

**MINUTES OF THE THOMASVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2024 AT 6:00 PM, AT 20 STADIUM DRIVE, THOMASVILLE, NC.**

Elected officials in attendance: Mayor Raleigh York, Jr.; Mayor *Pro Tempore* Lisa Shell; and Council Members Neal Grimes, Doug Hunt, JacQuez Johnson, Pat Shelton, Hunter Thrift and Payton Williams.

1. Call to Order – Mayor York called the meeting of the Thomasville City Council to order and welcomed everyone in attendance in person and online.
2. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda – There were no additions or deletions to the agenda. Council Member Thrift moved to approve the agenda as presented. Council Member Hunt seconded. Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.
3. Public Forum – Nobody came forward to speak.
4. Recognitions and Presentations: Proclamation – Black History Month

Council Member Johnson presented this Proclamation to former Council Member and current School Board Member Wendy Sellars.

Mrs. Sellars thanked Council for recognizing Black History month for many years. She also invited the public to join her at the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Black History Month program at Ball Park Recreation Center on February 23<sup>rd</sup> from 5 – 8 PM for displays, a speaker, dancers, two Black Excellence Awards and information on local African American trailblazers.

5. Public Hearings – Nobody came forward to speak for or against any of these items.

A. Consideration of Ordinance to Repair or Demolish Unit at 219 Tower Road  
Paul E. Lewis Heirs, Nathaniel E. Lewis

Mayor York opened the public hearing.

Minimum Housing Inspector Randall Markham advised that he inspected the property on 11/16/23 and found that the structure was not in compliance with City code. On that date, he notified Mr. Lewis of a hearing on 11/29/23. Mr. Lewis did not appear. Mr. Markham notified the owners that they had 60 days to make necessary repairs. The repairs were not made. He requested that City Council approve the demolition of the structure because it is unsafe and unfit for human habitation.

No one spoke for or against this Ordinance. Mayor York closed the hearing. Council Member Hunt moved to approve this Ordinance. Council Member Shelton seconded. Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.

B. Consideration of Ordinance to Repair or Demolish Unit at 114 College Street  
Freeman Family Trust, Kenya Alexis Young

Mayor York opened the public hearing.

Minimum Housing Inspector Randall Markham advised that he inspected the property on 11/20/23 and found the structure to be unsafe. On that date, he notified the owners of a hearing on 12/06/23. They did not appear. Mr. Markham then notified the owners that they had 60 days to make necessary repairs. The repairs were not made. He requested that City Council approve the demolition of the structure because it is unsafe and unfit for human habitation.

No one spoke for or against this Ordinance.

Mayor York closed the hearing. He then thanked the City's Minimum Housing inspectors Randall Markham and Josh Parks for doing a great job. He said, "That's



a lot of work to be done here, and they've done a good job on both of these. We appreciate your efforts very much."

Council Member Hunt moved to approve this Ordinance. Council Member Shelton seconded. Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.

C. Consideration of Amendment to Zoning Ordinance (Z-24-02) Article V, Section 2, Table of Permitted Uses to allow Microbreweries and Micro-distilleries in C-4, M-1 and M-2

City Manager Brandt said this stems from the City's 2035 Land Development Plan. The Plan recommends this type of uses for our Downtown and manufacturing districts. He added, "Hopefully this will spur some development in our Downtown."

Mayor York opened the public hearing. No one spoke for or against this Ordinance Amendment. Mayor York closed the hearing. Council Member Thrift moved to approve this Ordinance. Council Member Shelton seconded. Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.

D. Annual Generic Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Hearing

Mayor York opened the public hearing.

City Manager Brandt advised that no specific project is associated with this hearing. He explained that the City has to hold a generic hearing annually in order to be able to apply for CDBG grants from the North Carolina Department of Commerce. Each grant requires two public hearings, including this one.

No one spoke for or against this matter. Mayor York closed the hearing. No Council action was required.

6. Consent Agenda

A. Consideration of Approval of Minutes – Briefing Meeting on 01/08/24

B. Consideration of Approval of Minutes – Council Meeting on 01/16/24

C. Consideration of Hotel Occupancy Tax Voluntary Disclosure Agreement

City Manager Michael Brandt explained that this was related to an online travel company that has informed the City that they did not pay hotel occupancy taxes between January 1, 2013 through September 30, 2020. This agreement approves this voluntary disclosure to pay the back taxes as determined by the travel company, with the understanding that the company name will remain confidential. They will provide a detailed report and full payment of the taxes within 90 days of the approval of this agreement.

