

**CITY OF WILMINGTON
COUNCIL'S AGENDA BRIEFING MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 20, 2026**

The Council of the City of Wilmington held an Agenda Briefing meeting on the above date at 8:30 a.m. at City Hall, Council Chambers, Skyline Center, 929 North Front Street, Wilmington, North Carolina to review the regular scheduled agenda for the July 21, 2026 Council Meeting.

Those present were: Mayor Saffo, presiding; Councilmembers David Joyner, Salette Andrews, Cassidy Santaguida, and Chakema Clinton-Quintana; City Clerk Penelope Spicer-Sidbury; City Attorney Meredith Everhart; and City Manager Becky Hawke. Mayor Pro-Tem Kevin Spears and Councilmember J.C. Lyle attended via video conference.

Councilmember Lyle inquired about Item C1 (**Resolution Awarding On-Call Contracts to Five Firms for Professional Engineering Design Services**). Mr. Justin Carter, Design and Construction Director, responded that when we go through this process with all our consultants, we find the most qualified firm, and then enter negotiations to determine the final scope and fee. If at that point we do not believe it is reasonable, we then tell the firm we are not interested and move on to the next most qualified firm. He noted that this is much different from construction contracts, as we do not get bids and take the bid of the lowest responsive bidder, it is based on qualifications. He stated that this on call allows us to select firms that are qualified, and for this it would mainly be civil sight engineering and transportation. He stated that we look through them when we have a project to determine the most qualified firms that have been pre-selected and pre-audited to enter negotiations with that one firm. He stated that in a scenario where we do not believe it to be a good cost and price, we put it out to the normal RFQ process like for larger projects.

Councilmember Lyle inquired as to whether it was just five firms that were selected based on the criteria. Mr. Carter responded, yes, just five firms that are selected based on the criteria and they bring a very specific thing we are looking for, or they cover the broad spectrum of requirements better than the rest of the firms. He stated that these are the top five firms that met our criteria. Councilmember Lyle stated that she likes the efficiency of doing that ahead of time to ensure we aren't losing any information.

Mayor Saffo inquired about Item PH1 (**Ordinance Amending the Official Zoning Maps of the City of Wilmington to Rezone Property Containing 6.69 Acres Located at 320 Military Cutoff Rd from O&I (CD), Office and Institutional (Conditional District), and RB, Regional Business District, to O&I, Office and Institutional District**). Ms. Linda Painter, Director of Planning and Development, responded that the front portion of the property has a conditional district designation for the existing worship facility that is there. However, the rear of the property was previously a separate lot that has now been joined and is zoned RB. She stated that they are asking to take both zones to go to a straight O&I district which will provide them with the ability to do things in the future without coming back to modify that conditional district.

Councilmember Joyner inquired about Item PH2 (**Ordinance Granting a Modification to the Special Use Permit for a Private Recreation Facility Located at 4950 Holly Tree Road & 304 Westchester Road (SUP-CC-2026-0002)**). Ms. Painter responded that the applicant made a request for a continuance, and she believes it had to do with the availability of one of their expert witnesses. Councilmember Joyner inquired if we are continuing the hearing because the petitioner's witness is not available. He added that he would like to know more before agreeing to continue the hearing.

Councilmember Joyner inquired about the Budget Work Session follow-up presentation regarding the Funding Request for Community Justice Center and the Film Partnership of North Carolina. He stated that he does not

think that he has seen anything structured like this in the three years he has served on Council. He stated that we have had a lot of discussion about Council wanting more information on these two initiatives and funding them. He inquired as to procedurally, what Council will be doing tomorrow night with this item.

Ms. Becky Hawke, City Manager, responded that this stems from Council's Work Session discussions around these two different organizations that had submitted unsolicited requests for funding as part of the FY27 budget. She stated that during the Budget Work Session, Council did not come to any resolution so we moved it to say that if Council so desired, there are some contingency funds in the FY27 budget that Council could consider for allocation for these two purposes. She stated that there is not a formal process for this. It is outside the normal scope of how we solicit funding requests or how we process funding requests. She stated that the purpose of the meeting tomorrow will just be for discussion to determine if Council would like to formally move forward with any kind of funding allocation. She stated that if Council opts to do that for one or both, then Staff will prepare a budget amendment for a future meeting but the purpose for tomorrow is just conversational to understand if there is consensus to move forward in any way.

Councilmember Joyner inquired as to whether the leaders of these groups have been invited to come and participate. Ms. Hawke responded they have not and they were simply basing it on the information we have received regarding the funding amount requested. She stated that we have had some additional information that is now available in terms of what was included in the state budget for the Film Partnership, so we are able to have a little bit more of an informed discussion at this point. She stated that we didn't request them to come because the purpose of each request is fairly clear or they have responded with the information that Council had requested previously. Ms. Hawke stated that if Council prefers them to be part of the conversation, we can certainly invite them if they are not available tomorrow, we can continue this to a future meeting. Councilmember Joyner stated that the Film Partnership has reached out to him and asked if they should come, so he will relay the information and let them decide if they want to be here.

Mayor Pro-Tem Spears inquired as to whether the FY27 budget is finalized but included within the FY27 budget there were two pots of contingency funds, one being considered Council contingency and then there is also an economic development contingency fund. Ms. Hawke stated that both of those have an excess of \$100,000 in each fund that would be Council's discretion if, how, and when you might wish to allocate those funds, so it would be considering potential use of those funds for one or both of these requests either in whole or in part. Mayor Pro-Tem Spears inquired if we hired our economic development person yet. Ms. Hawke responded that the Economic Development Director will start on July 27th.

Councilmember Andrews inquired as to whether the amount of money received for funding from the County could be included as well. Ms. Hawke responded that is going to be a part of it as well.

Councilmember Santaguida stated that tomorrow Council is going to get some information about what the request is and the other places these organizations have received funds from, and inquired as to whether we are taking a vote on this tomorrow or just having a conversation. Ms. Hawke responded that it would be direction for Staff if there is consensus on how to move forward because if there is funding that Council ultimately decides to move forward with, we would need to prepare a budget amendment in order to process that to designate those funds. So that would come back for an actual vote at a future meeting. She stated that if Council wanted to take a formal vote on this tomorrow, they could, but it's just discussion and consensus to prepare for the future.

Ms. Hawke introduced our new Assistant Police Chief, Ms. Brooke Wright, and stated that she comes to Wilmington from the Fairfax County Police Department in Virginia. She stated that Ms. Wright was there for 27 years, spent her entire career there, and worked her way up from a 911 Dispatch Call Taker to Assistant Chief of Administration. Ms. Hawke stated that she was also the Deputy Chief of Investigations, has graduated from the F.B.I. National Academy, and has a Master of Public Safety from the University of Virginia. She stated that she comes to us as the result of a very rigorous national recruitment process for this position and we are very excited to have her.

Mayor Saffo welcomed Assistant Police Chief, Ms. Brooke Wright, and stated that she has a good group of folks and Staff here. He added that he looks forward to great things ahead, and gave her a warm welcome to North Carolina.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:47 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Penelope Spicer-Sidbury, CMC/MMC/NCCMC
City Clerk

NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE NOT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS, BUT ARE PART OF THE OFFICIAL RECORD.