



# **TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION**

Town Council Chambers  
Tuesday, October 21, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.  
Prepared By: Nicole Mayes

**Present:** Mayor George Holleman  
Mayor Pro Tem Eric Bumgarner  
Councilwoman Tamara Odom  
Councilwoman Kim Brown  
Councilman Jack Simms

## **Call to Order**

**George Holleman, Mayor**

The Town Council Work Session was called to order by Mayor George Holleman on Tuesday, October 21, 2025, at 2:05 pm. No invocation or Pledge of Allegiance was held.

## **Discussion Items**

### **1. Proclamation in Recognition of World Polio Day**

**George Holleman, Mayor**

Mayor George Holleman read a prepared proclamation recognizing World Polio Day.

The proclamation highlighted the efforts of Rotary International, which launched PolioPlus in 1985 and spearheaded the Global Polio Eradication Initiative alongside the World Health Organization, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and UNICEF. It noted that Rotary Clubs worldwide, including the Taylorsville Rotary Club, have contributed countless volunteer hours and over \$2.1 billion to protect nearly 3 billion children in 122 countries from polio.

The Town of Taylorsville commended the Taylorsville Rotary Club for its unwavering service, leadership, and advocacy in advancing health, peace, and goodwill locally and globally.

Mayor Holleman officially proclaimed October 24, 2025, to be recognized annually as World Polio Day in the Town of Taylorsville.

### **2. ABC Audit Presentation**

**Taylorsville ABC Board**

Present and representing the ABC Board, Jason Durmire, Chairman; Christy Merideth, Secretary; and Diane Martin, General Manager. The ABC Board provided a copy of their audit for time period February 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025 to the council.

#### General Manager Introduction and Store Operations

Chairman Jason Durmire introduced General Manager Diane Martin, highlighting her hiring in January and her comprehensive management of the store, including ordering, hiring, and inventory. He stated that Ms. Martin has been a significant asset to the Board. Ms. Martin, who has 4.5 years of experience in ABC operations, drives in from Lincolnton. Although this is her first time managing a store, her experience has been crucial, particularly her expertise regarding allocated liquors. Chairman Durmire noted that the store is now stocking allocated liquors that were previously only available at Catawba County ABC stores, benefiting the Town of Taylorsville.

The Chairman reported that the auditors gave the Board a good report, confirming that operations, while initially hectic, are now running smoothly.

Councilmember George Holleman commended the Taylorsville ABC Board for their diligent work in "righting the ship" amidst initial challenges, acknowledging the many hours dedicated to the effort. Chairman Durmire thanked the Councilmember, admitting the learning curve involved in navigating regulations. He reiterated that having Ms. Martin on the team has been very fortunate.

#### Sales Performance and Operations

General Manager Diane Martin presented the store's performance metrics, stating her goal is to increase sales monthly and draw more visitors to the town. She noted that the customer base has expanded beyond locals to include patrons traveling up to two hours away.

Sales Comparison:

- The store is currently "neck and neck" in sales with Granite Falls.
- Since February, the store's monthly sales have been at least \$20,000.00 over the county's sales.
- The store has generated over \$214,000.00 more than the county's comparable sales since February.
- August and September sales exceeded county sales by \$35,000 to \$37,000 each month.

Operational Highlights:

- Ms. Martin ensures adherence to all regulations, including RASP Training and alcohol education for employees.
- She maintains strict inventory management and ensures cash handling and deposits are double- and triple-counted daily.
- Employee scheduling and staffing have been highly successful, with a reliable and honest staff.

- Mr. Durmire confirmed that all new employees were hired fresh and had no prior affiliation with the Catawba County ABC system.

Mayor Holleman asked if all new employees had proven themselves. Ms. Martin confirmed they have, noting that they all have become proficient, trustworthy employees.

#### Facility Expansion and Location Concerns

Mayor Holleman inquired about the current limitations of the store's small size and the Board's long-term view on potentially moving the location, acknowledging the Town is the landlord.

