

**TOWN OF HILDEBRAN
COUNCIL'S CHAMBER
ALBERT PARKHURST
MUNICIPAL COMPLEX**

**March 23, 2026
7:00 PM**

**REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER	Mayor Pro Tem Stroupe called the regular meeting of the Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m.
COUNCIL PRESENT	The following members of the Board were present: Council Members Ben Honeycutt, Mike Smith, Mike Stroupe, Terry Weaver, and Jody York. Mayor Wendell Hildebrand was absent.
STAFF PRESENT	The following staff members were present: Town Manager Logan Shook, Town Clerk Alice Sanders, Finance Officer Fredrick Rankins, Events Coordinator Haven Ward, Building and Grounds Maintenance Worker Gary Towery, and Town Attorney Jared Amos.
CITIZENS & MEDIA	See attached sheet.
INVOCATION	A moment of silence was observed.
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE	Maliena Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.
APPROVAL OF AGENDA	Council Member Honeycutt made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. All voted in favor.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES	Council Member Smith made a motion to approve the February 23, 2026 regular meeting minutes, the February 23, 2026 closed session minutes, and the March 11, 2026 special meeting minutes as presented. All voted in favor.
PUBLIC COMMENTS	None.
PUBLIC HEARING DEVELOPING OF CDBG APPLICATION FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR	Kyle Case from the Western Piedmont Council of Governments was in attendance to present. He stated that the Town Council of the Town of Hildebran is holding a Public Hearing in order to receive citizen input in the development of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications for the coming year. These applications are to be submitted to the North Carolina Department of Commerce. CDBG funds may be used for a variety of different activities including: Neighborhood Revitalization (NR), Economic Development (ED), Infrastructure, Community Housing,

demolition of publically owned dilapidated buildings in order to create re-usable industrial sites, and Disaster Recovery (DR) including support to help communities deal with recovery from Hurricane Helene. All projects must predominately benefit low- and moderate-income persons.

He stated that the public hearing is the first hearing and is a requirement before any application is submitted and is good for one year. If the Town has any applications within the next year, a second public hearing will be called to discuss the specific project.

Mayor Pro Tem Stroupe opened the public hearing at 7:05 p.m. There being no comments, Mayor Pro Tem Stroupe closed the public hearing at 7:05 p.m.

**OLD BUSINESS:
REVIEW OF BID
SPECIFICATIONS FOR
LAWN CARE AND SNOW
REMOVAL SERVICES**

Staff presented the existing bid specifications for lawn care service and snow removal service for Council's review. Town Manager Shook reviewed the different sections of each bid document and discussed other work that is performed that is not in the existing contracts.

There was discussion regarding what our building and grounds employee could take on and it was decided to let Mr. Towery begin mowing the area behind Town Hall, including the old kudzu area, Royal Park, and the areas around the municipal complex.

Council also requested that the bid documents be more specific as to the definition of what mulch to use and how much to use in each area. Also, Council requested that the contractor fluff the mulch each fall.

Council also requested that the contractor mow at the end of the week so that the park will be freshly mowed for weekend rentals and events.

Regarding the snow removal contract, Council Member Weaver stated that he did not want to pay for any of the contractor's general liability insurance. Council Member Smith stated that he did not want to pay a yearly fee unless work is performed. Council Member Stroupe stated that if the Town doesn't pay a yearly fee, the Town may not have priority in the contractor's work and snow removal may not be done until it's too late. No

consensus was determined regarding the snow removal bid specifications.

Mayor Pro Tem directed Council to review the bid documents and provide any revisions to Mr. Shook within the next week prior to Mr. Shook beginning the bid process.

UPDATE ON PAVILION AT ROYAL PARK

Town Manager Shook stated that he is getting quotes for a pavilion at the Royal Park. He stated that due to the available space, the largest size that will work is 45' x 60'. He stated that 3 rows of tables might be possible, but it is not guaranteed. Pricing is expected to be around \$70,000 to \$80,000. Costs are higher if the Town adds end caps, guttering, grading, and sidewalks. He also stated that he is having Bakh review the plans with an engineer that could be an additional \$5,000 fee. Mr. Shook is working on getting final quotes and a special meeting may need to be called for approval.

**NEW BUSINESS:
CONSIDER APPROVAL OF
STORYBOOK TRAIL AT
ROYAL PARK (SERVICE
PROJECT)**

A student from East Burke High School, Aubrey Sanders, presented a proposal to purchase and install 16 weather-proof pedestals around the walking trail at Royal Park. Each pedestal will hold two pages of a children's book. Kids will walk along the park to finish the entire book. The project promotes literacy, exercise, and family bonding. She stated that the total cost of the project is \$5,000, with Burke River Trail already donating \$2,000. She will fundraise for the remaining \$3,000. The expense to the Town will be any amount not collected through fundraising and the future costs of books. She stated she will also plan a volunteer day at the park with Beth Heile to install the pedestals. Currently, Valdese has a Storybook Trail and the Towns of Drexel and Rutherford College are both fundraising on their own to bring this to their parks. She asked permission from Council to begin the project.

