



**Town of Clayton  
Town Council Work Session Minutes  
Monday, May 4, 2026 at 12:00 PM  
Council Chambers, Town Hall  
111 E. Second Street**

Pursuant to N.C. General Statute § 143-318.10(e), these minutes provide a general summary of the Town Council meeting and do not represent a verbatim transcript. A complete video recording of this meeting is available for public access on the Town of Clayton's official YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/TownofClaytonNC>.

**Council Present:**

Mayor Jody McLeod  
Mayor Pro Tem Andria Archer  
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  
Todd Melton, Budget Manager  
Jason Newman, Maintenance Superintendent  
Shane Thurst, Utility Maintenance Mechanic  
Ryan Keefer, Utility Maintenance Mechanic I  
Hayden Probst, Utility Maintenance Mechanic I  
Randy Lee, Instrumentation Control/Pump Technician  
Barry Alston, Inspections Director  
Desire Coira, Building Inspector Level I  
Joshua Baird, Water Resources Director  
Sharon Weisbeck, Business Analyst, ERP  
Josh Propst, Communication Specialist II

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

- a. Call To Order

Mayor McLeod called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

**2. ADJUSTMENT OF THE AGENDA**

- a. Adopt or Adjust the Agenda

**Adoption of Agenda as Presented**

<b>Result:</b>	<b>Passed 5-0</b>
<b>Mover:</b>	Andria Archer
<b>Secunder:</b>	Ruth Anderson

<b>Yes:</b>	Andria Archer, Ruth Anderson, Porter Casey, Amanda Underwood, Gretchen Williams
<b>No:</b>	None
<b>Absent:</b>	

### 3. STAFF INTRODUCTIONS AND RECOGNITIONS

- a. 12:00 - 12:15 p.m.  
 Shane Thurst, Water Resources Field Supervisor Training Program  
 Ryan Keefer, Utility Maintenance Mechanic I  
 Hayden Probst, Utility Maintenance Mechanic I  
 Randy Lee, Instrumentation Control/Pump Technician  
**Presenter:**  
 Jason Newman, Maintenance Superintendent

Mr. Newman introduced his team's new employees and provided an overview of their backgrounds.

- b. Todd Melton, Municipal and County Administration (MCA)  
 Joshua Baird, MPA (Master of Public Administration)  
**Presenter:**  
 Rich Cappola, Town Manager

Mr. Cappola recognized Mr. Melton who recently graduated from the UNC School of Government's Municipal and County Administration program. He also recognized Mr. Baird for receiving his Master of Public Administration degree.

- c. Desire Coira, Building Inspector Level 1  
**Presenter:**  
 Barry Alston, Inspections Director

Mr. Alston recognized Desire Coira who recently received her Building Inspector Level 1.

### 4. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- a. 12:15 - 12:30 p.m.  
 ERP Update  
**Presenter:**  
 Sharon Weisbeck, Business Analyst, ERP

Mr. Cappola introduced Sharon Weisbeck, Business Analyst for the Town's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, to provide a project update. Ms. Weisbeck has been dedicated to the project full-time over the past several months, Mr. Cappola commended the significant progress made.

Ms. Weisbeck reported staff have been working closely with BerryDunn, a contracted consultant, to develop a comprehensive and well-defined Request for Proposals (RFP) for the ERP system. As part of this process, the consultant team evaluated the Town's current system, documented key business processes, and identified functional requirements to support the RFP development.

Ms. Weisbeck explained that five options were initially considered, with Options 2 and 5

identified as the best fits for operational needs. The Town selected Option 5, which utilizes a phased procurement approach to better manage risk, workload, and organizational change.

Ms. Weisbeck reported Phase 1 of the RFP has been completed and was released to vendors on Friday. Vendor proposals are due by June 12. Staff anticipate completing proposal evaluations, scoring, and vendor demonstrations, with a targeted vendor selection by mid-September.

Following Phase 1, the Town plans to proceed with Phase 2, which would be developed based on the selected vendor's solution. Phase 2 would focus on identifying required integrations, including APIs and system interfaces, to ensure an efficient and cohesive system with minimal workarounds. The goal is to release the Phase 2 RFP in mid- to late September, with a vendor selection anticipated by February.