Chairman Durmire responded that the Board's priority is to eliminate the current debt first, but they would eventually like to relocate. The primary issue with the current location is the difficulty of ingress and egress due to increasing traffic and issues with cut-through parking. While the central location is a positive aspect, access is a significant detractor. The Chairman confirmed the Board would want to explore options, such as a loan or setting funds aside, and would require working with the Council to determine the details, as any new project would require some sacrifice from the Town. He noted the current building is over 60 years old, citing a lack of adequate parking, and zero storage space.

Ms. Martin added that the store is at maximum capacity, preventing her from ordering new items due to a lack of space.

Mayor Holleman clarified that the Board's preferred expansion method is building a new facility, to which Chairman Durmire replied, "Yes." Mayor Holleman then asked about the consideration of a second location. Chairman Durmire stated that a second location has not been discussed, as they doubt current sales could justify it.

The Chairman confirmed the Board signed a three-year contract with the Town, meaning no action on a new building is planned within the next three years, pending debt reduction. Future expansion would ideally include an additional 2,000 square feet of warehouse space, which he noted is a key factor in maximizing sales (e.g., ordering bulk when items are on sale).

Councilmember Eric Bumgarner asked about expiration dates for large quantity purchases. Ms. Martin clarified that only certain creams have a one-year expiration, while other items can be stored long-term.

#### Debt, Distributions, and Financial Outlook

Mayor Holleman asked if the Board was satisfied with the Town's assistance in getting the store operational. Chairman Durmire referenced former Chairman Ron Roseman and stated that the major challenge is the current debt.

#### Financial Status:

- The outstanding loan balance is currently \$95,572.26.
- The debt has been reduced from an initial \$130,000.00.

- The Board is currently making their required loan payment plus an additional \$5,000.00 per month to accelerate debt reduction.
- The Board is currently incurring over \$1,000.00 per month in interest charges.

Chairman Durmire explained that the minimum distribution owed to the Town is calculated by a state formula (3% of total sales), irrespective of the debt. Because the Board had to finance the initial inventory and expenses (a \$202,000.00 inventory jump from zero, plus a \$25,000.00 POS system and a new alarm system), they are "playing catch up." To pay the required minimum distribution now would necessitate borrowing money, which would extend the debt period. He noted that when Alexander County started a store from scratch, the ABC Store was allowed to defer distributions until the debt was entirely paid.

Town Manager Nathan Hester asked for the current inventory value. Ms. Martin confirmed it is \$203,000.00, which represents approximately 2.5 months of inventory, based on a cost of goods sold of about \$78,000.00 per month. Councilmember Kim Brown noted that upcoming holidays (October, November, December) will be the biggest months, requiring a large order that will yield significant returns. Mr. Durmire stated the average monthly cost of orders is \$70,000.00, and the store pays about \$45,000.00 per month to the State for taxes.

Chairman Durmire conveyed that being out of debt would put the Board in the best position to provide the maximum distribution to the Town. They have the minimum distribution check ready but request deferral to pay down the debt, understanding that they will pay if required.

Councilmember Kim Brown expressed optimism, noting the significant progress in only eight months and projecting the loan could be paid off in another year to a year and a half.

Town Manager Hester asked about the loan term. Secretary Christy Merideth clarified it is a \$250,000.00 open line of credit that the Board pays down. The distribution worksheet from the commission is based solely on sales, taxes, and surcharges. The current minimum distribution is paid quarterly, with a final payment after the annual audit will determine the remaining profit.

#### Audit Cost and Future Considerations

Councilmember Eric Bumgarner asked about the possibility of a small short-term warehouse to house extra inventory. Chairman Durmire replied he was unsure of the legality under State regulations and doubted they had the staff to manage the location.

Town Manager Hester asked if the Board expects to meet the budgeted \$80,000.00 annual allocation to the Town by June 30th. Chairman Durmire stated they are currently at \$12,000.00 for the first quarter (July, August, September) and did not expect to meet the full amount without a large, unexpected increase in sales. Ms. Martin, however, was optimistic, saying the next quarter would be high and they would be "pretty dang close" to the target.

