



## Wake Forest Board of Commissioners Work Session Meeting Minutes

The Wake Forest Board of Commissioners met on **Tuesday, February 3, 2026**, at **6:00 p.m.** in the Board Room at Wake Forest Town Hall, 301 S Brooks Street.

Mayor Clapsaddle called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Commissioners Present:** Mayor Ben C. Clapsaddle, Commissioner Haseeb Fatmi, Commissioner Faith Cross, Commissioner Keith Shackelford, and Commissioner Adam Wright.

**Commissioners Absent:** None

### Staff Members Present:

Town Manager Kip Padgett  
Assistant Town Manager Allison Snyder  
Assistant Town Manager Candace Davis  
Assistant Town Manager Aileen Staples  
Town Attorney Nathan McKinney  
Police Chief Julius Jefferson  
Fire Chief Ron Early  
Police Captain Matt Perkinson  
Facilities Director-Mickey Rochelle  
Police Captain Brandon High  
Police Sergeant Bryan Newsome

Budget and Performance Director  
Michelle Daniels  
Human Resources Director Angela  
McCray  
Director of Organizational Development  
Lisa Hayes  
Planning Director Jennifer Currin  
Senior Planner Michelle Michael  
Development Services Manager Patrick  
Reidy  
Long Range Planning Manager Brad  
West

### Presentations

- 1.1 Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the Town Manager to execute, on behalf of the Town of Wake Forest, the construction portion of the contract for Fire Station 6.

Facilities Director- ADA Coordinator, Mickey Rochelle, presented an overview of the new fire station and training facility project, including design, costs, and next steps. Mr.

Rochelle noted the project aligns with the Town Strategic Plan Goals 1, 3, 4, and 5. Rochelle advised that neighborhood meetings related to Station 113 and Station 114 were conducted and followed up with residents to address concerns raised during the meetings. Mr. Rochelle advised the facility will be a two-story building totaling approximately 22,344 square feet that includes a training room seating for 50-60 people with the ability to divide it into two spaces. The features include underground stormwater detention in the parking area and additional training infrastructure on site. Mr. Rochelle advised there will be the demolition of two existing structures on the property. Mr. Rochelle discussed the training tower design developed with input from firefighters to accommodate apparatus and operational training needs. Commissioner Cross inquired about the topography of the site. The design architect explained the discrepancy between the video shown and the actual site design, however, the design will be close to scale of what is shown on the video. Mr. Rochelle advised that Board approval of the contract will be presented at a future regular meeting. Contractor pricing is currently held until March, and site work will begin in March or April, if approved. Mr. Rochelle highlighted the need to secure funding and obtain Government Commission approval. The groundbreaking date is to be determined.

**ACTION:**

Mover: Commissioner Wright moved to approve a Resolution authorizing the Town Manager to execute, on behalf of the Town of Wake Forest, the construction of the contract for Fire Station 6.

Seconder: Commissioner Fatmi

Vote: Motion carried 4-0

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**2. Discussion of Monthly Financial Report**

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2.1 Discussion of December Financial Summaries

Monthly Financial Report Received.

Mayor Clapsaddle asked if there were any questions or comments. None were.

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**3. Review of Draft Agenda for Upcoming Regular Meeting**

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3.1 Draft Agenda for BOC Regular Meeting February 17, 2026

Mayor Clapsaddle reminded the Board that the Fire Station 6 needs to be added to the Consent agenda and Town Manager Kip Padgett confirmed. Town Clerk Evelyn Wright advised the item will be added. There was no objection by the Board.

#### **4. Other Business**

##### **4.1 Consideration of the Town of Wake Forest's Special Event Policy update**

Organizational Performance Director Lisa Hayes presented updates on the Special Events Policy since the discussion at the recent Board of Commissioners Retreat. Ms. Hayes advised the request during the work session is due to event applications awaiting a decision. Ms. Hayes advised there was a change to the amount of insurance to be carried by community organizers of various events; it establishes a two-tier structure for liability insurance and increases tier two coverage requirements from \$2M to \$5M. This change will allow the liability amount to be proportionate with the size of the event.

