

Town of Mount Olive
May 4, 2026
Regular Board Meeting
Minutes

Mayor Jerome Newton called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. Those in attendance per roll call were Mayor Pro-Tempore Delreese Simmons, Commissioner Vicky Darden, Commissioner CJ Weaver, Commissioner Harlie Carmichael, Commissioner Gena Knode, Town Attorney Carroll Turner, Town Manager Octavius Murphy and Town Clerk/Administrative Assistant Sherry Davis.

Mayor Jerome Newton called the meeting to order, and Commissioner Harlie Carmichael delivered the invocation and Commissioner Gena Knode led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Jerome Newton read the Conflict-of-Interest Statement; there were no conflicts.

Mayor Jerome Newton requested a motion to approve the published agenda. Mayor Pro-Tempore Delreese Simmons made a motion to add an action memo granting Mayor Jerome Newton his regular hours back. Commissioner Vicky Darden seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Jerome Newton then requested a motion to approve the April 6, 2026, meeting minutes. Commissioner CJ Weaver advised he would like to request one correction regarding the number of people attending the UMO Ag Day, it should have been 2,500. Commissioner Harlie Carmichael made the motion to approve with the requested change Commissioner Vicky Darden seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Jerome Newton opened the public forum.

Mr. Ray McDonald, Jr of 308 North Center Street, Mount Olive, NC 28365, 919-922-4171. He stated the four-year staggered terms is a good idea, but even good ideas can be dismissed by poor execution. If you pass this tonight, you will kill the four-year terms because the public has requested a referendum. He commented regarding action memo – 04-48. Does anybody have any idea how much private money was raised to create that football field? It was between \$300,000.00 & \$400,000.00. You will lose the trust of the private donors and poison the well for future investors. The offer being made is pennies on the dollar. He encourages the board not to sell it.

Mrs. Linda Boykin of 600 East Main Street, Mount Olive, NC 28365, 919-922-9364. She said the majority of the people are against four-year terms and advised they want to vote on this. Listen to what the citizens are saying.

Mr. David Braswell of 1111 East John Street, Goldsboro, NC 27530, 252-289-4539. He is with Rubicon Insurance. Last year they did not receive crucial information until the deadline was up and were not awarded our Health Insurance contract. He would like to meet with the board to discuss it.

Ms. Irvina Wentworth is the attorney for ADLA, Inc. she advised they are placing on bid on the football field at Carver Cultural Center because ADLA, Inc and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes would like to make improvements to the property for public use. She stated if ADLA, Inc ceases to exist the deed would revert to the Town of Mount Olive. A lease limits what we can do, we just want more control. A lot of 501 (c)(3) organizations did not know we could bid.

Mayor Jerome Newton then closed the public forum.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed 04-46 – Consider Approval of Ordinance Amendment to Four- Year Staggered Terms. Commissioner CJ Weaver made a motion to approve. Commissioner Harlie Carmichael seconded. Commissioner Vicky Darden said she did not want to upset the citizens and Mayor Pro-Tempore Delreese Simmons agrees, we should listen to the citizens and request a referendum. Commissioner Vicky Darden made a motion to table. Mayor Pro-Tempore Delreese Simmons seconded and the motion passed 5-0. Town Attorney Carroll Turner advised the board is required to act within sixty days of our resolution. We will proceed with the referendum request at the June 1, 2026, Regular Board Meeting. We can't have an election any sooner than seventy days after approval of the referendum. He will contact the NC State Board of Election to possibly get this item placed on the mid-term ballot. If approved the charter change would be effective in the 2027 elections. However, if the voters are against it the amendment is dead.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed Non-Action Item 04-47 - Certificate of Appreciation to Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Dortch Presented by Commissioner Vicky Darden. Commissioner Vicky Darden wanted to thank Mr. & Mrs. Dortch for their dedication to our community. She also presented a framed photograph of the late Doris Murphy to Town Manager Octavius Murphy.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed Action-Memo - 04-48 – Consider Approval of \$20,000.00 Offer from ADLA, Inc. to Purchase the Dr. Spencer E. Durante, Sr. Athletic Complex located at 612 South Breazeale Avenue and Authorize Town Attorney Carroll Turner to begin the Upset Bid Process. Commissioner CJ Weaver made a motion to table this item. Commissioner Vicky Darden seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed Action – Memo - 04-49 – Consider Approval of Renting a VAC Truck with Two Staff Members from the City of Goldsboro. Commissioner Harlie Carmichael made a motion to approve. Commissioner CJ Weaver seconded. Commissioner Gena Knode asked who are the staff members and what is the cost? Town Manager Octavius Murphy replied, the City of Goldsboro will be supplying the truck and two

