

Minutes Special Called Meeting January 11, 2019 at Hertford Fire Dept. at 1:00 PM

Mayor, Horace Reid attempted to call the meeting to order with Commissioners Sid Eley and Frank Norman present.

Murielle Harmon asked Mayor Reid to explain the purpose and process of today's meeting.

Town Manager, Pam Hurdle explained the purpose of the meeting was to interview citizens who had expressed an interest on serving the vacant council seat. She said that each applicant would be asked a series of predetermined questions.

Frank Noman said they were picking one of their own and he objected because he would not be allowed to ask his own questions and didn't feel he was being involved in the process. He gathered his belongings and left the meeting at 1:05 PM.

Sharon Gordon asked how was the meeting advertised? Mayor Reid informed her the notices were posted at the office.

Quentin Jackson and Frank Norman entered the meeting at 1:07 PM.

Connie Brothers suggested maybe since they were so unorganized that maybe they should hold this meeting at another time.

Quentin Jackson said if a commissioner left the meeting after it started that their vote counted as a yes vote. Town Clerk, Cindy Sharber said if they were not in attendance their vote didn't count. He said he would present that in writing.

Having a quorum Mayor, Horace Reid called the meeting to order at 1:09 PM. Commissioners present were Sid Eley, Frank Norman and Quentin Jackson. Others present were Town Manager, Pam Hurdle, Town Clerk, Cindy Sharber, Police Chief, Dennis Brown, Executive Assistant, Sarah Mills, Peter Williams, Gracie Felton, James Logan, Diane Stallings, Sara Winslow, Edgar Salvo, Vanora and Connie Brothers, Murielle Harmon, Martha Borders, Sharon Smith, Earnell Brown, Latoya Lewis, Anne White, Kim Brinn, Tony Riddick, Ashley Hodges, Sharon Gordon, and Marion Leary.

Sid Eley had the prayer.

Mayor Reid led the Pledge of Allegiance.

New Business

Each of the candidates were given 30 minutes to answer the following questions:

Edgar Salvo responded to the following questions:

1. Would you take a few minutes and tell the Council about yourself?

- Live in Hertford for 22 plus years
- Married with 1 child
- Has a computer science degree

2. What led you to seek the appointment of this vacant seat on the Council?

- Concerned about the Town of Hertford
- Wants to see the town grow, prosper and get new citizens

3. What skills, abilities, or strengths do you bring to the Council and how do you believe they fill any voids created by the vacant seat?

- Knowledgeable
- Keeps up to date
- Team player
- Fill the void

4. Our Town Council has historically operated as a Team, even when they might disagree relative to an individual agenda item. Can you provide an example of a recent “team” project or event you have organized or participated in?

- No

5. What are you most satisfied and least satisfied about regarding the Town (issues or projects) that Council has a role in determining?

- Rather not answer at this time

6. Have you given thought to any immediate goals or priorities for the next six months, any which may require funding in the upcoming budget, and is there any one subject or item you do not feel comfortable or wish to address in the coming year? Do you have any goals for yourself or the Town in the coming year?

- Don't have the background to answer at this time
- Continue to grow

7. Would there be a problem in attending the Council's two scheduled monthly meetings or any special or emergency meetings?

- No

8. The appointment is until December 2019; would you consider seeking this seat for 4 years in the upcoming municipal election?

- Yes

9. Please provide examples of your past service and involvement in Hertford and/or other communities in which you have lived. How do you feel these experiences would assist you in serving as a Council member?

- Boy Scouts of America; 1982 – 1944
- Cub Scout leader
- Assistant Scoutmaster
- Scoutmaster District Trainer (Adult & Youth)
- Planning and Zoning Board of Adjustments; 1998 – 2003
- Leadership, Planning, experience, responsibilities for actions

10. The Town of Hertford, like the vast majority of municipalities in North Carolina, operates under the Council/Manager form of government. With that in mind, what do you see the role of the Town Council member being versus that of the Town Manager?

- Don't have experience can't answer

11. Given the diversity of interests, backgrounds, and opinions on the Town of Hertford's Council, how could you play a part in assisting the Town Council to reach consensus on decisions?

- Don't have any leverage unless you agree with everybody

12. Any Additional questions, notations or concerns you would like to confer:

Frank Norman thank Mr. Salvo for his interest in serving and asked Mr. Salvo how many council meetings he had attended in the last year?

- 12

Frank Norman asked Mr. Salvo since he had lived in town for the past 22 years why he hadn't put his name on the ballot?

Frank Norman asked Mr. Salvo why he hadn't attended council meetings before the last year?

