

**River Bend Town Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 21, 2025
Town Hall
5:00 p.m.**

Present Council Members: Mayor Mark Bledsoe
Lisa Benton
Brian Leonard
Kathy Noonan
Jeff Weaver

Absent Council Member: Buddy Sheffield

Town Manager: Delane Jackson
Finance Director: Mandy Gilbert
Police Chief: Sean Joll
Town Clerk: Kristie Nobles
Town Attorney: David Baxter

Members of the Public Present: 13

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bledsoe called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 21, 2025, at the River Bend Town Hall with a quorum present, followed by invocation and the pledge of allegiance.

VOTE – Addition to the Agenda

Councilman Leonard motioned to amend the agenda by adding item 12B, Jeffery Meyer, EWAB Appointment. The motion carried unanimously.

VOTE – Approval of Agenda

Councilwoman Benton motioned to accept the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Joanne Garside – 408 Plantation Drive – Addressed the Council and shared her background explaining how she and her husband became residents of the Town.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Mayor presented the Council with the Consent Agenda. *Councilwoman Noonan moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.* Within this motion, the following items were approved:

A. Approve: *Minutes of July 17, 2025, Regular Council Meeting*

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

The Manager reviewed the town webpage and information that is posted regarding hurricanes. He expressed the importance of signing up for town notifications that could notify and direct residents of severe weather and important information.

Chief Joll reviewed the monthly statistics for the police department. He also announced upcoming events, Fishing with a Cop on September 1 and National Night Out on October 7.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

CAC – Councilwoman Benton

Councilwoman Benton stated that CAC met in August. She stated that the Fall Festive Award is scheduled for October, however the Spring and Independence Day awards have been canceled for 2026. CAC is organizing a fall hayride and the holley trolley.

FINANCE – Councilman Leonard

Councilman Leonard congratulated Mandy Gilbert, Finance Director, and the town staff on receiving the Government Finance Officers Association Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2024. He stated that this certificate is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting and this was the 14th year in a row that we had received it.

Financial Report – Finance Director, Mandy Gilbert, presented the financial statement for the month of July to the Council. She stated the total of the Town's Cash and Investments as of July 31, 2025, were \$2,679,452 and Ad Valorem Tax Collections for FY25-26 were \$0 and Vehicle Ad Valorem Tax Collections were \$0. She stated that this is the first month of the fiscal year.

VOTE– Internet Policy for Advisory Board Sites

Councilman Leonard stated that the proposed Internet Policy for Advisory Board Sites was discussed at the Council Work Session.

Councilman Leonard motioned to approve the Webpage Policy Amendments as presented. The motion carried unanimously. (see attached)

ENVIRONMENTAL & WATERWAYS – Councilman Leonard

Councilman Leonard provided the following report from the August meeting.

Chairman Hall called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. There was a quorum of members present. There was one visitor. The minutes for the July 2025 meeting were approved. Old Business: Fishing line recycling containers have been installed. Volunteer shirts. Discussion about having a canal clear up in conjunction with local Scouts, P&R, and CAC. Jeff Meyer attended meeting and was recommended to be added to EWAB as a member. There is still one vacancy on EWAB. Markers #3 & #4 need repair. Waterways soundings were conducted in July 2025. New Business: NNO EWAB will man a table. Councilman Leonard gave a council updated and answered members questions Volunteer Hours: 13 The guest had several questions for the board. September 1st, 2025, meeting is canceled. The next meeting will be on October 6th, 2025, at 7 PM in the small conference room in the municipal building. The public is welcome to attend. The meeting adjourned at 7:48 PM

VOTE – EWAB Appointment – Jeffery Meyer

Councilman Leonard motioned to appoint Jeffery Meyer to the Environmental and Waterways Advisory Board for a term beginning August 21, 2025, and ending on June 30, 2027. The motion carried unanimously.

PARKS & RECREATION – Councilman Weaver

Councilman Weaver stated that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board met on August 6 at 6:30 p.m. and have several upcoming events. All events are posted on the town's website and the next meeting is September 3 at 6:30.

RIVER BEND COMMUNITY ORGANIC GARDEN

Councilman Weaver gave the following report from the August meeting:

It has been a brutal summer for growing vegetables. The July harvest was good but most summer crops have now been removed. The garden will remain open in the fall and winter with a reduced number of winter vegetables. Gardeners labored 177 hours in July. Volunteers continue to fill the daily work schedule and attend alternate Saturday workdays. The next meeting has been re-scheduled to Tuesday, September 2nd at 1:30 pm in the Municipal building. The change is due to the Labor Day holiday. Guests are always welcome at meetings and in the garden.

VOTE – Award of Contract for Pickleball Court

Councilman Weaver called on the Town Manager for an update on the Pickleball Court Contractor, Court One. The Town Manager stated that he had not had any response from Court One and gave them a deadline of 5:00 p.m. today to respond. He stated that he had reached out to them via telephone, email and text.