men. They also have a dump site to empty the truck. He stated the cost is \$4,967.07 for three days. The immediate need is to ensure meeting the next special order of consent milestone. Commissioner CJ Weaver advised this option is less expensive for the Town and it doesn't go back into our system. Mayor Pro-Tempore Delreese Simmons wanted to know what happened with the forty thousand dollars that was approved for our last truck. Sorome Applins advised the purchase order was signed and it ended there; the money was never spent. It is budgeted for and we will still have twenty thousand in the budget. He thinks Goldsboro's offer is the best solution. With a motion to approve and a second the item passed 5-0.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed Action – Memo - 04-50 – Consider Approval of the Lupus Awareness Month Proclamation. Commissioner CJ Weaver made a motion to approve. Commissioner Gena Knode seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed Action – Memo- 04-51 –Consider Approval of Records Retention Policy Update. Commissioner CJ Weaver made the motion to approve. Commissioner Vicky Darden seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed Action-Memo – 04-52 - 04-52 – Consider Approval of Procurement Policy Update. Commissioner CJ Weaver made the motion to approve. Commissioner Harlie Carmichael seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed Action-Memo - 04-53 – Consider Approval of Amendments for the Town of Mount Olive's Personnel Policy. Commissioner Gena Knode made the motion to approve. Commissioner CJ Weaver seconded. Mayor Pro-Tempore Delreese Simmons made a motion to table this item for further discussion and review. Commissioner Vicky Darden seconded the motion, and it passed 3-2 as follows: Mayor Pro-Tempore Delreese Simmons – Yes, Commissioner Vicky Darden – Yes, Commissioner Harlie Carmichael – Yes, Commissioner CJ Weaver – No and Commissioner Gena Knode – No.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed Action-Memo – 04-54- Consider Approval of Inspections Mutual Aid Contract with the City of Goldsboro. Commissioner CJ Weaver made the motion to approve. He stated they were using our inspector and paying us for it. Commissioner Harlie Carmichael seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed Action-Memo – 04-56 - Consider Approval of Reinstating the Mayor's Office Hours & Revoking the Resolution Adopted at the March 12, 2026, Special Called Board Meeting. Commissioner Vicky Darden made the motion to approve. Commissioner Harlie Carmichael seconded and the motion passed 3-2 as follows: Mayor Pro-Tempore Delreese Simmons – Yes, Commissioner Vicky Darden – Yes, Commissioner Harlie Carmichael – Yes, Commissioner CJ Weaver – No and Commissioner Gena Knode – No.

Town Manager's Report – Attached.

Mayor & Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Vicky Darden

- She would like to start a program in our area helping victims of domestic violence.
- She thanked everyone for coming out and she will continue to pray. She likes to recognize people from her heart while they are still here.
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Commissioner CJ Weaver

- He attended the Regionalization meeting in person, and it was very interesting.
- He said the North Carolina Pickle Festival was packed.
- He thanked the first responders who did a great job and gave a shout out to Police Chief Jason Hughes and Fire Chief Will Bryan.
- He stated he enjoyed the Child Abuse Prevention drone show
- He reminded everyone our next ordinance review workshop is scheduled for May 13, 2026, at 6:00 P.M.
- He enjoyed the Black History Parade.

