Town of Woodfin
Town Council Meeting

Monday, June 8, 2026
3:30 pm

MEETING MINUTES

Council Members Present
Mayor Jim McAllister
Council Member Philip Cohen
Council Member Chip Parton
Vice Mayor Elisabeth Ervin
Council Member Ken Kahn
Council Member Johanna Young

Council Members Absent
Council Member Dan Bowers

Town Staff Present
Shannon Tuch, Town Manager
Gena Powers, Town Clerk / PIO
Ricky Hurley, Planning Director
Jacqui Boykin, Police Chief

Mayor McAllister called the meeting to order at 3:40 pm.

A. Approval of the Agenda

Council Member Vice Mayor Ervin made a motion to approve the agenda. Council Member Kahn seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 5-0.

B. New Business

1. Excellence in Governance Discussion – Woodfin town council

Facilitator Ellis Hankins introduced himself, he and Council Member Kahn introduced the topics for today and key goals for this meeting, including:
Being the best governing body, we can be by Providing Excellent Town Services:

- Exploring our model of governance and the working relationships between town staff/appointed boards and the town's elected officials.
- Governing as a unit.
- With the Council-Manager form of government being new to Woodfin - we have the opportunity to provide an Excellence in Governance Road Map for future Town of Woodfin Teams.
- Respect established priorities: do not introduce new priorities without input from all members of the council.

Today's Process was defined by Facilitator Hankins as:

- Defining each of the 4 broad goals.
- Discussing and documenting ideas including:
  - Legal framework
  - Best practices were reviewed:
    - Elected Officials: Statutorily mandated ethics training, strive to have all elected officials attend 2-day Essentials of Municipal Government Course co-sponsored by UNC School of Government & NCLM.
  - Examples
- Deciding to commit to team decisions.

Facilitator Hankins discussed the importance of perspective when working together to reach our goals. He asked:

What are we trying to achieve?
What is governance?
Governance refers to the systems, processes and rules used to direct and control an organization, country, or community. It defines who has power, how decisions are made, who is held accountable, and how stakeholders can make their voices heard.

Workshop Goals were listed by Facilitator Hankins including:
Key Goal: Strive for Council excellence in governance. Be the best governing body we can be.

- Explore our model of governance and the working relationships between Town Staff/Appointed Boards and the Town's elected officials.
- Governing as a unit
- Council-Manager form is new to Woodfin—we can provide an Excellence in Governance Road Map for future Town of Woodfin teams.
- Making this a priority will accelerate our improvement.

Roles of Council and Mayor were clarified by Facilitator Hankins:

- Statutory distinctions/legal framework was reviewed:
  - NC Constitution: Article VII, Section 1
  - Town Charter enacted by the General Assembly (as amended to move to Council-Manager form of government, 2022)
  - NC General Statutes
  - Town of Woodfin ordinances adopted by Town Council
  - Code of Conduct & Ethics, adopted by Town Council as required by statute (Jan. 2024)
  - Rules of Procedure adopted by Town Council as authorized by statute. Facilitator Hankins reviewed this document with council.
- The governing unit and collective decision-making. Council members stated that they will strive to make decisions and give directions to the Town Manager that had been agreed upon by the entire Town Council.
- Policy and priorities vs administration and execution

Boundaries were defined by Facilitator Hankins regarding:

- Council/Mayor interactions with Staff/Boards: incidents or concerns should be taken to the town manager directly.
- Communications: Town Manager as funnel and filter vs. more open style
- Collective Decision-making by the governing unit

Facilitator Hankins introduced Best Practices Document borrowed from another local municipality. It included guidelines for high quality governance.

Prioritization: Manager Tuch asked council to consider that the following should be best practice.

- Focus on priorities chosen
- Flexibility towards new opportunities and challenges
- Stay focused on identified priorities, before jumping to new priorities.

Facilitator Hankins lead a discussion on Mayoral Leadership in NC Council-Manager Municipalities:

- The mayor presides over council meetings.
- The mayor ideally is the person the community looks to, to preside over formal occasions.

Council Member Ervin asked council if they would like to adopt a document similar to the Operating Guidelines for High Quality Governance that was reviewed. Council decided to work collectively to revise and adapt their own version of the document.

Facilitator Hankins asked council to look at several scenarios and discuss how they would approach them.

Next Steps were outlined by Facilitator Hankins:

- Discussing and building consensus around actionable steps to achieve the goals/objectives stated.

C. Adjournment

Vice Mayor Ervin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Kahn seconded the motion, which passed unanimously, 5-0.

Mayor McAllister adjourned the meeting at 5:24 pm.

James C. McAllister/Mayor

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Attest: Gena Powers
Gena Powers/Town Clerk