#### **ACTION:**

Mover: Commissioner Wright moved to approve the Special Events Policy update.

Seconder: Commissioner Shackelford

Vote: Motion carried 4-0

##### **4.2 Consideration of Approval of a Resolution to Support Development of the S-Line Rail Corridor and to Provide Local Funding to Match a Federal Grant Opportunity for Mobility Hub Construction Activities**

Long Range Planning Manager Brad West presented on the downtown mobility hub of the S-Line Rail Corridor. Mr. West advised of a new federal grant opportunity related to the Downtown Wake Forest Mobility Hub, which will support the future Amtrak station once the rail line between Raleigh and Richmond is double-tracked. Mr. West reminded the Board that in January 2025 the Town received a \$13.2 million RAISE grant to finalize construction plans for the mobility hub and to begin portions of construction. Mr. West advised the new grant would fund the remaining construction, including the pedestrian bridge and additional infrastructure associated with the station. Mr. West noted the time-sensitive nature of the grant and requested the board consider taking action during the meeting.

North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) representative Jason Orthner, Rail Division Director, provided an overview of state and regional passenger rail initiatives and Wake Forest's role in those efforts. Mr. Orthner described the three major initiatives Southeast Corridor, the North Carolina Passenger Rail Expansion, and the Regional Triangle Rail Vision. Mr. Orthner advised the S-Line is considered the "missing link" connecting major passenger rail systems between North Carolina and Virginia. The project will improve rail reliability and capacity, create economic development opportunities, and strengthen regional transportation connections.

Grady McCollum, NCDOT Senior Project Manager, presented the vision and design concept for the Wake Forest Mobility Hub and train station and showed renderings illustrating the proposed facility and surrounding infrastructure. Mr. McCollum gave an overview of the funding source and use to date: the 2022 grant funded the feasibility study, preliminary design, and NEPA environmental work; RAISE 2024 grant funded the final design, property acquisition, and initial construction; and the current application for the 2026 BUILD grant will fund the remaining construction on the project.

Commissioner Cross asked about Wake Transit Plan funding mentioned in the presentation and whether the Town was expected to provide the 20% grant match. Mr. Orthner clarified that Wake Transit funds are supporting a separate rail construction grant, not the mobility hub grant currently before the Board and the Board's consideration relates only to the mobility hub project and its matching contribution, consistent with how NCDOT partners with municipalities across the state. Commissioner Cross inquired with ATM/CFO Aileen Staples that she is in agreement. Ms. Staples confirmed that everything is in proper order.

**ACTION:**

Mover: Commissioner Wright moved to Approve a Resolution to Support Development of the S-Line Rail Corridor and to Provide Local Funding to Match a Federal Grant Opportunity for Mobility Hub Construction Activities.

Secunder: Commissioner Shackelford

Vote: Motion carried 4-0

4.3 Interview and Possible Selection to Fill the Vacant BOC Seat- Below is a summary of the Board of Commissioners discussion regarding the questions, time allotment, and

voting procedure. Please see the [February 3, 2026 Board of Commissioners Work Session](#) video for additional information.

Mayor Clapsaddle introduced the agenda item for interviews and selection to fill the vacant Board of Commissioner seat. Mayor Clapsaddle explained the interview process and expectations for the meeting: five finalists were selected and are waiting downstairs in alphabetical order. The candidates will come to the podium individually for interviews and the Town Manager will ask prepared questions previously agreed upon by the board. Mayor Clapsaddle noted that candidates are sequestered to ensure fairness in the interview process. Mayor Clapsaddle asked the audience to remain quiet and respectful, stating that disruptions could result in individuals being asked to leave the chamber. Mayor Clapsaddle requested the Town Attorney, Nathan McKinney, review the proposed motions and procedures for conducting the interviews and selection process.

