

**Stoneville Town Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 2, 2026
6:00 PM – Council Chambers**

Regular Meeting

Members Present: Mayor Kathy Stanley-Galvan and Council members Jessica Smith, Curt Bennett, Henry Thornton, Daisy Smith, and Lee Shelton. Staff Present: Town Administrator Michael Sands, Town Clerk Deleia Hutcherson, Public Works Director Byron Curry, Police Chief Rebecca Dixon, Fire Chief Joel Freeman, and Town Attorney Eugene Russell.

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, and Invocation: Mayor Galvan welcomed the assembly and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., following the Pledge of Allegiance and the Invocation. She announced that the Council had previously met in closed session at 5:00 p.m. pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a) (3) to Consult with the Town Attorney, and (6) Personnel. Additionally, she noted that the Council would return to closed session following the regular meeting.

Agenda: Councilman Thornton made a motion to approve the June 2, 2026 agenda. Seconded by Councilwoman Jessica Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes: Councilman Thornton made a motion to approve the following meeting minutes: May 5, 2026 regular meeting minutes, May 12, 2026 special meeting minutes (Budget Work Session), and May 14, 2026 special meeting minutes (Budget Presentation). Seconded by Councilwoman Daisy Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearings:

2026-2027 Fiscal Year Budget – Councilwoman Daisy Smith made a motion to open the public hearing. Seconded by Councilman Shelton. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Jerry Smith of E. Main Street in Stoneville signed up for public comments. Mr. Smith addressed the Council regarding long-term staffing and funding priorities, focusing primarily on the Fire Department. Mr. Smith reviewed expenditure increases among Town departments over the previous five years, noting significant growth in Administration, Police, Public Works, and Fire Department budgets. He compared proposed salary allocations between the Police and Fire Departments and expressed concern regarding the aging membership of the volunteer Fire Department, stating that several firefighters were age 65 or older and emphasizing the need for succession planning. Mr. Smith encouraged the Town to begin developing a long-term strategy for recruiting younger firefighters, preparing future leadership, and ensuring operational sustainability while recognizing the dedication and service of the current volunteer firefighters. Mayor Galvan thanked Mr. Smith for his comments. With no additional speakers, Councilman Thornton made a motion to close the public hearing. Seconded by Councilman Bennett. Motion carried unanimously.

Text Amendments to the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance - Councilwoman Daisy Smith made a motion to open the public hearing. Seconded by Councilman Shelton. Motion carried unanimously. No members of the public spoke during the hearing. Following confirmation that

there were no public comments, Councilman Thornton made a motion to close the public hearing. Seconded by Councilman Shelton. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Business: None

Public Comments: None

New Business:

Presentation of Rockingham County Comprehensive Transportation Plan – Mayor Galvan introduced Emily Stupka, Transportation Engineer with the North Carolina Department of Transportation. The presenters explained that the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) is a long-range planning document intended to identify transportation needs over the next 25 to 30 years and serves as a planning guide rather than a funding commitment. They reviewed the planning process, including public engagement efforts, surveys, stakeholder meetings, and public meetings held throughout Rockingham County. The presentation highlighted proposed improvements affecting Stoneville, including modernization of Church Street/Stone Mountain Road, expanded public transit through SCAT, additional sidewalks, bicycle lanes, multi-use paths, and future regional greenway connections. Representatives emphasized that adoption of the CTP would not authorize construction or guarantee project funding but would improve opportunities for future transportation funding consideration.

Council Discussion – Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Council engaged in extensive discussion following the presentation, expressing concern that no public meeting had been held in Stoneville and questioning how recommendations affecting the Town had been developed without direct local input. Members voiced concerns regarding the proposed widening of Church Street, including potential right-of-way acquisition, impacts to mature trees, residential property setbacks, and neighborhood character. Council members indicated they generally supported pedestrian and bicycle improvements but believed sidewalks, neighborhood connectivity, and park access should receive greater priority than roadway widening. NCDOT representatives explained that the plan remained flexible and could be amended before adoption, with individual projects modified or removed if requested by the Town. Following discussion, Council agreed that additional public participation was necessary before adopting the plan.

Consideration to adopt Resolution R-2026-06 Adopting the Rockingham County Comprehensive Transportation Plan for the Town of Stoneville - Councilwoman Jessica Smith made a motion to table consideration of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan pending further citizen input. Seconded by Councilwoman Daisy Smith. Motion carried unanimously. Copy incorporated into minutes. Staff was directed to coordinate the public information meeting with NCDOT representatives and return the matter to Council following citizen input.

Consideration to adopt the 2026-2027 Budget Ordinance - Staff reported that, through a series of budget workshops and revisions, the initial projected deficit of more than \$1 million had been reduced to approximately \$200,000. The Finance Officer explained that approximately \$170,000 of the remaining deficit would be covered using fund balance for one-time expenditures, leaving roughly \$30,000 in ongoing operational expenses to be addressed.

