



## **Minutes of the Regular Town of Fremont Meeting March 18, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Board of Aldermen/Alderwomen for the Town of Fremont, NC was held at 6:00 p.m. on March 18, 2025. Present were:

Eddie Yelverton, Mayor  
Leroy Ruffin, Mayor Pro tem  
Oscar Mooring, Alderman  
Tim V. Howell, Alderman  
Wayne Jackson, Alderman  
Joyce M. Artis, Alderwoman/Interim Town Clerk

Absent: Annie Lewis, Alderwoman

Also in attendance were Town Administrator Jonathan Allen, Finance Officer Shannon Moats, Police Chief Paul Moats, Assistant Police Chief Greg Bottoms, and Interim Public Works Director, Kenneth Stanley

### **Quorum Present: Yes**

**Call to Order:** Mayor Yelverton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Invocation:** Mayor Eddie Yelverton gave the Invocation.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Alderman Tim Howell led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Agenda:** *Mayor Yelverton asked for a motion to approve or amend the agenda. Alderman Jackson asked to remove Action #7: Town of Eureka Sewer from the agenda, and to add Discussion #6: Facilities & Equipment. Alderwoman Artis asked to add Action #7: Adding an additional document to prove one's social security number other than an actual social security card, and Discussion #7: State Ditches located in the Town of Fremont. Town Administrator Jonathan Allen asked to add Action #8: The paving of the Fire Department's Parking Lot.*

*Mayor Yelverton asked if there was a motion to accept the amended agenda.*

*Alderman Mooring made a motion to accept the agenda as amended. Alderman Jackson seconded the motion.*

*Mayor Yelverton asked for any discussion. There was none. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

**Approval of Minutes:** *Mayor Yelverton asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2025 Regular Town Board Meeting, and the February 18, 2025 Closed Session Meeting.*

*Alderman Howell stated that the Police vehicle that was approved to be sold was a 2003 Chevrolet Impala, not a 2000 Chevrolet Impala as was printed in the February 18, 2025 Regular Town Board minutes. After receiving confirmation from Police Chief Paul Moats, Interim Town Clerk Joyce Artis stated that she would make the correction.*

*Alderman Mooring made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2025 Regular Town Board Meeting as corrected, and the February 18, 2025 Closed Session Meeting. Alderman Howell seconded the motion.*

*Mayor Yelverton asked for any further discussion. There was none. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

**Public Comment:** Mayor Yelverton opened the meeting for public comment.

- Brenda Jackson, who resides at 406 E. Wayne Street, Fremont, North Carolina expressed her concerns about the Board of Planning & Adjustment's approval of the house next to her, which is 404 E. Wayne Street, being torn down because of its age and the possibility of it having asbestos. She asked the Board what would be done if the house is found to have asbestos in it. She went on to say that she is asthmatic and has allergies, and is very concerned about how it would affect her, and her neighbors, that may have the same condition. Ms. Jackson also stated that she recently received the utility payment that was lost in the mail that she sent to pay her December's Utility Bill, and wanted to know what the Town plans to do if it happens to her again. Alderwoman Artis stated that she had instructed Billing and Collections Clerk, Vanessa Brooks to give her a credit for the late fee and \$25.00 reconnection fee. Ms. Jackson stated that she had not received a credit. Alderwoman Artis stated that she would look into the matter and would call Ms. Jackson on the following day.
- Zachery Fien, who resides at 402 E. Main Street, Fremont, North Carolina stated that on December 2, 2024 his water meter was replaced, and when the meter was read on December 30, 2024, it was discovered that he had used ten times the highest amount of water that he had ever used, which was approx. 100,000 gallons. He went on to say that he had hired a plumber, who determined that there were leaks on both Mr. Fien's side of the meter and on the Town's side. He went on to say that the plumber found a pin hole on the Town's side and a large amount of water that was leaking on his side of the meter. Mr. Fien stated that he believes that the leak was caused by the installation of the new water meter, and that other than low water pressure, he had no indication that he was losing such a large amount of water. Interim Public Works Director Kenneth Stanley stated that the Water Department Supervisor, Josh Pulley, informed him that there was not a leak found on either side of the meter after he had installed the new water meter.

