



**Wake Forest Board of Commissioners
Work Session Meeting Minutes**

The Wake Forest Board of Commissioners met on **Tuesday, January 6, 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
Fire Chief Ron Early
Police Captain David Zick
Police Captain Matt Perkinson
Engineering Director Timothy Watson
Public Works Director Timothy Bailey
Chief Information Officer Adam Oates
PRCR Director Ruben Wall
Facilities Director-Mickey Rochelle

Budget and Performance Director
Michelle Daniels
Budget and Performance Analyst
Benjamin Blevins
Planning Director Jennifer Currin
Senior Planner Michelle Michael
Senior Planner Timothy Richards
Development Services Manager Patrick
Reidy
Paralegal Danyelle Ritter
Police Lt. Alejandro Lezama

Presentations

1.1 Discussion of Pate Property Conservation Easement.

Town Manager Kip Padgett reviewed background on the conservation easement tied to the Pate/Harris track rezoning approval. Kip advised there are two options: Option 1: Town ownership of the easement with Triangle Land Conservancy (TLC) oversight and

enforcement; Option 2: Easement maintained by the developer, property owner, or HOA. Town Manager Padgett and Town Attorney Nathan McKinney explained pros and cons of both options, including liability, insurance, and long-term maintenance responsibilities. Town Attorney McKinney noted that Town ownership would involve liability similar to other Town-owned properties. Town Manager Padgett recommended consideration of a 30-foot buffer zone to reduce risks such as falling trees affecting adjacent residential properties. Town Manager Padgett stated that additional coordination would be required with legal counsel, TLC, and developers if Option 1 were selected. Town Manager Padgett confirmed TLC prefers to partner with the Town if the Town owns the easement but would need to reassess involvement otherwise.

Mayor Clapsaddle said that the agreement would be great for the Town.

The Board of Commissioners expressed general support for preservation of natural resources and the opportunity to protect land through Town ownership. Commissioner Fatmi inquired about liability and excess insurance issues and Commissioner Cross raised questions regarding tree management responsibilities and monitoring of the easement area. Town Manager Padgett confirmed the Town's insurance status and explained the responsibility of fallen trees will be determined by cause and location. Also, Town Manager Padgett explained TLC's maintenance undertaking of the property. Commissioner Cross confirmed that the Town will ensure the trees along the perimeter are healthy trees. Town Manager Padgett confirmed the Town Urban Forester will do an inventory of the trees. Town Attorney inserted that Urban Forestry will be able to make some determinations by looking at the map and borders. Commissioner Cross inquired about the purpose and risk-reduction benefits of the buffer zone and Town Manager Padgett confirmed it is to reduce risk from fallen trees. Town Attorney McKinney explained potential insurance premium increases and maintenance costs. Town Attorney McKinney noted that conservation values would remain the same regardless of ownership.

ACTION:

Mover: Commissioner Wright moved to go with Option 1 – Town ownership with TLC management and coordination.

Seconder: Commissioner Fatmi

Vote: Motion carried 4-0

- 1.2 Municipal Fee Comparison Ordinance amending Chapter 30, Article III Section 30-1, and 30-90 thru 30-92 focused on motorized scooter, electric bicycles and electric assisted bicycles, pedestrian right-of-way and requirements for helmets.

Captain David Zick presented the proposed amendments regulating motorized scooters, electric bicycles, and electric-assisted bicycles and explained that the previous 2019 ordinance restricted scooters due to safety concerns and lack of regulation. Captain Zick advised there have been reported increased use of scooters and electric bikes and the need for updated regulations and public education. Captain Zick provided definitions and distinctions among scooters, electric bicycles, electric-assisted bicycles, mopeds, and motorcycles based on speed and power limits. The proposed guidelines include speed restrictions for scooters and electric bikes, usage limitations on sidewalks, roads, greenways, parks, and multi-use paths, and helmet requirements for riders under age 16.

