

Mayor D. Dwayne Tuggle called a regular monthly meeting of the Amherst Town Council to order on October 9, 2024, at 7:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall at 174 S. Main Street.

It was noted that a quorum was present as follows:

P	D. Dwayne Tuggle	P	Andra Higginbotham
P	Janice N. Wheaton	P	Michael Driskill
P	Sharon W. Turner	P	Kenneth S. Watts

Also present were the following staff members:

Sara E. McGuffin	Town Manager	Ryan Watts	Police Captain
Kelley Kemp	Town Attorney-Remote	Gary Williams	Director of Plants
Tracie Morgan	Dep. Town Manager/Treas.	Becky Cash	Water/Wastewater Operator
Vicki K. Hunt	Clerk of Council		

Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was followed by an invocation by Andra Higginbotham.

Mayor Tuggle opened the floor to citizen comments.

Tim Ware, business owner and town resident, came forward in support of Amherst Mountain Biking Club’s request for use of land within Brockman Industrial Park to construct more bike trails. A proposal for beginner, intermediate and advanced bike trails was presented to the Planning Commission and to the Economic Development Authority at their October 2024 meetings.

Sonny Sundarmurthy, Town of Amherst resident, came forward in support of allowing more affordable paving options for town businesses.

There being no one else listed to speak on the citizen comment sign-in sheet, or otherwise, no other comments were made.

Ms. Turner made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Higginbotham to approve the minutes of the meeting held on September 11, 2024, as presented.

There being no discussion, the motion carried 5-0 via the roll call method as follows:

D. Dwayne Tuggle		Andra Higginbotham	Aye
Janice N. Wheaton	Aye	Michael Driskill	Aye
Sharon Turner	Aye	Kenneth Watts	Aye

Mr. Watts made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Driskill to approve the September 2024 check registry as presented with the exception of Item #6346 Hill Hardware.

There being no discussion, the motion carried 5-0 via the roll call method as follows:

D. Dwayne Tuggle		Andra Higginbotham	Aye
Janice N. Wheaton	Aye	Michael Driskill	Aye
Sharon Turner	Aye	Kenneth Watts	Aye

Mr. Watts made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Higginbotham to approve Item #6346 Hill Hardware, in the amount of \$402.43, on the September 2024 check registry, as presented.

There being no discussion, the motion carried 4-0-1 via the roll call method, as follows:

D. Dwayne Tuggle		Andra Higginbotham	Aye
Janice N. Wheaton	Aye	Michael Driskill	Aye
Sharon Turner	Abstain	Kenneth Watts	Aye

Town Manager McGuffin gave a report on a proposal from VDOT for an overall design study for pedestrian improvements at the traffic circle and along Second Street, as well as other improvements that could be made. A copy of the design study proposal was provided to Council. A broader design study which would include citizen participation is required to apply for grant funding through Smart Scale. Staff recommended that Council make a request to VDOT to go forward with implementation of the design study and citizen participation as proposed.

Mr. Higginbotham made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Watts to proceed with a request to VDOT to move forward with the design study and citizen participation, as recommended by staff.

After discussion, the motion carried 5-0 via the roll call method, as follows:

D. Dwayne Tuggle		Andra Higginbotham	Aye
Janice N. Wheaton	Aye	Michael Driskill	Aye
Sharon Turner	Aye	Kenneth Watts	Aye

Deputy Town Manager/Treasurer Morgan gave a report on a proposed updated personnel policy. Staff recommended approval of the proposed updated personnel policies.

After discussion, by consensus Town Manager McGuffin was directed to schedule a special session for Council to review and discuss the proposed personnel policy update. The matter was deferred.

Council Member Watts requested that reconsideration of paving standards be referred back to the Planning Commission for further discussion and recommendations.

Council Member Driskill gave a report on a proposed parking area square foot threshold that would allow for small business parking lot surface treatment and larger business asphalt requirements.

Mr. Watts made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Driskill to refer the matter of paving standards back to the Planning Commission for further reconsideration and recommendation.

After discussion, the motion failed 2-3 via the roll call method, as follows

D. Dwayne Tuggle		Andra Higginbotham	Nay
Janice N. Wheaton	Nay	Michael Driskill	Aye
Sharon Turner	Nay	Kenneth Watts	Aye

Mayor Tuggle opened the floor to citizen comments.

Jerry Martin, Town of Amherst business owner, came forward stating a perception of unethical practice of certain council and planning commission members to participate in the consideration of paving restrictions for businesses.

Angela Sundaramurthy, Town of Amherst resident and business owner, came forward in opposition of what appears to be targeting business owners with property complaints.

Jessica Robertson, Town of Amherst resident, came forward with to request a speed study of Sunset Drive, starting at Kenmore Road.

Zach Taliaferro, Town of Amherst resident, came forward requesting that the speed limit be reduced on Sunset Drive.

Tim Ware, Town of Amherst business owner, came forward in support of a crosswalk at the intersection of 2nd and S. Main Street and a pedestrian all-stop across S. Main Street.

There being no one else listed to speak on the citizen comment sign-in sheet, or otherwise, no comments were made.

There being no further business, on motion of Ms. Wheaton and seconded by Mr. Higginbotham at 8:01 PM the meeting adjourned until November 13, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

The motion carried 5-0 as follows:

D. Dwayne Tuggle		Andra Higginbotham	Aye
Janice N. Wheaton	Aye	Michael Driskill	Aye
Sharon Turner	Aye	Kenneth S. Watts	Aye

D. Dwayne Tuggle, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Clerk of Council