Commissioner Gena Knode

- She thanked everyone for coming and congratulated Julie Beck on forty years of the North Carolina Pickle Festival.
- She and Mayor Pro-Tempore Delreese Simmons are on the Budget Committee, and we had a great meeting.
- She has received lots of calls from landlords regarding placing utilities in their names and from citizens regarding their water bills.

Commissioner Harlie Carmichael

- He thanked everyone for their support.
- He reminded everyone of the deadline for senior tax relief, June 1, 2026. You must have an annual income of less than \$38,000.00 to qualify.
- He urged everyone to please call in any water leaks.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Delreese Simmons

- He thanked everyone for coming out and recognized Wayne County Commissioner Antonio Williams for attending.
- He told Town Manager Octavius Murphy that he appreciated him.

Mayor Jerome Newton

- He said the drone show was excellent.
- He welcomed Town Manager Octavius Murphy and stated he is doing a great job.
- He asked Wayne County Commissioner Antonio Williams if he would like to speak but he declined.
- He thanked the first responders for a great job with security at the North Carolina Pickle Festival. He said it was a great day but rained when it was time to clean up.

Our next regular board meeting is Monday, June 1, 2026, at 6:00 P.M.

Closed Session Pursuant to NC GS § 143-318.11. Closed sessions.

The purpose of the closed session was CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO NCGS SEC. 143-318.11 (*Motion/Second-Roll Call)

- (a) 6: To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee. General personnel policy issues may not be considered in a closed session. A public body may not consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, appointment, or removal of a member of the public body or another body and may not consider or fill a vacancy among its own membership except in an open meeting. Final action making an appointment or discharge or removal by a public body having final authority for the appointment or discharge or removal shall be taken in an open meeting. G.S. 143-318.11

Mayor Jerome Newton asked the audience to please step out during our closed session. We will step out to see if anyone is still here once we come out of closed session. He then requested a motion to go into closed session. Commissioner CJ Weaver made the motion. Commissioner Gena Knode seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

The closed session lasted approximately ninety minutes PURSUANT TO NCGS SEC. 143-318.11 (*Motion/Second-Roll Call)

- (a) 6: To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee. General personnel policy issues may not be considered in a closed session. A public body may not consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, appointment, or removal of a member of the public body or another body and may not consider or fill a vacancy among its own membership except in an open meeting. Final action making an appointment or discharge or removal by a public body having final authority for the appointment or discharge or removal shall be taken in an open meeting. G.S. 143-318.11

Mayor Jerome Newton requested a motion to return to open session. Commissioner Gena Knode made the motion. Commissioner Vicky Darden seconded and the motion passed 5-0. Someone checked to see if any members of the audience were still present and no one was there.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed Action-Memo - 04-55 – Any Action the Board Deems Appropriate Following the Closed Session. Commissioner Gena Knode made a motion to add Action-Memo 04-57 – Create a position of Assistant Town Manager Effective Immediately. She advised Town Manager Octavius Murphy will promote Administrative Assistant/Town Clerk Sherry Davis to this position. Commissioner Vicky Darden seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Delreese Simmons made a motion to add Action-Memo 04-58 to Rescind the March 12, 2026, Resolution Taking Away the Powers of the Mayor. Commissioner Vicky Darden seconded and the motion passed 3-2 as follows: Mayor Pro-Tempore Delreese Simmons – Yes, Commissioner Vicky Darden – Yes, Commissioner Harlie Carmichael – Yes, Commissioner CJ Weaver – No and Commissioner Gena Knode – No.

With there being no further business, Commissioner CJ Weaver made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Vicky Darden seconded, and the motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jerome Newton
Mayor

Sherry Davis
Administrative Assistant/Town Clerk