



MINUTES

The King City Council convened for its regular meeting at King City Hall, Council Chambers, 229 S. Main St., King, on Monday, July 6, 2026, at 6:00 PM. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and make decisions on various city matters. Present at the meeting were Councilman Tyler Bowles, Mayor Pro Tem Jane Cole, Mayor Rick McCraw, Councilman Michael Lane, City Engineer Ben Marion, City Attorney Brad Friesen, City Manager Scott Barrow, City Clerk Nicole Branshaw, Director of Finance and Personnel Susan O'Brien, Intern City Planner Emerson Wright, Fire Chief Steven Roberson, Police Chief Jordan Boyette, Police Lt. M. Perdue, Senior Center Director Paula Hall, Building Inspector Ricky Gordon, and Chaplain Rick Hughes. Councilwoman Terri Fowler was absent from the meeting.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM on Monday, July 6, 2026. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, with all remaining standing for the invocation given by Chaplain Rick Hughes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor presented the upcoming events and closures, which were noted on the agenda.

***Motion:** Mayor Pro Tem Cole made a motion to excuse Councilwoman Fowler from tonight's Council meeting. Councilman Bowles seconded. Motion carried unanimously 3-0.*

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Rick McCraw opened the public comment period at 6:02 PM, reading the full public comment notice into the record regarding rules of decorum, the three-minute speaker limit, the six-minute spokesperson allowance for large groups, and the thirty-minute session limit. He reminded those present that the Council would only listen and not respond, but may place topics on a future agenda.

1. Brian Booe – Stokes Municipal ABC Board Update

Brian Booe, of 122 Liquor Street, Walnut Cove, North Carolina, representing the Stokes Municipal ABC Board, addressed the Council to provide a one-year anniversary update on the ABC store. He thanked the Chamber, the Council, city staff, and the Town of Walnut Cove for their support in getting the store open.

Mr. Booe reported that the board had projected a combined budget of \$4,700,000 for both stores in their first year, and was pleased to report that the budget goal had been met. He further reported that distributions back to the City had thus far totaled \$88,291, with a projected final distribution of up to \$114,291 back to the City. He noted that sales were continuously strong and thanked the community and store employees for their support and hard work.

Mayor McCraw responded by thanking Mr. Booe, the ABC Board, store manager Tanner, and all store employees for their hard work. He specifically noted that the revenue returned to the city helped fund police vehicles and safety measures, and conveyed the Council's appreciation to the entire group.

2. Emily Williams – Stokes News Editor

Emily Williams, editor of the Stokes News, addressed the Council on two matters. First, she announced that she holds open office hours at Bagel Boss on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month from 9:00 AM to noon, and invited any community member to come speak with her about whatever may be on their mind. She noted her personal cell phone number is printed in the paper and is always reachable.

Second, Ms. Williams stated that she wished to provide clarification regarding a recent article published about House Bill 1068. She explained that comments had been made by a Council member on a public Facebook post in response to the article, and characterized those comments as "very rude and rather disrespectful," insinuating things she found inappropriate. She stated that she had been warned about this dynamic when she first came to Stokes County, and she directly addressed the Council member in question, saying, "If you have something you'd like to say to me, Michael, please feel free to come see me — my office hours, shoot me an email, you have my personal cell phone number." She emphasized that attacking a newspaper in a public forum without giving her an opportunity to defend herself was not appropriate, and that she had brought printed copies of the comments for the record. She concluded by reaffirming her openness to community conversation on any topic. **Documents provided by Ms. Williams will be incorporated by reference, maintained on file with the City Clerk, and are noted in the minutes as part of the official record upon approval.

Mayor McCraw thanked Ms. Williams for her comments.

No further members of the public signed up to address the Council during the public comment period. The public comment period was closed at 6:09 PM. ****SEE DOCUMENT 1****

1. ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA

Mayor McCraw asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. No Council members offered any adjustments.

Motion: Councilman Lane made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Councilman Bowles seconded. Motion carried unanimously 3-0.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor McCraw explained that the consent agenda items were considered noncontroversial and administrative in nature. No items were pulled from the consent agenda for separate discussions.

The following consent items were approved:

A. Approval of Minutes

a. June 1, 2026

B. Set a Public Hearing date for Kendall Comm. for Galaxi Towers (aka Alpha Towers Prop. Co.) & Adam L. Cain (Property Owner) Request for a Special Use Permit to Construct a Communication Tower

C. Set a Public Hearing Date for a Voluntary Annexation Request by Zachary & Nicole Burick, D.B.A. (1100 Meadowbrook Dr., LLC).

D. Set a Public Hearing Date for a Voluntary Annexation Request by Matthew Greene D.B.A. (Reaper Holdings, LLC).

Motion: Councilman Lane moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Mayor Pro Tem Cole seconded. Motion carried unanimously 3-0.

4. Discussion Items

A. Lease Agreement Draft for Chamber

City Manager Scott Barrow introduced the discussion, explaining that the previous lease agreement with the Chamber of Commerce had expired on August 31st and was presented for Council review. He noted that the prior lease was a one-year agreement, and offered the option of extending it on a multi-year basis, while clarifying that a multi-year lease would require public notice to be published at least 30 days in advance, per state statute.