Town Administrator Jonathan Allen stated that Mr. Fein's account was credited \$1,609.30 for sewer, and left owing for the water portion of Mr. Fein's bill was \$1041.92.

- Ava Rodgers, who resides at 210 E. Barnes Street, Fremont, North Carolina stated that she wanted to obtain an update on her request about erecting a stop sign in Elmwood Cemetery at the Barnes Street exit. Alderwoman Artis stated that the item was on the agenda for the Board to take action on. Mrs. Rogers also asked about replacing the flag in the Daffodil Park and also keeping the Town clean of debris. She went on to say that she was concerned about the trash clogging up the drains.

## **Action**

### **1. Budget Amendment #BA-07-2025 – Finance Officer Shannon Moats**

#### **Fire Department**

Finance Officer Shannon Moats asked to do the following: increase the Fire Department's Repairs to Building and Grounds line item by \$7,000; increase the Fire Department's Pension line item by \$3000.00; increase the Fire Department's Radio & Pagers line item by \$1,500.00; and to decrease the Fire Department's Uniforms line item by \$11,500.

#### **Water & Sewer and Electric Revenues & Capital Outlay Expenses in the Water & Sewer & Electric Funds**

Finance Officer Shannon Moats asked to increase the following line items in the Water and Sewer's budget: Interest earned by \$15,000, Taps & Connection Fee by \$7,100, Late Payment Fees by \$10,000. She also asked to increase the following line items in the Electric Revenue's budget: Pole and Connection Fee by \$2,375, and Late Payment Fee by \$13,673.43. Finance Officer Moats also asked to increase the following line items in the Capital Outlay Expenses in the Water & Sewer's budget: 2025 Ford F-250, by \$16,049.48, and 2025 Ford F-250 in the Capital Outlay Expenses in the Electric Fund's budget by \$16,049.48

#### **Travel & Training Expense/Hospital Insurance Expense**

Finance Officer Shannon Moats asked to increase the General Fund's Travel and Training line Item by \$500 and to decrease the General Fund's Hospital Insurance by \$500.

#### **Water & Sewer Fund/Professional Services, Telephone & Internet, Postage Expenses, Worker's Comp. & Maintenance & Repair to Vehicles Expense**

Finance Officer Shannon Moats asked to increase the following line items in the Water & Sewer's budget: Professional Services by \$5,000, Telephone & Internet by \$500, Postage by \$1,000. She also asked to decrease the following line items in the Water & Sewer's budget: Worker's Comp. by \$2,681.36, Maintenance and Repair to Vehicles by \$3,818.64.

*Mayor Yelverton asked if there was a motion to approve the budget amendments.*

*Alderman Jackson made a motion to approve budget amendment BA-07-2025. The motion was seconded by Alderwoman Joyce Artis.*

*Mayor Yelverton asked for any discussion.*

Alderwoman Artis stated that both CPA James Overton and the Town's current Auditor, Dana Layne had previously encouraged the Board to closely monitor the Fire Department's budget. She asked Finance Officer Shannon Moats how was monitoring their budget being accomplished. Finance Officer Moats stated that she and Town Administrator Jonathan Allen had met with Fire Chief Jeff Brooks and Fire Department Secretary/Treasurer Gene Howell to explain that purchases over \$500 that are not pre-audited would not be paid, and would have to be approved by the Board, unless the purchase was an emergency, and that she was following the NC State Statute.

Alderman Jackson stated that in the Finance Training that was held in Goldsboro, the Board learned that the Finance Officer was not supposed to pay for a purchase over \$500 that was not pre-audited; and if it was, the Board could hold the finance officer responsible for the purchase.

Mayor Pro Tem Ruffin asked the Town Administrator and Finance Officer if they had received a copy of the bank statement for the additional bank account of the Fire Department. Finance Officer Moats stated that, "At this time, they have not submitted it, and as a finance officer, I do not have the authority to demand that they give me the statement." She also stated that since the account is not in the Town's name, and it has nothing to do with the Town's accounts, it would be the decision of the Board to demand to see the statements of the account. She informed the Board that at times, she had received receipts/requests to reimburse the Fire Department's separate account. Mrs. Moats also stated that she has reached out to the Town's Auditor, Danna Layne concerning the issue, and was told that the Board could demand that the Fire Department would submit the bank statement of their separate bank account. She went on to say that, "In addition to Danna Layne, the LGC, and the Fire Marshal all said that the Town should know what is in that account."

