

# **Taylortown**

Town Council Meeting  
Tuesday, January 9, 2024  
Town Hall  
5:00 p.m. Closed Session  
6:00 p.m. Open Session

## **Agenda**

- I. Quorum & Presiding Officer**
- II. Call to Order**
- III. Roll Call**
- IV. Approval of Agenda**
- V. Closed Session**
- VI. Open Session**
- VII. Public Comment**
- VIII. Closed Session Report & Action Items As Needed**
- IX. New Business**
  - A. Town Council Elections**
    - 1. Mayor
    - 2. Mayor Pro Tem
  - B. Town Council Seating**
  - C. Office Hours for Mayor**
  - D. Town Boards & Commissions**
  - E. Town Staff**
  - F. Town Council Retreats & Training**
  - G. Agenda Format**
  - H. Public Comment Format**
  - I. Minutes** (Presented for December 19, 2023)
  - J. Town Calendar & Meeting Schedule**
  - K. Check Signing Policy**
- X. Old Business**
  - A. Staffing
  - B. Water Service & Billing Issues
- XI. Announcements**
- XII. Adjourn**

**Taylortown**  
Town Council Meeting  
Tuesday, January 9, 2024  
Town Hall  
6:00 p.m.

**Minutes**

**I. Quorum & Presiding Officer**

Town Clerk Rita Maness presented the following statement at the beginning of the Town Council meeting.

“Greetings fellow Councilmembers, staff, residents of Taylortown, and visitors. I’m Rita Maness, Town Clerk of Taylortown. We are required by law to have a quorum to conduct the business of the town council which means that at least three of the town’s duly elected council members must be present for an official council meeting. All five newly elected council members are present.

We need one of the councilmembers to serve as presiding officer for this meeting until Council elects a mayor and mayor pro tem. I will ask each council member to call the name of their choice for presiding officer. The person whose name is called in the majority will be the presiding officer until the Council elects the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem. Ms. Maness called the names of the council members in alphabetical order: Councilwoman Bridget Cotton, Councilman Sidney Gaddy, Councilwoman Andria Parker, Councilwoman Nadine Moody, and Councilman Marvin Taylor called the name of Councilman Sidney Gaddy. Ms. Maness announced Councilman Sidney Gaddy would serve as the presiding officer.

**II. Call to Order**

Councilman Sidney Gaddy called the meeting to order.

**III. Roll Call**

Councilman Gaddy asked Ms. Maness to call the roll. Ms. Maness called the roll and the full council responded present: Councilwoman Bridget Cotton, Councilman Sidney Gaddy, Councilwoman Andria Parker, Councilwoman Nadine Moody, and Councilman Marvin Taylor

**IV. Approval of Agenda**

Councilman Gaddy called for approval of the meeting agenda. The agenda was sent to council members and was available as a handout to the public. Councilman

Gaddy stated for the record that public notice of this meeting was given in accordance with state laws and called for approval of the agenda by voice vote. The agenda was approved unanimously.

**V. Closed Session**

Councilman Gaddy sought a motion to go into closed session to discuss legal & personnel matters. After a motion and second, he called for questions and discussion. There was no discussion and no questions. Ms. Maness called for the vote. The motion passed with all council members voting yes.

**VI. Return to Open Session**

Councilman Gaddy sought a motion to return to return to Open Session at 6:00 p.m. The motion passed. Councilman Gaddy pronounced this January 9, 2024 Taylortown Council meeting back in Open Session and greeted the public.

“Good evening, welcome to the first council meeting of 2024. By a vote of the council, I Councilman Sidney Gaddy, will be the presiding officer for this meeting until Council has selected its mayor and mayor pro tem.”

**VII. Public Comment**

Councilman Gaddy opened the floor for public comment and asked that people please come to the podium and speak directly into the microphone.

Gail McKinnon gave a report from the Historic Preservation and Beautification Committee. Several projects are underway at the Taylortown Museum. They are also planning a senior luncheon and will provide more information about the place at a later date.

Mr. Gregory Parker congratulated the new council, expressed his excitement for changes, and told them he would be holding them all accountable, including his wife, newly elected Councilwoman Andria Parker.

**VIII. Closed Session Report**

Councilman Gaddy informed the public about the matter discussed in Closed session. He stated that Council discussed personnel matters pertaining to the daily operation of the town. “Specifically, we are entertaining a proposal from RGJ, a business management and administrative services company. They are proposing to help us with staff development and training, and the comprehensive planning that we need to do to become a more effective and efficient government capable of providing excellent services to our residents and visitors.

They are proposing to provide the services of a team of professionals that can help us transition from being a council with limited staff trying to do everything to a government with departments and sufficient staff to do the jobs.

They will help with writing job descriptions, creating salaries and benefits packages for future employees, and developing our screening and hiring process.

RGJ is proposing to help us develop our volunteer town boards and commissions, and work with us to update our comprehensive plan.

The council would like to discuss the proposal with our attorney and determine its feasibility in relation to our budget, and current staff so we are not taking any action on it at this meeting.

Councilman Gaddy sought a motion to receive the RGJ proposal for consideration. After a motion and second, he directed Ms. Maness to call the vote. All council members voted in favor of accepting the proposal for consideration. The motion passed. Councilman Gaddy declared "We will accept RGJ's proposal for consideration."

### **IX. New Business**

Councilman Gaddy proceeded to New Business. He stated the following: "Our town charter issued by the state of North Carolina requires the newly elected council members to elect a mayor and mayor pro tem from among its duly elected members.

The council will first elect the mayor and once elected, our new mayor will immediately assume the duty of presiding officer.

If there is more than one nominee, each will be voted on separately unless the first one receives the majority vote.

#### **A. Town Council Elections**

##### **1. Mayor**

Councilman Gaddy opened the floor for nominations for mayor and there was only one nominee: Councilman Gaddy. The Council carried the nomination forward to a voice vote with a motion and second. The Council voted unanimously in favor of Councilman Gaddy. The motion passed. Councilman Sidney Gaddy is the mayor of Taylortown.

##### **2. Mayor Pro Tem**

Councilman Gaddy opened the floor for nominations for mayor pro tem and there was only one nominee: Councilwoman Nadine Moody. The

Council carried the nomination forward to a voice vote with a motion and second. The Council voted unanimously in favor of Councilwoman Moody. The motion passed. Councilwoman Nadine Moody is the mayor pro tem of Taylortown.

**Mayor Gaddy delivered the following message:**

"I've given a lot of thought to the possibility of my becoming our town's mayor. I'm looking forward to the challenges that come with the job and the positive results that we will achieve together as council, staff, and residents. You voted for change and we are going to deliver change. Changes that I believe will propel Taylortown into the glorious future that Mr. Demus Taylor and those that worked so hard to get us where we are today always envisioned for us.

I ask for your patience and support as we proceed as fellow councilmembers, co-workers, and neighbors. We are a small town of family and friends. Our birth certificates allow us certain privileges in our homes. Our state charter and the laws of these United States require that we abide by municipal laws defined by the State of North Carolina. My heart and my spirit demand that I use those laws, my faith, education, business experience, and common sense to treat you fairly and with respect. I'm going to omit favoritism as much as humanly possible. I aim to apply the laws of this nation, state, and town equally to everyone.

My first question in every situation brought before me will be "what is the town's law pertaining to this matter?" Then, what is the state law? Followed by is there a federal law that applies here? If there is none and a town law must be considered and passed, then we do so. Once the discussion has ended and the law is passed, whether you were for it or against it, it becomes **our** law, and we will hand it off to the staff for enforcement as that is their job.

I don't have any friends to reward and no enemies to punish. I don't have a heaven or hell to put anyone in. I'm simply the mayor of Taylortown and I'm going to do the best job that I can for all of us.

Mayor Gaddy moved to the next item on the agenda.

**B. Town Council Seating**

Mayor Gaddy presented his town council seating arrangement with the following statement.

"I would like you to sit as follows. Please don't change seats at meetings. It helps me to know where you are when I'm presiding and trying to call on you. I'm going to ask the Mayor Pro Tem to sit on my right. I'm going to ask the newest councilperson, Councilwoman Parker to sit on my left so that I can assist you if needed. Our remaining two councilmembers with their experience will anchor the council with seats on both ends—Councilwoman Cotton and Councilman Taylor."

Mayor Gaddy then asked Council to approve his seating arrangement for all town meetings. After a motion and second, he directed Ms. Maness to call the vote. The motion passed with Council voting unanimously to approve the town council seating arrangement as proposed by Mayor Gaddy.

Mayor Gaddy presented the following directives. "Now, for those of you attending the meetings, for public safety concerns, do not stand in the hallway, come into the meeting room, and have a seat. For courtesy and respect, I ask that you do not talk while Council is conducting its business."

### **C. Office Hours for Mayor & Council**

Mayor Gaddy proceeded to the next item on the agenda. He stated, "As Mayor, I will commit to office hours on a designated day and time which will change if I have meetings or other business away from Taylortown. If there are other council members interested in doing the same, I'd like to hear from you."

Mayor Gaddy directed Ms. Maness to contact each council member interested in having office hours for dates and times that they would like to hold office hours and have that on Council's agenda at the next meeting.

### **D. Town Boards & Commissions**

Ms. Maness had prepared a list of boards and commissions which was included with Council's information. Mayor Gaddy stated, "I have a list of boards and commissions that I would like for Council to consider. I am proposing that each board or commission have five members. I am asking each council member to present a member for consideration. When selecting a person, please make sure you are presenting people that will take the duty seriously and attend meetings.

I am proposing that our volunteer Board and Commission meetings be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month, but at a time earlier than our scheduled council meetings. Let's start thinking of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month as Taylortown business days.

We will take up the matter of these Boards and Commissions at our next meeting. This will give each of you time to think it over and come up with potential appointees.”

Mayor Gaddy proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

#### **E. Town Staff**

Mayor Gaddy stated, “We have some very serious staffing issues that we must address, but not in a knee-jerk manner. A couple of months ago we took a vote on hiring a water clerk without reviewing our budget or defining the screening and hiring process, salary, benefits, etc. As I said at that meeting, our town clerk is currently required to do too many jobs. That’s not her fault. She has carried this town on her back since we lost our town clerk about 6 years ago. It is time for us to improve our staffing situation. We must do it professionally and legally so that people will want to work for Taylortown.

As previously stated, we are considering a proposal from RGJ to provide staff and administrative services to help council and staff with the operation of our government. I ask for your patience as we develop a work plan that is best for our town.

There is so much for us as a Council to learn about the inner workings of our government. We want to access information as quickly as possible so as not to interrupt the operation of our government. We need help during this transition from one administration to another.

Former Mayor Thompson and Ms. Maness have been working with the attorneys, accountants, contractors, vendors, and staff, now is the time for us to work together to make sure we all have the same information so that we can all do our jobs.

I’m going to do something that looks a lot like what President Obama did when he appointed a Republican to his cabinet. So, here goes.

I seek a motion to appoint former Mayor James Thompson to the position of Acting Town Manager of Taylortown through the end of this fiscal year which ends June 30, 2024.”

Motion:

Mayor Pro Tem Nadine Moody: I move that we appoint former Mayor James Thompson to the position of Acting Town Manager of Taylortown through the end of this fiscal year which ends June 30, 2024.

Second:

Mayor Gaddy stated that he had a motion and second. He called for questions or discussion? There were no questions and discussion. Mayor Gaddy directed Ms. Maness to call the voice vote.

The motion passed with all council members voting yes.

Mayor Gaddy stated, "Mr. Thompson, you are now the acting town manager of Taylortown. You report directly to me. The details of how this will work for the benefit of the town will be ironed out in a series of meetings with Mayor Pro Tem Moody, the RGJ representatives, and me.

We will bring those details back to Council's next meeting for their consideration as a personnel, contractual, and legal matter in Closed Session. If there is any action to be taken on the matter, it will be done in Open Session at our next meeting."

Mayor Gaddy proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

#### **F. Town Council Retreats & Training**

Mayor Gaddy stated, "The North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM) is providing training for new and incumbent councilmembers. The course is Essentials of Municipal Government. We are members of this organization and this training will be helpful to all of us whether it's new information or as a refresher course. The dates and places for training have been provided to you from January to the end of February.

- January 11 -12      The Grandover Hotel, High Point, NC
- January 18 – 19      UNC Wilmington
- January 25 – 26      Rocky Mouny Event Center
- February 15 – 16      Hilton Asheville Biltmore Park
- February 22 – 23      Chapel Hill, School of Government (Hybrid)

I would like to see if we can attend a virtual session where all councilmembers and staff can attend. Madam Clerk, please check into the Feb 22-23 meeting described as hybrid to see if it is virtual and what the price would be for us all to attend a virtual session and let me know so that we can put that on the town's agenda.

Note: Councilwoman Andria Parker is registered to attend the January 11-12 session.

Mayor Gaddy proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

### **G. Agenda Format**

Mayor Gaddy stated, "I am proposing some changes to our agenda format. The major change is the manner in which we handle closed session. I am proposing that closed session when needed start at 5:00 p.m.

We will start our public part of the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Unlike tonight, Old Business will come before New Business on the agenda. I would also like to see the minutes accepted after approval of the agenda. Ms. Maness has prepared the format that I am proposing for your approval."

Mayor Gaddy sought a motion to approve the agenda format for Taylortown Council Meetings. He received a motion and second. There were no questions or discussion. Mayor Gaddy directed Ms. Maness to call the vote. The motion passed. The agenda format for Taylortown Council meetings is as presented.

Mayor Gaddy proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

### **H. Public Comment Format**

Mayor Gaddy stated, "We want to hear from you, the public, at all meetings, but it must be orderly and considerate of the fact that we have other business that we must get to at every meeting.

I am proposing that we limit public time at our regular council meetings to 30 minutes.

Speakers may have up to 3 minutes per person. You do not "yield time to anyone." You must sign up to speak in advance. We are going to get our website functioning so that you can sign up online or in person up to 15 minutes before our meeting starts.

If there is a topic that requires more time to hear from the public, we can make it an agenda item or schedule a public hearing. We have options to make sure your concerns are heard."

Mayor Gaddy sought a motion to change the public comment portion of town council meeting to maximum 30 minutes with 3 minutes per person.

Motion

Parker made the motion.

"I move that we change the public comment of our town council meeting to maximum 30 minutes with 3 minutes per person."

Second: Cotton

The motion received a second. There were no questions or discussion. Mayor Gaddy directed Ms. Maness to call the vote.

The motion passed. The motion passed. Mayor Gaddy stated, "We have just committed ourselves to a new way of managing the public comment portion of our council meetings."

Mayor Gaddy proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

#### I. Minutes

Mayor Gaddy directed his question to Ms. Maness, "Madam Clerk, do we have the minutes for December 19, 2023? She responded, "no." Mayor Gaddy requested that the minutes be placed on the agenda for approval at our next meeting.

Mayor Gaddy proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

#### J. Town Calendar & Meeting Schedule

Mayor Gaddy stated, Councilmembers, you have the revised meeting schedule and the town's calendar of events for 2024 for approval. He sought a motion to approve the town council meeting schedule and calendar of events for 2024 as presented.

