



**Town Council**  
**Meeting Minutes - Draft**  
**April 29, 2026, 6:00 PM**  
**RM 110 | Council Chamber**

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

ဘာသာပြန်ဆိုခြင်းနှင့် စကားပြန်ခြင်းအတွက် (၉၁၉) ၉၆၉ ၅၁၀၅ ကိုဖုန်းခေါ်ပါ။

如需口头或书面翻译服务，请拨打 919-969-5105。

လၢတၢ်ကတိၤကျိၤထံ မ့တ မ့ၢ် လၢတၢ်ကွၢ်ကျိၤထံအ တၢ်မၤစၢၤအဂီၢ် ကိးဘၣ် ၉၁၉-၉၆၉ ၅၁၀၅

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

**WELCOME to a COUNCIL MEETING!**

We're glad you're here. Want to know more about the meeting logistics, see <https://www.chapelhillnc.gov/Welcome-to-a-Council-meeting>

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** 9 - Mayor Jessica Anderson, Mayor pro tem Camille Berry, Council Member Wesley McMahon, Council Member Melissa McCullough, Council Member Paris Miller-Foushee, Council Member Theodore Nollert, Council Member Louie Rivers, Council Member Amy Ryan, and Council Member Elizabeth Sharp

**OTHER ATTENDEES**

Town Manager Theodore Voorhees, Deputy Town Manager Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Deputy Town Manager Loryn Clark, Assistant Town Attorney James Baker, Planning Director Britany Waddell, Long-Range Planning Manager Tas Lagoo, Transportation Manager Bergen Watterson, Economic Development Director David Putnam, Police Captain Johnnie Britt, Fire Marshal Tony Massey, Assistant Town Clerk Matt DeBellis, and Deputy Town Clerk Amy Harvey.

**OPENING**

Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**1. Proclamation: Bike Month**

Council proclaimed May 2026 as Bike Month in the Town of Chapel Hill. Council Member Rivers invited members of Shift Chapel Hill-Carrboro to the podium for the proclamation and group photo. The proclamation highlighted the benefits of biking for health, the local economy, and the environment, and emphasized the Town's ongoing investments in safer, more connected bike lanes and greenways. Community members were invited to participate in Bike and Roll to School Day on May 6 and Bike to Work Week from May 11-17, with encouragement to ride more and drive less throughout the year.

**2. Proclamation: Small Business Week**

Council proclaimed May 3-9, 2026 as Small Business Week in the Town of Chapel Hill. Council Member Sharp invited Economic Development Director David Putnam, and representatives from local business including Growler Grlz and Olmaz Jewelers to the podium for the proclamation and group photo. The Council recognized the vital role of small businesses in creating jobs, fostering innovation, and shaping the community's character. Community members and visitors were encouraged to support local businesses during Small Business Week and throughout the year.

**3. Proclamation: Period Poverty Awareness Week**

Council proclaimed May 11-17, 2026 as Period Poverty Awareness Week in the Town of Chapel Hill. Council Member Ryan invited Madison Lewis from the Diaper Bank of North Carolina to the podium for the proclamation and group photo. The Council acknowledged the challenges faced by individuals who struggle to afford menstrual products and recognized the efforts of local organizations working to address this need. The proclamation encouraged community support for local initiatives to ensure all residents have access to essential supplies.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**3.1 Mayor Jessica Anderson**

Mayor Anderson shared announcements including the conclusion of Poetry Month with a Library event, the temporary closure of pickleball courts at Ephesus Park for resurfacing, and the launch of the community survey. She also reminded the public of the upcoming May 6, 2026 Council meeting, where the Town Manager would present the recommended budget.

**3.2 Council Member Nollert**

Council Member Nollert encouraged advocacy for the Workforce Housing Loan program and raised concerns about recent Medicaid rebase provisions.

**3.3 Council Member McMahon**

Council Member McMahon requested that the Planning Commission be allowed to meet in-person at Town Hall to review the LUMO and receive training. Council members discussed the value of in-person meetings for public engagement and affirmed their commitment to supporting the Planning Commission's work.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*The Public Comment Period allows the public to address Council on items not on the printed agenda. To speak, please sign in at the Clerk's desk with your name and email. When called, step to the podium, adjust the microphone, and state your name for the record. Comments are limited to 3 minutes (or 2*

*minutes if more than 14 speakers). Large groups are asked to select a spokesperson. Council does not act or deliberate on items raised during this time.*

## CONSENT

*All items on the Consent Agenda are considered routine, to be enacted by one motion without discussion. Council member(s) may request discussion of an item. If such motion passes, then the item is removed from consent and considered separately.*

### *Approval of the Consent Agenda*

**A motion was made by Council Member Ryan, seconded by Council Member Miller-Foushee, to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