Mayor McCraw opened discussion by asking a Chamber Director, Cathy Loveday, whether the current location had been suitable and whether she had been pleased with it. After her affirmative response, Mayor McCraw suggested the Council consider a three-year lease, noting that it might be appropriate to revisit the lease amount at the end of that period but not before.

Councilman Michael Lane expressed support for the three-year term but suggested including a cost-of-living escalator clause to ensure the city was not effectively losing ground to inflation. He proposed something modest, referencing Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustments similar to those used in the city's solid waste contracts, and acknowledged it as a "double-edged sword" — wanting to protect both the Chamber and the taxpayer. He noted that over the past three years inflation had been significant, but suggested a cap to allow the Chamber to budget with certainty.

Mayor McCraw expressed reluctance to raise the rate, saying, "The Chamber offers so much to our community," and indicating a preference to keep the rate flat for three years before revisiting. He acknowledged Councilman Lane's point but said he would personally hate to see an increase during that period.

City Attorney Brad Friesen clarified the statutory requirements, referencing N.C.G.S. § 160A-272, which requires public notice describing the property, stating the annual rental or lease payments, and announcing the Council's intent to authorize the lease — all at least 30 days prior to a vote. He suggested that the Council could authorize City Manager Barrow to begin negotiations with the Chamber representative, publish the required notice the following month, and bring the matter back for formal approval at the September meeting.

The discussion turned to specific rate figures. A Council member proposed keeping the current rate of \$1,500 per month for the first year, increasing to a 2 percent escalation in the second year, and a 3 percent escalation in the third year. Mayor McCraw confirmed the structure: no increase in the first year, then 2 percent, then 3 percent.

City Attorney Friesen translated the percentages into concrete monthly figures for ease of administration: \$1,500 per month in the first renewal year, \$1,530 per month in the second year, and \$1,576 per month in the third year, rounding to the next dollar.

Mayor McCraw asked whether the Chamber representative was comfortable with the arrangement, and she indicated she was, noting that it would be easy to budget. The Council discussed the quality of the space, the Chamber's visibility on the main road compared to its prior location, and the parking arrangement — noting that 14 spaces had been allocated and that earlier issues with unauthorized parking appeared to have been resolved.

Motion: Councilman Bowles moved to approve the lease agreement with the Chamber of Commerce at the previously discussed rates of \$1,500, \$1,530, and \$1,576 per month over three years, with the agreement to be brought formally before the Council at the September meeting following the required public notice period. Councilman Lane seconded. Motion carried unanimously 3-0.

City Attorney Friesen then raised an additional procedural matter, noting that the existing lease contained a holdover provision that would increase the rate to 150 percent of the current rate if the lease expired without a formal extension. He recommended the Council vote separately to extend the current lease at its existing rate through the September 8th meeting date to prevent the holdover provision from triggering.

Motion: Councilman Lane moved to extend the current Chamber lease at the current rate from September 1 through September 8, 2026. Councilman Bowles seconded. Motion carried unanimously 3-0.

5. ACTION ITEMS

A. Comprehensive Plan Branding Review

Mayor Rick McCraw introduced the item, noting that the Council had reviewed several branding concepts at the prior month's meeting — referred to as options A, B, C — and that the preferred direction had emerged from that discussion. The resulting hybrid concept, described as "Gateway 2043," was presented for formal approval. The logo features mountain imagery reminiscent of Pilot Mountain with "King" placed below the mountain range and "Comprehensive Plan" incorporated into the design.

Mayor McCraw opened the floor for comments from the Council. Councilman Lane expressed strong approval of the work, saying that Emerson had "done a great job communicating exactly what we wanted," and stated the result was what the Council had described in the prior session. He added humorously that if the Council did not like it, "it's our fault at this point — we had about a mix of about 3 or 4 different logos." Other Council members expressed approval, noting the secondary logo variations presented alongside the primary logo.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Cole moved to approve the branding logo as presented. Councilman Bowles seconded. Motion carried unanimously 3-0.

6. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

The Mayor invited Council members to raise any questions or concerns regarding the departmental reports. The Council acknowledged receipt of all departmental reports.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Cole moved to accept the departmental reports. Councilman Bowles seconded. Motion carried unanimously 3-0.

ITEMS OF GENERAL CONCERN

Councilman Michael Lane thanked Mayor McCraw for organizing the July 4th parade, noting it was the first time he had his children ride with him in the parade. He acknowledged the heat had impacted attendance but said that those who came were enthusiastic, waving American flags and celebrating the nation's 250th anniversary. He said the event was "all about stirring patriotism and showing thankfulness for the great country we have."

Councilman Bowles expressed regret at having missed the July 4th celebration due to being out of town but said he had enjoyed watching videos and posts about the event on social media. He thanked Mayor McCraw for championing the event and gave particular thanks to staff member Tiffany for her large role in making it happen.