- Life got in the way

Frank Norman asked why he resigned from the Planning & Zoning Board?

- Life got in the way

Frank Norman asked what type of diversity did he experience in boy scouts?

- That has no bearing on this

Gracie Felton responded to the following questions:

1. Would you take a few minutes and tell the Council about yourself?

- Married
- 2 sons
- Raising a great niece as a daughter
- Own business
- Bachelor's degree in social work
- Master's degree in science healthcare administration
- Her mother is still living
- Motivated
- Love the town

2. What led you to seek the appointment of this vacant seat on the Council?

- After I began attending a few council meetings Commissioner, Aples stepped down and I wanted to get more involved
- People in the community need to have their voice heard

3. What skills, abilities, or strengths do you bring to the Council and how do you believe they fill any voids created by the vacant seat?

- People in community
- Team leader if need be
- Listen rather than come to judgement
- Not allow someone to sway her decisions
- Asset to the town

4. Our Town Council has historically operated as a Team, even when they might disagree relative to an individual agenda item. Can you provide an example of a recent "team" project or event you have organized or participated in?

- President of the Cosmetology Association for years
- Best to listen and not argue but can still get point across
- Don't allow people to convince her to go in a way she doesn't want to

5. What are you most satisfied and least satisfied about regarding the Town (issues or projects) that Council has a role in determining?

- Do a good job
- They have a decision to make for the best of all of town
- Bring in new and best for town

6. Have you given thought to any immediate goals or priorities for the next six months, any which may require funding in the upcoming budget, and is there any one subject or item you do not feel comfortable or wish to address in the coming year? Do you have any goals for yourself or the Town in the coming year?

- No
- Grow
- Succeed
- Community to increase – town not growing but decreasing
- Hindering the town from growing
- Town sits in a stand still not prospering

7. Would there be a problem in attending the Councils two scheduled monthly meetings or any special or emergency meetings?

- No

8. The appointment is until December 2019; would you consider seeking this seat for 4 years in the upcoming municipal election?

- Yes

9. Please provide examples of your past service and involvement in Hertford and/or other communities in which you have lived. How do you feel these experiences would assist you in serving as a Council member?

- New member to the Planning & Zoning Board
- Listen
- Experience
- Citizen of the town
- Know how town is
- Know everyone by face
- Experience as a business owner
- Town is falling down
- Need more businesses
- Don't want things to grown

10. The Town of Hertford, like the vast majority of municipalities in North Carolina, operates under the Council/Manager form of government. With that in mind, what do you see the role of the Town Council member being versus that of the Town Manager?

- Make decisions about what to pass or not
- Everybody should work together
- Joint process working for the same goals

11. Given the diversity of interests, backgrounds, and opinions on the Town of Hertford's Council, how could you play a part in assisting the Town Council to reach consensus on decisions?

- Listen
- Then do research to find answer

12. Any Additional questions, notations or concerns you would like to confer:

Frank Norman thanked Ms. Felton for her interest in serving.

Frank Norman asked Ms. Felton how many council meetings she had attended in the last year?

- 5

Frank Norman asked why she hadn't come to the meetings before?

- Didn't know about them and never knew how the town was run
- Once informed starting coming
- #1 concern growth

Frank Norman asked Ms. Felton to define success if on council?

- Bring unity

Sid Eley asked Ms. Felton what other involvement she had other than Planning & Zoning board and cosmetology?

- Church

Martha Borders responded to the following questions:

1. Would you take a few minutes and tell the Council about yourself?

- Graduated High School in Connecticut
- Attended College in Salem, VA
- Store manager at The Mills Store from 1977-1984
- Sentry Bank 1984-1992
- Small business owner for many years familiar with the ups & downs of small business
- Comes from a background in banking
- In 1992 started fiber art career

2. What led you to seek the appointment of this vacant seat on the Council?

- Volunteered in County
- Decided fundraising was a waste of her ability
- Get involved helping Town of Hertford

3. What skills, abilities, or strengths do you bring to the Council and how do you believe they fill any voids created by the vacant seat?

- Math
- Budget issues – only glanced at town budget
- Open & receptive
- Serve town to bring people together

4. Our Town Council has historically operated as a Team, even when they might disagree relative to an individual agenda item. Can you provide an example of a recent “team” project or event you have organized or participated in?

- Member of Holy Trinity Church organized card party
- Women’s
- Distribute money to people in need

5. What are you most satisfied and least satisfied about regarding the Town (issues or projects) that Council has a role in determining?

