



Minutes

Board of Commissioners

State of the Town Address

7 p.m. April 22, 2024

Board Meeting Room, Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St.

Present: Mayor Mark Bell and commissioners Meaghun Darab, Robb English, Kathleen Ferguson, Matt Hughes, and Evelyn Lloyd

Staff: Assistant Town Manager and Community Services Director Matt Efird, Lead for NC Fellow Marshall Grayson, Police Chief Duane Hampton, Town Attorney Bob Hornik, Town Clerk and Human Resources Technician Sarah Kimrey, Communications Specialist JC Leser, Town Manager Eric Peterson, Utilities Director Marie Strandwitz, Human Resources Manager Haley Thore, Public Space and Sustainability Manager Stephanie Trueblood and Communications Manager Catherine Wright

1. Opening of the work session

Mayor Mark Bell called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

2. Agenda changes and approval

There were no changes.

3. In-depth discussion and topics

A. State of the Town Address

The mayor delivered his first State of the Town address focusing on the positive impact of community groups and highlighting Hillsborough in the context of Orange County and the growing Triangle region.

Bell began by reflecting on how the town views itself, highlighting Hillsborough's rich history and culture. He also discussed connectivity, relationships with neighboring communities and the impact of significant population growth.

Bell identified specific challenges the town will face, which include:

- Funding large capital projects, including building a new fire station and greenway.
- Improving aging utilities infrastructure to prepare for new residential development and demand.
- Addressing increased traffic and congestion.
- Increasing the affordable housing supply.
- Meeting climate goals.

Bell noted the planned projects will cost several times more than the town's annual budget. He encouraged residents to provide input and to assist the town by serving on appointed boards, taking surveys and participating in Engage Hillsborough events.

The mayor also highlighted Hillsborough's current strengths, which include:

- The now completed Comprehensive Sustainability Plan.

- Community survey results showing positive perceptions of Hillsborough as a place to live, raise children, retire and visit. The community survey also indicated strong satisfaction with the quality of services provided by the town, specifically highlighting fire, police, town parks and customer service.
- Strong community organizations, including the Occaneechi village replica, PORCH Hillsborough, Fairview Community Watch and the Hillsborough Climate Challenge.

Bell concluded the address by saying the community is more connected than ever before. He encouraged residents to “find their village” and discover new ways to engage and positively impact the town.

4. Adjournment

Mayor Bell adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Kimrey
Town Clerk
Staff support to the Board of Commissioners

DRAFT