Mr. McKinney explained that the board must approve two items before proceeding: the final set of interview questions and the interview and voting procedures for filling the vacancy. Mr. McKinney advised each candidate will begin with a 3-minute opening statement, answer a series of core questions asked by the Town Manager, have 2 minutes to answer each core question, have up to 1 minute to respond to follow-up questions from commissioners, and end with a closing statement with a maximum time limit of 5 minutes. Mr. McKinney explained the voting process per North Carolina law and Town ordinance. After interviews and board discussion, Commissioners will vote using a ballot method listing all five finalists. A candidate must receive at least three votes (majority) to be appointed. If no candidate receives three votes, additional rounds of voting will occur (up to three rounds total). Candidates receiving zero votes in a round will be eliminated. If no candidate receives a majority, the board may schedule additional interviews with remaining candidates or move to a motion-and-vote process for selecting among remaining candidates. Under the "Motion-and-Vote" method, Commissioners may make motions to appoint a specific candidate. Votes will be conducted via roll call vote. If a tie occurs, the Mayor may break the tie. If no candidate is selected, the Board must decide whether to conduct another round of interviews, or restart the application and interview process. Commissioners discussed several procedural details before approving the process. The board approved the following structure: 3-minute opening statement, 2 minutes per question response time, 1 minute

for follow-up responses, a maximum of 25 minutes for the question portion, and 5-minute closing statement.

**ACTION:**

Mover: Commissioner Wright moved to allow candidate interview questions.

Second: Commissioner Cross.

Vote: Motion carried 4-0

**ACTION:**

Mover: Commissioner Wright moved to accept the interview procedure and voting process except for the time limit.

Second: Commissioner Cross

Vote: Motion carried 4-0

**ACTION:**

Mover: Commissioner Wright moved to set the timing as three minute opening statement, two minutes response time per question- not to exceed 25 minutes, five minute closing statement, and one minute per question time limit to respond to Commissioners follow-up question(s).

Second: Commissioner Fatmi

Vote: Motion carried 3-1

The interview of candidates commences.

Below is the list of questions asked of the five candidates during the interview and a summary of the candidates' responses. Please see the February 3<sup>rd</sup> Board of Commissioners Work Session video link ([February 3, 2026 Board of Commissioners Work Session](#)) on the Town's Public Meetings Portal page for additional information.

**BOARD VACANCY – CORE QUESTIONS**

- 1. Please take a moment to make an opening statement. Include anything you like.*
- 2. How do you view the role of a commissioner in balancing personal integrity, personal values and perspectives, the town's adopted policies, and input from constituents when*

*those are in tension, and can you share an example from your prior public or community service?*

3. *How do you stay informed about the needs and perspectives of different neighborhoods and demographic groups in our town, and how would you incorporate those perspectives into board deliberations and decisions?*
4. *A commissioner sometimes receives complaints about Town staff. How would you go about making a determination regarding whether or not a complaint is accurate?*
5. *How do you feel that you and your job experience relates and uniquely suits you to this role?*
6. *Describe your community involvement and how you have given back to the WF community.*
7. *What Town of Wake Forest boards and committees (standing such as planning/adjustment and advisory) and/or Wake Forest community organizations have you served on and what did that service teach you about Wake Forest?*
8. *Looking ahead five years, what are the two or three most pressing issues facing Wake Forest, and how would your 2 years of service as a commissioner help the community?*
9. *You now have five minutes for a closing statement. The timer will start when you begin speaking.*

### **Abigail Black**

1. Please see the February 3, 2026 Board of Commissioners video at [February 3, 2026 Board of Commissioners Work Session](#).
2. Ms. Black emphasized that commissioners must balance resident concerns with the legal authority and jurisdiction of the board. She used traffic as an example, noting that while residents may be frustrated, many roads are controlled by state and federal agencies, requiring cooperation beyond local authority. From her experience on the Urban Forestry Board, Ms. Black described balancing public

desire to preserve the tree canopy with the board's limited authority over only town-owned trees. The solution included public outreach and education, such as tree giveaways and community engagement events.