- Unhappy with how council seems to be at odds
- Agree with Quentin they need a 1, 5, and 10-year plan

6. Have you given thought to any immediate goals or priorities for the next six months, any which may require funding in the upcoming budget, and is there any one subject or item you do not feel comfortable or wish to address in the coming year? Do you have any goals for yourself or the Town in the coming year?

- Unable to answer not looked at the budget line items
- Agreed with Quentin about getting answers to the 911 charge of \$74,000
- Houses falling apart wants to locate residents to another part of town to be able to keep the residents we have

7. Would there be a problem in attending the Councils two scheduled monthly meetings or any special or emergency meetings?

- No, retired

8. The appointment is until December 2019; would you consider seeking this seat for 4 years in the upcoming municipal election?

- Don’t know the answer
- If she got on council, she would know better

9. Please provide examples of your past service and involvement in Hertford and/or other communities in which you have lived. How do you feel these experiences would assist you in serving as a Council member?

- Delivered Meals on Wheels in Town and County and saw the struggle & poverty
- Never lived in a community struggling

10. The Town of Hertford, like the vast majority of municipalities in North Carolina, operates under the Council/Manager form of government. With that in mind, what do you see the role of the Town Council member being versus that of the Town Manager?

- Support town manager
- Set direction for the town financially
- Set up 1,5, and 10-year plan then manager can help achieve the goals

11. Given the diversity of interests, backgrounds, and opinions on the Town of Hertford's Council, how could you play a part in assisting the Town Council to reach consensus on decisions?

- Calming influence
- Bank – personnel
- Every person has a voice
- Find compromise

12. Any Additional questions, notations or concerns you would like to confer:

Frank Norman thanked Ms. Borders for her interest in serving.

Frank Norman asked how many council meetings she had attended?

- Came a few years ago during the bridge discussion
- A few times after Archie didn't get the council seat

Frank Norman asked what she saw as a success for the board?

- Having a 1,5, and 10-year plan very important

Frank Norman asked if council made a decision and the manager didn't get it done what would she do?

- Need to understand reason
- A lot of time not clear
- Need to be handle on a case by case basis

Ashley Hodges responded to the following questions:

1. Would you take a few minutes and tell the Council about yourself?

- Moved here last year from Virginia
- Wide in the Air Force
- Work's from home
- IT work for the military

2. What led you to seek the appointment of this vacant seat on the Council?

- Attended some recent council meetings
- Make a real contribution
- Join church – serving
- Flexibility to contribute

3. What skills, abilities, or strengths do you bring to the Council and how do you believe they fill any voids created by the vacant seat?

- Business
- Acquisitions federal and state level
- Design
- Respond to proposal pricing
- Participation with serving on boards
- Leadership roles
- Worked with military since college graduation
- Watching leadership of officers and senior leaders
- Lead 100 programmers, engineers with bidding and problem solving
- Negotiation to get the best for their money
- Offer an opinion under the table
- He was super impressed with Archie and what he left behind
- Bridge the gap
- Keep an open mind for the greater group
- Video work – expertise in that area

4. Our Town Council has historically operated as a Team, even when they might disagree relative to an individual agenda item. Can you provide an example of a recent “team” project or event you have organized or participated in?

- He had been in Ohio this week working with software engineers making decision for the next 3 years
- Building consensus
- Worked three 14-hour days on next 3 months a lot of head butting but were able to come up with a plan
- Conflict is natural – don't make it personal

5. What are you most satisfied and least satisfied about regarding the Town (issues or projects) that Council has a role in determining?

- Love living here
- People are friendly, inviting and welcoming
- Always more can be done
- Bang you get for your buck
- People struggle to move into town
- Pay town and county taxes
- Higher utilities
- His mind was made up to live in town
- Was told to convert to gas when renovating his house because it is way cheaper than the cost of electricity, but not everyone can convert. Assist citizens and town to consume less.
- Encourage people to move here

6. Have you given thought to any immediate goals or priorities for the next six months, any which may require funding in the upcoming budget, and is there any one subject or item you do not feel comfortable or wish to address in the coming year? Do you have any goals for yourself or the Town in the coming year?

- Should expand the historical district
- State and Federal advantages for those renovating in the historic district
- Make it easier to move into town
- Increase tax revenues
- Get more people to move here
- Some can close on a house in 30 days he was unable to close that quickly took him 18 months
- Not comfortable but nothing off plate for discussion
- Finish renovating his house
- Didn't get to spend as much time with family he has a 10 & 7-year-old
- Be more engaged with family but for the town as well
- Has less travel time and more flexibility now
- Advantage to be able to walk to businesses, schools and restaurants

7. Would there be a problem in attending the Council's two scheduled monthly meetings or any special or emergency meetings?

