

**Draft Minutes of the  
Mineral Springs Town Council  
Regular Meeting  
April 10, 2025 – 7:30 p.m.**

The Town Council of the Town of Mineral Springs, North Carolina, met in Regular Session at the Mineral Springs Town Hall located at 3506 Potter Road S, Mineral Springs, North Carolina, at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 10, 2025.

Present: Mayor Frederick Becker III, Councilman Jerry Countryman, Councilwoman Janet Critz, Councilwoman Lundeen Cureton, and Councilman Jim Muller.

Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Valerie Coffey, Councilwoman Bettylyn Krafft, and Attorney Bobby Griffin

Staff Present: Town Clerk/Zoning Administrator Vicky Brooks and Administrative Assistant/Deputy Town Clerk Sharelle Quick.

Visitors: None.

**1. Opening**

With a quorum present at 7:30 p.m. on April 10, 2025, Mayor Frederick Becker called the regular meeting to order.

Councilwoman Cureton delivered the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Public Comments**

None.

**3. Consent Agenda – Action Item**

Councilman Countryman motioned to approve the consent agenda containing the March 13, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes, the February 2025 Union County Tax Report, and the February 2025 Finance Report as presented, and Councilman Muller seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Countryman, Critz, Cureton, and Muller. Nays: None.

**4. Discussion and Consideration of Realigning Staff Positions – Action Item**

Ms. Vicky Brooks reminded the council that they were made aware of some pending staff retirements. In an effort to transition to new staff members seamlessly there were some modifications to the current job descriptions. The Town Clerk position was removed from the current Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator/Planning Director/Town Clerk position. With the Town Clerk being removed from that position, there is a Town Clerk position, a Finance Officer position, or a combined Town Clerk/Finance officer position, and the Administrative Assistant. These are up for council discussion to select which of the job descriptions they feel best suits the town. Ms. Brooks mentioned that Mayor Becker spoke with Attorney Bobby Griffin who offered advice on interviewing potential employees.

Mayor Becker explained that Attorney Griffin (during a phone conversation) advised that a council member not be involved with the initial interviewing process. Staff (preferably Ms. Brooks who will be filling the planning director/administrator position) should be interviewing applicants as they come in. If someone is applying for the finance position, Mayor Becker should have some input to be able to narrow down the applicants. Attorney Griffin recommended staff could present two or three to the council when they got to that point.

Councilwoman Critz personally felt the separation of duties was excellent and that the staff doing the interview was the most appropriate way to go about it.

It was clarified that there was a combined position of town clerk/finance officer as a full-time position as one of the options. Advertising would be for “either” the town clerk/finance officer full-time position “or” the town clerk part-time position and the finance officer part-time position.

It was noted that the town clerk/finance officer position may be difficult to fill.

Councilwoman Critz thought that the town clerk should be onsite to be the face of town hall, it may not be necessary for the finance officer to be onsite.

Mayor Becker explained that there were at least two municipalities (Unionville and Fairview) that have the same finance officer who is a CPA in practice in Unionville. This is a possible way of doing the finance officer position; however, it is helpful to have the finance officer in-house for pre-audits and check signing. Mayor Becker noted that it was his preference (in a perfect world) to find somebody who was qualified for both positions or who could qualify. Mayor Becker added that when he started being finance officer in 1999, he had no idea what it was, and Ms. Brooks did not have any idea what a clerk was.

Councilman Countryman stated that it seemed to him that after 25 years, the town had grown to the point where the council needed to start looking at being open to the fact that individual positions were needed; a professional administrator, professional finance officer, and a professional clerk. Councilman Countryman added that the council realizes that they are going to have to pay them more, which was going to impact the budget, and it might impact the tax rate that is paid, which hasn’t changed in 25 years.

Mayor Becker noted that the tax rate had gone down.

Councilman Countryman commented that the point was that “maybe it’s time we bite the bullet, or think about biting the bullet, and if we’ve got to pay some people more, pay them more.”

Councilwoman Critz asked Mayor Becker if he could contact the gentleman [working for Unionville and Fairview].

