TOWN OF BAILEY MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING – 6/15/2026

This Regular Public Meeting of the Bailey Town Board of Commissioners was held at Bailey Town Hall on June 15, 2026 at 6:30 PM.

The following Board members were present: Mayor Owen H. Strickland II, Mayor Pro Tempore/Commissioner Walter Wells, and Commissioners Richard Wilson, Dillon Bissette, Ervin Powell, and David Evans.

Also present: Town Administrator/Town Clerk/CFO Joel Killion, Police Chief Adam Gelo, Zoning Administrator/Code Enforcer Shawn Lucas, and Town Attorney Nick Berry.

Mayor Strickland called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Adoption of Agenda:
Mayor Pro Tempore/Commissioner Walter Wells asked the Board to consider adding "Town of Bailey Board of Commissioners' Meeting" to the beginning of New Business in the Agenda. He also asked that "Mayor Strickland" be replaced with Commissioner Wells behind "Cemetery's Flagpole Light" under New Business in the Agenda, since he brought it up during the last Board of Commissioners meeting and wished to continue the discussion during this meeting.

After no objections, comments, or questions were raised by the Commissioners, Commissioner Wells made a motion to add "Town of Bailey Board of Commissioners' Meeting" to the beginning of New Business and to replace "Mayor Strickland" with Commissioner Wells behind "Cemetery's Flagpole Light", and Commissioner Wilson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Vote: Mayor Strickland: N/A, Commissioner Wells: Aye, Wilson: Aye, Bissette: Aye, Powell: Aye, Evans: Aye.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:
Commissioner Evans made a motion to adopt the meeting minutes from the Regular Public Meeting on May 18, 2026, and Commissioner Bissette seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Vote: Mayor Strickland: N/A, Commissioner Evans: Aye, Bissette: Aye, Wells: Aye, Powell: Aye, Wilson: Aye.

Acceptance of Financials:
The Board of Commissioners accepted the Accounts Summary from KS Bank, the Budget vs. Actual Report, and the KS Bank Statement for the General Funding Checking Account for March 2026.

Public Hearing:
Mayor Strickland asked for a motion to open the Public Hearing for the Proposed 26/27 Fiscal Year Budget.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to open the Public Hearing for the Proposed 26/27 Fiscal Year Budget, and Commissioner Wells seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Vote: Mayor Strickland: N/A, Commissioner Evans: Aye, Wells: Aye, Bissette: Aye, Powell: Aye, Wilson: Aye.

Referencing the Public Comments Sign-Up Sheet for this Public Hearing, Mayor Strickland opened the podium to the two following signers:

Ms. Leigh Deans – on behalf of the Bailey Chamber of Commerce and the Country Doctor Museum Foundation – thanked the Town for its support of the County Doctor Museum. She also requested that the Board of Commissioners reconsider the proposed $10,000 reduction in funding and maintain the Town's current level of support for the Museum.

Ms. Amy Pearson echoed Ms. Dean's comments regarding continued funding for the Country Doctor Museum and shared many reasons why this is so important to the Town of Bailey community. She also thanked the Town for its long-standing financial support of the Bailey Chamber of Commerce and summarized all that the Chamber has contributed and continues to contribute to the community.

Mayor Strickland asked if anyone else wished to provide public comments. When no one stepped forward, Commissioner Evans made a motion to close the Public Hearing, and Commissioner Powell seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Vote: Mayor Strickland: N/A, Commissioner Evans: Aye, Powell: Aye, Bissette: Aye, Wilson: Aye, Wells: Aye.

Public Comments:
Ms. Donna Boswell – She opted not to speak.

Mr. Jody Ordess – He also opted not to speak.

Mayor Strickland then asked if anyone else wished to provide public comments. When no one stepped forward, he closed the Public Comments portion of the meeting.

Administrative Reports:
Sewer & Water Department – Envirolink – When it was noticed that Mr. Chris Riat (Envirolink) was not present, Sewer/Water Commissioner Wells shared that Mr. Riat was absent due to travel delays. He then reviewed Envirolink's Monthly Activity Report included in the Board packets.

