

Town of Mount Olive
June 27, 2025
Special Called Board Meeting
Minutes

Mayor J. Jerome Newton called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M. Those in attendance per roll call of Mayor J. Jerome Newton, Mayor Pro-Tempore Barbara Kornegay, Commissioner Delreese Simmons, Commissioner Tommy Brown, Commissioner Danny Keel, Town Attorney Carroll Turner and Town Clerk/Administrative Assistant Sherry Davis.

Commissioner Vicky Darden was unable to attend today's meeting. Mayor J. Jerome Newton requested a motion for an excused absence. Commissioner Tommy Brown made the motion. Mayor Pro-Tempore Barbara Kornegay seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

Mayor J. Jerome Newton welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Mayor J. Jerome Newton delivered our invocation and Mayor Pro-Tempore Barbara Kornegay led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor J. Jerome Newton read the Conflict-of-Interest Statement; there were no conflicts.

Mayor J. Jerome Newton requested a motion to approve the published agenda. Commissioner Danny Keel made the motion but requested 06-59 - Consider Approval of Purchase of a Tymco 435 in the Amount of \$227,898.00 to be Paid through Powell Aid Funds be removed at this time. Mayor Pro-Tempore Barbara Kornegay seconded, and the motion passed 4-0. Mayor Pro-Tempore Barbara Kornegay made a motion requesting adding 06-60 - Consider Approval of a Proclamation in honor of Carver High School Alumni and Friends Association, Inc. Forty Third Annual Banquet. 06-61 - Consider Approval of Budget Ordinance Amendment #12 in the Amount of \$20,020. Transfer Monies from Fund 10 to Fund 30. Commissioner Danny Keel seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

Mayor J. Jerome Newton then discussed Action Memo – 06-58 Consider Adoption of the 2025/2026 Fiscal Year Proposed Budget & Budget Message. Finance Director Jamie Butler stated the General Fund balance has a decrease in trash revenues, the fund balance appropriation in the amount of \$32,000.00 is an addition for the airport mowing. She asked if anyone had questions. Commissioner Delreese Simmons commented, this is not the budget the citizens saw. He said he just got this budget. He asked why is \$10,000.00 in the Town Manager's budget for travel, are their employee raises this year? Why is there a line item for \$800.00 to \$5,300.00 to buy a desk. Who is going in that office? To him \$10,000.00 is a raise. Interim Town Manager Glenn Holland replied, a portion of the \$10,000.00 is for travel but not the full amount.

Commissioner Danny Keel asked if this is for Interim Town Manager to drive his personal vehicle. Interim Town Manager Glenn Holland explained he would be driving his personal vehicle because the Town vehicle he is currently driving needs to go back to the wastewater treatment plant. Commissioner Tommy Brown wanted to know why we are splitting hairs; the previous Town Manager received \$300.00 per month to drive his personal vehicle and lived only three blocks away. Mayor J. Jerome Newton thought the \$10,000.00 was for travel. Interim Town Manager Glenn Holland advised it is his travel home and back, but it is also to reimburse anyone who has to travel for town functions. Commissioner Delreese Simmons asked if Mayor J. Jerome Newton could use it if he had to travel somewhere or is it just for Interim Town Manager Glenn Holland and Town Clerk Sherry Davis. Finance Director Jamie Butler responded, anyone can use it for training, any commissioner.

Commissioner Delreese Simmons said the budget was done by Finance Director Jamie Butler and Interim Town Manager Glenn Holland. He said the 16% increase is for the water and sewer which just goes down the drain. Some commissioners are not running again. Mayor J. Jerome Newton commented to leave the other commissioners out. Commissioner Delreese Simmons said Mount Olive has screwed up the money and now we can't do things. Finance Director Jamie Butler advised there is an 8% increase for water and 8% increase for sewer. Commissioner Delreese Simmons feels this budget should not be approved. Mayor J. Jerome Newton discussed the possibility of an Interim Budget. Commissioner Danny Keel explained we can amend and make changes if we need to. The increase goes over all departments, why the big deal, it can be amended.

Mayor J. Jerome Newton stated the budget once passed, while it can be amended and the public wants to know what we are doing. We don't need to pass it just because there is a budget timeline. If this is not a real issue and can be done, making amendments though is sounds simple causes a lot of confusion. We shouldn't continue down this path. He doesn't want to hear again about this board being incompetent. He asked if the airport is balanced. He said we can consider an interim budget authorizing us to go beyond that date legally. It might be a mistake to pass it or not pass it. We need to dot all of our I's and cross all of our T's.

Commissioner Tommy Brown commented the budget is not a do all catch all. The increase in the water rates is to catch up to the recommendations of our water rate study. There was a Water Rate Study presentation about four years ago. We have not followed the recommendations and if we had we wouldn't be in this situation now.

Mayor J. Jerome Newton said you have a valid point, but the increase is not the issue. There are more questions that need to be answered, we don't need to rush just to say we passed the budget. The real concern is we don't come back later; we need to get it right the first time. We can have as many special called board meetings as we need to. He recommends we work with a CPA on this. Town Attorney Carroll Turner explained that either the budget or an interim budget needs to be adopted by July 1st. Mayor J. Jerome Newton asked everyone to please check their phones. He again asked for a motion to recess this meeting. Town Attorney Carroll Turner replied, we only have two options, either pass this budget or an interim

budget but either one has to be done no later than July 1, 2025. He stated the only thing that can't be amended after approval is the tax rate, but the rest of the budget could change. The budget is a guide. Last year's budget didn't provide initial salaries, but it did eventually. He thinks more than likely there will be additional revenues. An Interim Budget outlines necessary expenses and nothing more. The final budget needs to be passed as soon as possible so we are not so constrained.

Mayor J. Jerome Newton thanked Town Attorney Carroll Turner. He said if we entertained an interim budget it would mean the Interim Town Manager and the Board of Commissioners would have to burn the midnight oil. Town Attorney Carroll Turner stated, you can't buy anything if you don't adopt a budget.

Commissioner Delreese Simmons suggested consulting with Gerald Bell, Brenda Davis and Annette Kirby. He commented Finance Director Jamie Butler has been busting her butt since January and she deserves a raise. Interim Town Manager responded that our third-party CPA has looked at this budget and it meets her approval. He stated the airport budget is balanced. Finance Director Jamie Butler confirmed the CPA approved. Mayor Pro-Tempore Barbara Kornegay said we need to pass this budget. Mayor J. Jerome Newton advised it will be impossible to get an interim budget by July 1st. He stated he is going to allow Brenda Davis to speak. Mrs. Brenda Davis advised the Town can implement an interim budget very simply. The state of North Carolina operated on an interim budget until October one year. She said the Department Heads need a guide, it is not hard you could have a budget within a month. Commissioner Tommy Brown is concerned projects would have to be stopped due to the interim budget. Mayor J. Jerome Newton asked if we could only pay bills. Mrs. Brenda Davis replied, essential functions. Commissioner Tommy Brown wanted to know if the water meter project would be stopped temporarily. Interim Town Manager Glenn Holland responded the Town portion of this would stop this project.

Mayor J. Jerome Newton requested a motion to recess this meeting until June 30, 2025. Commissioner Danny Keel stated he could not be here Monday night. Commissioner Tommy Brown said he has a dental appointment at 1:00 P.M. Commissioner Danny Keel made a motion to recess this meeting until Monday, June 30, 2025 at 3:00 P.M. Commissioner Tommy Brown seconded and the motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

J. Jerome Newton
Mayor

Sherry Davis
Administrative Assistant/Town Clerk