Council Member Hunt moved to approve all the items on the Consent Agenda. Council Member Shell seconded. Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.

7. Regular Agenda

A. Consideration of Acceptance of Resignation of Council Member and Appointment of Replacement to Fill the Remaining Term of Office

Mayor York advised that Council Member Jeannette Shepherd has not been well for quite some time. He read her resignation, upon the advice of her physician. She resigned her position as Thomasville City Council Woman as of 2/15/24. She thanked everyone for their prayers, phone calls and cards.

Council Member Thrift moved to accept the resignation of Jeannette Shepherd.



Council Member Williams seconded, adding, "I admire Jeannette for the work she did while she was here and also for allowing someone else to take over so she can get better. I hope she does that."

Council Member Hunt said, "She'll be sorely missed."

Mayor York added, "She put all that she had into doing this to the best of her ability. I send our love and prayers out to her tonight."

Council Member Neal Grimes abstained with unanimous permission of the rest of Council. It was with sadness that Council unanimously approved this motion 6 – 0.

Council Member Thrift then moved to appoint interim Council Member Neal Grimes to fill Jeannette Shepherd's unexpired term. Council Member Shelton seconded.

Mayor York thanked the Grimes family for allowing Neal to come back to serve on Council. He said, "He did a great job when he was here before, and he's doing a great job now, and he'll do a great job in the future."

Council Member Grimes abstained again, with unanimous permission of the rest of Council. The motion was approved 5 – 1. Council Member Johnson voted against it.

Council Member Grimes said he regretted that Mrs. Shepherd was unable to fulfill her term. He said, "She worked very hard to earn her victory." He added, "Now that Jeannette is no longer able to complete her term, I am honored to complete it for her, and will do my best for the citizens of Thomasville on her behalf."

Council Member Grimes and Senator Thom Tillis's Regional Representative Stephanie Blair then presented to Mayor York and Council a United States flag that was certified to have been flown over the US Capitol.

The certificate said, "...At the request of the Honorable Thom Tillis, United States Senator, this flag was flown in celebration of the ribbon cutting on May 11, 2023, of the new Thomasville Aquatic and Community Center Housing the City Council Chambers." It was signed by Chere Rexroat, RA, Acting Architect of the Capitol.

Mayor York accepted the flag for the City and thanked Senator Tillis for this gift. He said, "We will honor and cherish this. We appreciate it so much."

#### B. Consideration of Budget Amendment 2024-P8-01

City Manager Brandt said this Budget Amendment transfers \$14,326 from General Fund Contingency for personnel salary increases and \$250 to cover the full purchase cost of 6 Trade Street, which is the piece of property that we recently purchased for a Downtown parking lot. This will leave a balance of \$247,445.

This Budget Amendment also includes proceeds totaling \$10,838 appropriated in the Fire Department and \$3,573 in the Police Department for vehicle repairs due to accidents.

It also appropriates \$9,840 of surplus investment interest revenue in the Water/Sewer Fund for the purchase and configuration of four Paymentus card payment devices. This will allow citizens to be able to pay with a credit card at City Hall.

Council Member Thrift moved to approve it. Council Member Hunt seconded. Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.

#### 8. Committee Reports and Appointments, Mayor's Report and Appointments, City Manager's Report, City Attorney's Report



Mayor York and Council expressed their kind thoughts and prayers regarding Jeannette Shepherd. They also welcomed Councilman Grimes back and thanked Pat Shelton for filling in for Ron Bratton during his leave of absence.

Mayor Pro Tem Williams invited someone to come open a microbrewery/ micro-distillery in Thomasville.

She also invited everyone to attend the Downtown Retail Market Analysis meeting on February 27 at 6 PM at the Aquatic Center. She said, "It would be a good opportunity to learn about what our Downtown is lacking, what assets we have, and how we can fill it out in the coming years."

The theme of Black History Month this year is "African Americans and the Arts." She said, "Thomasville has a really thriving art culture, and we enjoy the contributions of African Americans every single day."

She gave a shout out to Daryl Poole's team in Public Works for being so responsive and ready to help.

Council Member Johnson wished everyone a happy Black History Month. He said it was an honor to be a member of Council and to reflect on some of the other African American trailblazers who paved the way for him, such as Former Councilman J. W. Mathis. He invited everyone to attend the Black History Month celebration with Ms. Sellars.

Council Member Grimes reported that Unity United Methodist Church has operated as a warming center for men for 14 nights since January 16th, while Father's Storehouse (across the street) operates as a warming center for Women and Children. He asked everyone to spread the word. Volunteers are invited to help at the church during the remainder of the cold weather season.