Council Member York stated that she had visited the one that Valdese had and noticed that some of the pedestals were dirty and it was hard to read the book. Aubrey stated that she would check on cleaning them and get back to her.

Mayor Pro Tem Stroupe made a motion to approve the project as presented. Council Member York stated she

had no issues as long as a solution to cleaning was determined. All voted in favor.

Maliena Smith stated that she would be helping Aubrey with the project and they would get window cleaner and come out and clean the pedestals.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF
BUDGET AMENDMENT
FOR GRANT FUNDS AND
DONATIONS FOR ROYAL
PARK**

Town Manager Shook stated that a budget amendment is presented for approval to allow for grant funds awarded to the Town and citizen donations to be placed in the project fund. No new funds are being expended. Council Member Smith made a motion to approve budget amendment # 12 in the amount of \$314,930 as presented to allow for grant funds awarded to the Town by the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund in the amount of \$289,700 and donations to the park fund in the amount of \$25,230 to be placed into the project fund and be used towards park construction. Any remaining unspent funds will be returned to the General Fund upon completion of the project. All voted in favor. A copy of the amendment is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes (Attachment A).

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF
QUOTE TO REMOVE
RADIATORS IN THE
AUDITORIUM BASEMENT**

Town Manager Shook reviewed the quote from BluSky Restoration Contractors to remove the radiators from the basement of the auditorium. He stated that the cost to paint the walls after removal is not listed in the quote but they will do that at no cost. There being no discussion, Council Member Smith made a motion to approve the quote from BluSky Restoration Contractors as presented to provide labor, materials, and equipment to disconnect, remove, and cap 12 wall heaters, including proper disposal, and haul-off all units and debris that were removed for \$6,933.60. All voted in favor.

**DISCUSSION OF
CHRISTMAS TREE AT
ROYAL PARK**

Town Manager Shook stated that the newly planted Christmas tree at Royal Park has died most likely due to the existing roots from the former tree and stated that it's likely no tree planted in that area will live. Council Member York suggested purchasing an artificial tree and having it close to, or on the stage.

Council Member Honeycutt stated that the Town could also purchase a gazebo with the artificial tree to be placed in it.

Council was in agreement to purchase an artificial tree and for staff to bring back quotes. Mayor Pro Tem

Stroupe also asked for some type of decorative tree near the entrance at the gym.

FACILITIES REPORT

The March facilities report was provided for review.

DELINQUENT TAX REPORT

Tax Collector Sanders provided the February tax report. A copy of the report is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes (Attachment B).

DEPUTY REPORT

The February deputy report was provided for review.

EVENTS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Events Committee report was provided for review. Council Member York told Event Coordinator Ward that she was doing a really good job and that the Council appreciates her.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) – No report.

WPCOG Policy Board – No report.

Burke Development Inc. – Town Manager Shook stated that BDI reviewed its February financials, and had a housing and Burke Business Park update.

Recreation and Tourism Committee – No report.

Water Resource Committee – No report.

VEDIC – Karen Robinson stated that Don Boggs of Boggs Crump & Brown, P.A. conducted an annual review of VEDIC’s financial statements for year ending June 30, 2025 and the compliance report for 2025 stating that everything was in order. VEDIC can pull \$10,000 out at a time for loans from the RBDG grant of \$175,000. The delinquent report and assistance report were reviewed. A new loan application is in process.

Library Board – No report.

OTHER BUSINESS:
SPECIAL MEETING

The Council called a special meeting for a budget workshop to be held on Wednesday, April 15, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in the community center.

WATER METER MONITORING

Bill Jones asked if the Town could provide a water meter monitor that would notify staff if a water leak occurred.

DATA CENTER AT CLINE PARK

Council Member Honeycutt addressed the public concerning the recent newspaper and social media posts about a potential data center coming to Hildebran. He stated that due to the downzoning legislation passed by the NC General Assembly in December 2024 (SB 382), the Town is unable to ban the plan. However, the Town has done everything it its power by passing an ordinance to discourage the company from continuing with their proposed project. He encouraged everyone to write their representatives, including Huge Blackwell.

Council allowed those in attendance to briefly ask questions and voice their concerns regarding data centers in Hildebran such as what the timeline was, what was the name of the company, and how to make petitions against the project.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

ADJOURN

All business being concluded, Council Member Honeycutt made a motion at 7:56 p.m. to adjourn. All voted in favor.

I attest these are the approved minutes of the Board.

Alice Sanders, Town Clerk

Wendell Hildebrand, Mayor