- b. 12:30 - 12:50 p.m.  
Website Redesign and ADA Implications  
**Presenter:**  
Nathanael Shelton, Communication Director

Mr. Shelton presented an update on the Town's website redesign and related ADA accessibility requirements.

He explained the website redesign is part of the Town's contract, which included a user experience refresh every four years. The update also provides an opportunity to improve website accessibility and enhance overall community engagement.

Mr. Shelton introduced Josh Propst, Digital Communications Specialist, who provided additional details on the project. Mr. Propst stated staff began the process by gathering input from both the community and Town staff through surveys and focus groups. Feedback identified several key areas for improvement, including more frequent news updates, a more user-friendly homepage, improved navigation and organization, enhanced event information, and a better mobile experience.

Mr. Propst outlined planned design updates, including revised navigation, improved color contrast to meet upcoming accessibility standards, enhanced search functionality, updated news and announcement sections, and expanded visibility of events and transparency resources on the homepage. He also noted efforts to simplify navigation by reorganizing content and eliminating redundant sections.

Additional improvements include a more consistent, button-based layout for landing pages, updated interior page designs with improved headers and navigation, enhanced mobile functionality, and ongoing search engine optimization (SEO) efforts. He highlighted new tools such as address-based search functions for services like waste collection and expanded event page details.

Mr. Propst reported the project is currently in the design approval phase, with final approval anticipated by mid-May, followed by department-specific updates. The website launch is expected in late July or early August, pending completion of all components.

The presentation also addressed ADA accessibility requirements. The Town is currently compliant with WCAG 2.1 standards and is working toward meeting the more robust WCAG 2.2

standards. The compliance deadline has been extended to 2028. The accessibility requirements apply not only to the website but also to documents, forms, social media, multimedia, and third-party platforms.

Mr. Propst outlined key accessibility principles, including improved color contrast, clear content structure, mobile compatibility, keyboard accessibility, and the use of alternative text. He stated accessibility efforts are intended to ensure equitable access to information for all residents.

Shared was a three-phase approach to implementation: foundational improvements and monitoring; infrastructure enhancements and tooling; and ongoing staff training, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

Council Member Casey expressed appreciation for the presentation and emphasized the importance of staff training, including opportunities to assist residents who may be less familiar with technology.

## **5. BREAK**

- a. 12:50 - 1:00 p.m.

No break was taken during this period.

## **6. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

- a. 1:00 - 3:30 p.m.  
FY27 Budget Presentation  
**Presenter:**  
Todd Melton, Budget Manager

Mr. Melton provided a follow-up presentation to the April budget work session, stating the proposed budget is now balanced across all funds. The presentation outlined current conditions, key assumptions, and strategies used to achieve balance.

He reported initial departmental requests exceeded \$11 million across more than 160 submissions, resulting in a budget shortfall. External pressures included changes to Johnston County fire district funding, a 2.4% State Health Plan surcharge, and broader economic concerns such as inflation and rising fuel costs. Since that time, revenue projections have been refined, and departmental requests have been prioritized, adjusted, deferred, or phased as necessary.

As presented, the General Fund, Water and Sewer Fund, and Electric Fund are all balanced. Of the 36 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions requested, 18 are recommended for approval. The total proposed budget across all funds is approximately \$140 million.

He provided an overview of revenue sources, noting that property and sales taxes account for approximately 66% of total revenues. Additional revenues include interest income, permits and fees, and limited use of fund balance for debt service associated with a recently issued bond.

The General Fund budget totals approximately \$63.2 million and is balanced with no recommended tax increase. The proposal includes a 3% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), slightly below the statewide average. Of 31 positions requested, 16 are recommended. He stated the projected revenue growth of approximately \$6 million required offsetting more than

\$10 million in requests through various balancing strategies.

The budget included adjustments to fire department compensation practices. Specifically, it is recommended moving from a 28-day to a 14-day overtime calculation cycle to improve clarity and alignment with payroll periods. The change is estimated to have an annual budget impact of approximately \$50,000. Additionally, a 15-minute shift overlap is proposed to allow for proper transfer of equipment and information between shifts, addressing operational and compliance needs. This component is estimated at approximately \$20,000 annually.