Captain Zick explained enforcement, which entails the presence of officers in parks and greenways for the first few months, would focus primarily on education, with citations likely only in cases of crashes or repeated violations. The proposed amendment addresses complaints about high-speed electric bike usage on greenways.

Commissioner Cross asked clarifying questions regarding speed and roadway limitations for scooters versus electric bicycles. Captain Zick confirmed the scooters and motorized bikes in question are allowed on the roadways similarly to bicycles. Captain Zick explained enforcement strategies and whether violations would be misdemeanors or ordinance violations. Commissioner Cross inquired about applicability of the ordinance to natural or informal trail systems. Town Manager Padgett advised, if it's not a part of the right-of-way, it would not be subjected to the ordinance but fall under Parks & Recreation's rules. Commissioner Fatmi inquired about the absence of "electric bicycle" in subsection 4. Town Attorney McKinney advised he will look into compliance with State law and clarify enforcement penalties before final ordinance approval at the next meeting and ordinance vote. Commissioner Cross asked if speed limit signs would be posted and Captain Zick confirmed that signs are currently posted.

Item moved to the January 20, 2026 Board of Commissioners regular meeting.

- 1.3 Discussion of Updated Capital Improvements Plan for FY 2026-2031

Michelle Daniels, Budget and Performance Director, provided an overview of the updated CIP, noting that the CIP is a five-year planning document outlining the Town's

capital improvement needs and long-range development policies. Ms. Daniels explained that the CIP reflects scheduling for present and future public projects and is updated annually.

Ms. Daniels reported that the Town has implemented a new CIP software system, *PlanIt!*, which provides improved organization, reporting, and tracking of capital improvement projects. Ms. Daniels thanked department directors for assisting with the system implementation. The new system reorganizes projects by department rather than previous category roll-ups while maintaining project detail tracking.

Ms. Daniels explained that the Board focuses on prioritizing first-year expenditures during the Board retreat and work sessions. Once approved, the CIP serves as the Town's official commitment to funding identified projects, subject to available resources. Ms. Daniels reviewed the priority matrix used to rank capital projects, noting that projects are evaluated based on urgency, importance, and strategic alignment. Projects ranked at higher priority levels are typically considered for operating budget inclusion.

Ms. Daniels outlined funding sources used for capital projects, noting that Bonds and installment loans are the primary funding sources followed by general fund revenues, grants, and fund balance allocations. Ms. Daniels advised that staff actively pursue alternative funding sources to minimize impacts on Town financial resources.

Ms. Daniels presented a snapshot of projects categorized by department and funding sources. Ms. Daniels noted that current capital project requests for FY 2026 have increased significantly compared to prior years, partly due to rising project costs.

Ms. Daniels reviewed the Town's current debt status, noting, however, the Town remains well within statutory and policy debt thresholds. The initial bond issuance occurred in October 2024 with favorable interest rates due to the Town's AAA bond rating and Ms. Daniels advised that the Town has seven years, potentially extendable to ten years, to issue the remaining authorized bonds.

Ms. Daniels highlighted several long-range planning priorities, including the S-line mobility hub development, the property acquisition for future infrastructure needs, transportation improvements, the Renaissance Centre expansion/Performing Arts Centre initiatives, and the potential borrowing opportunities of \$175M beginning in 2028. Ms. Daniels also noted that cost estimates for some projects have increased significantly and may require reprioritization.

Commissioner Cross requested clarification regarding funding for the skate park project. Town Manager Padgett indicated that hospitality tax funding is anticipated but not yet finalized and, if not through the hospitality tax fund, it will be paid using the impact fees. Commissioner Cross confirmed that a grant was received for the project. Town Manager Padgett confirmed a grant has been received.

Commissioner Cross recommended moving Wright Park improvements higher in priority, citing potential economic benefits through tournament events, as requested by the community, and increased downtown activity.