Mayor Pro Tem Cole added her own thanks to Mayor McCraw for his support and hard work in organizing the July 4th parade, calling it an important day for honoring veterans and celebrating the nation's 250th birthday. She gave specific recognition to Tiffany, who she noted stood in the hot sun directing traffic. She expressed hope that the event would continue in future years.

Mayor Rick McCraw offered several items of general concern:

- **Veterans Walk Tram:** He recounted the story of Richard Petty donating a tram to the city, which was used for the first time at the Veterans Walk on the preceding Saturday morning. The tram, which seats 20 people in five rows of four, carried approximately two and a half loads of participants from American Legion to the Veterans Walk site, including veterans who were unable to walk the route. Mayor McCraw gave shout-outs to Stokes Tire and Fire Blade Graphics for their contributions to preparing the tram.

- July 4th Parade: Mayor McCraw credited the Masonic Lodge as a key partner without which the parade could not have happened, and noted the Lodge had already expressed interest in participating again. He said public response on Facebook and other platforms had been "nothing but positive," despite the near-100-degree heat. He also thanked Will Pruitt from Walmart for donating a cart full of small flags, and then calling back with additional donated items, characterizing Walmart as a generous community partner. Parks staff were recognized for their work setting up banners and the event space, with food trucks positioned in shaded areas. He also thanked the fire department for hosting a supper for the Council.
- Fireworks: Mayor McCraw said the fireworks were "fantastic," though he had worried about rain. He noted the storm that threatened the area moved around, with Pinnacle receiving the rain instead of King.
- ABC Store One-Year Anniversary: He noted the milestone and reiterated that the revenue returned to the city reduces the tax burden on residents.
- Comprehensive Plan Kickoff: Mayor McCraw expressed pride in how the Council and staff had handled the comp plan process.
- Police Vehicles: He asked for an update on police cars approved in the budget and was informed that two had been located.
- Community Pride: Mayor McCraw closed by noting that at the Veterans Walk and Senior Center, he had encountered residents and newcomers — including three couples who had recently relocated from Florida — all expressing how much they loved King. He reflected on the pride he feels representing the city: "I am just so proud to be able to represent our city when we're out and about different places and say, I'm from King."

City Manager Scott Barrow provided his own items of general concern:

- Building Demolitions: He announced that the Hensley building and the Keever Alderman building had both been demolished and disposed of during the month. He encouraged Council members to exit through that area to see the result, saying, "It looks great — a different look."
- Street Paving: Seven streets had been paved during the month, including Lake and Mohawk Streets, with one additional street crack-filled in preparation for the next round of paving. He noted the city maintains approximately 45 miles of streets, which he acknowledged is a significant undertaking, particularly for snow removal operations.
- Powell Bill Map: City Manager Barrow noted that the city's Powell Bill map submission had been logged that day, with Ben completing the work. He confirmed that Mayor McCraw had already signed the submission and that it had been formally submitted, representing approximately 45 miles of maintained city streets.

CLOSED SESSION

NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(3) Closed Session for the Purpose of Attorney/Client Privilege.

Motion: Councilman Bowles moved to enter into Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(3) for the purpose of preserving attorney-client privilege. Mayor Pro Tem Cole seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, 3-0.

The Council entered Closed Session at 6:52 PM.

The Council reconvened in open session at 8:03 PM.

Mayor Rick McCraw announced that no action was taken during Closed Session.

Prior to adjournment, a brief discussion took place regarding comments made during public comment by Ms. Emily Williams. The Council discussed the appropriate handling of the documents she had submitted —

specifically related to House Bill 1068 and associated social media comments — and whether they should be incorporated into the official minutes. City Attorney Brad Friesen advised that the documents could be incorporated by reference and kept on file, with notation in the minutes, and that once the minutes were approved they would be part of the official record.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Councilman Lane moved to adjourn at 8:05 PM. Councilman Bowles seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, 3-0.

The meeting stood adjourned.

*** ***Clerk's Note: See Documents 1 for supporting documents.*** ***

Attest:

Approved by:

Nicole Branshaw, City Clerk

Richard E. McCraw, Mayor



Date: July 6, 2026



PUBLIC COMMENT SIGN-UP SHEET

All persons who wish to speak MUST sign up for the Public Comment period unless you wish to speak during a public hearing, in which case you must sign up for the Public Hearing. ALL SPEAKERS ARE LIMITED TO 3 MINUTES.

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION (If Any)</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>City Resident?</u>
1. Brian Booe	Stokes Municipal ABC				☐ yes ☐ no
2. Emily Williams	The Stokes News	Mans + King		Community outreach	☐ yes ☒ no
3.					☐ yes ☐ no
4.					☐ yes ☐ no
5.					☐ yes ☐ no
6.					☐ yes ☐ no
7.					☐ yes ☐ no
8.					☐ yes ☐ no
9.					☐ yes ☐ no
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					

BOARD: City Council

DATE: 7/6/2026

DOCUMENT #: 1 PAGES: 1

In many cases, the City Council will receive your comments but take no action at the meeting.

A staff member will contact you to follow up on your concerns.