



**Town of Clayton
Town Council Council Retreat Day 1 Minutes
Wednesday, February 25, 2026 at 8:30 AM
Clayton Police Department Training Room
315 E. Second Street**

Council Present:

Mayor McLeod
Mayor Pro Tem Andria Archer*
**Joined remotely from
10:35 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.*
Council Member Ruth Anderson
Council Member Porter Casey
Council Member Amanda Underwood
Council Member Gretchen Williams

Council Absent:

Staff Present:

Rich Cappola, Town Manager
Jim Cauley, Town Attorney
Heidi Holland, Town Clerk
Dolores Gill, Chief of Staff and Strategic Initiatives
Lee Barbee, Deputy Town Manager
Greg Tart, Police Chief
David Ranes, Fire Chief
Robert McKie, Finance Director
Nathanael Shelton, Communication Director
Joe Stallings, Economic Development Director
Richard Livingston, Utility Analyst
Tim Robbins, Public Works Director
Todd Melton, Budget Manager
Michelle Snyder, Assistant to the Town Manager
Chris Gallant, Capital Program Manager
Emily Denison, Administrative Support Assistant
Todd Riddick, Parks and Recreation Director
Shannon Poole, Project Controls Specialist

1. BREAKFAST AND MORNING CHECK-IN

a. 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.

2. CALL TO ORDER

a. 9:00 a.m.
Call To Order

Mayor McLeod called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

3. WELCOME

a. 9:00 - 9:10 a.m.
Welcome/Meeting Materials Overview
Presenter:
Rich Cappola, Town Manager

Mr. Cappola stated Mayor Pro Tem Archer is in Boston and has not been able to fly out due to the snowstorm. She would not be able to join us in person but hoped to be able to join virtually later today and return in person tomorrow. Meeting norms were discussed and a timeline of the agenda was shared.

4. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- a. 9:10 - 9:40 a.m.
Setting the Stage for Decision Making
- Decision Matrix
 - Decision Making Styles Activity

Presenter:

Dolores Gill, Chief of Staff and Strategic Initiatives

Ms. Gill stated this retreat would be intense and fast-paced. Tomorrow would involve asking for a lot of input and decision making from Council.

She stated a couple of years ago at a retreat, we did the True Colors Assessment, which is a fun way to discover how one makes decisions. She stated Council received a book at the last meeting to take the assessment. Handouts on how to communicate using your true color assessment color were distributed and all were divided into groups to discuss their results.

Decision making matrix sheets were distributed to Council. She stated this is important as we go through the agenda today and tomorrow, Council would see what staff is asking them to consider. There is a note section, outcome section, and a new focus area section which refers to the 7 key focus areas in the Strategic Plan.

- b. 9:40 - 10:30 a.m.
Strategic Planning: Reflections and Progress

Presenters:

Dolores Gill, Chief of Staff and Strategic Initiatives
Lee Barbee, Deputy Town Manager

Ms. Gill stated the Strategic Plan forces us to be proactive and think about our vision for the future. Discussion on this topic would include a quick update, revisit the vision, mission, values, and discuss the 7 key focus areas.

There would be quarterly updates provided to Council on strategic highlights. In April, Ms. Gill would meet with all the Town's Advisory Boards to provide updates on the strategic planning. She stated Department Heads are wrapping up their 2025 goals and initiating their 2026 goals.

She asked Council to read the Vision Statement (A welcoming and engaged community that cherishes its charming local character and promotes economic vitality, environmental stewardship, safety, and opportunities for all.) and discuss if they still think our vision is still inclusive and reflective of our community. She asked Council to read the Mission Statement (Dedicated and responsive public servants who provide essential services that bring people together and promote quality of life in the Clayton Community.) and ask what word resonates with them the most. Regarding our values (responsibility, community, commitment, respect), she asked if we are still reflective of who we are today. There was group discussion on this.

She spoke on the 7 key focus areas in the Strategic Plan. She divided all into groups to discuss their thoughts on whether these areas are still headed in the right direction. There was group discussion on this.

Richard Livingston provided Council with a handout of things that are underway and that have been delivered at the Operations Center.

He stated these past 2 storms were the first time staff could really implement an Incident Command System (ICS). Being prepared with this in place really strengthened response times. During those two incidents, there were 12-hour shifts providing 24-hour service and 550 lane miles treated and plowed. No water and power outages were reported.

Shared were statistics that have been completed and what is to come.

What has been delivered included:

Water Resources

NPDES Permit Renewal
24 Hour staffing @ WRF
Water & Sewer Replacement Projects
New and Extended Bulk Agreements
2 Nitrogen Purchases
Country Lane Pump Station Upsizing Agreement
Sam's Branch Phase 2 Prelim. Eng. Report
Completed Total Dissolved Solids Study

Operations

Implemented centralized warehouse and inventory control
Standardized procedures to improve readiness and consistency
Enhanced emergency communications and coordination (NIMS/ICS implementation)
Improved the damage reimbursement process and tracking (\$75k collected to date)

Public Works

Delivered a stabilized paving program to improve roadway conditions
Launched an active street sweeping program
Completed trails and public space improvements enhancing walkability and recreation
Improved fleet fueling and maintenance practices to support daily operations

Electric

Completed targeted electric reliability upgrades
Improved system monitoring and operational readiness (OMS)
Advanced planning to support growth and load management (Clayton Blvd. Ext.)