Cemetery & Landscaping Department – Mr. John Thompson, Owner/Operator of Top Notch Lawn Care – Mr. Thompson was not present at this point due to completing work for the Town.

Regulatory Department – Mr. Shawn Lucas, Zoning Administrator/Code Enforcer – Zoning Administrator/Code Enforcer Lucas provided a summary of the recent Planning Board/Board of adjustments meeting and shared regarding some code enforcement work done around town.

Police Department – Chief Adam Gelo reported that Bailey continues to experience a low crime rate and expressed his appreciation for that positive status. He also addressed Lt. Cone's upcoming retirement and asked the Board to consider allowing him to present Lt. Cone with his current rank badge and sidearm through an asset transfer from the Town. Chief Gelo stated that this type of presentation is a meaningful tradition and would be appropriate and well-deserved in recognition of Lt. Cone's service.

Commissioner Bissette made a motion to transfer Lt. Cone's badge and side-arm to him for his retirement, and Commissioner Wells seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Vote: Mayor Strickland: N/A, Commissioner Bissette: Aye, Wells: Aye, Evans: Aye, Wilson: Aye, Powell: Aye. [Note: Mayor Strickland asked the Commissioners in favor of this motion to raise their right hand, since it included an asset transfer.]

Administration – Mr. Joel Killion, Town Administrator/Town Clerk/CFO – Administrator Killion directed the Board's attention to a letter to the Town from KS Bank, thanking the Town for its partnership and support and asking the Town to encourage the community to bank and partner with them.

He then shared regarding the 25/26 FY Budget Amendment #5 included in the Board packets and asked the Commissioners if they had any questions or comments about it prior to voting on it.

Commissioner Bissette made a motion to approve this budget amendment, and Commissioner Wells seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Vote: Mayor Strickland: N/A, Commissioner Bissette: Aye, Wells: Aye, Evans: Aye, Powell: Aye, Wilson: Aye.

Old Business:
Garbage/Recycling Contractor – Mayor Strickland referred the Commissioners to two documents included in their packets related to GFL Environmental and Meridian Waste.

Various Board members and the Town Administrator discussed the pros and cons of each company, as well as the costs and challenges related to transitioning from GFL to Meridian, including the liability/penalty associated with breaking the current contract with GFL.

Commissioner Wells suggested that the Board have the Town's Attorney review the contract.

Commissioner Evans suggested that if the Board decides to switch to Meridian, which would include a five-year term, that a six-month honeymoon period be included in the agreement. That way, we would not jump from one to the other and will have the option to not move forward with Meridian if they fail to perform.

Commissioner Evans made a motion directing the Town Attorney to review the possible early termination of the GFL contract, including any related costs or legal considerations. The motion also directed the Town Attorney to prepare language for a potential Meridian Waste contract that would include a honeymoon period of approximately six months, allowing the Town to end the agreement if Meridian Waste does not perform satisfactorily. Commissioner Wells seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Vote: Mayor Strickland: N/A, Commissioner Evans: Aye, Wells: Aye, Powell: Aye, Bissette: Aye, Wilson: Aye. [Note: Mayor Strickland asked the Commissioners who were in favor to raise their right hand.]

Recycling Services – Commissioner Bissette, Wells, and Evans discussed the pros and cons of recycling.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to have the Town Attorney provide legal verbiage to include the options to drop recycling and then add it back at the Town's convenience in the future at some point at the same cost as proposed now and do the same for the Yard Waste Removal service. Commissioner Bissette seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Vote: Mayor Strickland: N/A, Commissioner Evans: Aye, Bissette: Aye, Powell: Aye, Wells: Aye, Wilson: Aye.

Town of Bailey Zoning Ordinance Update – Commissioner Wells reminded the Board of Commissioners of the dire need to update the Town's website with the updated/current Zoning Ordinances.

