

The Smithfield Town Council met on Tuesday, June 16, 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
Stephen Rabil, At-Large
John Dunn, At-Large

Council Members Absent:
Doris L. Wallace, District 4
Roger Wood, At-Large

Administrative Staff Present
Kimberly Pickett, Interim Town Mgr.
Elaine Andrews, Town Clerk
Jeremey Daughtry, Fire Chief
Pete Hedrick, Chief of Police
Gary Johnson, Parks & Rec Director
Shannan Parrish, HR Director
Planning Director, Brent Reck
Ted Credle, Public Utilities Director
Lawrence Davis, Public Works Director

Also Present:
Robert Spence, Jr., Town Attorney

Administrative Staff Absent:
Tracy Stubblefield, Finance Director

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Moore called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Prior to the invocation, Mayor Moore informed the Council that Councilman Roger Wood had been admitted to Duke Hospital the previous evening and was undergoing double transplant surgery. He requested that the Council keep Councilman Wood in their prayers.

INVOCATION:

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Councilman Gettys Cohen, Jr. made a motion, seconded by Councilman John Dunn to approve the agenda, amended as follows. Unanimously approved.

Add to the Consent Agenda:

Item No. 8 - Juneteenth Celebration and March: Mayor Andy Moore stated a Juneteenth Celebration in March at Smith Collins Park on June 22, 2026, requesting approval for a street closure, security personnel, food vendors, and temporary structures

Item No. 9 - Legal Settlement: Mayor Andy Moore stated this added item is a legal settlement between the Town of Smithfield, Shook Construction Company, and the Wooten Company pursuant to NC G.S. 130A-2.1.3.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Juneteenth Proclamation

Mayor M. Andy Moore read a proclamation designating June 19, 2026 as Juneteenth in the Town of Smithfield, recognizing the significance of the date in African American history and encouraging residents to observe the occasion through ceremonies, educational programs, and community activities. Councilman Gettys Cohen, Jr. and others in attendance of the meeting, received the Proclamation from the Mayor.

**TOWN OF SMITHFIELD
PROCLAMATION
Recognizing Juneteenth – June 19, 2026**

Whereas, Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, the day Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, and announced the freedom of some of the last enslaved people in the United States; and

WHEREAS, although President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, many enslaved people in Texas remained in bondage until federal authority could be enforced following the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, newly emancipated African Americans in Texas began annual Juneteenth celebrations to commemorate freedom, preserve their history, and inspire future generations; and

WHEREAS, for more than 150 years, Juneteenth has been observed and celebrated across the United States as a reminder of the enduring struggle for liberty, justice, and equal opportunity for all; and

Whereas, Juneteenth serves as a reminder of the abolition of slavery in the United States and the enduring pursuit of liberty, equality, and justice for all; and

Whereas, in 2026, our nation marks the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, while also reflecting on the continuing journey toward freedom and opportunity for all Americans; and

Whereas, Juneteenth provides an opportunity to honor African American history, heritage, culture, and contributions, and to recognize the strength, resilience, and achievements of generations of African Americans; and

WHEREAS, the events of June 19, 1865, became known as "Juneteenth" and marked a significant milestone in the nation's journey toward freedom and equality; and

Whereas, the Town of Smithfield encourages residents to celebrate Juneteenth through reflection, education, community engagement, and a renewed commitment to building a more inclusive future;

Now, Therefore, I, M. Andy Moore, Mayor of the Town of Smithfield, North Carolina, along with the members of the Town Council do hereby proclaim June 19, 2026, as

JUNETEENTH

in the Town of Smithfield. We encourage all residents to recognize the significance of this day in African American history and in the history of our nation, and to observe and celebrate Juneteenth through appropriate ceremonies, educational programs, and community activities.

Proclaimed this 16th day of June, 2026.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- 1. Municipal Service District Contract Hearing:** The Council is respectfully requested to hold a public hearing to receive input before contracting with a private entity in the Municipal Service District, and to approve or deny authorization for the new contract as required by NC G.S. 160A-536(d1).

Mayor Pro Tem Sloan Stevens made a motion, seconded by Councilman John Dunn to open the public hearing. Unanimously approved.

Interim Town Manager Kimberly Pickett presented the background on the Municipal Service District (MSD) contract process. She explained that the town had solicited public input through social media and the town website and had issued a Request for Proposal advertised in the Johnston County News on May 20. One RFP was received from the Downtown Smithfield Development Corporation (DSDC). Pickett noted that the proposed new contract included performance benchmarks drawn from a prior survey and requested a 5-year term rather than the previous 3-year standard, though she indicated the town would accept a return to a 3-year term at Council's direction.