3. Ms. Black stays informed by attending town open houses, speaking with residents, consultants, and staff, and participating in discussions about proposed solutions. Ms. Black stressed the importance of meeting residents' needs while respecting the board's authority and limitations.
4. Ms. Black would gather information from both sides by speaking with the staff members involved and then facilitating a meeting between the complainant and staff member to ensure fairness and hear both perspectives before deciding on a remedy.
5. Ms. Black explained that her role as a private cloud administrator gives her experience with public communication and digital outreach. Her participation in immersive legislative sessions provided insight into how legislation impacts local governments and reinforced her understanding of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) as foundational to policy decisions.
6. Ms. Black advised of participation in the inaugural Citizens Academy class, completion of Planning 101, service on the Urban Forestry Advisory Board (2022–October dissolution), serving as Co-Chair for approximately 10 months, public outreach at events like tree giveaways and ForestFest and personal tree planting efforts. Ms. Black proposed creating urban orchards in partnership with Parks & Recreation to plant fruit and nut trees in public spaces.
7. Ms. Black has served on the Urban Forestry Advisory Board and learned that while the Town does not control everything, it works diligently to inform the public and pursue viable solutions. Ms. Black advised she has not served on boards outside Wake Forest, though she has attended other meetings.
8. Ms. Black identified traffic congestion and infrastructure not keeping pace with growth, the need for "smart growth" aligned with EPA principles (compact, economically sustainable development), and cooperation with entities like NCDOT to address transportation challenges.
9. Ms. Black expressed gratitude for being selected as a finalist, appreciation for the opportunity to speak, and interest in serving and working with the board in the future.

**Joan Falvey**

1. Please see the February 3, 2026 Board of Commissioners video at [February 3, 2026 Board of Commissioners Work Session](#) .
2. Ms. Falvey emphasized the importance of hearing all sides and avoiding political or religious divisions. Drawing from her business policy of not discussing religion or politics, Ms. Falvey advised the focus should remain on people’s needs, safety, and well-being. Ms. Falvey views the commissioner role as nonpartisan and centered on serving the entire community while maintaining integrity and balance.
3. Ms. Falvey described her diverse upbringing and family background as shaping her perspective. Ms. Falvey stressed the importance of stepping outside personal “bubbles” to understand different living conditions and viewpoints. Through her work on the Historic Preservation Commission, she focuses on protecting neighborhoods from displacement or gentrification and ensuring Wake Forest remains accessible and respectful of all communities.
4. Ms. Falvey would begin by listening to ensure the complainant feels heard. She would then investigate by speaking with the staff involved and review documentation when available. Ms. Falvey emphasized remaining calm and non-confrontational and, if appropriate, seeking guidance from fellow commissioners (unless the complaint involved a commissioner directly).
5. Ms. Falvey’s background includes event production, performing arts, and hospitality, giving her strong public speaking skills and extensive experience working with diverse groups of people. As a small business owner, Ms. Falvey regularly engages with the community and other downtown businesses. She believes these experiences demonstrate her ability to listen, organize, lead, and respond effectively to community needs.
6. Ms. Falvey has been the Vice Chair for the Historic Preservation Commission, a board member for Wake Forest Downtown, a volunteer for Town events, and an active participant in community events through her downtown business. Ms. Falvey emphasized her daily presence and active role in fostering a vibrant downtown community.
7. Ms. Falvey has served on the Historic Preservation Commission and the Wake Forest Downtown Board. Ms. Falvey advised that service taught her about the town’s history, preservation needs, and the importance of maintaining older

- buildings safely while protecting Wake Forest's historic character. She values preserving the past while building thoughtfully for the future.
8. Ms. Falvey identified infrastructure and traffic management, affordable housing, and support for the arts (including a performing arts space). Ms. Falvey noted that her experience living in larger metropolitan areas provides perspective on infrastructure solutions. She expressed concern about housing affordability for young families, including her own children. Ms. Falvey also highlighted her passion for developing performing arts opportunities in the community.
  9. Ms. Falvey advised she would focus on infrastructure improvements, affordable housing solutions, and arts development. She believes her background, community involvement, and investment in Wake Forest position her to help guide thoughtful growth and community-centered decision-making. Ms. Falvey thanked the board for considering her, reiterated her long-term commitment and financial investment in Wake Forest, and stated that regardless of the outcome, she will continue to actively serve and support the community.