Projects underway included:

Water Resources

Ongoing system maintenance and replacement planning
Enhanced SCADA coordination and security to protect critical infrastructure
Completion of Sam's Branch WRF Phase 1

Operations

Facility planning and readiness initiatives
Modernized service request processes to improve responsiveness
Focus on fleet and equipment readiness
Continued rollout of standardized processes, metrics, and performance tracking

Public Works

ADA and sidewalk improvements to enhance accessibility and safety
Continued focus on facility readiness and operational space optimization

Electric

Electric system planning to support growth, reliability, and resilience
Continued coordination across operations and engineering functions

5. BREAK

- a. 10:30 - 10:35 a.m.

6. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- a. 10:35 - 11:45 a.m.

Parks and Recreation: Programming and Facility Updates

- Review of Multigenerational Programming Research and Recommendations
- Clayton Fitness Property Acquisition and Next Steps

Presenter:

Todd Riddick, Parks and Recreation Director

Mr. Riddick provided an update on programming and facility.

The Town recently purchased 1370 Cameron Way (Clayton Fitness Center) with the goal of converting it into a community center for all ages. The planning stage has begun, and would include discussion on staffing, operation and hours, and potential programming/partnerships. The budget has been submitted for this facility.

He stated the Town has worked with Sara Burroughs with SageDesign on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which was adopted November 2024. Included in the plan were survey response highlights which included: new facilities to meet current demand, demand for additional indoor space, provide intergenerational features, create connections and develop sense of community, promote health and wellness, and senior and intergenerational programs.

At the open house held for citizens' input of this plan, information was gathered on space needs and demands. Shared were the goals of this project. He stated this would still be a community center for all ages, so the spaces need to be flexible enough to hold classes for anyone. The potential spaces at Clayton Fitness would allow for larger classes if many of the current classes were moved to this location. Space is needed for more of our current offerings such as fitness, social groups/classes, community meetings and for classes we don't have now but need similar space. Space is also needed for older adult classes and socialization. The goal is to have a space as a "senior room", senior-focused classes would be held in other spaces in the building as well.

A rendering of a conceptual design for the front of the building was shared, which included sliding doors to improve accessibility. Ideas for the front desk reception area were also presented, including a lower reception desk to create a more open and welcoming environment. Concepts for the lobby and passive gathering space were discussed, with an emphasis on creating an open, inviting, and comfortable area for visitors.

Additional ideas included incorporating a demonstration kitchen, classroom space, and office areas. He also discussed the potential for a large multi-purpose room that could be rented for meetings and used for various programs. Plans for a fitness classroom with dedicated storage were presented, along with a flexible space that could accommodate future fitness expansion or additional storage needs.

The current locker room is a good size; the existing lockers would be auctioned off. There is a need to have babies and adults changing stations, but showers are not suggested. Accessible restrooms are necessary and possibly private restrooms.

There is a small inclusion space that would fit about 4 people; this could be a “chill/calm room” playing soft music for a child that may be overwhelmed. He stated this would also be a good space for an office but not big enough for programming.

There is currently a racquetball court that needs an update on the acoustics. If it did not remain a racquetball court, it could be turned into a climbing wall for kids, a small cycle room, or a golf simulator.

Right now, the court in the gym is small with a basketball goal on one side, it would not accommodate youth basketball games. There are pickleball lines, but they do not meet any safety standards.

There was discussion on a name for the facility. A poll was conducted with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and staff and the top three names were:

- Clayton Multipurpose Center (or Multigenerational)
- Clayton Active Living and Wellness Center
- Clayton Connect

Mayor McLeod stated he likes the word “Active” because it plays into our “*Premier Community for Active Families*” tagline.

Ms. Gill stated once we land on a name, we would add temporary signs, so citizens can see activity.

It was Consensus of Council to have the word Active in the title.

Mr. Gallant stated an architect has been selected and has walked the space. They have provided a proposal for pre-design, so we are ready to go.

Next steps would be to provide Council with information on architectural work. Mr. Cappola asked Council if the brick pillars in the front of the building could be removed; it was consensus of Council to remove them. Mr. Cappola confirmed there would be some type of covered area in the front.

It was consensus of Council for the name to be Clayton Active Center.

Mr. Gallant stated he would get all this feedback and get test fits for the site and building. He would bring those back to Council so we could get started on true design.

Ms. Gill asked Council to include any feedback on their decision making matrix.

- b. 11:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Downtown Mobility Projects Updates
Presenter:
Shannon Poole, Project Controls Specialist

Ms. Poole provided an update on the Downtown Mobility Projects.

