



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
REGULAR SESSION
MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2025 – 7:00 PM
CITY HALL**

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

David Eady – Mayor
Laura McCanless – Councilmember
Mike Ready – Councilmember
Erik Oliver – Councilmember*
George Holt – Councilmember
Jeff Wearing – Councilmember

ELECTED OFFICIALS NOT PRESENT:

Jim Windham – Councilmember
*Note: Erik Oliver not present for votes
on Items 1 and 2 and vote on HB 581

APPOINTED/STAFF PRESENT:

Marcia Brooks - City Clerk/Treasurer
Bill Andrew – City Manager
Mark Anglin – Police Chief
David Strickland – City Attorney

OTHERS PRESENT: Nick Cole, Mike McQuaide, Kip Hart

1. The meeting was called to order by the Honorable David Eady, Mayor.
2. **Jeff Wearing made a motion to accept the agenda for the March 3, 2025 Mayor and Council Regular Meeting. Mike Ready seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (5/0).** (Attachment A)
3. **Jeff Wearing made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Laura McCanless seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (5/0)**
4. **Mayor's Report**
The Councilmembers present discussed the requirement of HB 581 to provide an estimated, nonbinding millage rate for 2025 to the Newton County Tax Assessor by mid-March. After discussion, Councilmembers agreed to amend the agenda to vote on this matter.

Mike Ready made a motion to amend the agenda to include a vote on the estimated millage rate for 2025. Laura McCanless seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (5/0).

Mike Ready made a motion to provide an estimated millage rate of 5.444 (same as last year). Laura McCanless seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (5/0).

Mayor Eady stated that an audit of the City's signs is needed. The scope of the audit would be limited to compliance with the signs required by State and/or Federal law. Atkins had proposed applying for a grant to expand the scope of this work, however, the availability of the grant is uncertain at this time due to Presidential Executive Orders. Mayor Eady proposed asking Atkins to prepare a Task Order specifically for the audit and a plan to bring the City into compliance to be presented at the March 17, 2025 work session.

The City Council agreed to reschedule the Special Called Work Session for the Capital Budget from April 3rd to April 2nd, and to ask Chad Peden from Carter & Sloope to come to the meeting and provide updated cost information for the planned water/sewer capital projects.

5. Citizen Concerns

Nick Cole thanked the City for installation of fountains at Asbury Street Park and for starting paving on City streets. He also asked some questions about street work in progress.

Mike McQuaide commented on the proposal from TSW for Planning Services. He stated that it seems there is a logic about having a vision for the town and crafting ordinances consistent with the vision for the town. How do we know what the vision is? What are the mechanics for creating a vision for the town?

Mayor Eady stated that a revised proposal from TSW includes public input elements. It also proposes rewriting the code to reflect concerns about development on bordering properties.'

Laura McCanless stated she believes the Planning Commission, Trees, Parks and Recreation Board, and Sustainability Committee should be involved with the effort from its inception during the public input phase. Mayor Eady stated he would expect them to talk to the DDA as well as the other committees.

Erik Oliver stated that any development in Oxford will also impact other things like schools.

6. Proposal from TSW for Planning Services (Attachment C)

Erik Oliver stated it seems like a lot of money to spend with little return. He expected a vendor to tweak the ordinances that need to be tweaked. He also would

like additional quotes. He feels rushed to make this decision, and believes the vision is already established in the Comprehensive Plan and Short-Term Work Program.

Laura McCanless expressed uncertainty about how she feels on this issue. She is concerned about the time it would take to complete and wants to focus on the quick fixes to the ordinances. She also would like more quotes. She would also like to hear from the Chairman of the Planning Commission regarding this proposal. She also feels rushed to make a decision and thought there would be another work session to discuss the revised proposal.

Mayor Eady reminded the Councilmembers that the reason a proposal was brought to them was because a desire was expressed at the Mayor and Council Retreat in November 2024 to get the Planning, Zoning and Development ordinances updated. There are inconsistencies within the code, and it was bastardized when it was codified. It essentially needs to be recodified. He believes the visioning tasks are included because the vendor does not know where the City stands on its vision. If the City Council prefers, they can be asked what the cost would be to make the corrections that are known to be needed.

Mike Ready recommends having the Planning Commission work with the vendor to prepare a package of amendments to present to the City Council. He recommends skipping the vision part of the proposal.

George Holt advised he is opposed to the proposal. He does not understand why the City needs someone to tell it what its vision is. We need to know what we really want to do and see if the code matches that.

Jeff Wearing expressed a need to review the codes based on future plans for surrounding areas but does not agree with spending the amount of money proposed.

Ms. McCanless reiterated her request to have additional input from the Planning Commission Chairman. Mayor Eady stated he will ask the Chairman to attend the March Work Session or obtain his written input if he is unable to attend. A vote can be taken at the end of the Work Session.

7. Approval of a Revised Resolution Pledging the Matching Funds for the 2025 CDBG Application for Water Line Replacement (Attachment D)

Erik Oliver made a motion to approve the resolution to increase the Matching Funds for the CDBG application to \$250,000. Jeff Wearing seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Mayor Eady advised that he needs to recuse himself from the discussion, and asked the Mayor Pro Tempore, Erik Oliver to ask for a motion.

Mike Ready made a motion to approve the resolution to increase the Matching Funds for the CDBG Application to \$250,000. Laura McCanless seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (5/0).

8. **Invoices** (Attachment I)

The City Council reviewed invoices paid for \$1,000 or more in the month of February 2025.

9. **Executive Session**

None.

10. **Adjourn**

Mike Ready made a motion to adjourn at 8:22 p.m. Jeff Wearing seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

Respectfully Submitted,



Marcia Brooks
City Clerk/Treasurer