

City of Woodland

Meeting Minutes

June 09, 2025

I. Call to Order

Mayor James Carter called to order the regular meeting of the Woodland City Council at 6:15 PM on June 09, 2025, at the Woodland City Hall.

II. Roll Call

The following persons were in attendance: Mayor James Carter, Mayor Pro Tem T. L. Carter, Councilwoman Allison Owens, Councilman Jeffery Mitchell, City Clerk Allissa Gresham, Municipal Clerk Cynthia Powell, and City Attorney Gary Byrd. Councilman John Haralson was absent.

III. Approval of Agenda

Councilwoman Owens made a motion to approve the agenda. Mayor Pro Tem Carter seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

IV. Approval of Minutes

The May 12, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes were distributed.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter made a motion to approve the May 12, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes. Councilman Mitchell seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

V. Guest Speakers:

- a) **Danny Barron** discussed grass cutting, police, water construction, old property, the park, the baseball field, and property owned by the City. Mr. Barron began by recalling that six years ago, while serving as a Council Member, he secured a loan from Talbot State Bank to renovate City Hall. Ken Chapman, President of Talbot State Bank and Talbot County Commissioner, confirmed the City of Woodland had secured a loan and had repaid the loan in full.

Mr. Barron discussed grounds maintenance, specifically regarding City employee Carsland Copeland. His concern was Mr. Copeland may not have received adequate training and recommended the Council either hire someone to assist and train him or consider hiring someone else to manage grass cutting responsibilities.

Mr. Barron discussed City hall was previously in a high-risk area, which made it hard for the City to obtain insurance. He stated the City has made progress and commended the Council, noting he had received a letter about the City hiring a Code Enforcer to address dilapidated properties. Mr. Barron stated during his time on the Council, an employee had been injured, which is why proper training and safety are important.

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Mr. Barron stated he did not believe the City needed to hire a police officer and recalled during his time on Council, the City could not afford an officer. Mayor Pro Tem Carter stated the City still could not afford an officer. Mr. Barron suggested the Council reach out to Talbot County Manager Carol Ison or Sheriff Bobby Gates, Jr., to ask if the County could assist. He stated he had recently seen Sheriff Gates patrolling the area. Mayor Pro Tem Carter stated the Council had already met with Sheriff Gates and discussed this matter.

Mr. Barron discussed the CDBG contractor digging. He stated while the City may not know the exact schedule or locations for the digging, he recommended the City issue a notice to residents to inform them about upcoming work. He stated he observed digging without apparent supervision and referenced a previous issue where something was said to be underground that was not. He stated in the past, the City struggled to secure grant funding, and he commended the Council for current progress and teamwork.

Mr. Barron discussed the City's water system contractor, Jeff Harrison, stating Mr. Harrison should be more visibly involved in overseeing work. Attorney Byrd responded that Mr. Harrison is well-trained and performs similar duties for other municipalities. Mr. Barron stated the City should have on-site supervision.

Mr. Barron stated the City had purchased new street signs, but they were still sitting unused in the back shop area.

As Mr. Barron concluded his discussion, Councilwoman Owens asked for clarification regarding concerns he had listed on his Agenda Application for the park, ballfields, and property owned by the City. Mr. Barron stated the City was investing funds in the park, such as for tree removal, while there were fallen trees near his home and throughout the City needing attention. He stated he had taken photos, including of a large tree limb near the ambulance service property that he felt required attention.

Regarding the park's baseball field, Mr. Barron questioned whether the City planned to restore it. He stated he previously offered to arrange for someone to scrape the infield and install bases so children could use the field, but the project had not moved forward. Councilwoman Owens asked if he had children to use the field, Mr. Barron replied he did not but he had heard some children wanted to play there. He stated if the City had a park, it should be functional, and he was willing use his time to help improve it.

Councilwoman Owens responded by stating she wanted to make certain that Mr. Barron's concerns were not based on assumptions, as the Council had already

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looked into whether children were interested in using the field. She stated she had discussed previously with the Council what the purpose of maintaining a ballfield was if there were no children to play on it. Mr. Barron stated he was only discussing what he had heard and was not assuming anything. Councilwoman Owens stated she did not intend to argue, but many of Mr. Barron's concerns had previously been discussed by the Council. Mr. Barron replied that any citizen has the right to bring concerns before the Council and if they had previously been discussed that was fine. Councilwoman Owens stated she was not trying to be argumentative, but she recalled during the time Mr. Barron was on Council, members of the public were not always allowed to speak freely.

At this time, Mr. Barron left the meeting.

VI. Attorney Report

- a) Attorney Byrd stated Talbot County Assistant Manager Ronnie Hendricks came to City Hall and told Clerk Gresham the County had just received the certified letter sent in January about cleaning up the old Adams Funeral Home property that the County owns. Attorney Byrd attempted to contact Mr. Hendricks and left a voicemail, but he had not received a return phone call. Attorney Byrd stated he had turned this matter over to the Code Enforcer, at the Council's request. Attorney Byrd stated County Commissioner Ken Chapman and the County attorney contacted him about the County giving the property to the City of Woodland. Attorney Byrd stated he spoke with the Code Enforcer about whether the City should accept the property from the County. The Code Enforcer recommend the City not accept the property because nothing was salvageable and demolishing it would be costly to the City.
- b) Attorney Byrd stated he advised Clerk Gresham that any tree falling from the City property to private property is the private property owner's responsibility unless the City knew or should have known there was a hazard, such as a leaning trunk or broken limb.
- c) Attorney Byrd stated he advised Clerk Gresham about the use of cell phones during the Council Meetings. He stated this was taken care of by adding a statement to Section II of the Agenda to please silence all cell phones.
- d) Attorney Byrd presented Clerk Gresham with the monthly invoice for services.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter made a motion to accept the Attorney Report. Councilwoman Owens seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

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VII. Grounds Maintenance Report

- a) Carsland Copeland, the City of Woodland Grounds Maintenance employee stated he was currently working to manage and maintain the side street medians. He stated Mayor Pro Tem Carter had been offering guidance and suggestions regarding areas in need of attention.