Alderman Mooring stated that there should be some accountability. Alderwoman Artis stated that she would like to see the fire department separate account included in the budget, in which the Town oversees. She went on to say that, "We are not trying to take control of their separate account, but like Chief Moats said, it shows transparency of how the money is or donations are spent"

*Mayor Yelverton asked if there were any further discussion. There was none. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Fremont Fire Department's Separate Bank Account**

*Aldерwoman Joyce Artis made a motion for the Town Administrator and Finance Officer to review the separate bank account statement of the Fremont Fire Department on a quarterly basis. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ruffin.*

*Mayor Yelverton asked if there were any discussion. There were none. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **2. Resolution Amending the Town's Charter to Add Hidden Hills to Voting District 4 Town Administrator Jonathan Allen**

Mr. Allen explained that the resolution was meant to adopt Hidden Hills to the district 4 Electoral Voting District.

*Mayor Yelverton asked if there was a motion concerning the for mention resolution.*

*Alderman Wayne Jackson made a motion to amend the charter of Fremont in order to add the Hidden Hills Subdivision to the District 4 Electoral District. The motion was seconded by Alderman Mooring.*

*Mayor Yelverton asked if there were any discussion. There were none. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **3. Erecting of Stop Sign in the Elmwood Cemetery at the Barnes St. Exit – Town Administrator Jonathan Allen**

Town Administrator Jonathan Allen stated that at the last Board meeting, Fremont citizen Ava Rogers requested for a stop sign to be erected in the Elmwood Cemetery at the Barnes Street exit as a safety precaution. Chief Moats stated that there are 4-way stop signs at North Street and at the intersection of Bryant and Vance Streets. He informed the Board that he did not see the necessity of adding another stop sign in the one block radius of the other stop signs. However, Chief Moats recommend that a stop sign would be erected on the service road coming out of the cemetery to eliminate any confusion that someone is exiting the cemetery. He went on to say that erecting a stop sign at the Barnes Street exit would be at the discretion of the Board.

*Mayor Yelverton asked if there was a motion to erect a stop sign at the Barnes Street exit of the Elmwood Cemetery.*

*Mayor Pro Tem Ruffin made a motion to install a stop sign on the service road of the Elmwood Cemetery in front of Barnes Street. The motion was seconded by Alderman Mooring.*

*Mayor Yelverton asked for any discussion. There were none. The motion passed by a majority vote. For: Mayor Pro Tem Ruffin, Aldерwoman Joyce Artis, Alderman Tim Howell, and Alderman Oscar Mooring. Opposed: Alderman Wayne Jackson.*

#### **4. Special Events Policy – Town Administrator Jonathan Allen**

Mr. Allen asked the Board if they had a chance to review the draft of the special events policy that he presented last month. Alderwoman Artis stated that in section 7-11, it states that “No pets should be allowed in the event area” She went on to say that during the Daffodil Festival, a lot of people bring their dogs. Chief Moats stated that there are some people who have service dogs, and that might a sensitive subject to address. Chief Moats went on to say that there are rules and regulations concerning how the dogs are brought into the festival, which are covered in the Daffodil Committee meetings (i.e. must be on a leash, cannot be aggressive, etc.)

Mayor Yelverton suggested that the terminology that Chief Moats used concerning dogs should be added to that section of the policy.

Alderman Jackson stated that the Special Events Policy draft stated that only the Police and Fire Departments staff could be compensated for working. He asked if the Public Works Department could be included as well. Mr. Allen stated that he would add the compensation of the Public Works Department Staff to the policy. Alderman Jackson asked would the Town be able to assist a sponsor of an event on how to acquire a \$100,000,000 issuance policy that is stated in section 7-6 of the special events policy. Mr. Allen stated that the Town would be able to do so.

Alderwoman Artis asked if there was a fee associated with the application. Mr. Allen stated that he would determine the fee when the policy is approved. Alderman Jackson suggested that the fee should be based on the size of the events.

