

MINUTES
TOWN OF RONDA REGULAR BOARD MEETING
March 10, 2026, 6:00 PM

The Ronda Town Board met on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, at 6:00 PM with the following members present: Mayor Gerald Masterson, Commissioner Helen Porter, Commissioner Chris Nelson, Commissioner Matthew Foster, Commissioner Bobby Munsey, and Clerk Rachel DeGroat. Commissioner Kevin Reece was not present.

The following members of the public signed-in: Doug & Mary Jane Combs, Victor Varela, Maria Sotts, and Albert Soots.

Mayor Pro Tem Reece Called the Meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Commissioner Nelson led the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the invocation.

AGENDA: Commissioner Munsey makes a motion for an amendment to the agenda, requesting that #2 of the Reports (HCCOG) be moved down to #5, and placing #5 (Yadkin Valley Chamber) up to the #2 slot. Commissioner Nelson seconds the motion. 4/0 aye vote in agreement to amend.

Commissioner Porter makes the motion to accept the newly amended agenda, Commissioner Nelson seconds. 4/0 aye vote in agreement to approve the agenda.

MINUTES: Mayor Masterson asks for a motion on the approval of minutes from the February Work Session, February Meeting. Commissioner Foster makes the motion to accept the listed minutes, Commissioner Porter seconded, and all said aye in a 4-0 vote.

DISCUSSION OF EXPENDITURES: None

Reports:

- 1) YVSA:** Victor Varela reports no reportable spills over the last month. Nine ongoing engineering projects that are currently \$40,000.00 under budget. Work is set to begin soon for the pump station at Ronda Memorial Park. Finally, replacement of an engine in one of the diesel trucks that will cost \$21,000.00. Mayor Masterson asks Victor to pass along to YVSA a thank you from the town for the recent and immediate same day support that they showed in running a camera down a culvert on Factory Street, as we work to assess drainage issues in that area. Victor Varela replies that she will pass the message along. Victor Varela concludes that the breakdown of YVSA funding is 67% from grant funding, 33% from loans, and 4% from local match. Victor praises, West Consultants, their engineering firm for "staying on top of grant funding situations."

- 2) YVCC:** Victor Varella reports meeting was held February 12, 2026, where he met Justin Somers, the Regional Director for Senator Ted Budd. Victor shares his contact information with the Town Clerk. Victor shares that Mr. Somers would be willing to sign any letters for the town in support of any grants. Victor Varella reports that YVCC joined the North Carolina Chamber of Commerce and doing so became eligible for healthcare benefits, Blue Cross Blue Shield for Small Business. Town of Ronda is eligible for that as well, and the information has been shared with Clerk as well. Victor Varella shares calendar of upcoming events to include:

CPR Lunch & Learn - 3/24

Business After Hours – 3/26

Yadkin Valley Wine Festival (volunteers needed) – 5/16

Yadkin Valley Carnival – 6/12-6/13

Yadkin Valley Pumpkin Festival – 9/26

Lastly Victor shares that YVCC has over \$250,00.00 in funds that “they don’t need and they want to find out where we can spend that money. If you have ideas, they would like to help do things for the community.”

- 3) Wilkes EDC:** Commissioner Reece is not present to report.
- 4) WCC:** Commissioner Reece is not present to report.
- 5) HCCOG:** Commissioner Munsey reports that the state foster has a huge amount of children and not enough fostering homes to take them in. Commissioner Munsey reports that he will work to gather more information on interested families can provide support and open their homes if able. Mayor Masterson asks Commissioner Munsey if the HCCOG has grant offerings specific to building structures, opportunities to address the structural needs of the Maintenance Building and Town Hall. Commissioner Munsey replies that he can ask.

OPEN FORUM: Mr. Doug Combs shares with the board that “Jordan is spot-on. Every time I seen him anywhere he is working, busy doing something, and has a great attitude. Do what you got to do to keep him if you can.” Mr. Combs speaks about the “care of the roads. When A-1, Matthew and his crew knew how and what to do. Last time I heard there was some discussion about hiring a town employee. Again, you will not be able to hire an employee cheaper than what I hear they are willing to do the roads for.....and the safety. They have done super. They are available right here, regulars.....I don’t know how many meetings ago it was, I had heard a discussion about a gentleman we were going to help who helped us, which we should have. It was the right thing to do. But, during that discussion I had heard that he was behind on his

