# Town Council Regular Meeting

## Meeting Minutes

**October 19, 2026, 7:30 PM**
**1102 Unionville Church Road**

## Opening Proceedings

The Town Council Regular Meeting of the Town of Unionville was called to order on Monday, October 19, 2026, at 7:30 PM at Unionville Town Hall, 1102 Unionville Church Road, Unionville, NC. Mayor Baucom, Mayor, Lana Kirkpatrick, Gene Price, Jaren Simpson, Attorney Ken Helms, Clerk Melody Braswell, and Deputy Clerk Sonya Gaddy were present. Absent were Pro Tem Andrew Benton, Jeff Broadaway, and Financer Officer Darrell Baucom. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and the invocation was delivered by Councilman Gene Price.

## Public Comment

No members of the public came forward to address the Council. The public comment period was closed.

## Action Items

### 1. Consideration of Minutes — September 21, 2026 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting

The Mayor then asked for a motion on the minutes of the September 21, 2026 public hearing and regular meeting.

> Motion to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2026 public hearing and regular meeting was made by Councilman Price and seconded by Councilman Simpson. The motion passed unanimously.

### 2. Financial Report

Darrell Baucom was absent, so Mayor Baucom referred the Council to the written financial report in their packets. He noted that, because it was early in the fiscal year, receivables appeared under-reported. He said this was typical until closer to the end of the calendar year. The Mayor also directed the Council to the notice of pending bills to be paid.

> Motion to pay the bills was made by Councilman Price and seconded by Councilwoman Kirkpatrick. The motion passed unanimously.

### 3. Consideration of Resolution RES-26-05 a Resolution Denying a Petition Regarding the Conditional District Rezoning of 623 Sikes Mill Road

Attorney Ken Helms explained that the resolution was a draft prepared as a result of the hearing held the previous month on the conditional district rezoning. He said the Council needed to approve or deny the resolution in its present form. Any changes the Council wanted could be made. Mr. Helms confirmed the resolution included the statement of consistency and reasonableness, so no separate action on that statement was required.

> Motion to adopt Resolution RES-26-05 was made by Councilman Simpson and seconded by Councilman Price. The motion passed unanimously.

## 4. Consideration of Resolution RES-26-06 a Resolution in Support of an Intersection Improvement Project at CJ Thomas Road and Unionville-Indian Trial Road, to be Funded by NCDOT at No Cost to the Town

Mayor Baucom raised a safety concern about NCDOT's initial proposal to remove the stop sign on Unionville Indian Trail Road. He said a driver on Unionville Brief turning east onto Unionville Indian Trail Road cannot see beyond the crest of the hill. He feared someone making a left turn could be "broadsided" if the stop sign were removed. Councilwoman Kirkpatrick agreed and noted the 55 mph speed limit on that road.

Melody Braswell reported that she had asked NCDOT to review the proposed removal and to consider keeping the stop control because of the sight distance. NCDOT said it would research the matter, but she had not yet heard back. She said the resolution already cited this request in paragraph 3. She also noted that NCDOT could not proceed without a resolution from the Town, and that the project was funded entirely by NCDOT at no cost to the Town. Councilman Price asked whether NCDOT would listen to the Town's concerns. Ms. Braswell and Attorney Helms said the Town could state its position, but NCDOT would ultimately do what it chose. Mr. Helms added that a town not in agreement with NCDOT's proposal could risk being passed over for funding.

Ms. Braswell said the current proposal used considerably less right-of-way than the intersection design developed by the earlier design committee. Mr. Helms said NCDOT had indicated it did not expect to acquire additional right-of-way.

Mr. Helms proposed clarifying the resolution to state that the existing stop control on Unionville Indian Trail Road, controlling eastbound traffic, would remain in place until NCDOT's review was complete and the Town had an opportunity to review the findings and comment.

> Motion to amend Resolution RES-26-06 to specify that the existing stop control on eastbound Unionville Indian Trail Road remain in place, and to adopt the resolution as amended, was made by Councilman Simpson and seconded by Councilwoman Kirkpatrick. The motion passed unanimously.

## 5. Consideration of Resolution RES-26-07 a Resolution Appointing a Deputy Finance Officer

Melody Braswell explained that the Council had appointed Sonya as Deputy Finance Officer in August. State statute also required a resolution, and tonight's resolution brought the Town into compliance with that earlier action. She recommended removing paragraph 6, which she did not believe had been part of the August discussion, and Mayor Baucom agreed.

> Motion to approve Resolution RES-26-07, with paragraph 6 removed, was made by Councilman Price and seconded by Councilman Simpson. The motion passed unanimously.

## 6. Consideration of VC3 Quote for AI Policy Creation & Managed AI Services

Melody Braswell reviewed the VC3 quote, which she had first raised under other business the previous month. It covered two items. The first was development of an AI use policy for the Town, at a cost of $1,400. The second was managed AI services, described as a protected environment so that Town information is not sold or harvested unknowingly, at $40 per month. The quote was originally for a three-year term. VC3 had offered a 12-month, year-to-year option if the Council preferred. Ms. Braswell said she did not know whether the three-year term locked in the monthly rate. She recommended the three-year term if it did and said a one-year term offered no advantage if it did not.

