

The Smithfield Town Council met on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers of the Smithfield Town Hall, Mayor M. Andy Moore presided.

Council Members Present:

Mayor Pro Tem Sloan Stevens
Dr. Gettys Cohen, Jr., District 1
Travis Scott, District 3
Doris L. Wallace, District 4
Stephen Rabil, At-Large
John Dunn, At-Large
Roger Wood, At-Large

Council Members Absent:

Administrative Staff Present

Kimberly Pickett, Interim Town Mgr.
Elaine Andrews, Town Clerk
Tracy Stubblefield
Gary Johnson, Parks & Rec Director
Pete Hedrick, Police Chief
Brent Reck, Planning Director
Shannan Parrish, HR Director
Jeremy Daughtry, Fire Chief
Ted Credle Public Utilities Director
Lawrence Davis, Public Works Dir.

Administrative Staff Absent:

Also Present:

Robert Spence, Jr., Town Attorney

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Moore called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

INVOCATION:

The invocation was given by Councilman Travis Scott, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Councilman Travis Scott stated that upon speaking with the mayor and other members of the council, that he wished to remove items number one and two on the Consent Agenda regarding the release of closed session minutes.

Mayor Pro Tem Sloan Stevens made a motion, seconded by Councilman John Dunn to approve the agenda, amended as follows. Unanimously approved.

Added to Presentations No. 2:

- *DSDC Update – Ham & Yam Contest Winners*

Added to Presentations No. 3:

- *Discussion of the Baseball Venue*

Remove from Consent Agenda Item No. 1

- *Consideration and request for approval to unseal Closed Session Minutes of Deputy Town Clerk Shannan L. Parrish*

Remove from Consent Agenda Item No. 2

- *Consideration and request for approval to unseal redacted Closed Session Minutes of Town Clerk Elaine Andrews*

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Proclamation Honoring the Service and Retirement of Deputy Police Chief James F. Grady

Mayor M. Andy Moore read the proclamation and it was presented to Deputy Police Chief Grady to honor him for his retirement.

Councilman Travis Scott also thanked Officer Grady, commenting that he has set a true example for the profession.

**Town of Smithfield Proclamation
Honoring Deputy Police Chief James F. Grady
Upon His Retirement**

WHEREAS, Deputy Police Chief James F. Grady began his distinguished career with the Town of Smithfield on June 3, 1998; and

WHEREAS, after nearly three decades of exemplary public service, Deputy Chief Grady will retire on May 1, 2026, with 30 years of creditable service; and

WHEREAS, throughout his tenure, Deputy Chief Grady has demonstrated unwavering dedication, professionalism, and leadership while serving the citizens of Smithfield; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Chief Grady has honorably served in multiple leadership roles within the Smithfield Police Department, including Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, Interim Police Chief, and ultimately Deputy Police Chief; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Chief Grady has been instrumental in securing thousands of dollars in Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP) grant funding, significantly enhancing the Town's public safety resources and initiatives; and

WHEREAS, he established the Town of Smithfield's first Bike Patrol Unit, expanding community policing efforts and strengthening relationships between officers and residents; and

WHEREAS, he attended the Graduate Management Development Program, demonstrating his commitment to professional growth and leadership development within the organization; and

WHEREAS, his commitment to excellence and innovation has left a lasting impact on the Smithfield Police Department and the community it serves; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Smithfield is deeply grateful for Deputy Chief Grady's years of dedicated service and the legacy he leaves behind;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, M. Andy Moore, Mayor of the Town of Smithfield, do hereby commend and congratulate Deputy Police Chief James F. Grady upon his retirement, and extend sincere appreciation for his outstanding service, leadership, and commitment to the Town of Smithfield.

(Added)

2. DSDC Update – Ham and Yam Coloring Contest Winners

Interim Town Manager Kimberly Pickett introduced Kate Coates of Coates Hearing, the sponsor of the Coloring contest for the K-5 students of Johnston County Schools. Together they presented awards to the coloring contest winners, of which there were five-hundred entries. The first and third place winners were from River Dell Elementary School. The second-place winner was from South Smithfield Elementary School. Winners were given prizes from the sponsor. Pickett stated that the drawings that were colored were of the new DSDC mascots this year.

DSDC Director, Heidi Gilmond stated the DSDC placed a *call for art* out to the students of Johnston County in the form of a T-shirt design contest. The selected design would be the official Ham and Yam T-shirt artwork. Three designs were submitted, and Johnston Family Dentistry sponsored prize money that was awarded to the top three student's designs. Students also received a Ham and Yam T-shirt voucher.

Gilmond reminded everyone of the 40th annual Ham & Yam Festival celebration scheduled for May 2, 2026.

(Added)

3. Discussion of the Baseball Venue

Interim Town Manager Kim Pickett introduced Mr. Ernie Allsbrook, the Commander of the Smithfield American Legion, who wished to give a few comments before the Board held its discussion regarding the baseball venue. Allsbrook expressed concerns about displacing the adult Hispanic soccer league, which currently leases the field. Allsbrook felt that negotiations for use of Legion Field for the baseball stadium did not result in a suitable solution for the soccer league, therefore he was withdrawing the American Legion from negotiations for use of Legion Field for a proposed baseball stadium for the Tobs organization.

Interim Manager Kimberly Pickett made a presentation, in which she reviewed the now withdrawn proposal to

relocate the stadium to the American Legion Field site. She noted the required approvals from the JCC Foundation and LGC, staff concerns over unsupported financial terms for the Hispanic soccer league, poor field orientation, limited parking and room for expansion, and approximately \$2.5 million in additional costs to renovate the Legion Field site for the baseball stadium were feasibility concerns. Pickett explained that the only way for the Town to take over the American Legion site now would be condemnation/eminent domain, with an estimated \$1,000,000 land cost.

Pickett then presented the Community Park “back 58” property, already owned by the Town, with estimated additional costs of about \$989,300 and the ability to develop the area as an athletic hub with additional soccer fields and a cross-country course. She explained that the back 58 site would have two access points, retain a 400-foot buffer to adjacent neighborhoods at Council’s preference, require rezoning from R-20 to O-9 (which staff can initiate immediately), and that staff does not recommend a future road connection to Canterbury Road due to floodplain and floodway constraints. Pickett recommended proceeding with the Community Park back 58 site so staff can meet contractual obligations with Tobs, including rezoning, design-build work, and necessary DEQ permitting. She asked the Board if there were any questions.

Councilman Travis Scott thanked Ms. Pickett for her presentation and reiterated that while staff originally identified the back 58 site, the Council had selected the Pitchi Street site, adding that he does not support the use of eminent domain and believes an agreement could have been reached voluntarily if all parties had truly wanted it. He asked her to clarify that the back 58 land donation had been anticipated and discussed before, not introduced only at this stage. He then expressed concern about the stadium’s long-term economic and tax impact on citizens, noting that it could divert resources from other recreational priorities identified in the 2023 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan, where baseball is listed as a lower priority compared to facilities for children who do not play sports and an outdoor environmental center. Finally, he explained that his interest in a potential Canterbury Road connection was driven by the desire to improve economic impact for nearby restaurants and hotels, and he acknowledged and appreciated Ms. Pickett’s clarification regarding the floodplain constraints on that concept.

Interim Manager Kim Pickett stated that with the site change staff will need a revised total project estimate, but emphasized the Town is committed to building only what can be funded with the existing \$6 million, pursuing additional components later as fundraising allows, and will not incur further expenditures without both sufficient funds and Council approval.

There was more discussion regarding impact for new neighbors to the stadium in the Eden Woods development, with Pickett noting she had asked a neighbor if there were any concerns, and agreeing with Councilman Scott that there would be as much buffer as possible.

Councilman John Dunn addressed the timeline of the development for the new site, and asked whether the Town was projected to be meeting all required deadlines per contract—with Parks and Recreation Director, Gary Johnson stating that he was assured by the contractor that turnover would occur on May 1, 2027. He stated the contract for the date for turnover to the Tobs is May 15, 2027. Both Johnson and Pickett stated that this will be in writing from the contractor, Muter Construction. Pickett emphasized that the Town must move forward and cannot afford further delays, and thanked Council for their concerns. She reminded Council that she inherited this project rather than initiating it but is committed to doing everything possible to meet the Town’s contractual terms and obligations and to get the project completed without additional stalls, respectfully.

Councilman Roger Wood stated he appreciated staff for all they have done.

Councilman Roger Wood made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Sloan Stevens to approve staff’s moving forward with the Community Park Back 58-acre property location for the development of the baseball stadium, staying within budget—and if not, coming back to the Council for any additional budget concerns, and that the development have a 400 ft buffer.

Councilman Scott apologized if he caused a delay in the project, noting that with nearly \$10 million at stake it is important to proceed carefully. He emphasized for the record that the Town must follow its own policies, thanked Pickett for the work and conversations they have had, and acknowledged her for trying to make the pieces fit together. He added that, professionally, he believed the process had stalled at one point and cautioned that, going forward, if something is not brought before Council, due diligence is still required even with an existing contract, and that “everything is negotiable.”

Mayor Andy Moore clarified and confirmed that the JCC Foundation—with respect to the Pitchi Street/American Legion site, would have been required to approve any arrangement regardless of actions or negotiations by the American Legion or others. Interim Manager Pickett affirmed this and added that the only way JCC was willing to transfer the property was through eminent domain, which had been discussed with them and attorneys. Upon this comment, the mayor reiterated that there was a motion and second on the floor and the vote was called.

Motion re-stated:

Councilman Roger Wood made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Sloan Stevens to approve staff’s moving forward with the Community Park Back 58-acre property location for the development of the baseball stadium, staying within budget—and if not, coming back to the Council for any additional budget concerns, and that the development have a 400 ft buffer. Motion carried by a vote of five to two with Councilman Travis Scott and Councilwoman Doris Wallace voting against the action.

Councilman Travis Scott wanted to make sure staff provided new council members with a copy of the 2023 Master Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan and its presentation, noting its importance. Mayor Moore noted that the adopted plan referenced fishing and stated that the Town has successfully implemented a public fishing amenity, which is very well attended, with an estimated 100–200 participants at the most recent open fishing day. He added that the Town continues working with representatives to improve the facility, including efforts to install an actual dock.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

- There were no citizens' comments made during this meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

Councilman John Dunn made a motion, seconded by Councilman Roger Wood to approve the consent agenda as amended. Unanimously approved.

- ~~1. Consideration and request for approval to unseal Closed Session Minutes of Deputy Town Clerk Shannan L. Parrish~~
- ~~2. Consideration and request for approval to unseal redacted Closed Session Minutes of Town Clerk Elaine Andrews~~
- 3. Resolution No. 804 (11 – 2026) Awarding Badge and Service Weapon to a Retiring Police Officer James F. Grady**

TOWN OF SMITHFIELD
RESOLUTION NO. 804 (11-2026)
AWARDING BADGE AND SERVICE WEAPON TO
RETIRING DEPUTY POLICE CHIEF JAMES F. GRADY

WHEREAS, NC G.S. §17F-20(a)(2) provides that retiring members of municipal law enforcement agencies may receive, at the time of their retirement, the badge worn, and firearm carried by them during their service with the municipality; and

WHEREAS, NC G.S. §17F-20(a)(2) further provides that the governing body of the municipal law enforcement agency may, in its discretion, award to a retiring member the badge and service weapon of such retiring member; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Chief James F. Grady has served as a sworn law enforcement officer in North Carolina as a member of the Smithfield Police Department for thirty years; and

WHEREAS, Officer Grady will be retiring from the Smithfield Police Department on May 1, 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Smithfield that the badge and service firearm (Glock 45, Serial Number CCEP523) used by Officer Grady during his service with the Town of Smithfield be declared as surplus property and be awarded to him at a cost of \$1.00 upon his retirement.

Duly adopted this the 21st day of April, 2026.

- 4. Consideration and request for approval of the Water Shortage Response Plan:** Staff is respectfully requesting the Town Council accept and acknowledge that they have completed the Town of Smithfield's Source Water Resiliency and Response Plan (SWRRP) and will upload certification to the NCDEQ website following Council approval, if granted.
- 5. Consideration and request for approval to renew stamp machine contract with Pitney Bowes:** Staff respectfully requests the review and approval of a new Pitney Bowes NASPO stamp machine contract for the annual amount of \$1,795.08.