Council acknowledged the significant effort by staff to reduce expenditures while continuing to provide essential municipal services.

Proposed Property Tax Rate

Councilman Bennett suggested reducing the rate from \$0.69 to either \$0.68 or \$0.67 per \$100 valuation in response to citizen concerns regarding affordability following countywide property revaluations. Members discussed the Town's responsibility to balance taxpayers' concerns with the need to maintain municipal services. The Finance Officer advised that each one-cent reduction would decrease annual revenue by approximately \$12,000 to \$13,000 and that a two-cent reduction would require approximately \$26,000 in additional appropriations from fund balance. Following discussion, no formal action was taken regarding the proposed tax rate adjustment.

Code Enforcement Funding

Councilman Bennett recommended eliminating approximately \$41,000 budgeted for the program, consisting of personnel and operational expenses, stating that previous efforts had been made to address code enforcement internally and questioning whether outside expenditures remained necessary. The discussion concluded without formal action.

Fire Department Capital Reserve and Staffing

Council discussed the proposed allocation of \$40,000 toward the future purchase of a replacement fire apparatus. Councilman Bennett questioned whether reserving funds immediately was necessary and suggested the Town instead commit to purchasing the apparatus when appropriate while continuing to evaluate long-term staffing needs. Discussion referenced comments made during the public hearing concerning the aging volunteer Fire Department and the importance of recruiting younger firefighters and ensuring long-term sustainability. Council generally agreed that maintaining adequate staffing would be equally as important as replacing aging equipment.

Fire Apparatus Financing Discussion

The Finance Officer reported that staff had contacted several lending institutions, including Civic Credit Union, LGFCU, Fidelity Bank, and USDA representatives, regarding financing options for a replacement pumper/tanker. Staff explained that preliminary discussions indicated financing would likely be available when needed and clarified that no substantial down payment would be required upon execution of a purchase contract. Instead, financing would generally occur as the apparatus neared completion and delivery. Council discussed whether reserving funds in advance would provide meaningful savings through reduced financing costs and considered whether the funds should remain invested until needed. No consensus was reached regarding the most advantageous financing strategy.

Fire Apparatus Vendor Presentation

Representatives from E-ONE and C.W. Williams/Fire Connections addressed Council regarding the proposed replacement apparatus. They advised that current delivery timelines were approximately 30 months due to continuing supply chain challenges and increased manufacturing costs. The representatives explained that most departments finance apparatus upon delivery and that advance payments are optional, although discounts may be available for early or staged payments. Council also discussed the remaining loan balance on the Town's

current apparatus, estimated monthly payments, potential trade-in value, and the importance of balancing equipment replacement with long-term financial planning. Members agreed the Fire Department remained a priority while emphasizing fiscal responsibility and maintaining adequate reserves.

Recess of Budget Deliberations

Following extensive discussion, Council agreed additional review was necessary before adopting the Fiscal Year 2026–2027 Budget. Members determined that postponing final action would provide time to complete potential budget revisions, continue evaluating the proposed tax rate, and review financing options for the replacement fire apparatus. Councilman Thornton made a motion to recess consideration of the 2026–2027 Budget to a future special meeting, with the specific date and time to be determined following review of Council members' schedules. Seconded by Councilwoman Daisy Smith. Motion carried unanimously. Copy incorporated into minutes.

Consideration to adopt Ordinance O-2026-09 Amending the Flood Damage Prevention

Ordinance – Staff explained that the ordinance was required to maintain the Town's compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program by incorporating updated FEMA flood insurance maps and revising ordinance references accordingly. Staff emphasized that the amendments were administrative in nature and did not represent significant policy changes. Based on the favorable recommendation by the Planning Board, Councilwoman Jessica Smith made a motion to approve the Statement of Consistency and Reasonableness as presented and adopt Ordinance O-2026-09 amending the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance to ensure the Town's continued participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. Seconded by Councilwoman Daisy Smith. Motion carried unanimously. Copy incorporated into minutes.

Consideration of quotes for new pumper/tanker fire apparatus – Council considered three proposals for a replacement pumper/tanker. Staff recommended proceeding with the E-ONE proposal in the amount of \$990,209 if Council elected to authorize the purchase and reiterated that financing would not be necessary until delivery. Vendor representatives further explained payment schedules and optional early-payment discounts while noting that rising material costs, tariffs, and manufacturing delays continued to affect apparatus pricing. Council discussed the Town's commitment to providing safe and reliable equipment while balancing budget priorities and long-term financial planning. Following deliberation, Councilman Thornton made a motion to enter into contract with E-ONE as recommended by staff. Seconded by Councilman Bennett. Motion carried unanimously. Copy incorporated into minutes.