### Daniel Hupp

1. Please see the February 3, 2026 Board of Commissioners video at [February 3, 2026 Board of Commissioners Work Session](#).
2. Mr. Hupp emphasized collaboration, respect, and open-mindedness. While acknowledging he may not always agree with others, Mr. Hupp stated he is willing to listen to all perspectives. In follow-up discussion, he explained that separating personal views from public responsibility requires being open-minded and considering the broader community's perspective before making decisions.
3. Mr. Hupp highlighted the town's growing diversity and the importance of understanding different perspectives when making decisions. As Chair of Parks & Recreation, Mr. Hupp described incorporating community feedback into board discussions.
4. Mr. Hupp advised he would remain open-minded and seek to understand the full situation. He would consult appropriate resources such as the town attorney if necessary and investigate concerns carefully. Mr. Hupp also

- expressed confidence in the town's staff, noting his positive experiences with them.
5. Mr. Hupp advised he works for IBM on a federal contract and described learning complex systems (like Salesforce) over time. He emphasized continuous learning, leadership development, and collaboration. Mr. Hupp believes commissioners must work closely with fellow board members and staff, recognizing they will not have all the answers and must learn and collaborate.
  6. Mr. Hupp advised he is a youth soccer referee and coach, Chair of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board, and a previous participant in Citizens Academy (2022). Mr. Hupp described growing more involved as his children became adults and expressed pride in helping guide parks and recreation initiatives as the town grows.
  7. Mr. Hupp's primary service has been on the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. He shared an example of discussions about building a pickleball complex, emphasizing the importance of multi-purpose facilities that benefit a wide range of residents rather than serving a single interest group and, through Citizens Academy, he gained deeper understanding of public safety, planning constraints, and municipal operations.
  8. Mr. Hupp identified rapid development and population growth, managing the impact of prior development decisions, and the need to thoughtfully guide future growth. Mr. Hupp acknowledged the town's rapid expansion and stressed the importance of careful development planning over the next two years.
  9. Mr. Hupp thanked the board for the opportunity and acknowledged his nervousness but emphasized his passion and willingness to listen. He expressed interest in: expanding the Wake Forest Center for Active Aging and growing specialized programs for individuals with disabilities and special needs. Mr. Hupp noted it would be an honor and privilege to serve the town and that he remains committed to serving Wake Forest in any capacity.

### **Nicolas Sliwinski**

1. Please see the February 3, 2026 Board of Commissioners video at [February 3, 2026 Board of Commissioners Work Session](#) .

2. Mr. Sliwinski stressed that integrity is foundational to public trust. When tensions arise between public input and town policy, he believes commissioners must first follow the law, then consult town plans and policies, and engage in open dialogue with both supporters and opponents. Mr. Sliwinski cited rezonings as examples of issues requiring careful consideration of legal standards, professional guidance, and community input before making decisions for the good of the entire town.
3. During his previous four-year term, Mr. Sliwinski prioritized attending open houses, town-sponsored events, and community gatherings—not just to be present, but to actively engage in conversations. Mr. Sliwinski emphasized the importance of speaking with residents outside his own neighborhood to understand diverse concerns and perspectives before making board decisions.
4. Mr. Sliwinski stated that in a council-manager form of government, evaluating staff performance is the responsibility of the town manager, not individual commissioners. If a complaint arises, he would refer it to the town manager to handle appropriately rather than independently determining its validity.
5. Drawing from his career in sales, Mr. Sliwinski emphasized listening, understanding problems, offering solutions, and—most importantly—following up. Mr. Sliwinski compared public service to client service, noting that commissioners must not only help make decisions but ensure those decisions are implemented properly and adjusted if issues arise.
6. Mr. Sliwinski expressed pride in founding the annual Mental Wellness Fair, that has been going for two years. Though modest about personal credit, Mr. Sliwinski noted it was a collaborative effort. His broader community engagement included consistent public presence and active participation during his prior term.
7. Mr. Sliwinski advised he was appointed to the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board, liaison to the Urban Forestry Board, delegate to the Central Pines Regional Council (CPRC), and has been actively involved with the Northeast Community Coalition. Mr. Sliwinski advised this service has taught him that Wake Forest is diverse in thought and perspective, especially regarding parks and cultural resources. Through regional work with CPRC, he learned that Wake Forest’s challenges are shared by neighboring communities and that collaboration provides valuable support and shared solutions.
8. Mr. Sliwinski identified the Capital Boulevard improvements (a long-anticipated infrastructure project), managing continued growth, and