Data Center Resolution – Commissioner Wells provided a document to the Board of Commissioners, the Mayor, the Town Administrator, the Town Attorney, and the Zoning Administrator concerning the risks of using an overly broad or unclear definition of "data center." He explained that he was sharing the information because he was not present during the portion of the previous month's meeting when the Resolution was discussed and approved by the four Commissioners in attendance. Commissioner Wells stated that he and Commissioner Evans would like to amend the definition in the Resolution to avoid unintentionally preventing businesses from opening in the Town's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). He clarified that he was not asking the Board to change the definition that evening, but was providing the information for consideration and future discussion. He also noted that he and Commissioner Evans had asked the Town Attorney to review the matter and provide information related to the definition. Commissioner Wells added that they are not opposed to the moratorium, but would like the definition to be refined.

Town Attorney Nick Berry approached the podium and stated that the amendment to the Resolution regarding the definition included in the Board packets addresses some of the concerns that were raised. He then read the amendment.

Commissioner Evans asked the Town Attorney if this definition had been used elsewhere.

Town Attorney Berry said that there are many floating definitions for data centers and that Attorney Edwards used various definitions to help address the concerns mentioned during and since the last Commissioner meeting.

Commissioner Wells reminded everyone that this Resolution is for a temporary moratorium on data centers until something else is developed.

Commissioner Evans made a motion, with the modification of adding servers to the definition, to adopt this amended moratorium on data centers and replace the previous definition with this new Resolution. Commissioner Wells seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

Vote: Mayor Strickland: N/A, Commissioner Evans: Aye, Wells: Aye, Powell: Abstention, Bissette: Aye, Wilson: Aye. [Note: Mayor Strickland asked that all Commissioners in favor of this motion provide a voice vote.]

Before the vote was finalized, Commissioner Powell asked the Town Attorney about finding many different definitions for "data centers." Town Attorney Berry concurred. Commissioner Powell then asked if the definition voted on tonight was just the one we liked. Town Attorney Berry said that the definition provided this evening was written to address concerns that were raised. Commissioner Powell said that Town Attorney Mark Edwards didn't have any concerns about the original definition Zoning Administrator/Code Enforcer Shawn Lucas included in the original Resolution. Town Attorney Berry said that it was the Board's concerns that this definition would address. Commissioner Powell asked what part of the Board.

Mayor Strickland said he believed Commissioner Powell was getting at the fact that a majority of the Board did not approach the Town Attorney on this matter. And so, when the Town Attorney spoke of the Board's concerns, it wasn't really the Board's concern but was the concern of two commissioners.

Commissioner Powell reiterated that Attorney Edwards was comfortable with the original definition provided by Zoning Administrator/Code Enforcer Lucas. He then asked whether, if he disagreed with the outcome of a future vote, he could similarly ask the Town Attorney to draft a new definition more aligned with his preference.

When asked by Mayor Strickland for his vote, Commissioner Wells abstained.

After the vote, Mayor Strickland said that he personally believed Commissioner Powell hit the nail on the head.

WWTP Permit Renewal Discussion – Commissioner Wells stated that there has been no further comment from the NCDEQ on this matter.

Glover Street (Property Boundary Issue at O'Neal & Finch Streets) – Commissioner Wells asked Town Attorney Berry for an update on this situation.

Town Attorney Berry stated that Town Administrator and Zoning Administrator/Code Enforcer Lucas worked together to complete all the statutory requirements for the Public Hearing on July 20th.

Mayor Strickland mentioned that there was a young lady who was present who wished to speak on this matter and asked Commissioner Wells if she could speak. Commissioner Wells approved.

The young lady (Ms. Alexandra Bullock), who owns the property next to the water tower, asked how this process would work for her since she paid for the property in question.

Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Wells and Mayor Strickland both said that they were unable to speak to this matter from a legal standpoint in this public setting. Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Wells encouraged her to have her attorney get in touch with the Town's attorney.

Then, Mr. Carson Bland, who is a member of the church adjacent to the property, approached the podium and asked what would happen to the land since a street was not going to be put there.

Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Wells shared that the land designated as a right-of-way for Glover Street was incorporated into the deed for Ms. Bullock, and so, from a deed-standpoint, the land belongs to her.

When Mr. Bland was done, Ms. Donna Boswell approached the podium and stated that her son, Travis, bought the property behind theirs before Ms. Bullock did and he was told that that was a street. And so, Ms. Boswell was unclear as to why when Ms. Bullock bought it from her husband why it wasn't stated then. She said it seemed like something was missed somewhere.