water bill. How does anybody get behind on their water bill? How many months behind? Now when I sat on the board, when you got behind on your water bill, we set a lock on it. That is the only way our water system is going to be able to sustain itself. I'd like to know, I would like the whole town to know, maybe the next meeting, how many people in this town is behind in their water bill. I don't want to know the names, that is none of my business but how many is behind? What is the total amount, the total amount that they are behind? And why are they behind? Who said they could be behind. Who told somebody to go ahead and let them have? If you do that, that is fine and great but then you need to sign and say I will be responsible for it from here on out. Duke Power has that if you leave them hanging a bill, you don't come back and get power again till that bill is paid. So, nobody should come back into our town and our water system and get water again when they had stuck us for a bill. And I understand there are widows, and they need to go to their church, and their church will help them. Besides that, that is a bill that is due and you know it is.....the water system is something really important. If you say yeah, go ahead, let them have the water, then you need to come sign and pay for them. Also, the well, I want to know how that is coming along, the \$3million dollars. And I know it takes time, if we don't push that situation, that money has to be spent by December, the check has got to be written. Is that right Mr. Boaz?" Boaz replies, "it was and it is not anymore. The state has solved the problem. They are going to move some money around, so it is no longer." Mr. Combs, "I want to know that next month for sure."

Board Actions:

- 1. Lawn Maintenance RFQ for In-City Limit Streets:** Commissioner Foster shares the cost analysis that was put together by town staff comparing in-house spending versus contracting services to an outside party. Commissioner Foster states that when reviewing yearly costs, license to spray, liability of another employee, it is more cost effective to contract out. Commissioner Foster makes the motion to award A-1 Lawn Care the contract for lawn maintenance on the streets. Commissioner Porter seconds the motion. All said aye in a 4-0 vote.
- 2. Basement Door Contracted Work Repair:** Commissioner Foster reports that we have yet to hear back from the original contractor since February's meeting when that contractor promised to provide the town with his insurance information. Commissioner Foster proposes to "go ahead and get the door fixed with the quote that we have from Oak Ridge Custom Creations, to fix the door, finish around the door so that it ties in with the building. Our building is a reflection on the citizens. And it looks terrible in the condition it is in and needs to be addressed." Commissioner Nelson, "to be consistent, I always want more than one estimate. I try to get 3, if possible. We definitely need to get a couple

more estimates." Commissioner Foster, "we still have a standing estimate with TCI." Commissioner Nelson, "lets get one more estimate and see where we are out. And then it is my opinion that we don't wait till the next meeting. If we can all come together, it does need to be fixed quickly." Commissioner Munsey, "with an agreement from Chris, if we can't get a third one within 30 days, can we get, I don't care if we do it via email, get it approved?" Commissioner Nelson, "I am perfectly fine with this company doing it. If I said go ahead and go with this I wouldn't be consistent with what I have said every single time. This needs to be repaired quickly, and if we don't hear something from this other gentleman that made this mess quickly, I think we need to pursue action against him." Commissioner Foster, "honestly, the action may cost more than..." Commissioner Nelson, "it would, but worth the look." Mayor Masterson, "I think that one thing that this board, and the mayor, former mayor or whatever, that signing that contract, we got to learn to be better on those. The contract that I saw was, it didn't really talk about that. It talked about a couple other projects. So, we got to be better in those contracts. And I think we also, probably in the future look into a bond, so we don't run into this problem. As much as I hate to do that for small projects, unfortunately it has gotten to a time in this world where we need to protect ourselves." Commissioner Munsey, "well lets just have Rachel notify you and you just handle all the oversight for that sort of thing." Mayor Masterson, "I am not willing to do that. I think there is another question here too, you are talking about handling something before the next meeting. I think you have got to authorize somebody to be able to do that, I don't necessarily think that maybe one person, maybe a couple. I think that you need to authorize somebody, in whatever motion we got to allow them to have that authority to give that contract." Commissioner Nelson, "on project specific basis?" Mayor Masterson, "yes, that is what I am saying, on this project." Commissioner Nelson, "that makes sense. I don't think a vote by phone or by email is legal at all in any sense. You can just get a consensus and vote on it kind of after the fact. But, if you want to talk about this project specifically." Boaz, "you know what the highest cost is going to be cause you have a quote, \$4,000.00 (for example). Authorize the mayor to sign a contract, not to exceed whatever that amount is, regardless of who it is with. So, if you go and get two more quotes, and somebody beats him by a thousand bucks, it is under that amount. I think you would be ok, to do that." Commissioner Nelson, "makes sense." Commissioner Munsey, "and if Chris wants a secondary signature have Matthew do it and they work together on these things. And we don't have to wait, like Chris said, 30 days." Commissioner Nelson, "this estimate is \$4,811.79. make it a \$5,000.00 limit, nothing above that, just rounding it off. Anything

under that, or anybody you approve, this company or anybody else, go with it. Let's do this: \$5,000.00 limit, mayor say so, if you see somebody does a better job, it might cost more money, then you rest of us and we will talk about it." Commissioner Munsey, "yeah, and Matthew sign off on it." Commissioner Munsey makes the motion, terms just stated by Commissioner Nelson. Commissioner Nelson seconds the motion. All said aye in a 4-0 vote.