completing and implementing the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) update. Mr. Sliwinski emphasized the importance of leveraging his prior experience and relationships with state officials to advocate for infrastructure funding and guide growth responsibly using community input gathered during the UDO process.

9. Mr. Sliwinski stated that being a commissioner is not about guaranteeing outcomes, but it is about doing the work—gathering information, engaging stakeholders, and positioning the town for long-term success. He emphasized thoughtful, forward-looking decision-making that benefits Wake Forest not just today but for decades to come. Mr. Sliwinski thanked the Board and town staff for their service and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to be considered.

### **Jasmine Zavala**

1. Please see the February 3, 2026 Board of Commissioners video at [February 3, 2026 Board of Commissioners Work Session](#).
2. Drawing from her experience as a teacher in an underserved Title I school and as a small business owner, Ms. Zavala emphasized compassion, listening, and problem-solving. She explained that policy decisions directly impact families and that leaders must consider both practical realities and human needs. Ms. Zavala shared examples of adjusting instruction to support students' home challenges and working closely with families and community partners. She underscored the importance of understanding trade-offs and recognizing how decisions affect individuals and businesses.
3. Ms. Zavala highlighted her long-standing community involvement, from volunteering as a youth to engaging with nonprofits and small businesses as an adult. She described herself as a "bridge" between organizations, neighborhoods, and demographic groups. Through involvement with more than two dozen nonprofits and daily interaction at her family's restaurant, Ms. Zavala gathers perspectives from diverse residents. She emphasized listening first and connecting individuals and organizations to needed resources.
4. Using her business and teaching experience, Ms. Zavala emphasized listening as the first step in resolving complaints. She explained that many concerns stem from misunderstandings and that effective leadership requires asking questions, identifying root causes, and working collaboratively to find solutions. Ms. Zavala acknowledged she would rely on appropriate channels and other knowledgeable individuals if she did not have the answers herself.

5. Ms. Zavala focused on her nonprofit consulting and graduate policy research experience. She described conducting strategic analyses, evaluating trade-offs, and using decision matrices to assess policy alternatives—specifically referencing her research on state taxation of hygiene products. Ms. Zavala emphasized slowing down, gathering data, evaluating economic and equity impacts, and recommending financially responsible solutions that benefit the most people.
6. Ms. Zavala described deep involvement through her family’s restaurant, which has hosted fundraisers, scholarships, church events, and nonprofit initiatives. Personally, she has supported numerous nonprofits, conservation efforts, youth organizations, and faith-based groups. Ms. Zavala has assisted organizations with websites, bylaws, youth programming, and logistical needs. She also founded “Latinos of Wake Forest” to improve communication, expand inclusion, translate town information into Spanish, and ensure broader community representation.
7. While she has not served on formal town advisory boards, Ms. Zavala emphasized her leadership through small business involvement, conservation advocacy, nonprofit collaboration, and founding Latinos of Wake Forest. She explained that this work taught her about representation gaps, the importance of inclusion, and the value of networks that support residents during challenging times.
8. Ms. Zavala identified conservation and responsible development, education partnerships, support for small businesses, and implementation and review of development policies such as the UDO. Ms. Zavala shared a personal story about tree clearing near her neighborhood, contrasting environmental concerns with economic opportunity. She stressed balancing growth with stewardship, strengthening partnerships, and using her lived experience to connect stakeholders and ensure long-term sustainability.
9. Ms. Zavala emphasized listening as her guiding principle. She described her leadership approach as empathetic, data-informed, and long-term focused. She framed the commissioner role as stewardship—making decisions today that will shape Wake Forest 10–20 years from now. She expressed gratitude for the community that shaped her, her commitment to inclusion and dialogue, and her desire to continue building connections and serving Wake Forest with passion and practicality.

