



Locust City Council

Meeting Minutes

Joel Huneycutt Community Room

7:00 PM

June 12, 2025

Mayor
Council Members

Mayor Steve Huber
Mayor Pro-Tem Larry Baucom, Mandy
Watson, Roger Hypes, De Dee Nathan, Mike
Haigler, Barry Sims, and Rusty Efird

1. Call to Order

Mayor Huber called the meeting to order at 7:05pm

2. Presentation of Colors, Prayer

Mayor Huber led in the Pledge of Allegiance and Council Member De-Dee Nathan gave the invocation.

M/S/A Council Members Larry Baucom and De-Dee Nathan (5-0)
Motion to excuse Council Member Roger Hypes and Mandy Watson

3. Adopt Agenda

M/S/A Council Members Larry Baucom and Rusty Efird (5-0)
Motion to adopt the agenda as presented

4. Minutes - adopt May 8, 2025

M/S/A Council Members Larry Baucom and De-Dee Nathan (5-0)
Motion to adopt the May 8, 2025 minutes

May 8, 2025

5. Financial Reports

Public Hearing - 2025/2026 Budget: City Manager Cesar Correa opened the public hearing for the 2025/2026 Budget at 7:10pm: Ms. Judy Godwin spoke about how proud she is of the City and the positive fiscal position

the City is in. Council Member Barry Sims thanked City Manager Cesar Correa and Finance Director Stephanina Morton for all of their hard work on the budget and the finances for the City.
The public hearing closed at 7:12pm

He then reviewed the General Fund noting that the revenues exceed expenditures by \$1,400,571.43, and the City should be carrying a healthy surplus into fund balance reserves. This is mainly due to high performing revenues, especially Sales Tax, Investments, and Parks & Rec Fees. Next, the Wastewater Fund revenues exceed expenditures by \$2,894,338.32 and a majority of this comes from the reimbursement provided by the \$10M grant. This isn't a net surplus, and our auditors will work with us to close the project and our books. Last fiscal year, the auditors allowed us to "front" some of these revenues since they were realized but not yet received. This fiscal year the cash actually came into our accounts, and now we need to settle our books. We will explicitly cover this during our audit presentation later this year.

City Manager Cesar Correa thanked all of the staff for all of their hard work during the budget process.

M/S/A Council Members Larry Baucom and De-Dee Nathan (5-0)
Motion to adopt the 2025/2026 Fiscal Year Budget and Budget Ordinance to include both Capital Improvement Plan Project Ordinances for the General Fund and Wastewater Fund

Public Hearing: Adoption of FY 2025-2026 Budget

Financial Summary - May 2025

6. Mayor's Report

Mayor Huber thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting tonight.

7. Manager's Report

City Manager Cesar Correa reviewed the purchase orders and comprehensive list of budget amendments.

He then gave an update to the Transportation Improvements – Meadow Creek Church Rd Traffic Light: A few weeks ago, City Manager, Cesar Correa informed Council that NCDOT confirmed that a traffic light is now warranted at the intersection of W. Main Street and Meadow Creek Church Road. The last time NCDOT looked into this for us was in September of 2023, when we met 6/8 light warrants. Since then, our traffic and accident history has checked off the remaining warrants needed to justify the light. While the intersection is dangerous, it is not dangerous enough to justify safety funding from NCDOT. We have the option of waiting until a development in the area triggers this improvement as part of their traffic impact analysis, or alternatively, the City may commission the installation of the traffic light. Should the Council decide to pay for the traffic light, NCDOT offered to complete the improvement through our regular reimbursement agreement. This means that NCDOT would design and install the light on our behalf, and bill us once the work is complete. This would prevent us from having to engage an engineering firm to complete the design, and to bid the construction. The anticipated cost of the light, with the wood poles, is \$150k to \$190k. The higher \$190k figure accounts for having to relocate utilities, which may not be necessary in that area, especially if we pursue the wood poles. To install the light with decorative masts, the cost increases to roughly \$275k. Council Members Michael Haigler and Larry Baucom had some concerns about the City paying for this project. They feel that NCDOT should pay for the project. Mayor Huber spoke in favor of the City taking the initiative and paying for this project. Council Member Barry Sims is in favor of the light and believes the safety of our citizens is worth the expense. If Council approves then NCDOT could have the improvement completed in 4-5 months.

Next he discussed the Sewer Collection Improvements – W. Main Street Vacuum Extension: This sewer improvement project was discussed during our April 10th meeting. Since then, the City has confirmed that any sewer consolidation with Stanly County would not take effect until July 1, 2026, at the earliest. This means another fiscal year to collect system development fees. We feel confident in our ability to cover the costs associated with this improvement through a combination of system development fees, remaining funds from the \$10M grant, and likely a small balance from wastewater fund balance reserves. We would like to present a recommendation for City Council to allow us to proceed with this improvement. The total estimated cost for this project is \$1,665,853.