Commissioner Cross asked why reservoir improvements were listed under Engineering rather than Parks and Recreation. Town Manager Padgett explained the project remains under Engineering until dam stabilization is complete, after which responsibility will transition to Parks and Recreation. Commissioner Cross requested a status update. Engineering Director Tim Watson reported that the reservoir project is awaiting final approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Bureau. The delays have occurred due to the federal government shutdown, but staff anticipates bidding and construction may begin later this year pending permit approval.

Commissioner Cross expressed support for the inclusion of restroom installations in parks and the downtown area, noting the improvements would benefit residents and visitors.

The Mayor thanked staff for their work on the CIP and the presentation. No further questions or comments were raised.

1.4 Ordinance amending Chapter 30, Article IV Section 30-131 focused on handicapped parking spaces.

Captain Zick presented an update regarding the handicap ordinance that was submitted earlier this year. It was noted that portions of the ordinance had previously been removed, specifically language granting authority to civilian employees of the Police Department, such as the Parking Enforcement Officer, to issue civil citations for certain violations within the Town. Captain Zick advised that the removed language has now been added back to the ordinance. Mayor Clapsaddle advised the revisions will be ready for consideration on at the January 20th Board of Commissioners regular meeting.

1.5 Ordinance Amending Chapter 30; Article VI. Schedules; SEC. 30-216 Schedule XVII Of the Code of Ordinances for the Town of Wake Forest

Engineering Director Tim Watson presented a request to the Board from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). NCDOT requested that the Town amend its ordinance to designate a 55-mile-per-hour speed limit along specified roadways to ensure consistency with NCDOT's established speed limits.

Mr. Watson explained that the Town had not previously adopted this speed limit within its municipal ordinance. Without concurrence between the Town and NCDOT, the statutory default speed limit would revert to 35 miles per hour, despite posted signage indicating a 55-mile-per-hour zone.

The amendment would add language designating the 55-mile-per-hour speed limit along portions of NC 98, extending beyond the area near Durham Road and Jones Dairy Road. Mr. Watson clarified that the amendment aligns the Town's ordinance with NCDOT's roadway designations.

ACTION:

Mover: Commissioner Shackleford moved to pass the Ordinance Amending Chapter 30; Article VI. Traffic Schedules; SEC. 30-216 Schedule XVII Of the Code of Ordinances for the Town of Wake Forest.

Secunder: Commissioner Cross

Vote: Motion carried 4-0

1.6 Introduction of 2026 Municipal Service District Extension

Development Services Manager Patrick Reidy explained that Municipal Service Districts (MSDs) are geographically designated areas in which property owners pay an additional tax to fund enhanced services within the district. These districts are governed by North Carolina state law and are commonly used to support downtown revitalization and economic development efforts. Eligible MSD expenditures include public space improvements, safety enhancements, economic development initiatives, utility and right-of-way improvements, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, parking facilities and public restrooms, tourism and visitor facilities, traffic congestion mitigation, additional municipal services beyond standard levels, and downtown festivals, markets, and promoting business investments.

Mr. Reidy provided an overview of downtown revitalization and MSD development from 1985 when the Downtown Revitalization Corporation (DRC) was established to 2024 when the Wake Forest Downtown Plan was adopted. Mr. Reidy noted that since the last MSD update in 2008, several planning and development initiatives have occurred, prompting review of the district boundaries.

Mr. Reidy explained that the current MSD, which was expanded in 2008, reflects the Town's growth, from approximately 4,000 residents in 1988 to approximately 62,000 residents today. The proposed 2026 expansion fills development gaps, includes new residential developments such as condominiums and townhomes, adds the Heath Ridge area and certain Town-owned properties.

Mr. Reidy gave an overview of MSD tax history from the 1988: \$0.10 per \$100 valuation to the current and proposed rate of \$0.14 per \$100 valuation and indicated anticipated uses of current and expanded MSD funding. Mr. Reidy presented the current fiscal year MSD funding breakdown with \$29,000 used for improvement grants and decorative lighting, \$65,000 for debt service for streetscape improvements, \$92,000 for downtown parking study, and \$36,000 for banner replacements, decorations, and lighting. This includes 151 properties consisting of 38 condominiums, and identifies 32 tax-exempt properties, including Town-owned properties and religious institutions.

