



**REGULAR
MEETING *MINUTES*
MAYODAN TOWN COUNCIL
September 14, 2026
6:00 p.m.
James A. Collins Municipal Building**

MAYOR AND COUNCIL PRESENT:

Mayor Dwight Lake
Mayor Pro Tem John Miller
Doug Cardwell
Buck Shelton
Letitia Goard Via phone, not eligible to vote

ABSENT:

Melanie Barnes

STAFF PRESENT:

Town Attorney Eugene Russell
Town Manager Melody Shuler
Town Clerk Sarah Hopper

The Mayodan Town Council met at 6:00 pm on September 14, 2026, in the Council room of the James A. Collins Municipal Building, and with a quorum present, Mayor Lake called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION:

Invocation by Pastor Michael Lindsay, Westside Baptist Church, Mayodan

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor and Town Council members.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Steve Luking introduced himself to Mayor Lake and the Town Council as a retired family physician and the Democratic candidate for North Carolina Senate District 26. He noted that he also ran for the seat two years ago.

Mr. Luking stated that his involvement in politics began approximately 15 years ago because of concerns about his working patients who lacked access to health insurance. He described the difficulties uninsured patients faced in obtaining medical care and shared that he advocated for Medicaid expansion. Mr. Luking identified public education as his highest priority. He stated that North Carolina has a constitutional obligation to provide a sound public education to all children, regardless of their ZIP code. He expressed concern about the state's education funding and stated that, if elected, he would prioritize support for public schools.

Mr. Luking also discussed healthcare access and affordability. He emphasized the importance of placing patients at the center of healthcare legislation and expressed concern about the influence of insurance companies and hospital systems.

Mr. Luking thanked the Council for the opportunity to introduce himself and noted that additional information about his campaign was available online.

Mayor Lake welcomed former Mayor Jeff Bullins and Town of Madison Aldermen Michael Scales and Gini Cardwell.

RECOGNITION:

- A. Swearing-In Ceremony for Matthew Royals, Police Officer II, and Gage Grogan, Police Officer I
- B. Proclamation: Constitution Week of September 17; Tara Maxey will be accepting
- C. Introduction of Colby Hollis, WWTP Apprentice, WWTP Backup ORC Chad Darst, and WWTP Operator Joel McCubbins

Mayor Lake recognized Eden Mayor Neville Hall and thanked him for attending.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT ITEMS:

- A. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Agenda Meeting Minutes of August 6, 2026
 - b. Regular Meeting Minutes of August 10, 2026
 - c. 2026 MM Christmas Parade approval

Motion by Councilmember Shelton, seconded by Councilmember Cardwell, to approve the consent Agenda, as presented.

Ayes: Councilmembers Cardwell, Miller, and Shelton

Nays: None

Motion carried unanimously

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. **Interlocal Agreement with Madison Mayodan Recreation Commission for Management, Maintenance, Staffing, and Programming of Farris Memorial Park**

Town Manager Melody Shuler presented the proposal to contract with the Madison-Mayodan Recreation Commission (MMRC) to manage and provide programming at Farris Memorial Park. She explained that A. G. Farris conveyed the park to the Town under a 1976 contract containing restrictions and conditions, including a prohibition on alcohol on the property.

Ms. Shuler stated that the Town Attorney had advised that the proposed agreement would comply with the 1976 contract if certain requirements were met. The Town must retain ultimate control through a termination-for-performance provision. MMRC must provide regular performance reports to the Town Council and Town Manager. MMRC must also comply with all terms and conditions of the original contract.

The Farris Memorial Park Committee reviewed the proposal and voted 3–1 to recommend approval. During its discussion, concerns were raised about Madison having an equal voice in decisions affecting the park. MMRC also reviewed the proposal and expressed its support.

Town representatives held an initial discussion with a member of the Farris family, who supported MMRC managing the park. He stated that the arrangement was consistent with his understanding of the Recreation Department's originally intended role.