Finally, City Manager Cesar Correa reviewed a list of scheduled records available for destruction and asked Council to approve their destruction. These documents include accounts payable information, bank statements, bank reconciliation, and business registrations.

M/S/A Council Members De-Dee Nathan and Rusty Efird (5-0)
Motion to approve purchase orders

M/S/A Council Members Larry Baucom and De-Dee Nathan (5-0)
Motion to approve budget amendments

M/S/A Council Members Rusty Efird and Michael Haigler (4-1)
Motion to approve new traffic light at W Main St and Meadowcreek Church Rd and enter into an agreement with NCDOT for the improvement competition.
(Council Member Larry Baucom was the nay vote)

M/S/A Council Members Michael Haigler and De-Dee Nathan (5-0)
Motion to approve sewer collection improvement to the W Main St vacuum extension

M/S/A Council Members Larry Baucom and De-Dee Nathan (5-0)
Motion to approve scheduled record retention destruction (list attached)

Transportation Improvements: W. Main Street & Meadow Creek Church Road Traffic Signal

Sewer Collection Improvements - W. Main Street Vacuum Extension

Records Retention - Disposal Approval

Budget Amendments

Purchase Orders

8. Administration/HR

Council Member De-Dee Nathan had nothing to report at this time. Thank you to City Manager Cesaar Correa and the City staff for all they do.

9. Parks

With Council Member Mandy Watson absent, City Manager Cesar Correa reviewed the upcoming movies, concerts, and events for the City and Parks Department. The City of Locust is hosting the Ozone District Dixie Youth Baseball Tournament starting this weekend.

10. Facilities

Council Member Barry Sims spoke that following the bid opening for the new Senior Center on May 7th our architects had an opportunity to review the bids the City received. They confirmed that the bids were responsive, and that the contractors had all of their GC licenses current and valid. It is their recommendation that we award the contract to Cinderella Partners out of Indian Trail in the amount of \$2,595,680.00 A copy of the architect's recommendation is attached for your review. The action requested from Council is to award the contract to Cinderella Partners, and to authorize City Manager Cesar Correa to enter into a contract for the construction for the new senior center.

M/S/A Council Members Barry Sims and Michael Haigler (5-0)

Motion to award the contract to Cinderella Partners, Indian Trail and to authorize City Manager, Cesar Correa to enter into a contract with them for the construction of the new senior center.

Senior Center - Construction Award

11. Public Works

Council Member Larry Baucom reviewed the monthly report. Thank you to the department for the hard work they do.

Wastewater Flow Report - May 2025

12. ABC, Economic Development & Small Business Support

Council Member Rusty Efird spoke about more businesses coming into Locust.

13. Public Safety

With Council Member Roger Hypes being absent, City Manager Cesar Correa reviewed the monthly statistics, noting that the Officer of the month for May was Officer Jerry Wallace.

Public Safety Report - May 2025

14. Planning & Zoning

Council Member Michael Haigler reviewed the monthly report. He then asked Council to please schedule a public hearing for the July 10th meeting for the conditional rezoning request submitted by Rock Therapy. This project entails an indoor rock climbing gym in the Meadow Creek Business Park, off Laurin Ct. The project was presented to the Locust Planning & Zoning Board during the May 22nd meeting, and it received a unanimous favorable recommendation. Monday, Kolter Homes pulled 7 permits to begin their model homes.

M/S/A Council Members Michael Haigler and De-Dee Nathan (5-0)

Motion to schedule a public hearing for Thursday, July 10, 2025 for the conditional rezoning request submitted by Rock Therapy

Monthly Report - May 2025

Schedule Public Hearing - Conditional Rezoning: Rock Therapy

15. Public Comment Period:

Jeff Kipp from Abbingtion Place and Whitney Dr spoke about expanding the sidewalks to the neighborhood on HWY 200.

16. Board Closing Comments

Thank you to everyone who came out to the meeting tonight. Wonderful budget and Council feels confident in the upcoming year. Proud that Locust is reducing the tax rate to .29 cent from .36 cent and keeping the same benefits and services that the City provides. Thank you to the staff for all of their hard work. Thank you to the Police Department and Chief Shew for all they do.

17. Executive Session GS: 143-318.11 (5)

M/S/A Council Members Michael Haigler and Larry Baucom (5-0)

Motion to enter into executive session GS: 143-318-11 (5) at 8:20pm

Out of executive session at 9:09pm

M/S/A Council Members Michael Haigler and Barry Sims (5-0)

Motion to allow City Manager Cesar Correa to approach property owners to purchase property of 1.69 acres on E Main St, Locust that connects to existing City owned property for a purchase price not to exceed the tax value of \$40,560.

18. Adjourn

M/S/A Council Members Michael Haigler and Barry Sims (5-0)

Motion to adjourn at 9:10pm

Amy Furr, City Clerk

Stephen Huber, Mayor