- Regular meetings not a problem can bend his schedule
- Emergency meetings with 48-hour notice may be a problem but he would strive to attend

8. The appointment is until December 2019; would you consider seeking this seat for 4 years in the upcoming municipal election?

- Maybe
- Never been on town council before
- Would like to say yes if the decision goes like he hopes it will go

9. Please provide examples of your past service and involvement in Hertford and/or other communities in which you have lived. How do you feel these experiences would assist you in serving as a Council member?

- Volunteer work with church
- Run down house repair
- Stop hunger now
- Previous community banned homeless people in the winter and his church allowed them to stay in the church. He and his wife washed clothes for those staying at the church and provided meals.
- While working for Virginia Tech serve on several boards for public funding

10. The Town of Hertford, like the vast majority of municipalities in North Carolina, operates under the Council/Manager form of government. With that in mind, what do you see the role of the Town Council member being versus that of the Town Manager?

- Town manager involved in making the town run on daily basis
- Big fan of delegating duties
- Tactical
- Council set guideline for spending
- strategic

11. Given the diversity of interests, backgrounds, and opinions on the Town of Hertford's Council, how could you play a part in assisting the Town Council to reach consensus on decisions?

- Some believe the smaller the group the faster the decision made
- More people in the decision making the better
- Provide transparency and input from citizens

12. Any Additional questions, notations or concerns you would like to confer:

Quentin Jackson asked how long you plan to live in Hertford?

Ashley responded:

- He was a bit nervous he hadn't interviewed for a job in 14 years he had move to different position within his current employer and moving would be a stupid financial decision.

Sid Eley asked why Hertford?

Ashley responded:

- His primary customer is in the Hampton Roads area and he wanted to live close enough to drive to and from work in 1 day. He had lived in 4 of the 7 cities in the Hampton Roads area which has good restaurants, but he doesn't want to live there again.
- 2 daughters and education were very important, and they had toured and checked ratings and test scores of the schools.
- Narrowed it down between Camden and Hertford even though Edenton was a possibility but felt Edenton was too big and Camden was a bunch of farms.

Frank Norman asked his thoughts of decreasing the utility rates?

Ashley responded:

- Saying everyone wants low taxes so encourage people to move here and by having more people here to pay taxes you could move the needle rather than dropping utilities.

Frank Norman asked if he got on council what would you like to say you did?

Ashley responded:

- Internet to allow people to work from home said it's sufficient but could be better
- Economy of Hertford is tethered to the Hampton Roads for people working at the ship yard and what happens after work is important need to encourage people to be here more
- Impressed with how well the community plays together from school field day to sports through the recreation department
- Keep people here when not at work

All candidates were then seated in front of the citizens allowing them to ask questions.

Murielle Harmon said only when something like this occurs, we realize the wealth of knowledge from the community. She thanked the candidates.

Sara Winslow asked what the process was from here.

Mayor Reid said they would make their decision Monday night.

Quentin Jackson asked about possibly changing the time of the meeting to 7:00 PM? After much discussion they decided to have the meeting at the regular time.

Tony Riddick asked Ashley Hodges since he had experience with business acquisitions what would he do

Ashley responded:

- Get people to buy product or service
- Coming into downtown no big deal to him
- Advertise
- Businesses fail in the 1st year because they take on so much start up expense
- Donut shop wanted to come to Creek Drive in Winfall, but owner requested a large amount and they ended up opening in Elizabeth City
- Tax advantage

Tony Riddick said he didn't mention marketing Hertford.

Tony Riddick asked Gracie Felton about her business decreasing and what she wanted.

Gracie Felton responded:

- She wanted them to promote and cater to her
- She opened her business in Winfall 1st because of rent
- Rented in Winfall for 15 years without a rent increase
- She rented around the corner and had problems with flooding, ceiling and having to go through building inspector
- Current location rent is cheaper

Mayor Reid suggested that she advertise in the Perquimans Weekly.

Quentin Jackson said it was fine to advertise but that is just another expense. He said he knows if a business is a member of the Chamber of Commerce, they put out business information.

Quentin said businesses in Hertford use to be mom and pop stores. Tax base incentives.

Frank Norman said advertising in the Perquimans Weekly is very expensive. He said tax incentives are out there they just haven't had time to research because they have been too busy house cleaning.

Tony Riddick told Martha Borders he had own an energy business here since 2010 and had been trying to get the Town of Hertford to do business with him and the town had torn down a house he own. He asked how she would get him to stay in Hertford?