Mr. Reidy stated that MSD expansion requires public hearing and notice in accordance with state law. The proposed public hearing is scheduled for February 17th, the second reading and potential adoption on March 17th, and implementation aligned with July 1st tax year, pending approval and submission to Wake County in April.

Commissioners Fatmi asked about the classification of condominium properties. Mr. Reidy clarified that each condominium unit would be assessed individually, even if located within a single development. Commissioners Fatmi asked how MSD expansion would contribute to revenue and activity. Mr. Reidy explained that the MSD supports the downtown district collectively, benefiting residents, employees, and visitors. The downtown MSD studies indicated that surrounding residential properties contribute to downtown vitality through walkability and local engagement.

Commissioners Cross confirmed that Homeowners Association common property would remain tax-exempt, while individual residential properties would be assessed and Mr. Reidy confirmed. Commissioner Cross inquired about the cost to residents. Mr. Reidy reported that the estimated annual cost for single-family residential properties in

the expansion area would typically range from approximately \$450 to \$600 annually, depending on assessed property value.

Commissioners Cross asked whether affected property owners had been notified. Mr. Reidy stated that notification would occur in accordance with state law, including a minimum one-month notice prior to the public hearing, with detailed reports available through the Town Clerk's office and direct contact information to provide individual tax estimates.

Commissioners Cross asked about the residential and commercial composition of the proposed expansion area fee. Mr. Reidy indicated that approximately 70% of the expansion area is residential, with higher revenue generation expected from apartment developments, undeveloped properties, and limited commercial areas based on assessed property values.

2. Discussion of Monthly Financial Report

2.1 Discussion of November Financial Summaries

Monthly Financial Report Received.

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

3. Review of Draft Agenda for Upcoming Regular Meeting

3.1 Draft Agenda for BOC Regular Meeting January 20, 2026

Town Manager Kip Padgett advised a resolution needs to be added to the consent agenda to appoint an HRC member. Also, in addition to the work session items being moved forward to the January 20th Board meeting, Town Manager Padgett advised a resolution to approve a contract for a traffic signal will be added.

4. Other Business

4.1 Resolution to Adopt Board Vacancy Appointment Process

Town Attorney McKinney advised a correction was identified regarding Exhibit A of the resolution. The application window closing date listed as 4:00 PM on January 16

was noted as incorrect. The correct closing date was confirmed as 4:00 PM on January 14, consistent with the information published on the Town website.

ACTION:

Mover: Commissioner Fatmi moved to amend the date on the Resolution.

Secunder: Commissioner Wright

Vote: Motion carried 4-0

Town Manager Padgett clarified that the resolution further refined the vacancy appointment process previously approved during the December 15th meeting. Town Attorney McKinney noted key updates including Commissioners would be allowed to review applications independently outside of a public meeting, Commissioners would rank applicants they wished to interview in person, and, after the application period closes on January 14, the Board would determine the number of applicants to interview based on the total number of applications received.

Town Attorney McKinney provided additional clarification that decisions regarding the number of finalists, interview scheduling, and special called meetings would require separate motions from the resolution approval.

ACTION:

Mover: Commissioner Cross moved to adopt the Resolution.

Secunder: Commissioner Shackelford

Vote: Motion carried 4-0

Commissioner Cross made a motion to discuss and approve the number of finalists to be interviewed during the Board retreat scheduled for January 16th, after the application period closes on January 14th. Discussion focused on establishing the number of interviews (e.g., five, seven, or nine) after reviewing the total number of applicants.

ACTION:

Mover: Commissioner Cross moved to select the number of applicants at the Board Retreat on January 16th.