Alderman Mooring stated that Daffodil Park should be added to section 5-3; Town Facilities.

The Board asked Mr. Allen to make the corrections/additions listed below, and to bring the Special Events Policy back to the Board for review in April:

1. Application Fee for Special Events, according to size
2. Add Daffodil Park to section 5-3; Town Facilities
3. Reword section 7-11; pets
4. Add Compensation for the Public Works Staff

#### **5. Public Works Director/Code Enforcement Officer – Town Administrator Jonathan Allen**

Mr. Allen stated that both the Finance and Personnel Committee had met and each committee had suggested that, in order to save money, the Public Works Director and the Code Enforcement Officer positions should be combined. He went on to say that both committees agreed that the public works director would be out in the community enough to notice any code ordinance violations. Mr. Allen stated that the job description of the Public Works Director would include the job duties of the Code Enforcement Officer.

Alderman Jackson stated that the Board has been discussing the need for a new public works director for approximately a year, and suggested that the advertisement for a public

works director should begin immediately. He went on to say that the public works department is currently short-staffed, and hiring a new public works director would alleviate some of the responsibilities of Interim Public Works Director Kenneth Stanley. Finance Officer Shannon Moats stated that, unless something major happens, there was enough money in this fiscal year's budget of the water & sewer fund & the electric fund to pay the salary of a new public works director.

*Mayor Yelverton asked if there was a motion to combine the Public Works Director and Code Enforcement Officer Positions.*

*Mayor Pro Tem Ruffin made a motion to combine the Public Works Director and the Code Enforcement Officer Enforcement Officer Positions. The motion was seconded by Alderman Jackson.*

*Mayor Yelverton asked for any discussion. There was none. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Alderman Jackson made a motion to advertise for a public works director/code enforcement officer with a yearly salary range of \$60,000 - \$65,000. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ruffin.*

*Mayor Yelverton asked for any discussion. There were none. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **6. Street Light Ordinance – Town Administrator Jonathan Allen**

Mr. Allen stated that the Board of Planning and Adjustment, after making one correction, passed the Street Light Ordinance. He went on to say that he was asking for the Town Board's approval as well. Alderman Jackson suggested that the Board should approve the type of light fixture that contractor would like to use before they are installed. Mr. Allen stated that he would add that language to the Street Light Ordinance.

Alderwoman Artis stated that a public hearing had to be held when there is a change in the Town's ordinances, and that the action and the public hearing could take place during the April's Board meeting.

## **7. Another Form of Identification to Verify a Person's Social Security Number**

Finance Officer Shannon Moats stated that a few years ago, the previous Board was asked to make the utility deposits \$200.00 higher if a potential customer was not able to produce a social security card. She went on to say that without a social security card, and if a person would leave owing the Town money, there would be no way to collect. She informed the Board that Billing and Collections Clerk Vanessa Brooks received an application for utilities from a person who was out of town. Mrs. Moats went on to say that the person sent everything but a copy of his social security card. She also stated that Mrs. Brooks informed the person that the Town requires a copy of a person's social security card, and if it could not be produced, an extra \$200 deposit would have to be paid before utilities would be connected. Mrs. Moats stated that she personally spoke

with the gentleman, who asked if the Town would accept a copy of his tax returns, which has his social security printed on it. Mrs. Moats asked if the Board wanted the Town Hall staff to accept other documentation that verified a person's social security number, or if the Town should continue to charge an extra deposit of \$200 if a person is not able to produce a social security card.

*The consensus of the Board was to require a copy of a person's social security card, and if they are unable to produce a card, an additional \$200 would be required; making it a total of \$650.00 deposit required to have utilities connected.*

## **8. Paving of Fremont Fire Department's Driveway - Town Administrator Jonathan Allen**

Mr. Allen stated that in each Board member's packet was an email from Fire Chief Jeff Brooks concerning the paving of the fire department's driveway. He then asked Chief Brooks to present his request to the Board.

