

SHALLOTTE BOARD OF ALDERMEN

REGULAR MEETING

January 6, 2026

5:15 P.M.

The Shallotte Board of Aldermen met for a regular meeting on January 6, 2026 at 5:15 p.m. in the meeting chambers located at 110 Cheers Street with Mayor Art Dornfeld presiding.

Aldermen present: Gene Vasile, Bobby Williamson, Larry Harrelson, Jimmy Bellamy and Karmen Custer (5:18)

Staff present: Mimi Gaither, Robert Waring, Brandon Eaton, Natalie Goins, Isaac Norris, Adam Stanley, Paul Dunwell, Dan Formyduval and Attorney Laura Thompson

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Dornfeld called the meeting to order. A motion was made by Jimmy Bellamy seconded by Gene Vasile to open the meeting. Motion carried 4 yes 0 no.

II. INVOCATION & PLEDGE

Katherine Moore gave the Invocation followed by the Board and audience reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Mayor Dornfeld asked if any member of the Board had a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest with regard to any item on the agenda. None identified.

IV. AGENDA AMENDMENTS & APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Gene Vasile seconded by Karmen Custer to approve the agenda with the following amendments:

- Add Item A. ABC Board Request under 7. Administration.

Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Representative Frank Iler addressed the board, emphasizing the importance of early voting and primary elections. He provided information about the upcoming election dates: early voting from February 12-28, with Election Day on March 3. He shared information about five early voting locations in the area, noting that voter ID requirements would be in effect.

Dean Saffos, a resident who has lived in the area for 20 years, spoke about his appreciation for the Town's first responders. He expressed support for a new town hall, police station, and fire station, noting that while these would be expensive budget items, costs would only increase if delayed.

VI. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

1. Police

Police Chief Adam Stanley introduced Jeremy Dixon to the Board. Mr. Dixon, currently Police Chief of Holden Beach, will assume Chief Stanley's position in March.

2. Fire

3. Planning

Planning Director Robert Waring reported that three applicants had expressed interest in the Resilient Coastal Communities Program CAT team. A motion was made by Gene Vasile seconded by Karmen Custer to approve appointment of Michael Norton, Eugene Cartrette and Julie Jurusz to the Community Action Team, while still seeking additional members. Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.

4. Public Utilities

Public Services Director Dan Formyduval requested that Board members review the maps provided at a previous meeting, which identify prospective areas for future sewer development, in preparation for discussion at the January 20, 2026 meeting.

5. Finance

6. Media & Events

7. Administration

A. ABC Board Request

A motion was made by Jimmy Bellamy seconded by Gene Vasile to approve increasing the ABC Board Chairman's monthly compensation from \$125 to \$150 and ABC Board members' monthly compensation from \$100 to \$125. Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Larry Harrelson seconded by Gene Vasile to approve the following consent agenda items:

- A. December 2, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes
- B. Summers Walk Phase II Performance Guarantee – Sidewalks

Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. TXT 25-35 (Roof Signage)

- 1. A motion was made by Jimmy Bellamy seconded by Bobby Williamson to open the public hearing. Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.

Town Planner Brandon Eaton presented the text amendment regarding roof signage, explaining that it would update ordinance language to allow rooftop signage on commercial structures in the central business zoning district. He noted that this was a citizen-initiated amendment (Exhibit A), though staff had proposed alternative language (Exhibit B) with supplemental standards.

2. Public Comments/Questions

Barrett McMullan of McMullan Partners spoke as the citizen who initiated the amendment. He presented himself as an advocate for small businesses in the community and expressed disappointment with the Planning Board's response to his proposal. He explained that the amendment aimed to address visibility challenges for properties set back from Main Street, specifically mentioning his restaurant "Smoke'd" which had closed despite positive reviews due to insufficient customers. A consistent comment from potential patrons was that they didn't know the restaurant existed due to its setback from the road. He emphasized that his goal was to help businesses in the central business district succeed.

3. A motion was made by Jimmy Bellamy seconded by Bobby Williamson to close the public hearing. Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.

4. Board Comments-Questions

Alderman Bobby Williamson stated that, as a CB District business owner, he has heard from individuals also who did not realize his business was there.

Alderman Larry Harrelson expressed support for being "in partnership with our small businesses to help them be successful" and updating ordinances to reflect newer technology in a tasteful manner. Alderman Gene Vasile asked for clarification about buildings with flat roofs. Planning staff confirmed that the language would not allow rooftop signs on flat-roofed buildings since they lack a ridge.

5. A motion was made by Larry Harrelson seconded by Karmen Custer to approve Exhibit B of the proposed amendment after confirming with Mr. McMullan that he had no issues with any language in Exhibit B. Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.
6. A motion was made by Jimmy Bellamy seconded by Bobby Williamson to approve the Board of Aldermen Statement of Consistency with the following updated language: *The proposed citizen-initiated amendment to the Town's UDO would update ordinance language to revise the Town's list of prohibited signage to allow for the installation and use of rooftop signage on commercial structures in the Central Business Zoning District (CB).* Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.
7. A motion was made by Karmen Custer seconded by Gene Vasile to approve Ordinance 25-35 amending the Town of Shallotte Unified Development Ordinance, specifically Article 21, Section 21-13(D) with the understanding that it would be updated to reflect Exhibit B. Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.

2. TXT 25-34 (Data Centers)

1. A motion was made by Bobby Williamson seconded by Larry Harrelson to open the public hearing. Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.

Town Planner Brandon Eaton presented the staff-initiated amendment to create a zoning definition for data centers and establish supplemental regulations for such facilities within town jurisdiction. He explained that while no specific inquiries had been received, similar discussions were occurring across the state, prompting staff to develop standards proactively.

Planning Director Robert Waring stated issues other towns were experiencing with data centers included consuming significant amounts of energy and water, continuous noise, and occupying considerable land area.

2. Public Comments/Questions

3. A motion was made by Jimmy Bellamy seconded by Karmen Custer to close the public hearing. Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.

4. Board Comments/Questions

5. A motion was made by Bobby Williamson seconded by Karmen Custer to approve the Board of Aldermen Statement of Consistency. Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.

6. A motion was made by Jimmy Bellamy seconded by Bobby Williamson to approve Ordinance 25-34 amending the Town of Shallotte Unified Development Ordinance, specifically Article 10, Section 10-3(G). Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.

IX. DISCUSSION

Town Manager Mimi Gaither asked the Board to consider dates for the Retreat. The Board agreed on March 13, 2026.

X. RECESS

A motion was made by Karmen Custer seconded by Gene Vasile to recess until January 20, 2026 at 3:00 p.m. Motion carried 5 yes 0 no.

Respectfully submitted,

Natalie Goins,
Town Clerk