

**CITY OF WILMINGTON
COUNCIL'S AGENDA BRIEFING MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MARCH 23, 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 March 24, 2026 Council Meeting.

Those present were: Mayor Bill Saffo, presiding; Councilmembers David Joyner, Salette Andrews, J.C. Lyle, 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 attended via video conference.

Note: Councilmember Lyle arrived at 8:32 AM.

Mayor Pro-Tem Spears stated that he does not feel that Item C4 (**Resolution Authorizing Funding for the Wilmington Police Department Transition from Shotguns to Rifles**) is timely with some of the issues we have going on with Wilmington Police Department, weapons, and citizens in the community. He wanted to verbalize it now and not take staff by surprise tomorrow night.

Mayor Saffo asked for more information on what is happening with the proposed Resolution. Chief Zuidema responded that Wilmington Police Department is extremely behind the curve and provided details of the 1997 Bank of America, North Hollywood shootout where the Police Department had to take weapons from a local gun store to meet the firepower they were up against. He stated that they are routinely seeing criminals locally and across the country that have firepower that exceeds what we have. We need to keep our officers, and this community safe as we are almost 30 years behind when Law Enforcement started transitioning from shotguns to rifles. They allow Officers to be more accurate at a much greater distance and not put them in harms way as much.

Mayor Saffo inquired about the current shotgun policy. Chief Zuidema responded that most vehicles are equipped with a 12-gauge shotgun. There is a policy in place that allows Officers to bring their own patrol rifles, there are armorers that look at them to ensure they are a certain make, model, standard and caliber, but it is not consistent across the board. He added that we need to make sure we have a consistent weapons platform across the board.

Councilmember Joyner inquired about Item C5 (**Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Purchase Twenty-Five Pursuit-Rated Tahoes from Capital Chevrolet, Inc., of Raleigh, NC, in the Amount of \$1,325,175 from the Fleet Replacement Fund**) and asked for an update on the Fleet Transition Fund. Mr. John Fortuin, Fleet Manager, responded that he had a meeting with the Transition Study Team on Friday who are putting together a narrative of what they have done and where the City is headed. Due to the restructuring of the City, he advised it has set us back on the timeline, but once we have an idea of the placement of all of our vehicles then we will be able to move forward. Councilmember Joyner stated that since he did not hear an answer on timeline he will not be able to vote in favor of this item until he gets that answer.

Councilmember Santaguida inquired about Item O1 (**Ordinance Amending Wilmington City Code, Chapter 1, "General Provisions"**) and wanted clarity on the red line attachment, and not being able to see anything that has been changed. Mrs. Meredith Everhart advised she will double check the attachments and will resend it to Council today.

Councilmember Clinton-Quintana commented on Item C4 **(Resolution Authorizing Funding for the Wilmington Police Department Transition from Shotguns to Rifles)**. She stated that it does seem that the temperature is not right for this to be approved or brought to Council. She suggested that it be reintroduced at a later point in time, so it does not go away completely.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:41 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

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