3. **Town Truck Policy:** Clerk, Rachel refers the board to their packets for the amended policy changes. Commissioner Foster makes a motion to accept amended policy as written in regard to the town truck and 24-hour call employees. Commissioner Porter seconds that motion. All said aye in a 4-0 vote.
4. **Town Hall Entry Foyer Repair:** Clerk refers to the board the 2 quote options located in their packet from Carolina Waterproofing regarding the repairs that need to be performed at the entrance of Town Hall. Commissioner Foster, "if you look at the break-down of his description, the tear out he is going to take all the layers of the floors, the sub-floor and the joist and then replace it. He said that includes the floor joist, joist hangers, and the sub-flooring. That's the material and labor. The trim and flooring, for that area and then it goes on to say item #%, replacing damaged joist, broken joist on other areas of the building. So, it is not just addressing the issue at that room. It is addressing the issue at the bathroom." Clerk clarifies, "no, I think it is specifically addressing what is impacted down this strip here." Commissioner Foster, "ok. Something I would like to do, and I started to do that one day when I was looking at the door. I started under there, but there are some things that I didn't want to inhale, so I thought I would at a later date get my respirator. Go under there and look at I for myself. And see what actually is, how badly it is damaged. On the way through there, what does need to be replaced, how many." Mayor Masterson then asks what kind of action would the board like to take? Commissioner Nelson, "my personal opinion is, if Mr. Foster can back with a respirator soon and go up under there and take a look that, I think that would be a good thing. And then come back and discuss this. I know it is something we need to do rather soon, but it is not dire. It is not going to get that much worse in the next month." Commissioner Foster states that he will take a look under Town Hall tomorrow and will take pictures to share. Commissioner Foster, "I believe it needs to be fixed right. Band-aids work for a little while when they are necessary. Band-aids cost more when you have to rip them off, when you have to go back and fix them later. If it does take another month to be sure that this is what needs to be done. Then I think that is what we need to do. Get it fixed, make that room useful again. This building is for the town, and we need to see that it is done correctly." Commissioner Munsey, "or with that said, if Matthew

and the mayor are fine with what is going on under there and transparency with John (Carolina Waterproofing) do you want to go ahead and give them permission to sign off on it and go ahead and start? Or do we want to wait another month?" Commissioner Nelson, "I am fine with that. I trust Matthew's judgement on that." Mayor Masterson, "I am going to have to say upfront that I am going to have to let Matthew be my seeing eye dog because with my lung issues I am not going in there." Commissioner Munsey, "he can share pictures with you, and John is transparent and you guys are good with it, sign off on it." Commissioner Foster, "and I will share it with the rest of the board as well." Commissioner Nelson, "and by the way I was going to ask you for multiple estimates on this one, but I tried that once before with these guys and you couldn't get nobody else to give an estimate." Commissioner Munsey, "let the mayor and Matthew sign off on it. It's a separate project; do we need to vote on that since we already voted on it with one other project?" Commissioner Nelson, "I am perfectly fine if Matthew says 'go ahead and let them do' whichever way. I trust Matthew's judgement. And do I need to make a motion according to that? Well, I make that motion then. If Matthew goes down, eyeballs it, contacts you (mayor), tells you what he thinks and per Mr. Foster's decision." Commissioner Munsey seconds that motion. All said aye in a 4-0 vote.

- 5. 2025 Audit Findings:** Mr. Boaz beings, "the corporate tax return deadline is Monday, so I have not had the opportunity to fully and carefully study the audit. For those of you who don't know, I work in an accountant's office now full-time, and corporate tax return in on Monday, so we are pretty busy. At any rate, I did look at the report at the front of the audit, the management discussion analysis, there were no huge surprises there. The water fund is not strong, but I think we all knew the water fund was not going to be strong. It lost \$120,000.00. that is not terribly surprising. Which is why the board voted to increase the rates, rather significantly, in this year's budget cycle. Those rate increases combined with the new well when it gets online, and the Elkin Senior Assisted Living Facility will hopefully bring that deficit down. General Fund, I think the fund balance was about 45%. The LGC is probably going to tell you that is not high enough, but it is half a year of expenditure. That means you can take in \$0.00 and operate a town for 6 months. So, the LGC is going to tell you it probably needs to be over 100%, and it used to be up near 100% but your expenditures were substantially lower. What that number is, is your savings as compared to your budget. As your budget number goes up, that percentage is going to go down. I have not thoroughly reviewed it; I have not gotten into the weeds yet. It is still in draft form. Hopefully to get that done and incorporate any thoughts that you folks might have, that Rachel might have. I know that she has had a copy of it. And