Emergency Generator Maintenance, Service & Implementation – Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Wells stated that Mr. Mark Boykin has not yet completed the maintenance, while the parts have been ordered for the wiring and upfitting of the generator and should arrive soon.

(5-minute recess.)

New Business:
Town of Bailey Board of Commissioner's Meeting – Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Wells passed out several hand-outs [Town Charter, two documents from Chapter 30 of the General Ordinances regarding the duties and responsibilities of the mayoral office, a legal document outlining the "Defined Roles for the Mayor of the Town of Bailey", a print-out of N.C. Gen. Statute 160A-69. Mayor to preside over council.", a Coates' Canons article on "Who Controls the Agenda?", etc.] to the Board members, the Town Attorney, and the Town Administrator. He explained that these documents lay out the limited and defined role and responsibilities of the mayor, asked that the Board review said documents, and be prepared to discuss the topic during the next monthly Commissioner meeting. He encouraged the Board members to study these documents and understand them.

Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Wells explained that the comments made by the Mayor moments before to Commissioner Powell, as well as those made regarding Commissioner Powell's comments, were not within his right in this meeting; the comments were out of line and were not beneficial or productive. He said that the Mayor gets to participate based on the Board allowing him to do so and does not get to take over. He said the Mayor is to preside over the meeting and to keep it in order; it is not to make comments; it is not to put items on the Agenda. He mentioned that while some in the meeting were laughing, the Mayor functions at the discretion of the Board, as made clear by the rules. He said that if folks want the rules changed, they need to change the Town Ordinance and the State Laws. He stated that the Board of Commissioners are responsible for what happens in the Council Chambers and the Mayor has to ask for the Commissioner's permission to comment, participate, weigh in on issues, etc. He said that this doesn't mean the Mayor doesn't have valid points to bring up and that there aren't discussions that are pertinent. He repeated his request for the Commissioners to please study these documents and to understand the Commissioner's roles and responsibilities. He said that these are Board of Commissioners' meetings, that it is the Commissioners who approve Ordinances and dictate the direction, while the Mayor's job is clearly defined in the documents provided.

Town of Bailey General Ordinance Update – Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Wells reminded the Board of the General Ordinances being out of date, as was also mentioned by the Mayor months prior. He stated that the General Ordinances need to be updated and that the Board needs to work with the Council of Governments, the N.C. League of Municipalities, N-Focus, etc. to get this done.

Commissioner Bissette asked Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Wells if he wanted to form a committee for this and Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Wells said a committee would be good and that it may want to include and/or work with Planning.

Zoning Administrator/Code Enforcer Lucas approached the podium to say that the Town would need to put out an RFP to gather bids from various vendors for these updates. He said that he could have this done by the following week, after which the committee could get involved to work with the vendor.

Commissioner Wells made a motion to have Zoning Administrator Lucas reach out to vendors, determine the process and cost, etc. for updating the General Ordinances, after which the Board of Commissioners can determine to create a committee to move forward with re-writing said Ordinances. Commissioner Wilson seconded the motion.

Vote: Mayor Strickland: N/A, Commissioner Wells: Aye, Wilson: Aye, Powell: Aye, Bissette: Aye, Evans: Aye.

Cemetery's Flagpole Light – Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Wells admitted to making a huge mistake bringing up the situation with the light on the flagpole at the Bailey Cemetery. He said he thought he was being helpful to assist in paying the electric bill for the light and did not intend for it be anything other than that. He apologized and stated that the flagpole is already in the best hands possible.

Mr. Jody Ordess approached the podium, stated that Mt. Pleasant put the light in in 2008 and has been paying the light bill ever since. He said Mt. Pleasant does not mind paying the bill.

Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Wells reiterated that he was only trying to see if Bailey could take over that cost so Mt. Pleasant doesn't have to.

Mr. Jody Ordess shared concerns regarding whether the light pole would be maintained to the level it should be, showing respect for the flag.

Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Wells again reiterated that he was only trying to help with the light bill and that's it. He also stated that the flagpole is already in the best hands possible.