Mayor Becker responded he was sure that he could, but he still wanted to “play devil’s advocate.” Looking at the duties of finance officer, Mayor Becker did not know whether it was Greg Allison at the School of Government that taught a class or if it was the town auditor that he said to, “I’m not a CPA,” and they tell you that you don’t have to be, because the finance officer in a town like Mineral Springs is essentially a bookkeeper and an administrator. Looking at the job description, the duty for Mayor Becker involved things like a handyman and errand boy duties, which have been taken out. The description is long, but it supports the fact that there is a skill set that does meet both of them; it is a lot of following statutes and following schedules of when things have to be filed, which are things that a clerk does. Mayor Becker sees it as somebody who has done it and who has worked with the clerk for 25 years and he sees that there is a big overlap in the positions. Mayor Becker believes the reason there are separate positions, aside from the ones he is describing, is that most other municipalities have a full-time position for it and Mineral Springs does not need to. Mayor Becker stated that even with his extra duties that are not finance officer duties, he is still only working 25 hours a week on average.

Councilwoman Critz commented that even though Mayor Becker is not a CPA, he still has a strong background in mathematics, which is not easy to find outside of a CPA. Councilwoman Critz thought that looking at CPA’s that are already in some capacity could work.

Mayor Becker responded there was no question, because people are doing it. Mayor Becker mentioned that he anticipated retiring by December 31<sup>st</sup> if possible, but he did expect to run for mayor and if elected would serve another two years. Mayor Becker mentioned that the budget includes him continuing to work as finance officer through December 31<sup>st</sup>, even though the town would be hiring the combined position as of July 1<sup>st</sup> (if combined). The town would be hiring an

assistant finance officer at a lower pay scale, because that person would be in training for six months, while he was being paid for half a year. If the town is lucky enough to find a person willing to work under those conditions where their first-year salary would be lower and they attend the finance officer school in August in Chapel Hill, then if everything works out, that person would get a raise in January at the entry level finance officer position.

Councilwoman Critz motioned to give staff the authority to take as many avenues of advertising as they see fit to be profitable. [There was no second to this motion]

Councilman Countryman asked if the council was picking from the shopping list of the 5 positions.

Mayor Becker commented that Ms. Brooks was hopefully staying in the planning director/town administrator position, so the town was looking for clerk and/or finance officer or assistant to move into the position.

Councilman Muller stated he thought the council needed to consider (first and foremost) if they want it to be one role or split roles. Councilman Muller explained that he was voting for splitting the clerk from the finance officer for multiple reasons: to pursue finding one person is narrowing the field way down; and if there was a turnover, the town could replace the clerk, but replacing a finance officer would be a monumental task. This is why Councilman Muller felt the best course of action would be to look at hiring two people.

Councilman Countryman concurred with Councilman Muller.

Ms. Brooks suggested that Councilwoman Critz continue to fine tune the motion.

Councilwoman Criz motioned (as part of the advertising process) we would prefer that staff look at this as two separate roles (town clerk and finance officer) for the sake a stability and Councilman Countryman seconded.

Mayor Becker asked the council (before they voted) if this “unicorn” showed up who was “dynamite” in both positions, would they be interested in considering that.

Councilman Countryman responded they would be open to that.

Councilwoman Critz responded absolutely.

Mayor Becker clarified that the council was open (to the combined position), but it would be focusing on the skill sets for those two positions separately.

Councilwoman Critz responded yes.

Ms. Brooks asked if that was an amendment to the motion made by Councilwoman Critz.

Councilman Muller commented that he thought the motion was to advertise for two roles.

Councilwoman Critz commented should they find the “unicorn”, then certainly...

Councilwoman Critz amended the aforementioned motion to include that the council would be open to considering one person for both roles, if staff found that person that they consider capable and exceptional.

Councilman Countryman agreed to the amendment to the motion that he seconded.

The motion by Councilwoman Critz, seconded by Councilman Council as amended is: as part of the advertising process) we would prefer that staff look at these as two separate roles (town clerk and finance officer) for the sake a stability and (with the inclusion of the amendment) that the council would be open to considering one person for both roles if staff found that person that they consider capable and exceptional. The motion was passed unanimously. Ayes: Countryman, Critz, Cureton, and Muller. Nays: None.

The council discussed options for schooling for both positions.

Mayor Becker noted that staff would come back to the council in May after they “test the waters,” to see what people out there are looking for and what was available for the two fields.

