MAYOR
Jessie Bellflowers

MAYOR PRO TEM
Dr. Kenjuana McCray

TOWN MANAGER
Chancer McLaughlin

TOWN BOARD
Elyse Craver
Jerry Legge
Bryan Marley
Joanne Scarola

TOWN CLERK
Ashley Wyatt

TOWN OF HOPE MILLS BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Meeting Agenda –October 22, 2025
5:00 p.m. Special Meeting

Mayor Jessie Bellflowers called the Special Meeting of the Hope Mills Board of Commissioners to order on Wednesday, October 22, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance.

STAFF PRESENT
Town Manager Chancer McLaughlin, Town Clerk Ashley Wyatt, Deputy Town Clerk Coronda Regan, Police Chief Stephen Dollinger, Town Attorney Dan Hartzog, Public Works Director Don Sisko, Human Resources Director Leeanne Carlucci, Finance Director Drew Holland, and Parks and Recreation Director Lamarco Morrison.

ABSENT: Commissioner Jerry Legge

PHONE ATTENDANCE: Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Kenjuana McCray

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bellflowers led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS.
Mayor Bellflower called the special meeting to order. Before addressing the agenda, he noted Commissioner Legge's absence due to health issues, mentioning he had been in and out of the hospital. He asked everyone to keep Commissioner Legge and his family in their thoughts and prayers.

Mayor Bellflower also addressed Mayor Pro Tem Dr. McCray's remote participation, explaining that she was recovering from surgery at home and would be participating via phone. He clarified that the board had previously voted on November 4, 2024, to suspend the rules of procedures indefinitely to allow remote participation for both Mayor Pro Tem Dr. McCray during her recovery from scheduled surgeries and Commissioner Legge during his recovery from a car accident. The mayor read the relevant portion of the minutes from that meeting into the record to address questions that had been raised about remote participation.

Commissioner Scarola moved to reorder the agenda by moving Item 3 (Mac McCarley Personnel Investigation General Update) to Item 2 and moving Item 2 (Closed Session) to Item 3.

Motion by Commissioner Scarola, seconded by Commissioner Marley, to approve the agenda with the reordering of items. Motion carried unanimously with Mayor Pro Tem Dr. McCray voting in the affirmative.

MAC MCCARLEY PERSONNEL INVESTIGATION GENERAL UPDATE

Town Attorney Dan Hartzog introduced Mac McCarley, who was authorized to conduct an investigation at the previous board meeting. Mr. Hartzog distributed copies of Mr. McCarley's memo to board members.

Mac McCarley presented his investigation findings regarding allegations that Commissioner Craver made a racist comment to citizen Roy Young at the Waffle House on September 11, 2025. He explained that the scope of his investigation was limited to determining whether Commissioner Craver stated "there are too many blacks running the town" during that encounter.

Mr. McCarley stated that his conclusion was that it was "more likely than not" that Commissioner Craver made the statement. He explained that this was a "2 on 2, he said, she said case" with four people directly involved: Commissioner Craver, Ruth Farley, Roy Young, and Mr. Ritz. Mr. Young and Mr. Ritz provided one account, while Commissioner Craver and Ms. Farley provided a different account.

Mr. McCarley detailed his investigation process, noting that all four individuals agreed they were present at the Waffle House, sitting in adjacent booths. According to Mr. Young, the conversation began with discussion about his business and his mother's recent death, then moved to topics including historic landmark designation versus national register designation, staggered term votes, concerns about the Parks and Recreation Director's budget management, and Commissioner Craver's stated desire to "replace the mayor" and "reverse some things." Mr. Young claimed Commissioner Craver concluded by saying "there are too many blacks running the town."

In contrast, Commissioner Craver acknowledged talking about Mr. Young's mother's death but denied discussing anything about town matters. Ruth Farley stated the conversation included discussion of historic plaques but nothing else.

Mr. McCarley also noted that Mr. Young had taken a photograph at the Waffle House to document the encounter, which McCarley interpreted as indicating that Mr. Young understood the significance of what had been said to him and needed documentation. Mr. Young later reported the conversation to the Town Manager and Mayor after the September 15, 2025 meeting and wrote a two-page statement to document what occurred.

In assessing credibility, Mr. McCarley determined that Mr. Young and Mr. Ritz had no apparent motive other than being "good citizens," while Commissioner Craver's potential motive would be avoiding embarrassment and protecting her reelection campaign. He concluded that based on all factors, it was more likely than not that the statements were made.

Motion by Commissioner Marley, seconded by Commissioner Warner, to accept the findings of the investigation. Motion carried by majority vote with Commissioner Craver voting against acceptance of the report.

CLOSED SESSION CALLED PURSUANT TO NCGS 143-318.11 (A) (3) ATTORNEY CLIENT PRIVILEGE AND NCGS 143-318.11 (A) (6) PERSONNEL

Motion by Commissioner Scarola, seconded by Commissioner Marley, to conduct a closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with the attorney on matters within the attorney client privilege and pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6) to discuss personnel matters. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board entered closed session and later returned to open session at 6:38pm

Motion by Commissioner Scarola to seal the minutes of the closed session until such a time as the release of the information would no longer frustrate the purpose of the closed session, noting that no action was taken, seconded by Commissioner Marley, carried unanimously with Mayor Pro Tem Dr. McCray voting in the affirmative.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Commissioner Scarola, seconded by Commissioner Marley, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Seeing no additional business to come before the board, the meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

ADOPTED this 3rd Day of November 2025.

Jessie Bellflowers, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Ashley Wyatt, MMC Town Clerk

TOWN OF HOPE MILLS SEAL HOPE MILLS, N.C.