Consideration of a proposed street name for the private drive located at 309 S. Henry Street (Public Works location)

– Town Administrator Michael Sands presented a request to designate the private drive serving the new Public Works facility at 309 S. Henry Street in honor of Joe Kellam, a longtime Public Works employee. Staff explained that the request originated from members of Mr. Kellam's family as a way to recognize his dedication and service to the Town. Following review of several possible commemorative options, staff recommended naming the private drive at the Public Works facility because of its direct association with Mr. Kellam's career. It was noted that Mr. Kellam retired from the Town on June 30, 1990, after 30 years of

service in the Public Works Department. Councilwoman Daisy Smith made a motion to name the private drive Joe Kellam Drive in recognition of Mr. Kellam's years of dedicated service to the Town. Seconded by Councilman Bennett. Motion carried unanimously.

Town Administrator Report: Mr. Sands provided several updates to Council. He reported that the community emergency warning siren malfunctioned during a scheduled system test earlier that day. Staff contacted Rockingham County Communications, which advised that the issue resulted from implementation of new software. They agreed to notify the Town before future testing to help prevent unnecessary public concern. Mr. Sands also reported that the Glendale Project was expected to be completed later that week, weather permitting. He expressed appreciation to the volunteers, vendors, participants, and residents who contributed to the success of the Town's recent May Day Celebration and thanked the community for its continued support. Finally, staff advised that renovations to Town Hall previously authorized by Council would begin the following day, including removal of the interior glass wall system as part of the renovation project.

Mayor Galvan announced the next regular meeting scheduled for July 7, 2026. Additionally, she announced that the Council would be returning to closed session. Councilman Thornton made a motion to go into closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a) (3) to Consult with the Town Attorney, and (6) Personnel. Seconded by Councilwoman Jessica Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Thornton made a motion to come out of closed session at 8:20 p.m. Seconded by Councilman Shelton. Motion carried unanimously. Following closed session, Mayor Galvan reconvened the regular meeting in open session. No action was reported as having been taken during closed session.

Following the return to open session, Council resumed discussion of the proposed FY 2026–2027 Budget. Members revisited several topics previously addressed during budget workshops, including the proposed municipal property tax rate, funding for contracted code enforcement, allocation of funds toward the replacement fire apparatus, preservation of the Town's fund balance, and the overall sustainability of the operating budget. Council acknowledged citizen concerns regarding increasing property taxes while recognizing the need to continue providing essential municipal services and investing in public safety. Members agreed that staff had made substantial efforts to reduce expenditures while preserving core services and noted that additional reductions would likely require cuts to personnel or essential operations. Discussion also included the value of the Town's code enforcement program, ongoing Fire Department recruitment challenges, future technology costs, and long-term financial planning.

Following discussion, Council determined that no additional amendments would be made to the proposed budget. Councilwoman Daisy Smith made a motion to adopt the 2026–2027 Budget Ordinance as presented by staff. Seconded by Councilman Thornton. Councilman Shelton opposed. Council members Henry Thornton, Curt Bennett, Daisy Smith, and Jessica Smith voted yes. Council member Lee Shelton voted no. Motion passed with a majority vote of 4 to 1. Copy incorporated into minutes.

Council considered the possibility of cancelling the July regular meeting due to the anticipated limited amount of business and deferring any remaining agenda items to the August meeting. Councilwoman Daisy Smith made a motion to cancel the July 7, 2026 regular meeting. Seconded by Councilman Thornton. Motion carried unanimously.

Stoneville Community Cemetery Maintenance Contribution

Council considered the annual request for financial assistance to support maintenance of the Stoneville Community Cemetery located off of South 220 Business. Council members recognized the importance of assisting with the upkeep of the cemetery and were in agreement to continue the Town's annual contribution. Councilman Thornton made a motion to approve a \$500.00 contribution for cemetery maintenance to be paid from the FY 2026–2027 Budget after July 1. Seconded by Councilwoman Daisy Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

Event Traffic Control Signage

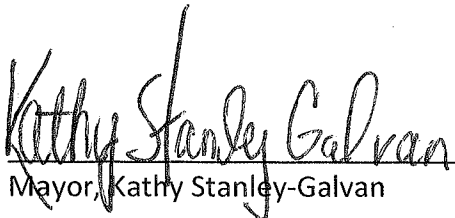
Council discussed the need to purchase additional traffic control signs for use during community events, festivals, and temporary street closures. Staff advised that an inventory of the Town's existing traffic control signage would first be completed to determine current availability and identify any deficiencies. Once the inventory was finalized, pricing for any additional signage would be presented to Council for future consideration.

Traffic Signal Discussion

Council discussed recent modifications to the timing of a local traffic signal near the Stoneville Post Office and expressed concerns regarding vehicle speeds and pedestrian safety at the intersection. Staff explained that the timing adjustments were established by the North Carolina Department of Transportation in accordance with traffic engineering standards and noted that a pavement sensor damaged during resurfacing operations had since been repaired, allowing the signal to operate as originally designed. Council encouraged staff to continue communicating with NCDOT should additional operational or safety concerns arise.

Motion to adjourn made by Councilman Thornton. Seconded by Councilman Bennett. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.


Mayor, Kathy Stanley-Galvan


Town Clerk, Deleia Hutcherson