Councilman Scott raised two concerns. First, he emphasized the importance of inclusive engagement with all downtown businesses, including those with negative perceptions of DSDC. Interim Town Manager Pickett confirmed that quarterly business engagement sessions with all storefront owners had been added to the contract as a benchmark. Second, Councilman Scott asked whether the DSDC would be subject to public records requests, given that the contract is funded in part by tax dollars. Interim Town Manager Pickett clarified that the DSDC, as a 501(c)(3), does not fall under North Carolina public records law.

Attorney Spence acknowledged that public records obligations could theoretically be contractually required but cautioned that doing so could be burdensome and might deter volunteer board members. Mayor Pro Tem Sloan Stevens expressed concern about inadvertently exposing volunteer board members to potentially bad-faith records requests, while acknowledging the legitimate interest in financial transparency. The Council generally agreed that the DSDC's financial information, including their budget and expenditures—is already made available through the town and through the organization's annual tax filings, and that Interim Town Manager Pickett regularly provides financial updates to the Council. Councilman

Scott clarified that his concern was primarily about financial transparency rather than personal communications and referenced past financial discrepancies under a prior contract period.

With the Mayor's permission, DSDC Director Heidi Gilmond addressed the Council, confirming that the organization had not received any public records request and that its meetings are open to the public. She noted that her salary is disclosed through the organization's annual tax filings and that all expenditures are board-approved in a public setting. She provided a budget overview, noting that approximately \$100,000 in MSD funds was received in the current fiscal year out of a total budget of approximately \$568,000, with the remainder raised through fundraising, sponsorships, grants, and donations. She indicated the next fiscal year's MSD contribution is anticipated to increase to approximately \$234,000.

Councilman John Dunn made a motion, seconded by Councilman Gettys Cohen, Jr. to close the public hearing. Unanimously approved.

Following the public hearing, Councilman Travis Scott asked that the current DSDC contract be extended for 30 days to allow staff time to revise the new contract with a 3-year term and a 90-day exit clause for either party, with the revised contract to be brought back for Council approval at the next session.

Councilman Travis Scott made a motion to extend the current DSDC contract for 30 days and return the revised contract—incorporating a 3-year term and a 90-day termination provision—to the Council for approval at a subsequent meeting was made by Councilman Travis Scott and seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

- No citizens came forward to speak.

Councilman Gettys Cohen, Jr. made a motion, seconded by Councilman John Dunn to approve the consent agenda as submitted. Unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Approval of Minutes

- April 29, 2026 – Recessed Budget Session
- May 5, 2026 – Regular Session (including budget discussions)
- May 5, 2027 – Closed Session (under a separate cover)

2. Special Event – Bulldog Harley-Davidson Ride into Summer on July 11, 2026: The Council is being asked to grant a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) for this event will be held at 1043 Outlet Center Drive on from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. Live amplified sound will be utilized between 12:00 pm and 3:00 pm. A food truck will be on site serving food.

3. Special Event – Bulldog Harley-Davidson Bikini Bike Wash on July 18, 2026: The Council is being asked to grant a TUP for this event to be held at 1043 Outlet Center Drive from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm. A food truck will be on site selling food.

4. Special Event – Father's Day Cookout – June 21, 2026, at Smith Collins Park: The Council is being asked to grant a TUP to Omar McKnight to have a Father's Day Cookout. Amplified sound will be used 12:00 noon to 8:00 pm. Over 100 people are expected to attend.

5. Special Event – Bulldog Harley-Davidson Christmas in July on July 25, 2026: The Council is being asked to grant a TUP for the event to be held at 1043 Outlet Center Drive from 11:00 am to 4:00pm. A food truck will be on site selling food.

6. Special Event – Bulldog Harley-Davidson Bike Night on July 30, 2026: The Council is being asked to grant a TUP for this event to be held at 1043 Outlet Center Drive from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm. A food truck will be on site selling food.

7. Sound Rivers MOU: The Town Council is respectfully requested to consider the finalization of agreement with Sound Rivers for the installation and management of a trash collection device at Spring Branch.

- 8. Juneteenth Celebration and March:** The Council is being asked to approve a request from Angela Williams to hold a Juneteenth Celebration and march at Smith-Collins Park on June 20, 2026. This annual event will include a street closure, security personnel, food vendors and temporary structures exceeding 200 sq. feet. As the event components differ from those approved in previous years, Council approval is respectfully requested.
- 9. Legal Settlement:** In accordance with NC G.S. 132-1.3, staff is providing a high-level summary of the terms of a settlement agreement reached between the Town of Smithfield, Shook Construction Company and the Wooten Company. Council approval is respectfully requested to allow execution of agreement.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

1. Administrative Ordinance Amendment Discussion - Electric Line Extension

Policy: The Council is requested to discuss and consider an ordinance amending Chapter 18, *Utilities* to add Article VII, Section 18-190 for a Town Electric Line Extension Policy.