Chief Brooks stated that he had received quotes from Fulford & Jones, ST Wooten, Asphalt Services of Pikeville, and Mario Pidillo of SMC Concrete. He went on to say that the quotes that he received ranged from \$38,500 to \$67,500. He informed the Board that Fulford & Jones, at approx. \$42,000, would be the best company to do the job. He also stated that, at that price, Fulford & Jones would install a concrete pad and do the asphalt work in front of the fire department. He went on to say that included in the quote, Fulford & Jones would also fill in holes, reseal the parking lot, and repaint parking space lines of the former EMS Building. He informed the Board that, if approved, it would be about one month before Fulford and Jones could begin the project, and, once started, it would take seven to ten days to complete the job. Chief Brooks requested to move \$50,000 from the fire department's fund balance into their budget. He stated that his requests to move an additional \$8,000 was for any possible issues that may occurred during the project. He also informed the Board that Fulford and Jones does not require a deposit to begin work.

Finance Officer Shannon Moats stated that she was not sure of how to proceed with moving the money from the fire department's fund balance. She stated that she had reached out to the Town's Accountant, Dana Layne to obtain an answer, and was unable to reach her. Mrs. Moats went on to say that if the project was considered an emergency, and if the Board approves it, she would make sure that the money is moved into the fire department's budget.

Alderwoman Artis stated that she felt that the project was an emergency, due to the fact that Chief Brooks stated that the current pad was in a great need of repair, and moving forward with the project would ensure that the fire trucks would be able to exit the fire station to answer calls for service.

*Alderwoman Artis made a motion to accept the quote of \$42,000 that was submitted by Fulford and Jones to:*

- 1. Install a concrete pad and tile for the Fire Department*
- 2. Pave the Front Lot of the Fremont Fire Department*
- 3. Fill potholes and resurface the front lot of the former EMS Building*



4. *Grade the area between the fire department and the former EMS Building*
5. *Restripe lines, and*
6. *Other things listed in the scope of work*

*Alderwoman Artis also stated in her motion that an additional \$8,000 should be moved from the fire department's fund balance to pay for any unexpected cost related to the project; and that only a total of \$50,000 should be moved from the fire department's fund balance and placed into their budget.*

*The motion was seconded by Alderman Howell. Mayor Yelverton asked for any discussion. There was none. The motion passed unanimously.*

Alderwoman Artis informed Chief Brooks that, before his arrival to the meeting, the Board voted that the Town Administrator and the Finance Officer should review the bank statements of the fire department's separate account on a quarterly basis. Mayor Yelverton also informed Chief Brooks the Board took action to do so at the recommendation of the LGC, the Town's Auditor, and the Fire Marshal. Chief Brooks stated that he would make sure that Fire Department Secretary/Treasurer Gene Howell would submit the bank statements of the Fremont Fire Department's separate account every quarter.

### **Reports:**

#### **(1) Finance Report – Shannon Moats**

Finance Officer Shannon Moats asked the Board if they had any questions about her finance report, which was included in their packets. Mrs. Moats directed the Board's attention to the Cash Trending Report. She stated that the Town had \$128,740 more from January to February. She went on to say that on February 5, 2025 she transferred \$50,000 from the Southern Bank Checking Account to the General Investment Account at NC Capital Management and Trust. Mrs. Moats informed the Board that the interest earned for the month of February was \$6,666.44, which is lower than the previous month due to the decrease in interest rates. She also informed the Board that due to the recent street repair, she transferred \$3,123.67 from the Powell Bill account to the Checking Account to pay for a truck load of stone and asphalt.

Alderwoman Artis asked whose responsibility was it to fill in the sewer/water line cuts in the road on Vance Street. Alderman Jackson stated that, while he is building, it was the responsibility of the builder to maintain the streets. Mr. Allen stated that he would speak to Contractor Jonathan Lee concerning maintaining the cuts in the road.

Finance Officer Shannon Moats also informed the Board that due to the fact that SAM's Club requires an individual's Social Security number, Town would not be able to obtain a SAM's MasterCard. She went on to say that she was currently working on the budget, and trying to find different ways to cut expenses and save the Town some money.

Alderman Howell questioned the checks written to Herlene Lewis and Rena Spivey. Finance Officer Shannon Moats stated that the check written to Herlene Lewis was for the cleaning of the Town Hall, and the check written to Rena Spivey was for the cleaning of the Police Department and Boardroom.