On behalf of the Personnel Committee, Council Member Thrift moved to make the following appointments, effective March 1st:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <u>ABC Board</u>                             | Roger Bryant   |
| <br><u>Beautification</u>                    |  |
| (3-year terms)                               | Denise Barnes, Nancy Griffith, Cherie Johnson, Brooke Murphy                                 |
| (2-Year term<br>to fix staggering)           | Nathan Smith, Hilda Warner   |
| <br><u>Golf Advisory</u><br>(Senior Golfers) | <br>Don Clinard, David Costello  |
| <br><u>Historic Preservation</u>             |  |
| (3-year terms)                               | Amanda Cox, Jennifer Mayhall, Jill Simpson   |
| (2-year term<br>to fix staggering)           | David Carter   |
| <br><u>Planning/Adjustment</u>               | <br><del>Edward Keller</del> , Pat Shelton   |
| <br><u>Recreation</u>                        | <br>Bill Tagliaferri (3-year term)<br>William Rainey (to fill Tony Vinzini's unexpired term) |
| <br><u>Tourism</u>                           | <br>Christy Jones, Edward Keller, Leslie Watts,<br>Dee Stokes (at-large)                     |

Council Member Hunt seconded. Council Member Pat Shelton abstained with unanimous permission of the rest of Council. Motion unanimously approved 6 – 0.



Council Member Thrift also invited everyone to Central Wesleyan Church for their annual pancake breakfast on March 9<sup>th</sup> from 7 – 11 AM. Donations will benefit the Memorial Day Parade and Ceremonies Committee.

Council Member Shelton thanked Council for allowing her to fill-in for Council Member Bratton over the past three months. She said, "He's healthy now. I'm so happy to report that."

Council Member Hunt thanked Chuck George's department for getting Thomasville cleaned up. He said, "I appreciate all you guys do!"

He thanked Thom Tillis's office for presenting Council with the flag.

He added that Jeannette was a close friend of his, and he will miss her.

Council Member Shell also encouraged everyone to participate in Black History Month activities. She also wished Jeannette well and thanked Neal Grimes and Pat Shelton for filling in over the past few months. She is happy that Council Member Bratton's health has improved.

Mayor York reported that there were 3 ribbon cuttings over the last month. January's Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Shell attended the ribbon cutting at Renew Integrative Wellness on Trade Street. He attended ribbon cuttings for grand reopenings at Piedmont Crossing's Veranda Building, as well as Childress Realty on Fisher Ferry.

He congratulated Nat P. Walker on his retirement from the City after over 20 years of service and many years of volunteering before that to give the cemetery some much-needed TLC. He will continue to help out at the cemetery on a part-time basis. He said, "Nat's heart is in what he does, and his heart is in (his work at) the cemetery." Mayor York attended the Chamber's annual meeting, as well where they recognized the Citizen of the Year and other awards.

It was also his honor to present a key to the City to Lois Hunter for her 49 years of service at the Thomasville Housing Authority. He asked for prayers for her health in her retirement.

He thanked Pat Shelton for always being willing to come back and serve on Council when she is needed. He said, "You've always done a great job and done your homework. You're always ready with all the issues. We really thank you."

City Manager Brandt thanked Got Your Six Towing Co. for cleaning up the road before dawn on Saturday morning, after a vehicle lost control and collided with another vehicle, pushing it through the window at the old Palace Theater. He said, "I just wanted to give them a shout out for doing that type of work on a cold, dark night when they could have just gotten those cars out of there and gotten home as fast as possible. I appreciate that they did that."

Regarding Black History Month, City Manager Brandt said, "I never think history is relegated to one month. It is part of our American story, so I, too, recognize Wendy Sellars and the work that she has done, and others throughout the community, to let people know the importance of all of our histories. They all play a role in our society."

#### 9. Closed Session - Personnel and Attorney/Client

Council Member Thrift moved to go into closed session for Personnel and Attorney/Client matters. Council Member Shelton seconded. Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.

Council returned to open session. No action was taken in closed session.

10. Additional Items – City Manager Brandt announced that the City has received a \$500,000 grant from the NC Commerce Industrial Development Fund to support the

sewer extension for Nucor. These funds will reduce the cost that Nucor is contributing to the project.

11. Adjournment – Council Member Williams moved to adjourn. Council Member Thrift seconded. Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.



Raleigh York, Jr.  
Raleigh York, Jr., Mayor

Wendy S. Martin  
Wendy S. Martin, City Clerk