The Water and Sewer Fund budget totals approximately \$54 million and is balanced with one recommended FTE. A combined 9% rate increase is proposed, primarily driven by increases in wholesale water costs from Johnston County (approximately 10.1%) and preparation for future capital needs related to water supply. Revenues are projected to exceed expenditures, allowing for increased reserves and improved financial planning for future infrastructure.

The Electric Fund budget totals approximately \$23 million and is balanced with one recommended FTE. A 2.5% rate increase is proposed, which is below the projected wholesale power cost increases of approximately 4–4.5%. The Town would absorb a portion of these increased costs to limit the impact on customers. Mr. Melton also highlighted a planned generator project to support peak load management, which is expected to reduce long-term purchased power costs.

Solid waste operations, while part of the General Fund, are managed with a cost-recovery approach. He stated a \$2 monthly increase in residential solid waste fees (from \$24 to \$26) and adjustments to additional cart fees is being recommended. The increase is necessary to offset rising contractual costs, including fuel surcharge impacts, and to restore full cost recovery. He stated the Town remains competitively priced compared to peer communities.

Mr. Melton stated the budget would be presented as the Manager's Recommended Budget at the June 18th meeting, along with the required public hearing and a comprehensive fee schedule. The budget must be adopted by June 30 in accordance with state law, with a target adoption date of June 1.

Council members discussed rate increases, staffing levels, and public communication. Clarification was provided regarding the drivers behind utility rate adjustments, particularly wholesale cost increases. Council emphasized the importance of public outreach ahead of the budget hearing, including use of multiple communication channels.

Mr. Melton addressed questions regarding vacancies, noting approximately 13 current vacancies townwide, and discussed strategies for recruitment and workforce planning. Additional discussion included long-term cost pressures related to the State Health Plan and ongoing efforts to monitor and plan for future increases.

## **7. BREAK**

a. 3:30 - 3:35 p.m.

This break was held from 1:48 - 2:04 p.m.

## 8. CLOSED SESSION

a. 3:35 - 5:00 p.m.

To Discuss a Legal Matter in Accordance with NC GS 143-318.11(a)(3)

To Discuss a Personnel Matter in Accordance with NC GS 143-318.11(a)(6)

### Motion To Go Into Closed Session

<b>Result:</b>	<b>Passed 5-0</b>
<b>Mover:</b>	Ruth Anderson
<b>Second:</b>	Gretchen Williams
<b>Yes:</b>	Andria Archer, Ruth Anderson, Porter Casey, Amanda Underwood, Gretchen Williams
<b>No:</b>	None
<b>Absent:</b>	

### Motion To Return To Open Session

<b>Result:</b>	<b>Passed 5-0</b>
<b>Mover:</b>	Porter Casey
<b>Second:</b>	Gretchen Williams
<b>Yes:</b>	Andria Archer, Ruth Anderson, Porter Casey, Amanda Underwood, Gretchen Williams
<b>No:</b>	None
<b>Absent:</b>	

## 9. ADJOURNMENT

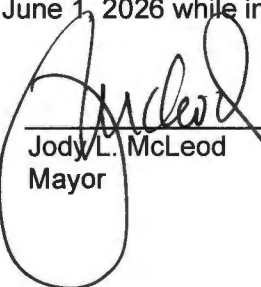
a. Adjourn

With nothing further, the meeting was adjourned at 3:18 p.m.

### Motion To Adjourn

<b>Result:</b>	<b>Passed 5-0</b>
<b>Mover:</b>	Porter Casey
<b>Second:</b>	Gretchen Williams
<b>Yes:</b>	Andria Archer, Ruth Anderson, Porter Casey, Amanda Underwood, Gretchen Williams
<b>No:</b>	None
<b>Absent:</b>	

Duly Adopted by the Town Council on Monday, June 1, 2026 while in regular session.

  
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Jody L. McLeod  
Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
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Heidi L. Holland, MMC, NCCMC  
Town Clerk