E. Main St. Sidewalk Connector (BL-0050) project involves extending the sidewalk on both sides along East Main Street and Clayton Boulevard to E. 2nd Street. Council should have an update on the construction by the fall retreat. 100% of the design drawings are complete as well as the right-of-way acquisitions and NCDOT right-of-way certifications. This would be advertised in July for construction bids.

She stated there is a wireline agreement between NCDOT and NCRR for the wireline adjustment at Central and Main Street that is still in negotiation. Construction cannot begin until we receive the utility certification from NCRR.

E. Main St Public Parking Lot project involves creating a public parking lot on an existing empty lot along the railroad corridor. A total of 18 spaces is expected. Design drawings have been completed and currently NCRR is review design.

Main St Pedestrian Improvements (BL-0125) project involves improving targeted intersections and mid-block crossing for pedestrian safety along Main Street from Robertson to Smith Street. A stakeholder meeting was held with great attendance from downtown businesses. This is only a concept plan at this time. Staff expects to have 25% of design completed in the next few weeks.

Downtown Parking & Utilization Study is a complete data-driven Downtown Parking Inventory and Utilization Study. The Town's last comprehensive parking study was completed in 2007 which showed the Town did not have a parking problem. Having a new study completed would help us out and show us where the utilization is.

She stated there are three ways to collect data for this study; aerial, manual, and camera analysis collection. This data would be able to tell us where the hot spots are.

Mr. Gallant stated there are two pieces to this in-depth study; the count - how many public and loading zones are, and utilization - which collects hourly data on certain days. This study would be in Phase 1 which will tell us if we have a parking problem. The results of the study would come to Council at a future work session.

Clayton Connector Robertson St Sidewalk (HL-0129) project involves extending the sidewalk and multi-use pathway along a portion of Amelia Church Road, S. Robertson Street, and Main Street. 65% of the design plan has been completed and is under review with NCDOT. There was discussion on possibly being able to incorporate water and sewer line replacement into this project.

Chief Tart stated when Clayton High School renovation is completed, the front of the school would face Robertson Street and all the pedestrian traffic now on Fayetteville Street would

offset to Robertson Street. It's crucial for this project to be completed by the end of the renovation. Ms. Poole stated funding for design and right-of-way has been approved.

First Street Roadway and Parking Improvements project involves creating approximately 40 parking spaces along First Street and reconstructing the street to be an asphalt pavement surface. With this project being in the railroad right-of-way, it involves close coordination and approval. A concept plan has been created and reviewed by NCRR in December 2025.

NCRR Pilot Program Grant – Railroad Safety is a project that would focus on installing protective measures at high-priority commercial and pedestrian areas to reduce the risk of collisions and enhance safety for motorists and pedestrians. The Town is seeking grant funding from NCRR to improve the safety along the railroad corridor downtown. The grant request has been submitted and is under NCRR submittal review. There was discussion of turn-over with staff at NCRR and the possibility this program may not move forward.

7. LUNCH

- a. 12:30 - 1:00 p.m.

8. TRAVEL TO ADAPTIVE REUSE SITES

- a. 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Council will travel to Wake Forest, NC to visit two types of adaptive reuse projects

Mayor McLeod, Council Member Anderson, Council Member Underwood, Council Member Casey, Council Member Williams, Tim Robbins, Chief Raney, Michelle Snyder, Heidi Holland, Tim Robbins, Robert McKie, and Rich Cappola traveled to Wake Forest to tour two adaptive reuse projects.

9. TOUR OF SITES

- a. 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Tour of Sites

Presenter:

Joe Stallings, Economic Development Director

Council and staff toured 535 Warehouse at 535 S. White Street and The Loading Dock at 525 S. White Street in Wake Forest. 535 Warehouse is an adaptive-reuse redevelopment project on South White Street in Downtown Wake Forest, led by Raleigh-based developer Atlas Stark. The 16,200-sq-ft building, originally the Welsh Warehouse, was built in 1962. The project is positioned to help catalyze growth in the south end of downtown. The Loading Dock is a renovated warehouse turned flexible coworking and community hub, located in Downtown Wake Forest. The space offers a blend of modern work amenities and community-focused gathering areas, serving remote workers, small businesses, and growing teams.

10. TRAVEL BACK TO TOWN OF CLAYTON

- a. 4:00 - 4:50 p.m.

Council and staff traveled back to Clayton.

11. ADJOURNMENT

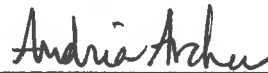
- a. Adjourn

With nothing further, the meeting was adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

Motion To Adjourn

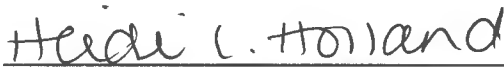
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| Result: | Passed 4-0 |
| Mover: | Ruth Anderson |
| Second: | Gretchen Williams |
| Yes: | Ruth Anderson, Porter Casey, Amanda Underwood, Gretchen Williams |
| No: | None |
| Absent: | Andria Archer |

Duly Adopted by the Town Council on Monday, March 16, 2026 while in regular session.



Andria Archer
Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:



Heidi L. Holland, MMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk

