



Bond Implementation Commission Meeting

Draft Minutes

Wednesday, August 25, 2021, at 5:30 pm

Market on Main

332 First Ave SW

Hickory, NC 28601

I. **Welcome & Call to Order**

Chair Burk Wyatt called the meeting to order at 5:57 PM.

Chair Wyatt thanked the Bond Commission Members for attending. Chair Wyatt shared that according to the most recent 2020 census, Hickory's population was above the national average and the housing numbers had gone up exponentially as well. He added that he felt that these numbers were primarily thanks to the bond commission and the projects. Mayor Hank Guess thanked the Bond Commission for being there. He commended their passion for their community and added that everywhere he goes, he hears great things about all great new additions to the community and the growth seen all over Hickory thanks to the Bond Projects. They are indebted to them for the time and effort they have put into the project. Mayor Guess also expressed his gratitude to City Staff and thanked them for all their work.

II. **Approval of the Minutes**

Chair Burk Wyatt moved, seconded by Dan Shabeldeen approval of the Minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

III. **Brief History**

Freese and Nichols Consultant, Morgan McIlwain thanked everyone for being there. She wanted to go back and discuss their progress to date. Second to the Silicon Valley, Hickory was hit the hardest during the 2008 recession due to the

decline in the furniture industry. Ms. McIlwain shared a timeline of the conception of the bonds and the creation of the Bond Commission.

IV. Hickory Trails Overview

Executive Assistant Manager, Yaidee Fox shared a new map of the entire Hickory trail. It was originally 5 miles and now they have 10. She pointed out where it started and connected to the OLLE art walk, Historic Ridgeview Walk, and the Aviation Walk, which were added after the start of the projects. The Aviation Walk will help them extend into two counties

V. City Walk

Public Works Director Steve Miller shared that they were currently working on the part that connects to Lenoir-Rhyne University. They are working toward getting through the railroad.. The part from the bridge to the roundabout is the only thing they need done. They are shooting for Mid-October for the completion date. They have a lot of change coming in the next few days. The 3rd street bridge and the railroad underneath it were built in 1909 so they have worked with the railroad to make sure everything goes well. There were metal panels underneath and they have repaired it and are working on painting it grey. The pedestrian bridge over HWY127 will be pressure washed and painted. They will shut it down in a few works to get that done.

Mr. Steve Miller shared that he grew up in Hickory and has never seen downtown look so crowded every single night. He loves seeing it full of people every weekend. He doesn't think that this would have happened without the help of the Bond Projects.

Steve shared that they recently added Wi-Fi to Union Square thanks to CommScope. They have also added speakers which they can use to play music downtown. They will be able to make announcements and change the music to match different themes. This would not be able to be done without the Wi-Fi.

VI. Riverwalk

Public utilities Manager Shawn Pennell shared that the Riverwalk project had been broken up into two portions. The on land and over water portion. They have the permatrack installed up to the greenway. The handrail has been the biggest

holdup recently. They are anticipating getting that part set up as soon as possible. There will be a 10-foot-wide track that will have two bike crossing so they can ride safely. They are anticipating the on-land part up to the water to be completed in the winter of this year.

VII. Aviation Walk

Mr. Steve Miller shared that the Aviation walk was underway. The layout behind raceway had been set up. The bridge will go across HWY 321. It will not be as complicated as the arches, but it will go across 6 lanes. It is going to be amazing to see the area transformed. The ARC (Appalachian Regional Commission) grant will be a great addition as well.

Mr. Rob Dickerson asked who gets to design the bridge. Mr. Miller replied that it is already designed and looks like the one on HWY 40 going toward Winston-Salem. It will be built offsite, and they will put it together on site. It is going to be a single part and will be put together quickly.

VIII. Historic Ridgeview Walk

Transportation Manager, John Marshall provided an update on the Historic Ridgeview Walk. The second phase, Bookwalk south, will go toward USHWY 70 and it will help people get to Walmart Grocery and across. The Historic Ridgeview Walk will actually be 3 projects. They are working on gaining right of way access in order to continue but are nearing final design.

IX. OLLE Art Walk

Mr. John Marshall shared an update on the OLLE art walk. It would go from 3rd to Old Lenoir Road and lead to the Riverwalk. The ROW is under way. There will be a pocket park near the Raceway and excellent great pedestrian crossings.

X. LR Blvd Streetscape

Mr. John Marshall shared that the DOT has delayed the project. If you are coming from the mall toward LR Blvd, they will add a clover leaf to try to help the traffic. Once that part of the project is complete, they are open to a gateway in that area.

XI. Trivium Corporate Center

Mr. Shawn Pennell shared that there is a lot going on. He spends 15-20 hours a week on this project alone. Corning is being constructed. Gusmer and Fuji are working hard.

As of now. The rest of the road is under construction. Other than that, all of the roadway improvements are still underway.

Mr. Rodney Miller added that our population numbers had gone up in the last few years. We were not growing at the beginning of the decade. If you are bringing in jobs that people will actually move here for, they will add to our tax base and Jobs, schools, and housing will bring people to the area.

XII. Hickory Trails' Successes

Ms. Yaidee Fox shared that Crafting Hickory Flyer. They had seen \$90 million in projects, 689 new jobs, 409 million private investments and 397 new housing units.

XIII. Wrap-Up & Adjournment

Chair Burk Wyatt asked for a round of applause for Yaidee Fox, Shawn Pennell, Steve Miller, and John Marshall.

Assistant City Manager Rick Beasley said that as soon as the City Walk is done, they will have a ribbon cutting celebration. They had several ribbon cuttings to look forward to and should be proud of the work they had done. He looked forward to getting together and seeing everyone at each of these celebratory events. Mr. Beasley added that he may not have been with them since the beginning, but he is very proud to have been a part of the process.

Chair Wyatt adjourned the meeting at 7:19 pm.