Public Utilities Director Ted Credle presented a discussion item on codifying the town's electric line extension policy into the municipal code. He noted that while Chapter 18 addresses water and sewer extensions in detail, electric distribution is only referenced broadly and has not been meaningfully updated since 2008. Credle explained that the town's current practice—placing the cost burden of electrical line extensions on developers rather than absorbing it into town funds—mirrors the approach used for water and sewer and is consistent with how neighboring municipalities such as Benson operate. He indicated this practice has been informally in effect since development at East River but is not in written policy, which leaves the town vulnerable to disputes.

Councilman Scott, who had brought the issue before the Council, affirmed the rationale, noting that as an enterprise fund, the electric utility must be self-sustaining and that growth costs should not fall on existing ratepayers. He also raised the ancillary benefit of requiring underground service, which improves community aesthetics and reduces storm-related outages. Mayor Pro Tem Stevens expressed support and suggested the policy apply to major subdivisions while excluding infill development and single-lot builds, where main line extensions are typically not required. The Council agreed that underground installation is already the de facto standard among new developers. Interim Town Manager Pickett noted the need for clear grandfathering provisions to distinguish between projects already approved for plat and those that would fall under the new ordinance. Councilman Gettys Cohen, Jr. confirmed with staff that the distinction between informal practice and having a codified policy, and the Council directed staff to proceed with drafting formal ordinance language for a future public hearing.

No formal motion was required; the Council provided consensus directions to staff to proceed.

2. Administrative Ordinance Amendment Discussion - Loitering in Town

Parks: The Town Council is requested to discuss and consider an ordinance amending Chapter 12, *Parks and Recreation*, by adding Section 12-110, Regulating Loitering and Idle Presence in Town Parks and Recreational Facilities.

Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson presented a framework ordinance for regulating access, occupancy, and use of town parks and recreational facilities. He described recurring issues with the monopolization of shelters and pavilions—with individuals or groups occupying amenities for four to eight hours at a time—as well as similar concerns at the pickleball courts during peak hours. The proposed ordinance would establish a two-hour continuous use limit for any amenity without a permit, require a reservation permit for groups of more than ten persons using a shelter regardless of duration, define prohibited conduct within access zones (areas within 25 feet of restrooms, playground boundaries, and building entrances), and restrict adults from remaining in designated playground areas unless supervising a child or performing authorized work. Enforcement would be handled by the police department through a graduated process including verbal warnings, removal from the facility, citations, and trespass notices. The ordinance also includes explicit protections for passive recreational use and constitutionally protected activity.

Councilman Scott asked whether the ordinance would address unauthorized vendors and inquired about the duration of a trespass order. Director Johnson confirmed that vendors are generally not permitted in parks and that trespass terms are governed by applicable law.

Councilman Scott also asked Director Johnson to consider planning for a gated secondary entrance at Smithfield Community Park to prevent the park from becoming a through-route after hours, particularly if a second entrance is developed. Director Johnson indicated those discussions have begun.

Councilman Cohen confirmed that parks are closed at sunset, with Smith Collins and Smithfield Community Park remaining open until 10:30 PM due to lighted amenities.

Mayor Moore raised the possibility of charging non-resident fees for amenities such as pickleball courts, which Director Johnson noted is under consideration as the county expands its own parks and recreation services.

No formal action was taken; the item will return for a public hearing prior to adoption.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS:

Councilman Gettys Cohen, Jr. relayed positive constituent feedback regarding ongoing paving improvements in District 1 and thanked the Council and staff for the effort.

Mayor Moore shared that he received an update during the meeting from Councilman Wood's wife indicating that the kidney transplant surgery had been completed successfully, that the surgical team was pleased with the outcome, and that Councilman Wood's body was functioning on its own. The Council was asked to continue keeping him in their prayers.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

Interim Town Manager Pickett highlighted several upcoming events: a Freedman's Schoolhouse ribbon cutting on Friday, June 19 at 11:00 AM; the Juneteenth parade on Saturday, June 20 at 10:30 AM with a celebration in East Smithfield; the Parks and Recreation Department's 3 Little Pigs Triathlon on the same Saturday; a live burn training exercise at the former DAV house on June 27 beginning at 8:00 AM, involving approximately three to four fire departments; and the grand opening of Once Upon a Crumb bookstore on Market Street on June 27. Councilman Scott also reminded those present of the US 301 Yard Sale taking place that weekend.

ADJOURN:

Mayor Pro Tem Sloan Stevens made a motion, seconded by Councilman John Dunn to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:13 p.m. Unanimously approved.


M. Andy Moore, Mayor

ATTEST:


Elaine Andrews, Town Clerk