Secunder: Commissioner Shackelford

Vote: Motion carried 4-0

Commissioner Cross proposed a motion to schedule a special called meeting on January 22nd for applicant interviews. After discussion, concerns were raised regarding

scheduling conflicts, holiday closures, and adequate notification to applicants. The motion was withdrawn. The Board agreed to determine the interview schedule during the January 16 retreat, allowing staff time to review applicant totals and available scheduling options.

5. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Shackleford no report. Commissioner Shackleford commended Commissioner Cross and the report given on the Wake Forest Center for Active Aging in light of the challenges encountered at the end of 2025.

Commissioner Cross advised of an update regarding participation in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities, noting the Town of Wake Forest has been accepted into the program, which includes approximately 940 participating cities, counties, and states nationwide. Commissioner Cross reported that North Carolina's population aged 65 and older is projected to increase from 1.9 million to 2.8 million by 2042, emphasizing the importance of the initiative. Commissioner Cross advised that she attended the first meeting, led by Ann Welton, and gave an overview of what has been covered in the meeting. Commissioner Cross advised that the completion of a community needs assessment survey received approximately 1,200 responses, one of the highest response rates for a town survey. Commissioner Cross advised the key needs identified included youth services for teens and tweens, expanded senior services, and caregiver support. Commissioner Cross advised the committee priorities are communication and information, health services and community support, transportation, outdoor spaces, and housing. Commissioner Cross advised that the committee will continue meeting regularly and will present future recommendations to the Board for consideration. Commissioner Cross announced plans to host "Coffee with the Commissioner" sessions at the Center for Active Aging. Her plans include visiting classes, interacting with participants, and gathering community feedback. Finally, Commissioner Cross reported that she attended a New Year's chili cook-off community event that was delicious.

Commissioner Fatmi no report.

Commissioner Wright no report.

Mayor Clapsaddle announced Allison Luvisi as the Town of Wake Forest's 2025 Employee of the Year. Mayor Clapsaddle noted that Ms. Luvisi serves as a Human Resources Consultant. Mayor Clapsaddle encouraged residents to provide feedback on the Town's Sustainability Plan and emphasized the importance of community participation. Mayor Clapsaddle advised he is issuing a proclamation scheduled on January 20th for the Walk for Peace. Mayor Clapsaddle reported attending a meeting with the WFPSS Superintendent and Board Chair alongside municipal leaders. The meeting marked the first collaborative discussion with municipal leadership since 2006. Mayor Clapsaddle shared that the Board of Education plans to make these meetings a regular occurrence. Mayor Clapsaddle indicated there will be future opportunities for Board members to attend and discussed inviting Board of Education representatives to meet with northeastern Wake County municipalities. Mayor Clapsaddle reminded everyone of the Town Hall closure on January 19 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day and invited the public to attend the annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration at Friendship Chapel on January 22nd, highlighting youth performances, essays, and poetry readings.

Town Clerk advised no report.

Town Manager Padgett reminded the Board of the upcoming Board Retreat scheduled for January 16 at 9:00 a.m. at the Renaissance Centre, noting the retreat will be recorded and uploaded to the Town website, and the last agenda item will be discussion of the vacant Board seat.

5.1 Closed Session: N.C.G.S 143-318.11(5)

ACTION:

Mover: Commissioner Wright moved to go into closed session.

Second: Commissioner Cross

Vote: Motion carried 4-0 at 7:30 p.m.

Reconvened at 8:13 p.m.

6. Adjournment

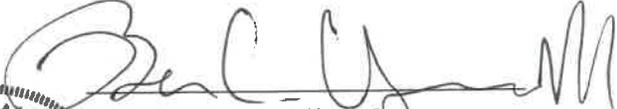
The Board of Commissioners adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Duly approved in open session this 17th day of February 2026.

(ATTEST)


Evelyn Wright, Town Clerk




Ben C. Clapsaddle, Mayor