4. [Recommended 2026-27 Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan](#)

**Resolution R-1 and ordinance O-1 approves the 2026-27 Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan.**

5. [FY 2025-26 Audit Services](#)

**Resolution R-2 authorizes the extension of the contract with Mauldin & Jenkins to perform the Town of Chapel Hill's FY 2025-26 audit.**

6. [Appointment to Orange Water and Sewer Authority Board of Directors](#)

**The Council approved the appointment of Judith Miller to the OWASA Board of Directors effective April 30, 2026.**

## DISCUSSION

7. [Public Hearing: Proposed Charter Amendments - Council Size and Mayoral Term](#)

Mayor Anderson opened by providing context for the proposed amendments to the Town Charter. She explained the previous discussions regarding the idea of changing the Council's structure, reasons for postponing the discussion, and emphasized the Council's commitment to a clear and transparent process. Mayor Anderson reminded everyone that the Council's previous discussion had focused on balancing values such as representation, diversity, effectiveness, and manageability, and encouraged all participants to approach the conversation with openness and good faith.

Town Manager Theodore Voorhees followed the Mayor's remarks by outlining the statutory process and options available to the Council. He

clarified that the administration did not have a position on the proposed changes, but aimed to help the Council and public understand the process and requirements for amending the Town Charter. Mr. Voorhees explained that the Council could amend certain aspects of the Charter, such as Council size and mayoral term, by ordinance without needing action from the General Assembly. He described the two available options: the Council could either adopt the changes by ordinance or call for a referendum, and if the Council chose the ordinance route, voters could still petition for a referendum within 30 days. Mr. Voorhees detailed the timeline and steps required to ensure any changes could be implemented in time for the November general election, including the need for a public hearing and the possibility of a petition-driven referendum. He also explained the mechanics of transitioning to a smaller Council and longer mayoral term, including staggered terms and election cycles.

Council members asked clarifying questions about the impact on current officeholders, timing of elections, and cost for elections on even versus odd years.

The following members of the public shared comments regarding the proposed changes: Danita Mason-Hogans, Mark Kleinschmidt, Betty Curry, Nancy Oates, Yvette Mathews, Will Raymond, Delores Bailey, and Michelle Laws.

Speakers shared a variety of concerns regarding the proposed changes to Council size and the Mayor's term, including worries about reduced representation—especially for Black residents and other groups who have fought for a voice in local government. Many felt the process was moving too quickly and that the community hadn't been given enough time or information to weigh in. There were also concerns that extending the Mayor's term could make leaders less accountable to voters. Several speakers asked the Council to slow down, do more outreach, and let the public decide through a referendum. Most speakers wanted more community involvement and were not ready to support the proposals as presented.

Council members engaged in a discussion reflecting on the feedback received. Several Council members expressed appreciation for the thoughtful and passionate comments from the community and acknowledged the concerns about representation, diversity, and the pace of the process. Council members stated the need for more robust community engagement and a desire to avoid making significant structural changes without broader public input.

Council members discussed the merits and drawbacks of reducing the Council size and extending the mayoral term, with some noting that smaller boards are common in other North Carolina municipalities but acknowledging that Chapel Hill's context and history are unique. Council also discussed the mechanics of implementing changes, including the

timing of elections, the process for staggering terms, and the potential for a referendum. Several members indicated a preference for putting any proposed changes to a public vote rather than adopting them by Council ordinance.

Council closed the public hearing without taking action to move the proposal forward. Staff clarified that, absent further Council direction, no ordinance would be drafted and the proposal would not appear on a future agenda. Council members reiterated their commitment to ongoing dialogue with the community and to ensuring that any future consideration of governance changes would be grounded in transparency, inclusivity, and public trust.

**A motion was made by Council Member Ryan, seconded by Mayor pro tem Berry, to open the public hearing. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

**A motion was made by Mayor pro tem Berry, seconded by Council Member Miller-Foushee, to close the public hearing. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

#### 8. [2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update](#)

Triangle West Transportation Planning Organization Planning Manager Colleen McGue presented an update on Destination 2055, the region's long-range metropolitan transportation plan.

Ms. McGue reviewed projected population and employment growth in the region, the overarching goals of the plan, and the required steps for plan development and adoption. She explained that key priorities include environmental protection, connecting people and destinations, improving equitable access to multimodal transportation, addressing congestion, enhancing infrastructure resilience, and supporting economic vitality. She highlighted major investment areas-such as transit expansion, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and modernization of existing roadways-and noted the importance of aligning projects with federal funding requirements and local fiscal constraints.

Council members asked questions regarding how local funding obligations are calculated, how projects are scored for inclusion in the plan, and whether specific connections, including improved access to the airport, were being considered. Council thanked staff for the update and emphasized the importance of long-term regional planning in supporting Chapel Hill's future mobility needs.