6. **Consideration and request for approval award of contract for use of ARPA Grant funds for I-95 Gravity Sewer Crossing (Phase I):** The Town received ARPA funds in 2022 to improve and enlarge the gravity sewer crossing under I-95. The project has been designed, permitted, and approved, and the lowest construction bid has been received from JYMCO for construction services for an amount not to exceed \$1,752,314.00.
7. **Consideration and request for approval of award of contract for use of State funding for I-95 Gravity Sewer Crossing (Phase II):** In 2023, the Town received state funding to improve the downstream gravity sewer completing the I-95 crossing to support future development east of the interstate along the US-70 corridor and Mallard Road. The project has been designed, permitted, and approved, and the lowest construction bid has been received from TA Loving Company for construction services for the approved amount of \$2,417,415.00.
8. **Consideration and request for approval to enter into a Cleaning Contract with Janitize Jantize America of Raleigh, Inc. for the amount of \$70,218.96 annually.**
9. **Consideration and request for approval for Appearance Commission and Recreation Advisory Commission Board Appointments**

BUSINESS ITEMS:

1. **Consideration and request to restructure Smithfield Police Department Staff:** The Police Chief requests approval to restructure command staff by creating two Captain positions, eliminating the Deputy Chief position, and promoting two Lieutenants to Captain and one Sergeant to Lieutenant.

Police Chief Pete Hedrick explained that, following the recent retirement of Captain James F. Grady, he is requesting to restructure the Police Department by splitting the former captain's duties between two captains, returning to the organizational model in place when he first arrived. Under this structure, one captain would oversee the patrol division and the other would oversee detectives, SROs, and special operations, resulting in an even distribution of manpower (approximately 22 officers per side) and, in his view, the most efficient way to operate the department.

Councilman Scott thanked Chief Hedrick for his service, commended officers for their excellent handling of a recent frightening incident involving his mother, and voiced strong support for properly funding public safety and the proposed restructuring. He moved to approve the chief's request and, after the vote, emphasized the need for a fair, transparent, and equal-opportunity promotion process, noting that perceived bias in past internal promotions has harmed morale and urging that the upcoming process be handled with integrity.

Councilman Travis Scott made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Sloan Stevens to approve the request. Unanimously approved.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS:

- Councilwoman Doris Wallace thanked the Police Department for their *no parking lane* enforcement near Belk's department store in town. She also thanked volunteers and staff for their cleanup of the Community Garden area.
- Councilman Gettys Cohen, Jr. gave thanks and acknowledgement for the donation and installation of blessing boxes—installed in honor of Councilman Marlon Lee in his district—one located near the Sarah Yard Center. He stated the boxes were generously donated by Bright Speed Internet service. Cohen also thanked his Fraternity brother, as well as Smithfield's Parks and Recreation Director, Gary Johnson for their help. He asked the donation be recorded in the minutes of record.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

Interim Town Manager Kim Pickett made note of the following during her report:

- Reported that a West Smithfield class will visit Town Hall the next morning at 8:00 a.m. for a mock global summit in the council chambers, and welcomed Council to attend.
- Reminded everyone that the next day is Administrative Professionals Day and encouraged thanks to administrative staff for their work.
- Announced a Sexual Assault Awareness Walk in front of the courthouse the next day from 12:30–1:30 p.m.
- Advised she will be out of the office Thursday on approved PTO, but will be available by phone if needed.

- Requested to recess the budget meeting on Thursday the 30th at 6:30.
- Mentioned the retirement party for Officer James F. Grady on Thursday the 30th, from 3:00–5:00 p.m. in the council chambers as a floating session for any council members who can attend.
- Offered that she and the Finance Director can meet individually with council members for one-on-one, in-depth budget reviews, especially since this is the first full budget cycle for some members.

Councilman Travis Scott sought clarification regarding plans for ballpark access points. He iterated that a long entrance street from Buffalo Road, shown on the plan, was always intended as a general connection point to the parking area on the plans, more conducive to the neighborhood and the area. He noted that any related parking layout may change based on Council's concerns.

He also asked that, when considering demolition of the DAV house, the large existing trees be preserved and incorporated into the entrance design, citing the Town's tree-preservation efforts for trees greater than eight inches. The Interim Town Manager responded that there is no plan to remove those trees; while the DAV house is proposed for demolition, the large trees, outdoor equipment, and memorial on the site are to remain. Interim Manager Kim Pickett added that, if ok with Council, the request related to removing the DAV house will be brought before the Council at the next meeting.

Adjourn/Recess:

Councilman Travis Scott made a motion, seconded by Councilwoman Doris Wallace to recess the meeting at approximately 8:00 p.m. until Wednesday, April 29, 2026 at 6:30 pm for further budget discussions. Unanimously approved.

ATTEST:


Elaine Andrews, Town Clerk




M. Andy Moore, Mayor