Mayor Holleman asked the cost of the audit by Lowdermilk Church & Co, LLP. Ms. Martin responded, \$5,500.00, and confirmed the firm specializes in ABC audits.

Mayor Holleman thanked the ABC Board for attending.

### **Economic Development Update**

**Nathan Hester, Town Manager**

#### Taylorsville Development Alliance Update

Mr. Hester began by noting the establishment of the Taylorsville Development Alliance, a non-profit organization. The non-profit has been filed with the state, which is a significant step forward for the Town. Mr. Hester stated that he is awaiting the final board signature, from Dale Cleary, for the Board of Directors documents, and has reached out but has not yet received a response.

#### Hospital Property Negotiations

The Board previously approved the Letter of Intent to begin negotiations with the property owner of the hospital property regarding an equity participation partnership. This letter has been sent to the owner for signature. Once approved, this legal agreement between the two organizations will allow them to continue negotiating the definitive documents outlining the partnership's structure, including how equity will be split upon the property's development and eventual sale. These negotiations are ongoing and moving forward.

#### Urgent Care Property Listing

Mr. Hester informed the Council that he met with Hartness Realty today to discuss contracting with them to list the Urgent Care Property. He thanked the Council for allowing him to explore options for the property, acknowledging that the initial efforts had not been as successful as hoped.

Councilmember Jack Simms asked if Tim McCullen remained interested in the building. Mr. Hester acknowledged that Mr. McCullen had expressed interest but had not yet submitted a formal offer. He added that if an offer were received, he would present it to the Council for consideration, but he believed it was best list the property now.

Councilmember Simms also raised a concern about the "Urgent Care" signage, noting that people have been seen attempting to enter the closed facility, which suggests confusion among visitors or non-residents. He suggested removing or covering the sign to clarify that the facility is no longer operating as an urgent care center.

Mr. Hester highlighted the advantage of the property's zoning allowing for multiple uses, including continued use as a medical or professional services office, or even conversion into multi-family units (duplexes or triplexes). This flexibility allows the property to be marketed multiple ways, which he believes will help generate interest. He commented that the commercial market in Taylorsville appears to be variable depending on the property's location.

Michelle from Hartness Realty will run some comparable sales, and Mr. Hester expects to have a listing contract for the Council's review soon. The subsequent process will remain the same: an offer would be made, subject to Council acceptance, followed by a 10-day upset bid period, after which the Council would need to formally agree on the sale.

Mr. Hester expressed his hope to allocate half of the sale proceeds to the Town and the other half to the new non-profit as seed money. He stressed the need to continue working with the non-profit to establish creative, future revenue streams. The goal is for the organization to become financially self-sustaining within several years, operating on its own budget, partnering with the Town, and advocating on its behalf. He concluded that they will continue to assess different potential projects for other properties and areas of town needing revitalization and development.

#### Council Acknowledgment

Councilmember Eric Bumgarner thanked Town Manager Nathan Hester for his dedication, expressing hope that the hospital project, in particular, would provide a much-needed boost for the town.

#### **Staff Reports**

#### **Staff Department Head**

Town Manager Nathan Hester presented reports on behalf of absent department heads. Public Utility Manager Aaron Wike and Finance Director Zachary Greene were unable to attend the meeting as they were in Greensboro, NC, for a training session with Black Mountain Software.

#### *Public Works Report*

The Public Works Department had no new updates to report, other than the previously addressed leak on Liledoun.

#### *Finance Department Report*

Finance Director Zachary Green has initiated work on the 2025 Audit. Mr. Greene is working with Greg Isley to prepare the groundwork and financial statements for submission to Martin, Starnes & Associates. The submission to the Local Government Commission (LGC) is anticipated for late January or early February, which will be past the December 31, 2025, deadline. The Town Manager acknowledged that this would make the audit approximately a month to a month and a half late. Once the 2025 audit is complete, the department will have a few months' before preparing for the 2026 Audit beginning in July or August of next year.