**(2) Billing & Collections Report – Interim Town Clerk Joyce M. Artis**

Interim Town Clerk Joyce Artis stated that the Billing and Collections report was included in each Board Packet. She also stated that the Water & Sewer Fund was in the negative due in-part of partial payments from the Town of Eureka and not receiving the utility refund payments from the NC Department of Commerce. She went on to say that a request for reimbursement for the remaining unpaid accounts would be sent to the NC Department of Commerce later this month.

**(3) Police Dept. Report – Chief Paul Moats**

Chief Moats asked the Board if they had any questions concerning his written Monthly Activity Report Summary for February. He stated that the department received 59 calls for service, and during the month, there were no misdemeanor or felony arrests. Chief Moats also stated that the PD had conducted one traffic stop, and issued one verbal warning. He went on to say that the Fremont Police Department conducted: 99 area checks, 202 business checks, 20 business escorts, and 4 welfare checks. He also stated that the Fremont Police Department completed 60 hours of in-service training, and had a total of 380 calls for service, which included 911 dispatch calls and officer self-initiated activities. Chief Moats also informed the Board that the police department had written sixteen reports, and had assisted with one car wreck in the month of February, and 10 reports were filed as well.

Chief Moats informed the Board that police department had begun training the newly hired part-time police officer, Officer Kadir. He went on to say that Officer Moran Kadir would join the department as a full-time officer in April.

Chief Moats also stated that the police department was preparing for the upcoming Daffodil Festival, and that there would be a total of 9 officers present.

Chief Moats informed the Board that the police department had gone through the proper abatement procedures concerning a property in the Town of Fremont, and that he would keep the Board updated concerning the issue

**(4) Public Works Report – Interim Public Works Director Kenneth Stanley**

Mr. Stanley stated that the Public Works Department had been very busy during the last month due to the Annual Spring Cleanup, preparation for the Daffodil Festival, etc. He went on to say that, in order to catch up on some projects, he had to prioritize what is most important, and would get to the other projects or concerns as quickly as possible. He also informed the Board that Thomas Thompson was taking classes to hopefully obtain his Spray field Irrigation License.

**(5) Town Update Report – Town Administrator Jonathan Allen**

Mr. Allen provided a written report, which was included in each Board members

agenda packet. Mr. Allen stated the public works staff had been busy with trimming the limbs from the powerlines. Mr. Allen also provided pictures that showed how much the limbs were being cut back. He went on to say that the trimming of the limbs seems to have decreased flickers and total loss of power. Mr. Allen thanked Mr. Tom Goff and his Town of Lucama Public Works Staff from leading the effort.

He went on to say that the drainage issue on Vance Street had been repaired. He commended the Fremont Public Works Department for completing the project, and by doing so, the Town saved approx. \$10,000. Mr. Allen also informed the Board that paving of the cut out on Vance St. should be completed very soon.

Alderman Howell asked if there had been any work completed as a result of the Thermal Imaging Report. Mr. Allen stated that he would check the status of the completed work and would give Alderman Howell an update. Alderman Howell also stated that should revisit the topic of hiring a welder. He went on to say that the Town could save money if we performed our own projects that required the use of a welder.

### **Old Business:**

#### **1. Grant Writer & Code Enforcement Officer – Mr. Allen, Town Administrator**

\*Please refer back action #5 concerning the Code Enforcement Officer.

Mr. Allen stated that he was still trying to secure a grant writer for the Town. Alderman Jackson stated that, for a fee, grants could be written by the East Carolina Council of Governments (ECCOG). Alderwoman Artis asked Mr. Allen if he had received any information about if the Town possibly using the grant writer that was hired by Wayne County. Mr. Allen informed the Board that he had reached out to the County, but no one had returned his call, and that he plans to call again on Wednesday, March 19, 2025.

Mayor Pro Tem Ruffin asked Mr. Allen if he kept a record of his calls. Mr. Allen stated that he only keeps a record of when he is called back, but he doesn't keep a record of when he calls to inquire about something, but he would do so going forward.

#### **2. Trimming of Limbs from Power Lines – Mr. Allen, Town Administrator**

\*Please refer back to Town Administrator's Updates concerning the Trimming of the Limbs from power lines.