then get it finalized and get it out. And I am happy to try and answer any questions, but like I said I don't have, my computer battery died and I have not thoroughly reviewed it." Mayor Masterson asks the board if there are any questions. No questions are asked. Mayor Masterson asked if there is any action that needs to be taken on this. Mr. Boaz, "I have told the auditor that they need to plan to be at the April meeting to discuss, so you can hear from the CPA and not just me. The board also should think about, it has been 3 or 4 years since we hired Bernard Robinson, and I think they do a fine job. But, you probably want to think about, do we want to go out for the 2026 audit and get proposals from other firms. Don't have to but that is up to the board. If you want to do that, you probably need to do that relatively quickly so that they can get started on the 2026 audit when the fiscal year ends." Commissioner Nelson asks, "how often do other towns change up?" Mr. Boaz, "that really depends on the particular town. The LGC will probably tell you that you need to go out every 3-5 years. And you need to change, I don't know, I don't know what they'd say, probably every 10 years. Some towns stay with the same auditor for 20 years, 30 years. The problem is that there are a lot fewer firms doing this type of work then there once were. It is harder to go out and find. There are a couple of big firms and then there are some smaller ones that do but it depends on how comfortable the town is with the auditor, if they are doing a good job, the pricing. Sorry, that wasn't really a great answer, but there isn't one." Commissioner Munsey, "I fell like we need to change some things up a little bit. Thanks to Chris and Kevin for bringing on the mayor and Matthew, they seem to be doing a great job. I feel like we need to, and we did this last year when I was elected, changing up the Budget Officer and Financial Officer. Giving them a shot to do what I used to do, and Helen has done since 2021. Switch it up, giving up some of the responsibility, and let them have a hack at it. I would like to recommend we give the mayor the responsibility of Budget Officer and giving Matthew the Financial Officer. If you are ok with that Ms. Helen? Matthew are you ok with that, Budge Officer?" Commissioner Fosters ask, "what is a Budget Officer?" Commissioner Munsey, "you just have to work with Michael and set the budget for the fiscal year. And from time to time just amend it throughout the year, move money around, that sort of thing." Commissioner Nelson, "can I correct you on something. The board sets the budget; we literally vote on it." Commissioner Munsey, "but you have a Budget Officer to present it." Commissioner Nelson, "technically, in name only, yes." Commissioner Munsey, "well, if you go to the statute, and this no poke at Michael, under statute no consultant can be the Budget Officer. I have got the statute right here. I am just looking to cover all aspects of the town. I know he was appointed when I wasn't here, at one of the

meetings. And I am not saying, for whatever reason that happened. I think it would be in the best interest of the town if we looked at, maybe appointing one of the board members. And Helen said she was fine with someone else being the Financial Officer." Commissioner Nelson, "I have no objection to anybody, ok? I want to make it clear that man (Boaz) saved this town bacon, a lot. He did a lot of stuff that we asked him to do and went above and beyond to make sure this town stayed open. Like I said, I don't care, I truly don't. and I am sure Michael would probably rather have all that off of him." Commissioner Munsey, "well he just admitted he has got a full-time job, so I am just trying to look out for him too." Commissioner Nelson, "he didn't admit, he just stated he got a full-time job. It is not a sin, I just want it made clear that Michael Boaz has been a huge help to this town in a time when we were desperate, in a time of major chaos among people he brought us through it. And I just wanted that on record, in public. I could care less who is Budget Officer, who is Finance, as long as it ain't me. I want it understood we would be closed right now if it were not for that man. I believe that with all my heart." Commissioner Munsey, "he deserves his wings, he's been here for what, 10 years?" Mr. Boaz, "as far as the Budget Officer, the Budget Officer is essentially responsible for preparation and presentation of the annual budget. The Finance Officer is responsible for; the Finance Officer or the Deputy has to sign all checks. The Finance Officer generally has to be available to sign checks on a weekly basis." Commissioner Munsey, "and the mayor already does that, would that need to change any of the paperwork with the bank?" Commissioner Nelson, "you like complicating things, don't you Bobby?" Commissioner Munsey, "I am just trying to do things within the guidelines of the statute. I am learning too Chris. I have only been up here a little over a year, and I just want to make sure with Michael's input we are following all the guidelines." Mr. Boaz, "no, it depends on who the third check singer is. Right now, the mayor is the deputy by town policy. Commissioner Porter is the Finance Officer, so if she was not the Finance Officer and the mayor was the Finance Officer, you would need to appoint someone else as a deputy. Because one of the 2 of them always has to sign a check. Now you can make Helen the Deputy, and then you don't have to change anything at the bank. It is none of the bank's business. You can leave the check signers alone and do that. The Finance Officer has to carry a bond, which is not a bog deal. That is all covered in our, the insurance policy from the League. And technically the Finance Officer is personally responsible if the budget gets overspent." Commissioner Munsey, "but that is why you kind of amend it and watch it through the year. And you (Boaz) can help him do that." Mr. Boaz, "right. Absolutely, I will not change anything." Commissioner Nelson, "with Kevin Reece

