

**FAYETTEVILLE CITY COUNCIL/STATE DELEGATION  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL  
433 HAY STREET, FAYETTEVILLE, NC  
FEBRUARY 6, 2025  
5:30 P.M.**

Present: Mayor Mitch Colvin

Council Members Katherine K. Jensen (District 1); Malik Davis (District 2); Mario Benavente (District 3); Lynne Greene (District 5); Brenda McNair (District 7); Courtney Banks-McLaughlin (District 8); Deno Hondros (District 9)

Absent: Council Members D. J. Haire (District 4); Derrick Thompson (District 6)

North Carolina General Assembly Delegation:

Senator Val Applewhite (District 19) (arrived at 5:47 p.m.); Senator Tom McInnis (District 21); Representative Mike Colvin (District 42); Representative Diane Wheatley (District 43); Representative Charles Smith (District 44); Representative Frances Jackson (District 45)

Others Present: Douglas Hewett, City Manager  
Lachelle Pulliam, City Attorney  
Jeff Yates, Assistant City Manager  
Jodi Phelps, Assistant City Manager  
Kevin Dove, Fire Chief  
Kemberle Braden, Police Chief  
Michael Gibson, Parks, Recreation & Maintenance Director  
Christopher Cauley, Economic, and Community Development Director  
Brian McGill, Interim Assistant Public Services Director  
David Steinmetz, Development Services Assistant Director  
Byron Reeves, Deputy Public Services Director  
Deonte Watson, Assistant Airport Director  
Brook Redding, Special Projects Manager  
Jennifer Ayre, City Clerk  
Kirk deViere, Cumberland County Chairman  
Henry Tyson, Cumberland County Commissioner  
John Easterling, Checkmate Government Relations  
Kendall Conger, Checkmate Government Relations  
Members of the Press

**1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Colvin called the meeting to order.

**2.0 INVOCATION**

The invocation was offered by Council Member Greene.

**3.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was led by the City Council.

**4.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Council Member Greene moved to approve the agenda.

**SECOND:** Council Member Benavente

**VOTE:** UNANIMOUS (8-0)

## **5.0 ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

### **5.1 Welcome and Introductions**

Mayor Colvin thanked the Cumberland County State Delegation for attending the meeting and acknowledged elected officials in attendance. Representative Wheatley thanked the City for allowing the delegation to come and hear all of the needs of the community. The Cumberland County Delegation and Fayetteville City Council introduced themselves.

### **5.2 Discussion of City of Fayetteville's State Legislative Agenda with North Carolina Delegation**

Mayor Colvin stated over the year many great things have been accomplished in the City and County. A short video was presented displaying various accomplishments of the City of Fayetteville over the past year.

#### Infrastructure & Transportation

##### Airport:

The City is proud of the progress that has been made at the airport. The City Council recently approved for the first time ever out of general fund a \$400,000.00 incentive to attract and expand airline presence. Staff are working diligently to gain connections to the D.C. area and there have been several inquiries of interest from.

Discussion ensued.

Representative Smith asked if the issue is regulatory or funding. Mr. Deonte Watson, Assistant Airport Director, stated the concerns are regulatory to make it less restrictive for grants for capital projects and the Airport Improvement Projects regulations.

##### Public Transportation:

Discussion ensued regarding the City's continued expansion and investment in transportation. This includes connecting the western part of the City through the new express route, possible expansion into Hope Mills and Spring Lake, and expanding passenger rail connectivity between Fayetteville and Raleigh.

##### Infrastructure:

There are various needs for dam infrastructure and Cape Fear River trail extensions. The City wants to be proactive in making repairs and maintenance that will help protect the community and future infrastructure. Mr. Douglas J. Hewett, City Manager, stated the City Council recently authorized to move forward with the Cape Fear River Park and Veterans Park II. Both of those are in water-sensitive areas but progress will start very soon. Representative Smith requested a copy of the Pedestrian Safety study.

Discussion ensued.

#### Housing and Community Development

##### Affordable & Workforce Housing:

Mayor Colvin stated everywhere in America is dealing with the housing crisis, but it is exacerbated here in Fayetteville. For affordable workforce housing, most of the Federal programs target low to moderate income meaning the people in the middle are the ones that are affected and are forced into a rental market because they cannot afford the downpayment. The City approved a Housing Bond to create a program to assist residents with down payments.

Discussion ensued.

## Public Safety

### Ghost Guns:

Mayor Colvin stated the City Council passed a resolution on Ghost Gun Regulation and requested the support of the delegation on the regulation of those weapons.

### Recruitment and Retention:

The City stepped up and raised the pay scale to be competitive for recruitment and those that have been here for years are compensated for their commitment. As the City continues to fill positions in public safety, the ask is to be considered for any funds or grants available for public safety to continue to make the community safer.

### Firefighters:

Firefighters are a valued part of the City and want to ensure they are taken care of with the continuation of the North Carolina Firefighter Cancer Benefit Program beyond 2025.

### Office of Community Safety:

Mayor Colvin stated the City has created a new department that incorporates both law enforcement and non-law enforcement responses that proactively help address crime and the overall safety of the community to deal with mental and behavioral health issues that often intertwine with crime. Council member Benavente stated there are dozens of connection points for juveniles that intervention could have occurred before their first experience with law enforcement. When it comes to issues of mental health and addiction, non-law enforcement groups should be able to address these issues instead of police officers.

Discussion ensued.

## Quality of Life & Economic Development

### I-685 Connectivity:

Mayor Colvin stated connectivity of I-685, there is a regional approach, and a group has put together a lobbying effort to ensure Fayetteville is included in the discussions and asked for the delegation to champion having Fayetteville included.

### Sewer/Water Extension:

Sewer/Water extension drives economic development. The City is working with PWC to complete installation of utilities in the western part of the City. The state has previously given grants to communities to incentivize connections. One of the issues PWC has relayed regarding the slow installation process is due to the cost associated with connection; there is a need to help offset the cost of connection, to help PWC expedite connections.

### Blight Removal:

Blight removal and demolition have been aggressive to help clean up corridors. The City offers grants in certain circumstances for those who are willing to comply with demolition of blighted properties.

### Tax Allocation:

Discussion ensued regarding sales and hotel/alcohol tax.

## **6.0 ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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JENNIFER L. AYRE  
City Clerk  
020625

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MITCH COLVIN  
Mayor