5. **Consideration of a Budget Amendment O-2024-04** – Action Item

Mayor Becker explained this was a routine budget amendment; employee overhead would be overspent by a couple hundred dollars. The budget amendment is to transfer \$300 out of “Contingency” into “Overhead.”

Councilman Muller motioned to accept the budget amendment O-2024-04 and Councilwoman Cureton seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Countryman, Critz, Cureton, and Muller. Nays: None.

The ordinance is as follows:

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
TOWN OF MINERAL SPRINGS

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET OF  
THE TOWN OF MINERAL SPRINGS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025  
O-2024-04**

**WHEREAS**, NC G.S. 159-15 authorizes a municipal governing board to amend the annual budget ordinance at any time after the ordinance's adoption;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED** by the Council of the Town of Mineral Springs, North Carolina, the following:

SECTION 1. **Appropriations and Amounts.** Amendment #2024-02:

INCREASE		DECREASE	
Employee Overhead	\$300	Contingency	\$300
Total	\$300	Total	\$300

SECTION 2. **Effective Date.** This ordinance is effective upon adoption.

**ADOPTED** this 10th day of April, 2025. Witness my hand and official seal:

Frederick Becker III, Mayor

Attest:

Vicky A. Brooks, Clerk

6. **FY2025-2026 Budget: Preliminary Departmental Appropriations** – Action Item

Mayor Becker commented that this had been more confusing, because of the uncertainty about the salary positions and how to plan for what the overhead and expenses will be for next year. Mayor Becker thought he had explained in excruciating detail [in the preliminary departmental appropriations document], while not talking about the one lovely circumstance if the town were able to find that person (that we don't think we can), that for the first year the town could maybe come in \$15,000 to \$20,000 less and \$5,000 less in employee overhead, if that position could get filled for the first year, and then the second year, Mayor Becker would be out of here [as finance officer]. That would be another \$20,000 off, so it could put the town in an easier position when it comes to the potential of not being able to reduce the tax rate to 100% revenue neutral. Right now, the council

is looking at “guesstimate” appropriations of \$453,000 which is up from \$428,000. Mayor Becker stated he was assuming \$379,000 for operating last year. There is a substantial increase due to the cost of additional employees and benefits. Mayor Becker referred to his memo that mentioned if a younger person were hired, they would expect some type of health benefit, even if the town did not pay the whole thing, it would be expected for the town to be competitive.

Mayor Becker explained those were the challenges for him to prepare the spreadsheet for the council this year, noting the town had plenty of money in the bank. At this time, the council is not discussing revenues or tax rates, but if those did not cover costs 100%, the town still budgeted \$49,000 in capital last year, and that was basically individual capital. This is not a Capital Project, it does not usually get spent, it was rolled in, so there is a cushion. The town could budget essentially nothing for that, maybe a little more revenue from the tax revenues without going to a fully revenue neutral tax rate if needed and still come out okay. If worse came to worse, there is \$1.6 million in the bank now.

The town will be spending approximately \$70,000 in the first year for the match on the sidewalk plan. The mechanisms are in place to start getting the paperwork signed by Mayor Becker, which will be spent in the fiscal year upcoming, and then nothing will happen for another year. The year after that will be the next installment of approximately \$150,000. Mayor Becker stated he believed the town had plenty of money to meet those obligations.

Mayor Becker stated the good part was that the town had a big cushion, because the council had been careful about keeping reserves.

The next phase of the budget [presentation] next month will be presented with a tax rate as close to revenue neutral as possible. Mayor Becker did receive an estimated tax base from the county, and he estimated revenue neutral tax rate for Mineral Springs next year will be 1.45 cent down from 2.1 cents. If the town raised it to 1.8 cents, so that it was still a tax rate cut to reflect the huge property reevaluation, that would bring in an extra \$30,000 in revenues. This would cost the owner of a \$500,000 house \$18 to \$20 more a year.

Mayor Becker commented that the council has been committed to treating taxpayers with as much respect as they could, and they want to find every way not to burden the taxpayers.

Councilwoman Critz commented that she found most people did not realize that if the county raised the tax rate (for an actual tax hike or reappraisals), that unless the municipality adjusted their amount, they would be gaining the benefit of more tax, because they are not remaining revenue neutral, but pretending that they are by not informing their constituents. Councilwoman Critz credited Mayor Becker on a financial level on how the council remained fair to constituents. Councilwoman Critz stated the town needs a new finance officer that appreciates that.