**This matter was received and filed.**

#### 10. [Update Regarding Planning in the Southern Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Reissued](#)

Long-Range Planning Manager Tas Lagoo provided an update on planning efforts in the Southern Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), with a focus on the potential expansion of OWASA's service area and the challenges associated with extending water and sewer infrastructure. Mr. Lagoo reviewed the history of the Water and Sewer Management, Planning and Boundary Agreement (WASMPBA), discussed development potential in the expansion area, and summarized findings from a recent sewer alignment study.

Mr. Lagoo stated the update noted that although sewer extension in the area is technically feasible, it presents significant financial, environmental, and topographical challenges. He explained that opportunities for "missing middle" housing in the expansion area are limited and that viable development is more likely to occur in concentrated areas with higher densities that can better support infrastructure costs.

Council members asked several clarifying questions regarding site conditions and development feasibility. Council inquired about buildable soil types and whether soil conditions in the Southern ETJ might limit or shape development patterns. Council also discussed whether the Town should consider early planning for future greenway alignments, noting the importance of long-term connectivity and opportunities to link the area with existing or planned greenways identified in Town plans and feasibility studies.

Council members additionally asked about appropriate density near the US Hwy. 15-501 corridor, acknowledging that topography and infrastructure costs may necessitate concentrating development near major transportation routes. Questions were also raised about potential annexation considerations and whether the Town might eventually evaluate annexation timing should development proceed in the area.

Council reflected on the implications for affordable housing, transportation connections, and the financial feasibility of supporting infrastructure in an area with limited environmental capacity. Members expressed interest in continuing to explore funding tools, partnerships, and public investment strategies that could help advance desired development patterns in the Southern ETJ. The Council thanked staff for the update and indicated a desire for future reports as planning progresses.

**This matter was received and filed.**

#### 9. [Proposed OWASA Reimbursement Policy](#)

Long-Range Planning Manager Tas Lagoo presented an overview of a proposed Orange Water and Sewer Authority (OWASA) reimbursement policy, intended to allow developers who extend water and sewer lines to receive partial reimbursement from future benefiting property owners. Mr. Lagoo explained that the purpose of the policy is to reduce the "first-mover disadvantage," encourage development in areas that currently

lack utilities, and distribute infrastructure costs more equitably over time.

OWASA Deputy Executive Director Monica Dudson provided additional clarification on the proposed policy framework. She addressed how reimbursement eligibility would be determined, how costs would be allocated among subsequent connecting parties, and how OWASA anticipates administering the reimbursement process in a predictable and transparent manner. She also noted that the policy is intended to support development in areas with difficult or costly utility extension scenarios, while ensuring fairness for both early and later developers.

Ian Scott spoke in support of the policy and shared that the Chamber also supports the proposed approach. He emphasized that the policy could help catalyze development in strategic areas, reduce infrastructure-related barriers, and advance economic development goals for the broader community.

Council members discussed the technical details of the policy, including reimbursement timelines, definitions of eligible expenses, and how the policy might apply in areas with affordable housing goals or infrastructure challenges. Council members stated their interest in transmitting broader Council goals and themes along with their formal comments. These included guidance related to equity considerations, affordable housing opportunities, long-term infrastructure planning, and ensuring that the reimbursement process does not unintentionally create financial barriers for low-income residents or small-scale developers. Council expressed its appreciation for OWASA's collaboration and highlighted the importance of exploring creative and equitable financing tools to support the Town's long-term infrastructure and housing goals.

**A motion was made by Council Member McMahon, seconded by Council Member Nollert, to adopt R-3 authorizing the Mayor to transmit comments on a proposed OWASA reimbursement policy. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

**11. [Participate in the National Opioid Settlement with the Six Remnant Defendants](#)**

Council considered a resolution authorizing the Town Manager to execute the required participation and release form enabling the Town to join the National Opioid Settlement with six remaining distributor/defendant companies. Participation would allow the Town to receive a one-time settlement payment to be used for eligible opioid abatement and prevention activities as outlined in the settlement agreement.

**A motion was made by Mayor pro tem Berry, seconded by Council Member Miller-Foushee, to adopt R-4 authorizing the Town Manager to execute an agreement to participate in the National Opioid Settlement with the six remnant defendants.**

**The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

**CLOSED SESSION (AS NEEDED)**

**12. [General Statute 143-318.11\(a\)\(4\)](#)**

**A motion was made by Mayor pro tem Berry, seconded by Council Member Miller-Foushee, that the Council entered into closed session as authorized by General Statute Section 143-318.11(a)(4). The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

Council recessed into Closed Session at 9:52 p.m.

**A motion was made by Mayor pro tem Berry, seconded by Council Member Miller-Foushee to adjourn the Closed Session and Council meeting. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 p.m.