Martha Borders said she didn't know why the town tore his house down. Tony Riddick replied because the town manager decided that's what he wanted to do.

Martha Borders asked Tony did he have a lawyer for that matter? He replied no. She said they have codes regarding houses, and she would have to look at each case by case.

Tony Riddick asked what about the town not doing business with him? She didn't know the situation.

Tony Riddick told Edgar Salvo he had come to council expressing his discontent and with that how can you effectively join this board?

Edgar Salvo said he wasn't creating a conflict he was expressing his concern about council listening to citizens.

Tony Riddick said you can get more bees with honey than vinegar and accused Edgar of saying the current administration was incompetent and asked how do you expect to get anything done?

Edgar Salvo said he didn't think he had said that.

Earnell Brown thanked all the candidates for their responses. She felt the council needed a focus direction road map called a strategic plan and get everybody's concerns and needs and use to develop the budget needs. She asked what do you know about the discipline of strategic planning?

Ashley Hodges said strategic planning is a big part of his job. He has a 1-year road map on software and 5 at large spots which they get input from all. He suggested the use of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Gracie Felton said her life has been about reaching goals she said she plans this year for what she will do next year. She said she decided to go to college, and she did. She said she wants to work with the community and teach children things in life and have them complete those things. Reach for whatever you want and go for it.

Martha Borders said the town manager has already initiated a strategic plan. She said strategic plans are great, review as you go. What do we want, keep diversified fix all houses raise real estate value where are poor people going to go the County? Don't want to see us turn into Hilton Head. Low income housing available, provide services in town. She loved living in California because of diversity but was tired of living in Cape Cod because only white people live in Cape Cod.

Edgar Salvo said he was familiar with strategic plans but wasn't sure what Hertford is currently working on. He felt he could add fresh ideas. He liked the small community and doesn't want to see it become a large community. He said it is important to get ideas from a different view point. He said he didn't know what the ideas of the last strategic plan was because it was not talked about.

Connie Brothers said 1 street always turns out for the meetings and asked how could they get other streets to turn out like Front Street?

Ashley Hodges responded:

- Citizens want to be heard
- Difficult to participate
- Hard with small kids or during the middle of the day
- Actively reach out to citizens
- Have more seating or a place people can walk
- Have at different times and places

Gracie Felton responded:

- Word of mouth
- Lack of communication
- Never knew the meetings were occurring

Sharon Gordon said the meetings have been the same day and time forever. She said they didn't know what was on the agenda but felt it is up to the citizens to keep up with what is going on.

Quentin Jackson said he had 2 county commissioners tell him they didn't know when the town board met. He said that's why the meetings need to be recorded. He said a lot of government boards use social media, but Hertford needs to have a policy in place first.

Martha Borders responded:

- Meeting area is small, dark and hot
- Larger facility
- Apathy
- Turned off by politics
- Encourage in our neighborhoods
- People may not drive a night
- Maybe have meetings on Saturday
- Aging population may not use the internet
- Print meeting dates and times on utility bills or add an insert even though she didn't want to put more work on Cindy

Edgar Salvo responded:

- Getting the work out
- Keep same meeting day and time
- Post meetings in the Daily Advance
- Rolling schedule of meetings is not the answer

Frank Norman said he is actively trying to get people to come out. He said he attended meetings in the past as a citizen and requested council to get back to him and they still haven't gotten back to him. He felt previous council hadn't been responsive and that citizens don't feel they have a voice. He said they needed to be open and transparent. People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

James Logan said his work schedule didn't allow him to attend some meetings. He felt maybe they needed to get a business downtown such as a dollar tree to pull the people to the downtown area.

Murielle Harmon said that interior stores create a double struggle. She said she attended 7 council meetings in 2014 with only 3 citizens present. She felt if only 3 people showed up that represented, they didn't care and when the cats away the mouse will play. She said they use to have meetings that ended at 8:15 because of no input. But since 2014 there has been a difference. She said they need to start believing they can make a difference.

Martha Borders asked if the work session is open to the public?

Sid Eley felt the idea of changing meeting times would be difficult because of our charter. He said they would have to request change to the General Assembly, and they would have the final say. He said Hertford had a strategic plan 20 years ago and 35 of the 40 items have been accomplished. He said they took down 6 street lights downtown and put up 24 and they received complaints until they were turned on. Sid thanked everybody who attended the meeting and the 4 candidates.

Frank Norman said it would be very difficult to change the meeting dates/times, but it can be done.

Motion by Quentin Jackson seconded by Sid Eley and passed 4-0 to adjourn the meeting.