#### **3. Grading of Street Shoulders – Mr. Allen, Town Administrator**

Mr. Allen stated he had contacted Mr. Brian Taylor about completing the grading of the street shoulders. Interim Public Works Director Kenneth Stanley stated that Mr. Taylor informed him that he would visit the Town to assess the needs of the project, but has not come as of yet. Mr. Stanley stated that, time permitting, the grading of the street shoulders could be done with the Town's old tractor.

Mayor Yelverton asked for the Board's thoughts about borrowing Mr. Julian Nelms' motor grader. Mr. Allen was directed to ask the wife of Mr. Nelms' about the use of her husband's equipment to grade the Town's street shoulders. He was also asked to wait for a period of time to allow the family to grieve the passing of Mr. Julian Nelms and Mrs. Polly Whitley. Alderman Jackson stated that if the Town was unable to use Mr. Nelms' motor grader, we should contact the surrounding towns to inquire about what company that they use to grade their street shoulders.

**4. Benefit Package for New Employees – Town Administrator Jonathan Allen**

Mr. Allen stated that he was awaiting on additional information before his presentation concerning benefit package was complete. Alderman Jackson stated that he felt that the new benefit package should be in place before new staff is hired.

**5. Flushing of the Town's Water System – Mr. Allen, Town Administrator**

Mr. Allen stated that Water Supervisor Josh Pulley would begin to flush the Town's Water System on April 1, 2025. He went on to say that Mr. Pulley would flush the water system every two weeks. He also informed the Board that notices would be sent out to the citizens two weeks prior to the flushing of the lines.

**Discussion:**

**1. Erecting of Flag Pole in Front of Post Office – Alderwoman Artis**

Alderwoman Artis stated that, while at the post office, Post Master Peter Johnson asked her if he could erect a flagpole on the sidewalk in front of the post office. She went on to say that Mr. Johnson wanted to use the same spot, in which a previous sign was erected. She also stated that Mr. Johnson's reason for the request was due to the fact that the current flag, which is attached to the post office, was being negatively affected by the wind, and that he has to bring it inside of the building at the end of each business day.

Interim Public Works Director Kenneth Stanley stated that his concern would be whose responsibility would it be if someone runs into the pole and is hurt. He went on to say that the signs that are currently erected alongside the sidewalk are break-away signs, and the flagpole would not be. Alderman Jackson stated that, if approved, the pole should not be placed where a car door could hit it. Mayor Pro Tem Ruffin stated that all signs, trashcans, flowerpots, etc. should be placed at the start of each line of the parking space, which would eliminate car doors being hit or damaged.

It was the consensus of the Board to have the public works staff to determine if the area, that was indicated by Mr. Johnson, would be suitable for a flag pole to be erected.

**2. Making the Front of the Post Office Handicapped Accessible – Alderwoman Artis**

Alderwoman Artis stated that Fremont Post Master Peter Johnson asked her about what it would take to make the front of the post office handicapped accessible. She stated that Mr. Johnson was concerned about some of the post office customers, that use wheelchairs, having to use the handicapped ramp at the corner of the street in order to access the

sidewalk. Mayor Yelverton stated that according to the American Disabilities Act the handicapped ramp would have to be of a certain slope. He went on to say that Main St. is a State maintained road, and the post office would have to obtain permission from the Department of Transportation. Alderman Jackson stated that he was concerned about the safety of someone trying access the ramp in the line of traffic.

It was the consensus of the Board to contact the Department of Transportation about the Mr. Johnson's request.

### **3. Responsibility of Replacing Dirt Around Headstones – Alderwoman Joyce Artis**

Alderwoman Artis stated that she had received a call from a citizen, who said that their loved one's cemetery plot was sinking, and asked if the Town was responsible for adding more dirt around the plot. She went on to say that she spoke with both Mr. Allen and Mr. Stanley, who stated that they were not sure whose responsibility it was to do so. Alderman Howell stated that funeral homes are responsible for filling new graves, and they would possibly charge the family. Mayor Pro Tem Ruffin stated that correcting the issues with the headstones is not the responsible of the Town. Alderwoman Joyce Artis stated that she would informed the citizen that the Town is not responsible for adding dirt around the cemetery plots.