Upon completion of the interviews, Town Clerk Evelyn Wright distributes two rounds of ballots resulting in a tie. Nicolas Sliwinski received the majority vote in round three

and was immediately sworn in to fill the remaining term of the Board of Commissioners vacant seat.

## 5. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Shackelford thanked all applicants who participated in the vacancy process and recognized the importance of volunteerism in the community. Commissioner Shackelford expressed appreciation for residents willing to serve and contribute time and effort to local government.

Commissioner Cross thanked all applicants who participated in the board vacancy interview process, acknowledging the difficulty of presenting publicly. Commissioner Cross provided an update on AARP Age-Friendly Community initiatives, including discussions on social engagement across age groups and efforts to support caregivers, including those caring for aging parents or individuals with disabilities. Commissioner Cross advised there will be ongoing discussion and presentations on initiatives to the Board in the future. Commissioner Cross reported hosting her first “Coffee with the Commissioner” event at the Center for Active Aging that was well attended and informal. Commissioner Cross advised residents shared ideas, questions, and suggestions related to community services and programs. Finally, Commissioner Cross advised she attended the MLK Day celebration, also.

Commissioner Fatmi thanked everyone for their patience during the board vacancy selection process and expressed appreciation for the strong group of applicants. Commissioner Fatmi advised he attended the MLK Day Celebration with the Mayor and Commissioner Cross. Commissioner Fatmi acknowledged the Walk for Peace, where Buddhist monks traveling from Texas to Washington, DC stopped in the area on January 24<sup>th</sup>, noting it was an uplifting experience. Also, Commissioner Fatmi recognized January 27<sup>th</sup> as International Holocaust Remembrance Day and encouraged the community to reflect on its significance. He shared a quote from Elie Wiesel emphasizing the importance of remembrance and action against hate. Commissioner Fatmi encouraged residents to show kindness, speak out against hate, and oppose antisemitism. Commissioner Fatmi attended his first Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup> and commended staff for their work. Finally, Commissioner Fatmi encouraged residents to participate in upcoming town events and thanked staff for their work during recent winter weather operations.

Commissioner Wright thanked town staff for preparing roads and maintaining services during winter weather.

Commissioner Sliwinski thanked the Board for their confidence in him to fill the vacant Board of Commissioner seat. Commissioner Sliwinski expressed commitment to meeting the expectations of the Board and serving the community. He acknowledged the other applicants, noting they were all active community members involved in boards, committees, and civic activities. Commissioner Sliwinski stated that the applicant pool demonstrated the high level of civic engagement in Wake Forest. Finally, Commissioner Sliwinski expressed enthusiasm about beginning work with the Board.

Mayor Clapsaddle highlighted that February is Black History Month and announced several upcoming community events, including Black History tours and educational programs, Freedom Songs performance on February 20th at the Alston-Massenburg Center, Ailey Young House reopening event, and the Minority and Women-Owned Business Expo at the Renaissance Centre. Mayor Clapsaddle encouraged residents to attend the State of the Town Address on February 16th and extended Valentine's Day wishes to the community.

Town Clerk advised no report.

Town Manager Padgett thanked Public Works and Electric Utility staff for their response to the recent snow and ice event, including weekend shifts. Mr. Padgett advised there was only one power outage reported, affecting approximately 1,000 Wake Forest Power customers, which was resolved within about an hour. Mr. Padgett commended the Town Attorney and Town Clerk for their work supporting the vacancy appointment process. Finally, Mr. Padgett informed Commissioners that new board photos will be taken soon, with scheduling information to follow.

**6. Adjournment**

The Board of Commissioners adjourned the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

Duly approved in open session this 17<sup>th</sup> day of March 2026.

(ATTEST)

  
Evelyn Wright, Town Clerk



  
Ben C. Clapsaddle, Mayor