#### *Police Department Report*

Police Chief Michael Millsaps provided the following updates:

- Staffing: The department has hired a new officer, Matthew Bauer, who previously worked for the Wilkesboro Police Department and is currently on his second day of work. The department is nearing full staffing capacity.
- School Resource Officers (SROs): The department is making preparations to resume SRO positions at the schools when that time comes, and the Chief expressed confidence in the department's ability to handle the assignment.
  - Councilmember Kim Brown clarified the SRO requirement. Chief Millsaps confirmed that the department will have four total SROs at that point. This will include two officers at Alexander Central High School (ACH), one officer at Taylorsville Elementary, and one officer split between the Early College and the Student Success Center.

- Recent Events: The Apple Festival was successful, with the department setting up displays and arranging for costumed superheroes to be available for children's photos.
- Upcoming Events and Projects: The next major event for the department is the Christmas Parade, following the Hometown Halloween event. Chief Millsaps mentioned that the department is working on other projects that will be presented once they are fully prepared.

### **City Managers Report**

**Nathan Manager, Town Manager**

Town Manager Nathan Hester reminded the Council that following the holiday season, they should keep the potential hiring of additional School Resource Officers (SROs) in mind as the next budget season begins and preparations for the upcoming fiscal year get underway.

### **Council General Discussion**

Councilmember Jack Simms opened the discussion by expressing concern that despite the approaching November date, sidewalks on the west side of town had not been installed. He noted that the original completion date had been understood to be December. Town Manager Nathan Hester initially suggested the deadline was March, leading Councilmember Simms to state that this change "significantly alters the expected timeframe," as the council had been told December for months. Councilmember Kim Brown then questioned the feasibility of pouring concrete when the ground is frozen, a possibility confirmed by Councilmember Eric Bumgarner. Town Manager Hester assured the council he would contact the contractors for clarification on the schedule. Councilmember Simms also asked Mr. Hester to call Duke Energy regarding the four streetlights removed during the installation of new 55-foot utility poles, noting the resulting darkness on the west side of town.

Councilmember Brown inquired about the Halloween night plans and if the town had an adequate supply of candy. Town Manager Hester confirmed they had a "beaucoup" (plenty) of candy for Halloween and likely enough for Christmas, but he committed to purchasing more if necessary for the later holiday.

Councilmember Tamara Odom requested the use of a trailer for a bluegrass band to set up at the ball park. Mr. Hester confirmed the availability of a trailer. Councilmember Brown noted that drop cords would also be needed, and Councilmember Odom agreed to verify if the band would supply its own extension cords.

Councilmember Brown updated the council on the difficulties securing a hayride for an event. She noted the FFA could not assist due to a lack of a trailer, and the Hiddenite Center was also unable to help. She planned to contact Allison Brown to see if her sons, who reportedly owned the trailer the FFA previously used, could perform the hayrides. The Town Manager mentioned the town's trailer is a tilt trailer. This prompted a discussion about another town-owned trailer, which Councilmember Simms confirmed was still with Harry Schrum for a proposed project to retrofit it as a portable stage, potentially for use at locations like Matteson Park.

Councilmember Bumgarner inquired about the schedule for installing the town's Christmas trees, and Town Manager Hester confirmed the installation date as Friday, November 21st.

Councilmember Brown mentioned a design for a decorative picture frame—resembling the outline of a present—that could be set up near the Christmas Tree for family photos, suggesting she would work with Councilmember Bumgarner to build it.

Councilmember Simms stated he would like a future discussion regarding the conduct of Gina Kay at the recent Apple Festival. Councilmember Brown offered a positive assessment of the festival, praising the large attendance, beautiful weather, and the effective layout, especially the inclusion of schools and the principal pumpkin carving contest on the courthouse park.

Mayor George Holleman, left at 3:00.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss the Mayor Pro Tem Eric Bumgarner requested a motion to adjourn at 3:05 pm.

*Motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Kim Brown, seconded by Councilmember Jack Simms, and approved unanimously.*

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Mayor

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Councilmember

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Councilmember

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Councilmember

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nicole Mayes, Town Clerk