### **4. Excavator Quotes – Interim Public Works Director Kenneth Stanley**

Mr. Stanley stated that he had received a quote from the Tractor Center, Raleigh, NC for a rubber tracked, 36in. quick attached trenching bucket, hydraulic thumb, 48in bush hog cutter excavator for \$140,000.

### **5. Town of Fremont Fire Tax – Mayor Eddie Yelverton**

Mayor Yelverton stated that Allan Lumpkin of the Wayne County Tax Office informed him that the fire tax could not be separated from the property tax as he had wished.

### **6. Facilities and Equipment – Alderman Wayne Jackson**

Alderman Jackson stated that he, Mayor Pro Tem Ruffin, and Alderman Mooring rode around the Town and found some areas that needed immediate attention. He mentioned that they found the following issues:

- Tin missing from the shelter at the Lagoon
- Holes in the roof of the public works building
- Bay Doors of the public works department were not operable
- Lights in the bay section of the public works shop were not working
- A lot of the equipment at the public works shop was broken or could not be repaired

Alderman Jackson also stated that they found that the jet-rodder, golf cart, and the Ford Tractor needed to be diagnosed to determine whether or not they were worth keeping. He went on to say that the Leaf Truck could also be used as a dump truck by removing the box, which was rusted, at the end of the leaf season. He went on to say that the committee felt that a new box could be manufactured or the old one could be repaired. He also informed the Board that he, Mayor Tem Ruffin, and Alderman Howell felt that the repair of the roof of the public works building, the bay doors, the roof of the shelter at the lagoon are a top priority. Mr. Allen stated that he would address these issues, and ensure that the repairs are made.

Mr. Stanley stated that, after discussing the issue concerning the holes in the roof with Town Administrator Jonathan Allen, the public works staff plan to patch the holes themselves. He went on to say that he was waiting for a quote for coating the roof.

Mayor Pro Tem Ruffin stated that, in order for the Town's electrician to accomplish more work during the week, the Board should consider hiring someone to help him to do so. He went on to say that we should consider adding a position in the upcoming budget. Alderman Jackson also stated that there were issues with streets that needed paving, pot holes, and parks.

## **7. Zachary Fien's Water Loss**

*After much discussion, Alderman Jackson made a motion to forgive what was overcharged for Mr. Fein's water and sewer, and to charge him an average of his bills due to the fact that the leak presented itself after a new meter was replaced by Town staff, and also due to the uncertainty of who was at fault. The motion was seconded was by Alderman Mooring.*

*Mayor Yelverton asked for any discussion.*

*Alderman Mooring asked if the meter was repaired after the leak was discovered. Mr. Allen stated that, former employee, David Herring repaired the line, and Water Department Supervisor Josh Pulley verified that there was no leak on either side. Therefore, the meter is reading correctly.*

*Mayor Yelverton asked for any further discussion. There was none. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **Information:**

### **1.) March is Women's History Month – Alderwoman Joyce Artis**

Alderwoman Artis stated that Women's History is celebrated in March of each year. She referred the Board to the information concerning Women's History Month that was included in each Board packet.

### **2.) Choosing Home Assistance Program – Mayor Eddie Yelverton**

Mayor Yelverton, who serves on the Wages Committee, shared some information concerning a financial assistance program that was sponsored by Wages. He went on to say that the financial assistance was for those 60 years old and over, and information concerning the assistance was listed on the flyer. He also stated that the information was posted in the Town Hall Lobby, the Post Office, on the Town's Website, and the Town's Facebook page.

### **3.) Spring Cleanup will be on Monday, March 10, 2025**

Mayor Yelverton stated that Spring Cleanup will begin on Monday, March 10, 2025. He also stated that the information was included in each Board packet.

**Motion to Close Open Session**

*Mayor Yelverton asked for a motion to close the regular session.*

*Alderman Howell made a motion to close regular session. The motion was seconded by Alderman Jackson.*

*Mayor Yelverton asked for any discussion. There was none. All were in favor of the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

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Eddie Yelverton, Mayor

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Joyce M. Artis, Interim Town Clerk

*Meeting ended at 9:55 pm*