Mayor Becker commented that it did help to have a finance officer that has some governing board connection, but that was a rare situation. Mineral Springs has a good board.

Mayor Becker pointed out that the figures for the positions that have not been filled are flexible. Based on what Mayor Becker and Ms. Brooks had discussed about what he put in for the positions that have not been filled yet are probably on the high end, because the town will be getting people with less experience. There will be a salary range and no promise of a salary until the applicants have been seen. The salary range is going to be based on the average in that League of Municipalities report; there is a minimum and a maximum. Currently Mayor Becker and Ms. Brooks are generally going at the average for this coming year, except Ms. Brooks is a little bit above the average for a planning director, because most planning directors don't have that administrative role, so hopefully the proposed salary for that position and the old finance officer is acceptable to the council, and filling the position for finance officer will be flexible.

Mayor Becker asked the council if there was anything in the appropriations that stood out to them that they were not spending enough or something was forgotten.

Mayor Becker commented that he and Ms. Brooks had talked about bringing back the newsletter when there is a dedicated clerk, because more things like that can be done. The town might do something that got online publication with mailing only to people who request it in print.

Councilwoman Critz commented that Mayor Becker did an excellent job, and she thought the current salaries and the proposed potential salaries were inline with what the town needs.

Councilman Countryman motioned to go with the preliminary numbers and then review them in the month of May and Councilman Muller seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Countryman, Critz, Cureton, and Muller. Nays: None.

**7. Discussion and Consideration of a New Janitorial Service** – Action Item

Mayor Becker explained that he did not know that the town would ever get such a good price, but the janitor did not show up the last week of March. Staff noticed the waste baskets had not been emptied and wondered what had happened. Mayor Becker received an email from Barry from Bucket, Mop, and Broom stating they would need to terminate their service. Ms. Brooks will need to look for another janitorial service.

Councilwoman Critz motioned that the council authorize Vicky to research and find another janitorial service to suit our needs and Councilwoman Cureton seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Countryman, Critz, Cureton, and Muller. Nays: None.

**8. Consideration of Appointing a Delegate for the Election of the NCLM 2025-20226 Officers and Board of Directors** – Action Item

Mayor Becker explained this was for the League Officers; a slate of officers are presented and the designated person votes.

Councilman Muller volunteered.

Councilwoman Critz motioned to appoint Jim Muller as our designated delegate and Councilman Countryman seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Countryman, Critz, Cureton, and Muller. Nays: None.

**9. Staff Reports**

None.

**10. Other Business**

Councilwoman Critz mentioned a situation on Potter Road that Ms. Brooks issued a cease and desist on some of the actions that were taking place that were not permitted by the state concerning the flood zone, as well as the non-encroachment area. Councilwoman Critz continued that action was being taken by staff to deal with this, but there was also evidence that there is a commercial business being run off the property.

Ms. Brooks responded no.

Councilwoman Critz asked if there was enough evidence that Ms. Brooks was content that was not what was happening.

Ms. Brooks responded correct.

Councilwoman Critz noted that the council had some unhappy constituents in and around that area, and once the current situation was done she thought it would be of good rapport for the council to follow-up and make sure things are actually what they were supposed to be and say that they are.

Councilwoman Cureton asked if there was any way the people on the property next door to her could be contacted, because they were piling stuff there and doing nothing with it.

Ms. Brooks asked if it was more than 600 square feet of junk.

Mayor Becker noted that it would be 20 feet by 30 feet.

Councilwoman Cureton stated she did not know if it was 600 feet.

Councilwoman Critz suggested that Ms. Brooks or Mayor Becker run by there to see if it fell under that purview.

**11. Adjournment** – Action Item

At 8:17 p.m. Councilman Countryman motioned to adjourn the meeting and Councilman Muller seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Countryman, Critz, Cureton, and Muller. Nays: None.

The next regular meeting will be on Thursday, May 8, 2025 at 7:30 p.m. at the Mineral Springs Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Vicky A. Brooks, CMC, NCCMC, Town Clerk

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Frederick Becker, Mayor