



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

Town Council

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Town Hall
405 Martin Luther King Jr.
Boulevard
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Mayor Jessica Anderson
Mayor pro tem Amy Ryan
Council Member Camille Berry
Council Member Melissa McCullough
Council Member Paris Miller-Foushee

Council Member Theodore Nollert
Council Member Adam Searing
Council Member Elizabeth Sharp
Council Member Karen Stegman

Wednesday, February 26, 2025 6:00 PM The Junction | 136 E. Rosemary St

Language Access Statement

For interpretation or translation services, call 919-969-5105.

ဘာသာပြန်ဆိုခြင်းနှင့် စကားပြန်ခြင်းအတွက် (၉၁၉) ၉၆၉-၅၁၀၅ ကို ဖုန်းခေါ်ပါ။

Para servicios de interpretación o traducción, llame al 919-969-5105.

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如需口头或
书面翻译服
务，请拨打
919-969-5105.

Meeting Logistics

Parking and Entry

- See <http://www.parkonthehill.com> for other public lots on Rosemary Street
- Entrance from Rosemary Street on the ground floor.
- Rm 50-51 is up the stairs and to the far left

ROLL CALL

Present: 9 - Mayor Jessica Anderson, Mayor pro tem Amy Ryan, Council Member Camille Berry, Council Member Paris Miller-Foushee, Council Member Adam Searing, Council Member Karen Stegman, Council Member Theodore Nollert, Council Member Melissa McCullough, and Council Member Elizabeth Sharp

OTHER ATTENDEES

Interim Town Manager Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Deputy Town Manager Loryn Clark, Town Attorney Ann Anderson, Town Clerk Brittney Hunt, Deputy Town Clerk Amy Harvey, and Chief of Staff Jeanne Brown.

AGENDA ITEMS

Town Council

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Mayor Jess Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. and introduced Dr. Kim Nelson and Dr. Carl Steinberg from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's School of Government.

Interim Town Manager Mary Jane Nirdlinger introduced new Town Clerk, Brittney Hunt.

Council Member Adam Searing arrived at 6:36pm.

1. Council/Manager form of government Principles

[\[25-0095\]](#)

- Working together: roles and responsibilities
- Best Practices for High-Performing Boards
- Clarifying Roles and Expectations & Survey Results

Dr. Kim Nelson stated the main goals were to understand the council-manager form of government, strengthen council's effectiveness as a governing team, and review the council meeting logistics.

Council members introduced themselves and shared their interests of the retreat to set clear roles and responsibilities, improve communication, ensure transparency, and define goals for their work sessions.

Dr. Nelson and Dr. Stenberg explained Council-Manager form of government, emphasizing the balance of decision-making between policy and implementation, the importance of collaboration and differing perspectives, and the need for high-performing boards to foster community trust and work effectively with staff.

Dr. Nelson and Dr. Stenberg compared the roles and responsibilities in the Council-Manager form of government. They noted that the mayor's role includes presiding over Council meetings, calling special meetings, and acts with the powers conferred by the Council. The Council is responsible for governing and overseeing municipal management, conferring power to the mayor and its employees, and appointing and dismissing the manager and attorney. The Manager's duties involve preparing the agenda in consultation with the Council, hiring and firing employees, enforcing municipal and state laws, preparing and submitting the annual budget, reporting on financial and administrative activities, and performing other duties as required or authorized by the Council.

The Council recessed at 7:29 p.m. and returned at 7:36 p.m.

The Council and facilitators discussed accountability and self-assessment, focusing on the annual performance reviews for the manager and attorney. These reviews aim to clearly communicate and realign expectations, address how the manager interacts with the mayor and the public, and emphasize the importance of aligning on key areas while exploring and understanding areas of disagreement.

Dr. Nelson and Dr. Stenberg reviewed the results of the Governing Board Quick Scan survey with the Council, highlighting common themes and responses that may have been surprising. The Council then discussed these responses and provided additional clarification.

2. Discussion about Rolling Agenda

[\[25-0094\]](#)

Interim Town Manager Mary Jane Nirdlinger and Deputy Manager Loryn Clark described the process for preparing for council meetings and inquired about changes to the process. Council members agreed the following met the expectations:

- Providing meeting materials six days before the meeting, with a caveat that staff could adjust as needed.
- Council questions with staff responses via email
- Manager's weekly updates
- Work session format limited to one or two items and discussion-oriented
- Clear interests when making requests to staff
- Guiding balance between Council policy vs. staff implementation
- Council should aim for a majority decisions rather than consensus and operate through formal procedures rather than cultural norms.
- Add policy column to rolling agenda to clarify the critical path in all items
- Add an item for council input on future desired items
- Informational packets for items that do not need discussion or have complex content
- Logistical conversations between Mayor and manager, but not unbalanced information
- New format and process on upcoming agendas and minutes

The Mayor and Council requested the following outcomes from the retreat:

- Facilitated conversation for the mayor's role and actions.
- Clarify expectations and responsibilities for the mayor, council, and manager through the manager's hiring process.
- Build a team mentality and mutual respect.
- Consider a code of conduct (not enforceable) and develop, as needed.
- Improve information formats for council members to quickly understand project measures, public engagement and clarity in public meetings.
- Set clear goals and consider a regular discussion item to vet future discussions.
- Set a regular schedule for meetings and work sessions.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.