being Mayor Pro-Tem, does that have any effect on anything you are saying?" Mr. Boaz, "no. Mayor Pro Tem could be one of those people but doesn't have to be. And I don't think Kevin will agree to sign checks." Mayor Masterson, "since my name has been thrown in here, and this is first I knew about it, I don't think it would hurt for a month to leave things they way they are. Let me process that. I can answer my goals as far as this office, I can't answer for Matthew but would like to think about that just a little bit before I commit." Commissioner Foster, "is that you (mayor) going in as the Budget Officer?" Commissioner Munsey, "no, that's you still. Cause you work a job, right?" Commissioner Foster, "yeah, and I feel the same way. I would like to bump it out till the next meeting. I am like the mayor; this is the first I've heard of it and I understand what you are saying. The town should be in line with the statutes, so that there is no kind of issues. I am happy to help, any way that I can. I would like a little bit of time to process." Before moving on Mayor Masterson shares with the board an idea he has holding a "town meeting, that is a non-meeting. I would be the only one sitting up here. I would like to know what people of the town think of, like you (Mr. Combs) did tonight, that is very valuable to us. No gun slinging, probably no answers to anything. I am open to a commissioner or two sitting out there, but we can't have more than 2 of them in a discussion about it because it now dictates a meeting. To see what people think about, either what we are doing or what we are not doing, or things they need to be done. So that it will give us guidance." The mayor hopes to schedule this for a date soon and will keep the board posted.

- 6. Maintenance Building Repairs:** Mayor Masterson shares with the board that the maintenance building needs new siding, new insulation package, a lot of the skeleton is rusted, new roof, gutters. Mayor states that there are a few quotes but none that cover the whole scope for all that needs to be done. Mayor Masterson, "I think we need to give a complete scope. I am not in favor of having one company do this part of it and another company do this. I think we should table this until we have more information on that. There is ways to make it better than it is, and rebuild it, maybe putting an A-style roof on it. Something where water will actually run off. As I said earlier, if we are going to do something, lets do it right." Commissioner Munsey, "I think the problem was, there was no oversight and they just kept putting the wrong roof on there." Mayor Masterson, "yes, and that is exactly where I was headed. I don't want to be the 4th person; I don't want that to be on my record as the mayor of Ronda. I don't want to kick this thing down the road. I want it done right and I want it done this summer if we can." The board agrees to table this action till a complete statement of work is drafted by Mayor Masterson.

Prior to concluding Commissioner Munsey inquires about entering into Closed Session to discuss Jordan Church.

Mayor Masterson:

Closed Session: Pursuant to the N.C.G.S § 143-310.11 subsection (a)(1) and (6) for the purpose of considering confidential personnel matters.

Commissioner Munsey makes the motion to enter into Closed Session. Commissioner Porter seconds the motion. All said aye (4-0) in agreement to enter into Closed Session.

While in Closed Session Commissioner Munsey shares with the board there consideration in raising Jordans hourly pay to \$25.00 an hour. Brief discussion is had regarding Jordans years of service with the town, his job performance, and the money the town has been saving by Jordan taking on the additional work load of another full-time employee. The board agrees to the raise. Mayor Masterson leads out of Closed Session and back into Open Meeting.

Commissioner Munsey makes the motion to raise the hourly rate for Jordan Church to \$25.00 an hour effective the following Monday. Commissioner Nelson seconds the motion. All say aye in a 4-0 vote.

Mayor Masterson adjourned the meeting, and all stood in agreement.

Rachel DeGroat

Rachel DeGroat, Town Clerk