Discussion and Vote on Proposed 26/27 Fiscal Year Budget – Commissioner Evans suggested that the $10,000 donation to the Country Doctor Museum could be funded in the 26/27 budget with an additional $.01 property tax increase and $1,000 from each of the Commissioner's departmental budgets.

Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Wells mentioned that another idea could be to possibly find funds in the current 25/26 budget to cover the donation. And if this would not be possible, he said that he believed a way needed to be found to fund it in the 26/27 budget.

It was then determined that June 23 at 6:30pm would be the best time for the Board to meet again to decide on how to fund the donation and on the proposed 26/27 budget.

Town Attorney Berry recommended that the Board recess this meeting, rather than adjourn, until June 23 at 6:30pm.

Commissioner's Remarks:
Dillon Bissette – No remarks.

David Evans – No remarks.

Ervin Powell – No remarks.

Richard Wilson – No remarks.

Mayor Pro Tempore/Infrastructure and Sewer & Water Commissioner's Remarks:
Mayor Pro Tempore/Commissioner Wells distributed a document entitled "Ethical Considerations for a North Carolina Mayor Signing a Partisan Political Party Statement" to the Commissioners, the Mayor, the Town Attorney, and the Town Administrator. He stated that he had previously discussed the matter with Mayor Strickland. Commissioner Wells explained that his concern related to the Mayor serving as Chairman of the Nash County Republican Party while also signing certain public social media statements as Mayor of the Town of Bailey. He stated that, in his view, using the mayoral title in that context could appear to connect the Town's nonpartisan office with a partisan political statement, regardless of political party. Commissioner Wells further stated that he had encouraged Mayor Strickland to consult with the Town Attorney, but that the Mayor had instead consulted with the attorney for the Republican Party. Commissioner Wells said he believed the practice was inappropriate and could give residents the impression that the Town of Bailey was associated with or endorsing such statements. He added that, because his private discussion with the Mayor did not resolve the matter, he wanted input from the Board. He asked the Commissioners to review the document and consider addressing the issue at a future meeting.

Mayor's Remarks:
Mayor Strickland said that in light of all the hyperbole...

Mayor Pro Tempore/Commissioner Wells attempted to remind the Mayor of the limits of his role.

Mayor Strickland told Mayor Pro Tempore/Commissioner Wells that this was his time to speak and used his gavel to attempt to silence Mayor Pro Tempore/Commissioner Wells.

Mayor Strickland said that in light of the attacks that had been laid on him that evening, he stated that he had spoken with Town Attorney Mark Edwards prior to the last Commissioner meeting. He shared that both the State General Council for the N.C. GOP and the Town Attorney indicated that as long as he put a caveat on it as to why he was signing it the way he was signing it, it was fine. So, he said that in deference to a Commissioner who obviously has issues with him in his role here and in my role as Chairman of the Republican Party, he said he has not signed anything of late. He said that he now has a Vice-Chairman who he can delegate that to at the county level if it's such a concern for this particular Commissioner.

Mayor Strickland said he does what he can for the Town of Bailey and the citizens of the Town of Bailey. He admitted to not being a pleasant person but said he wasn't the only person with issues sitting at the dais and said the great majority of the Board don't have those same issues.

He said he stated that he would be professional in the Council Chambers and that he would do his best to do that. He stated that he doesn't have to like people to work with them. He stated that there is no recall in North Carolina, that there's an election coming next year, and that there's no guarantee he will run. He shared that attacks may not be the proper way to go about getting him off the Board, because if he's offended, he's liable to run, and if he's not offended, maybe he won't run.

Closed Session:
None

Commissioner Wells made a motion to recess the meeting until June 23, and Commissioner Bissette seconded. Motion carried.

Vote: Mayor Strickland: N/A, Commissioner Wells: Aye, Bissette: Aye, Wilson: Aye, Powell: Aye, Evans: Aye. [Note: Mayor Strickland asked the Commissioners who were in favor to raise their right hand.]

Meeting recessed.

Owen H. Strickland II

Owen H. Strickland II, Mayor

Joel Killion

Joel Killion, Town Administrator/Town Clerk/CFO