Mr. Copeland asked the Council if they had any concerns about his work or if there was anything they would like him to handle differently.

Councilwoman Owens asked Mr. Copeland if he felt he needed assistance with grounds maintenance or if there were responsibilities he might not be aware of, referencing concerns raised earlier by Mr. Barron. Mr. Copeland responded that he was unsure of the specific nature of Mr. Barron's complaints. He stated that he regularly works throughout the City and, without further clarification, could not address the concern.

Councilwoman Owens explained that Mr. Barron had suggested Mr. Copeland may not have received adequate training and might need help. Mr. Copeland stated Mr. Barron had spoken with him multiple times while he was out working. Attorney Byrd asked Mr. Copeland to clarify the content of those conversations. Mr. Copeland stated that one of the discussions involved the adjustment of the blade on the zero-turn mower, and he informed Mr. Barron that he had been properly trained on that equipment.

Councilwoman Owens suggested if Mr. Copeland ever felt he needed additional training or assistance with grounds maintenance, he should bring that request before the Council. Mr. Copeland agreed and stated he would do so if needed.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter made a motion to accept the Grounds Maintenance Report. Councilwoman Owens seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

VIII. Water Report

- a) Jeff Harrison of HWR Water Solutions was absent. Clerk Powell stated the City of Woodland produced 785,300 gallons of water and billed out 397,887 gallons of water. She stated there was 87,413 gallons of water loss.
- b) Clerk Powell discussed the CDBG project was still ongoing, and the contractor is having difficulty locating a line that needs to be disconnected. She stated as soon as the contractor can locate and disconnect the line, the project should be completed as far as she knew. Mayor Carter discussed the City going ahead and applying for another CDBG Grant to help with water system infrastructure in the next area of the

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City. Attorney Byrd suggested Clerk Gresham contact Ian Perry, of the River Valley Regional Commission, and have him attend the July 14, 2025, Regular Council Meeting to discuss the application process. Clerk Gresham will contact Mr. Perry.

- c) Clerk Powell distributed the Water System Totals Report and the Delinquent Account Report for May 2025. Clerk Powell reviewed the Delinquent Account Report with the Council. The water report shows the total billed was \$6,850.65, and the total received was \$7,912.79.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter made a motion to accept the water report. Councilwoman Owens seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

IX. Clerk Report

- a) Clerk Gresham stated she received a quote from VSA Security Systems, Inc. of \$7,823.00 to install security cameras with a \$20.00 monthly monitoring fee and a quote of \$7,550.50 for just the cameras with no monthly monitoring fee. Clerk Gresham stated she had made several attempts to contact Alexander Electrical for a quote but had not received a call back. She stated she would continue to try to contact Alexander Electrical and add discussing the quotes to the July 14, 2025, Regular Council Meeting Agenda.
- b) Clerk Gresham reminded the Mayor and Council of the June 11, 2025, River Valley Regional Commission Comprehensive Plan Meeting to be held at the Talbot County Chamber of Commerce at 6:00 PM and the June 16, 2025, Comprehensive Plan Meeting to be held at the Woodland City Hall at 5:00 PM.
- c) Clerk Gresham stated she mailed out the City of Woodland Property Maintenance reminder letters to all the City water customers.
- d) Clerk Gresham stated she would be taking vacation starting June 19, 2025, through June 24, 2025.
- e) Clerk Gresham presented the month's financial reports.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter made a motion to accept the Clerk Report. Councilman Mitchell seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

X. Open Business

- a) Clerk Powell discussed she was still in the process of finding contractors to get quotes to enclose the Community Building porch ceilings.

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XI. New Business

- a) Talbot County Commissioner Ken Chapman discussed Talbot County giving the Adams Funeral Home property to the City of Woodland. Councilwoman Owens made a motion to accept Talbot County's offer to give the City of Woodland the Adams Funeral Home property. Mayor Pro Tem Carter seconded. All approved. Motion carried. Attorney Byrd will contact Talbot County's lawyer to have the deed transferred from Talbot County to the City of Woodland.
- b) The topic of Vicky Waller of the Tri-City Housing Authority, suggesting that the City refund the water deposit to tornado victims on May 3, 2025, was not discussed at this time.
- c) Clerk Powell discussed raising the water service account startup fee and implementing a deposit fee. The Council discussed raising the startup fee from \$75.00 to \$150.00 and adding a \$75.00 deposit, which would be refundable if the customer moved or closed the account and their account was in good standing. Attorney Byrd suggested opening a separate bank account to hold the deposit fees, making it easier for Clerk Powell to process refunds. Councilman Mitchell made a motion to increase the startup fee from \$75.00 to \$150.00, implement a \$75.00 refundable deposit fee, and start a separate bank account for the deposit fees. Councilwoman Owens seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

XII. Executive Session: No Executive Session was needed.

Councilwoman Owens made a motion to pay the bills. Councilman Mitchell seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

XIII. Adjournment

Councilman Mitchell made a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Owens seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

Mayor James Carter adjourned the meeting at 7:14 PM.

Minutes Submitted By: _____

Allissa Gresham

City Clerk

Approval Date