Councilman Weaver motioned to declare Court One as an unresponsive bidder and withdraw the previously accepted bid from them and reject all other bids for pickleball court construction. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Weaver stated that the only other bid received was \$130,000, which is well above the quote from Court One in the amount of \$85,000, thus the reason for rejecting all other bids. Councilman Leonard asked if the funds that were allocated for this project will be returned to the original line items and the Town Manager stated that a budget amendment will be needed and will be addressed at the next Council meeting.

MAYORS REPORT

The Mayor read the following statement. "That in an effort to clarify the town's official position on social media, the River Bend Town Council adopted the attached resolution on September 19, 2024. The town's position remains the same. Recently, some citizen concerns have been voiced over the operation of a local Facebook page called "River Bend Community Page". The Council has discussed these concerns and any potential legal issues related to the same, as well as Council members' participation in, and operation of social media platforms. Today, the Council is publicly acknowledging that we have received citizen concerns, comments and input about this site. Furthermore, the Council publicly states that the Town Council, as a collective governing body, has no legal authority to regulate, monitor or control the action and/or participation of Council members on this particular site or any other social media platform and is in no way affiliated with the "River Bend Community Page" on Facebook. As is stated below, the Town of River Bend is not responsible for or liable for any content on non-Town sites."

The Mayor then read the resolution in its entirety.

VOTE – Social Media Resolution

Councilwoman Noonan motioned to approve the resolution on social media as presented. The motion carried unanimously. (see attached)

CLOSED SESSION

Councilwoman Benton motioned to go into Closed Session under NCSG §143-318.11(a)(3). The Council entered Closed Session at 5:38 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

Councilwoman Benton motioned to return to Open Session at 5:53 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

The Mayor stated that no action was taken in closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, *Councilman Weaver moved to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.* The meeting adjourned at 5:54 p.m.



Kristie J. Nobles, MMC
Town Clerk

Webpage Policy

The Town of River Bend operates a webpage and other social media platforms, such as Face Book. The main goal of these sites is to make information about the Town of River Bend easily available to the public. Additionally, only information about groups, organizations, events or activities that are officially affiliated with or sponsored/sanctioned by the Town of River Bend may be placed on the Town's webpage or social media platforms. The webpage is also used to share time sensitive Town alerts, such as notice of meetings, weather advisories or other emergency/special notices. The Town's platforms can also be used to share information from or about other government units or agencies thereof that may be useful to River Bend residents. For example, information from Craven County, The State of North Carolina or its agencies, such as NCDOT, any U.S. Federal agency such as FEMA, CDC, HUD, The National Weather Service, etc. or any such similar government unit and/or agency. Use of the Town's website or social media platforms for a purpose other than what is stated in this policy is strictly prohibited.

Adopted 8-21-25

In an effort to clarify the town's official position on the matter, the River Bend Town Council adopted the resolution below on September 19, 2024. The town's position remains the same. Recently, some citizen concerns have been voiced over the operation of a local Facebook page called "River Bend Community Page". The Council has discussed these concerns and any potential legal issues related to the same, as well as Council members' participation in, and operation of social media platforms. Today, the Council is publicly acknowledging that we have received citizen concerns, comments and input about this site. Furthermore, the Council publicly states that the Town Council, as a collective governing body, has no legal authority to regulate, monitor or control the action and/or participation of Council members on this particular site or any other social media platform and is in no way affiliated with the "River Bend Community Page" on Facebook. As is stated below, the Town of River Bend is not responsible for or liable for any content on non-Town sites.

Town of River Bend Resolution on Social Media

Whereas, social media, in numerous platforms, is a common tool for people, business and government to communicate and exchange thoughts, ideas and positions; and

Whereas, the Town of River Bend does use social media in a very limited manner and only on platforms that are approved for use by the Town Council; and

Whereas, the Town of River Bend recognizes the potential advantages and the potential disadvantages of social media, and encourages everyone to exercise caution in separating fact from fiction while consuming information on non-official social media sites; and

Whereas, the Town of River Bend finds it necessary to officially adopt a stance on social media;

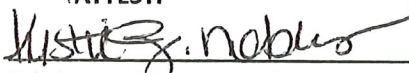
Now, therefore be it resolved, by the Town of River Bend Town Council that:

1. No town staff, employee or elected official is authorized to officially speak, post or comment on non-Town social media sites on behalf of the Town of River Bend.
2. The Town of River Bend is only responsible for the content of social media sites that are officially approved by and operated by the Town of River Bend.
3. The Town of River Bend does not monitor or exercise any control over, or have any responsibility for, the operation or content of any non-Town operated social media sites and/or the users thereof.
4. The Town of River Bend is not responsible for or liable for any content on non-Town sites.

Reaffirmed this the 21th day of August, 2025


Mark Bledsoe, Mayor

ATTEST:


Kristie J. Nobles, Town Clerk, MMC