Councilwoman Kirkpatrick said her employer uses a comparable managed service rather than public tools such as ChatGPT, and called it "much, much safer." Ms. Braswell said that recent training she attended devoted half a day to internet safety and AI, and that municipalities across the state were being encouraged to adopt AI policies. In response to a question from Mayor Baucom, she said VC3 is a preferred partner of the North Carolina League of Municipalities, which vets its partners. She added that VC3 does extensive municipal work and that the Town had researched the company.

> Motion to approve the VC3 quote on a three-year term was made by Councilman Price and seconded by Councilwoman Kirkpatrick. The motion passed unanimously.

## 7. Consideration of Quote for Streetlight Banner Replacement

Melody Braswell reported that the Town's vinyl street banners had steadily deteriorated. She presented two designs, a general town welcome and a Fourth of July design, which are the most widely used and most worn. The replacements would be made of machine-washable Sunbrella material and were expected to last longer. The quote totaled $1,229.76 for eight banners, four of each design.

She also reported receiving an email that evening saying the hardware on the second pole was beginning to break down. Councilman Simpson asked whether outside labor would be needed. Jordan Edwards said it would not, because staff already secure the banners with zip ties at each change. Ms. Braswell said she would order replacement hardware along with the banners.

> Motion to approve the quote for banner replacement was made by Councilwoman Kirkpatrick and seconded by Councilman Simpson. The motion passed unanimously.

## 8. Consideration of Capital Project Grant documents

Mayor Baucom asked whether the item had to be decided that evening. Melody Braswell explained that the State Legislature had granted the Town $300,000 for park updates. The documents were a capital project ordinance outlining the cost and purpose of the project, a conflict of interest policy, and a certification that the Town has no overdue tax debts. They would need to be on file before the Town could draw down the funds. She said the Council was not making any decision about how the grant would be spent. The scope of work was not yet ready because the park master design plan had not been finalized. That plan would determine Phase 1 and its costs. Mayor Baucom said the item was a procedural step and the scope could be narrowed as the project progressed.

> Motion to approve the capital project grant documents was made by Councilwoman Kirkpatrick and seconded by Councilman Price. The motion passed unanimously.

## 9. Consideration of Groundskeeping Bids for Noel Williams Park

Mayor Baucom suggested the full Council should weigh in at the appropriate time, ideally the following month. Melody Braswell clarified that Jordan Edwards had prepared two bids. One followed the bid request document, and the other reflected his recommended approach to the park's needs.

Mr. Edwards advised that the Bermuda grass at the park generally did not need to be overseeded each year. He said spending on spraying and fertilization would cost less over time than recurring overseeding, though some spots would need seeding in the first year. He said the smaller fields were about 75 percent Bermuda. The football, baseball, and soccer fields were essentially 100 percent Bermuda and mainly needed fertilizing, spraying, cleanup, and twice-weekly mowing. He noted that paying up front for a season's work would avoid paying a landscape contractor year after year.

Discussion turned to the park's condition. Mr. Edwards said the football field lacks adequate crown and drainage, and that corrective work would quickly consume the $300,000 grant. Mayor Baucom said the entrance needed work and that wasted space on the site could be converted to parking. Mr. Edwards and Councilman Simpson questioned how heavily the football field was used. Councilwoman Kirkpatrick asked when the Town would receive the park proposal. The Mayor said he was disappointed in the initial proposal, which called for relocating fields and installing all new lighting. He said he would still like to see features that appeal to all age groups, such as pickleball. Council members agreed to wait until Jeff and Andrew returned before deciding on a contractor.

> Motion to table the decision on groundskeeping services at Noel Williams Park until the next month's meeting was made by Councilman Simpson and seconded by Councilwoman Kirkpatrick. The motion passed unanimously.

## 10. Update on Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Project

Melody Braswell reported on behalf of Michael Harvey of N-Focus, who was absent. Mr. Harvey was finalizing updates and edits and was about two weeks behind his planned schedule. The November Planning Board meeting would be used to confirm that the Planning Board had no further questions. The Board would then have the full month of November to review the draft and make a recommendation in December. At that point the Council would set a date for a public hearing, with a decision likely closer to January. Attorney Helms confirmed this timeline.

## 11. Review of Lease Agreement with Piedmont Recreation Association

Attorney Ken Helms said he had reworked the existing lease to clarify each party's responsibilities. He had also incorporated the groundskeeping and maintenance provisions from the request for bid. Jeff had not yet seen the draft because it was finished that day. Mr. Helms distributed copies and suggested the Council review them and take the matter up the following month. He said he would also speak with Jeff, who remained involved with the recreation association. Mr. Helms noted that the Council's discussion might lead to changes in the provisions drawn from the bid request.

Mayor Baucom said that, without speaking for them, he believed the Piedmont Recreation Association might be willing to help pay for some groundskeeping costs. Mr. Helms said the Town would need to meet with the association to determine that. No action was taken. The Council agreed to review the draft before next month's meeting.

## Adjournment

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Melody Braswell
Clerk/Tax Collector/Land Use Administrator

Approved as to form:

_____

R. Kenneth Helms, Jr., Town Attorney

Note: These minutes were drafted with the assistance of Clerk Minutes by HeyGov. All content was reviewed and approved by the Clerk/Tax Collector/Land Use Administrator prior to submission.