The proposed Interlocal Agreement would take effect on October 1, 2026, and remain in effect through June 30, 2029. The parties would review the agreement and budget annually. Either party could

terminate the agreement for convenience with 120 days' notice. The Town could terminate the agreement for cause with 30 days' notice.

Under the agreement, MMRC would be responsible for staffing, programming, and day-to-day operations. The Town would remain responsible for capital improvements, equipment, and utilities. The Town would continue to fund all expenses associated with Farris Memorial Park.

The proposed program cost was \$166,139 after deducting anticipated park revenues. This amount was within the funds available in the current Parks and Recreation budget. MMRC would provide monthly park revenue reports to the Town. All revenue collected would be credited against the park's total estimated expenses. If revenues exceeded budgeted amounts, the MMRC Director and Town Manager would discuss how to distribute the additional funds.

MMRC would maintain a comprehensive maintenance schedule for the park's amenities, vehicles, and equipment. The schedule would be available to the Town Council. Elliott Duncan Park and Garfield Park would remain under the maintenance responsibility of the Town's Streets Department.

Lee Mitchell, Director of MMRC, presented the organization's strategic vision for Farris Memorial Park. He shared a PowerPoint presentation outlining proposed improvements to the concession stand and miniature golf area, including the addition of outdoor seating.

Mr. Mitchell also discussed expanding biking trails and camping opportunities. Proposed activities included archery, yoga, haunted trails, and other events intended to attract more visitors. He stated that the Commission intended to take a proactive approach to help Farris Memorial Park thrive again.

Councilmember Cardwell stated that he would vote against the proposed agreement. He explained that his opposition was based on Madison having an equal say in decisions affecting Farris Memorial Park. He believed this was inconsistent with Mr. Farris's intent because the park was conveyed to Mayodan, rather than jointly to Madison and Mayodan. Councilmember Cardwell clarified that he had no objection to the Recreation Department operating and managing the park.

Motion by Councilmember Shelton, seconded by Councilmember Miller, to approve the Interlocal Agreement between the Town of Mayodan and the Madison Mayodan Recreation Commission for the Management, Maintenance, Staffing, and Programming of Farris Memorial Park, and authorize the Town Manager to execute the Agreement.

Ayes: Councilmembers Miller and Shelton

Nays: Cardwell

Motion carried 2-1

MANAGER/ COUNCIL COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Town Manager Shuler announced that the Farris Memorial Park trail expansion was funded through a Great State Trails Program grant. A groundbreaking ceremony was scheduled for October 2 at 3:30 p.m. at Farris Memorial Park. She encouraged everyone to attend and noted that information would be shared on the Town's social media and website.

Ms. Shuler also announced that What the Hay Fest would take place on October 10, beginning at noon and continuing into the evening.

Town Manager Shuler read this statement: **Enforcement Statement – 800 S Ayersville Rd**

I want to give a brief update on 800 S. Ayersville Road. Enforcement on this property is being handled through the Fire Marshal's Office rather than through the zoning ordinance. That follows the Town's established practice of relying on the Fire Marshal's Office and Building Inspections when their authority offers a faster, more effective path to compliance.

This was a deliberate decision, not an oversight. The Fire Marshal's Office has the authority to shut a noncompliant business down, which gives us a stronger and faster enforcement tool than the zoning ordinance route. My priority is making sure this is handled correctly — both to protect our residents and to protect the Town from legal exposure. Melissa knows this process thoroughly, and I have full confidence she'll use every tool available to bring it to resolution.

I'll also say plainly: I'm currently covering multiple roles for this organization, and there will be times when something slips through. This was not one of those times. This was a considered call on the best way forward, and sometimes making the right decision takes a little more time.

Motion by Councilmember Shelton, seconded by Councilmember Miller, to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes: Councilmembers Cardwell, Miller, and Shelton

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

ATTEST:

Sarah Hopper, Town Clerk

E. Dwight Lake, Mayor