Motion: Moody

\_\_\_\_\_ made the motion.

I move that we approve the town council meeting schedule and calendar of events for 2024 as presented.

Second: Parker

The motion received a second. There were no questions or discussion. Mayor Gaddy directed Ms. Maness to call the vote. The motion passed. The amended town council meeting schedule and town calendar of events for 2024 is approved.

Mayor Gaddy proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

**K. Check Signing Policy**

Mayor Gaddy stated, "I would like our check signing policy to be stated in a resolution that can be presented to our bank. Each time we change check signers this resolution should be updated.

I am proposing that Taylortown have two signers on each check: one from council and one from staff. The council person should have a back up signer and the staff person should have a back up signer. Back up signers should sign only in the absence of the primary designated signer when the primary signer has notified the backup signer that he or she will be unavailable.

I propose the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem serve as the signers for Council and that the staff signers be Town Manager (when we have one), and the Town Clerk as back up signer. Resolution 1-2024 and Resolution 2 -2024 is what I had prepared. Resolution 1-2024 is for the accounts Taylortown has at Truist Bank. Resolution 2-2024 is for the Taylortown account at PNC Bank.

Mayor Pro Tem Moody, I'm going to ask you to read Resolution 1-2024 and 2-2024 into the record."

Mayor Pro Tem Moody read Resolution 1-2024 into the record and read only the part of Resolution 2-2024 that was different from Resolution 1-2024: the names of the bank and account descriptions.

**Mayor Gaddy sought a motion to adopt Resolutions 1-2024 and 2-2024.**

Motion: *Parker*

\_\_\_\_\_ made the motion.

I move that we adopt Resolution 1-2024 and 2-2024.

Second: *Bridget*

The motion received a second. There were no questions or discussion. Mayor Gaddy directed Ms. Maness to call the vote. The motion passed.

Taylortown banking and check signing policy is established by resolutions 1-2024 and 2-2024 effective immediately. This resolution, with all appropriate signatures

will be delivered to Truist Bank and PNC Bank. Both resolutions were signed by Council and the designated signers. Ms. Maness attached the town seal to the resolutions.

**X. Old Business**

Mayor Gaddy stated the following. "We are looking for solutions to problems with water service, maintenance, and billing. Madam Clerk, here's what Council needs from you prior to our next meeting so that we can have as many facts as possible upon which to base our decision-making.

**A. Water Billing Issues**

As for water billing issues, please provide the following:

1. List of names and addresses of people late between 1-3 times in a single year,
2. List of names and addresses of people late between 4-5 times in a single year,
3. List of names and addresses of people late more than 6 times in a single year and how many times they were late.
4. How many outstanding lates do we currently have and who are they?

**B. Water Service Issues**

As for service failures, including meters, abnormal usage, maintenance, etc., please provide:

1. List of names and addresses of people with excessive water usage in the last 3 years,
2. List of addresses with meter issues since installation of new meters,
3. List of streets with water and sewer issues

- C.** Mayor Gaddy asked Council members if there was anything they would like to add to the water discussion that has not been addressed previously and at this meeting? Council members did not have anything to add.

Mayor Gaddy proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

**XI. Announcements**

Mayor Gaddy asked Councilmembers if they had any announcements they wished to make.

Mayor Gaddy proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

Adjournment

Motion: Moody

Second: Gaddy

All yes

**XII. Adjournment**

Mayor Gaddy sought a motion to adjourn. He received a motion and second. There were no questions or further discussion. He directed Ms. Maness to call the vote. The motion passed. This meeting of the Taylortown Council was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

**Attachments:**

1. Agenda
2. Agenda Format
3. List of Proposed Boards & Commissions
4. Town Council Meeting Schedule 2024 (Revised)
5. Town Council Calendar of Events 2024
6. Resolution 1-2024 (Truist Bank)
7. Resolution 2-2024 (PNC Bank)

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