

City of Graham City Council Meeting Minutes January 13, 2026



The City Council of the City of Graham held a regularly scheduled meeting on January 13, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall Municipal Building, 201 South Main Street, Graham, NC.

Council Members Present:

Mayor Chelsea Dickey
Mayor Pro Tem Ricky Hall
Council Member Bobby Chin
Council Member Bonnie Whitaker
Council Member Jim Young

Staff Present:

Megan Garner, City Manager
Aaron Holland, Assistant City Manager
Bob Ward, City Attorney
Bryan Coleman, City Attorney
Renee Ward, City Clerk

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Chelsea Dickey

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Rev. Duane Partin, First United Methodist Church, Graham, gave the invocation, and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

RECOGNITION: Mr. Andrew Heath and Mr. Omar Utley



Fire Chief Tommy Cole presented Mr. Heath and Mr. Utley with a Life Saving Award. Both gentlemen were on their way to work when they noticed a house on fire. They stopped, knocked on the door, and finally woke the homeowner, who was then escorted out of the house. Because of these two men, a life was saved.

PRESENTATION: Mr. Brad Fowler, Alamance County Tax Administrator, presented the process for the upcoming 2027 Property Revaluation

2027 Revaluation Update Introduction

Major items to be discussed

- 1 - Overview
- 2 - Project Dates
- 3 - Exemption Programs



2027 Revaluation - Why

- North Carolina General Statute 105-286 - revaluation at least once every eight years.
 - Last conducted 2023
 - The Alamance County BOC advanced to a 4-year cycle
 - Values/assessments stay closer to current market
 - Public stays more educated on the Revaluation Process
 - Reduces the likelihood of large market increases seen in 8-year cycles

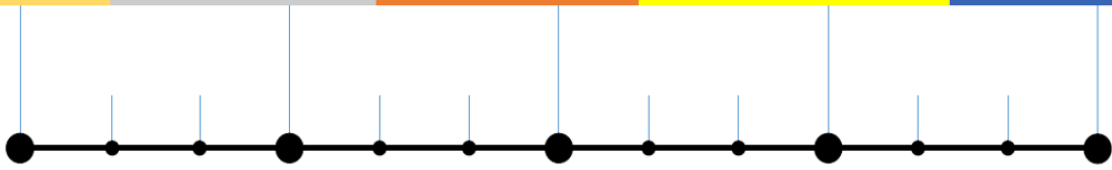
Revaluation Purpose

- **1. Redistribute the property tax base**
 - Fair and equitable assessments
- **2. Valuations/assessments updated to current market levels**
- *** A revaluation is not a means to increase property tax revenue ***

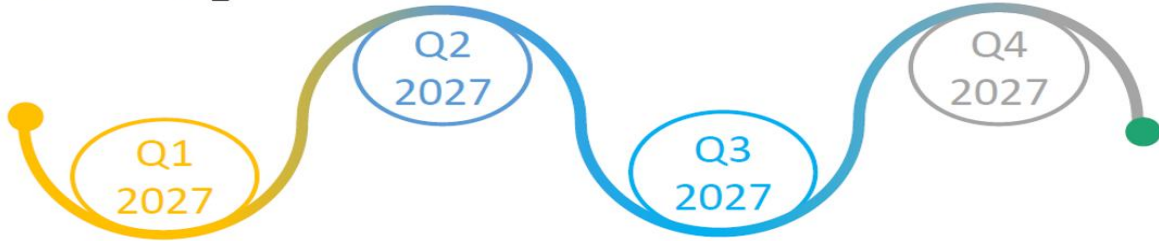
Revaluation Important Dates

Dates Leading up to 2027

Dec 25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement Begins • Continued Review of Data 	Jan 26-March 26: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement • Continue Review of data 	April 26-June 26: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement • Finalize data review and begin revaluation review 	July 26-Sept 26: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement • Final Revaluation Review Underway • Schedule of Values: Presentation, Public Hearings and approval 	Oct 26-Dec 26: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement • Schedule of Values Appeal period begins and ends • Final Valuation Review
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Roadmap for 2027



Final Valuations

- Final Values rendered and notices are mailed.
- Informal appeal period begins
- Community engagement

Appeal Period

- Informal appeals wrap up
- BER convenes
- Last day to file a formal appeal May 2027

Property Tax Bills

- Property tax bills will be mailed July 2027

PTC Appeals

- Appeals will be worked throughout the year and filings to the Property Tax Commission will begin



Alamance County Property Tax Relief
Overview and Discussion

HOMESTEAD REQUIREMENTS OVERVIEW

APPLICATION

An application is due between January 1 and July 1 of the year in which you are applying for relief

DEEDED OWNER

You must own the property as of January 1 of the year in which you are applying

AGE/DISABILITY

At least 65 years of age or totally and permanently disabled

INCOME

2025 Income cannot exceed \$38,800 for the 2026 application period

Exclusion \$25,000 or 50% of the taxable value of house and 1 acre

Tax Exemptions and Exclusions

Disabled Veterans Exclusion

(first \$45,000 of assessed value)



- Deed in applicant's name or title to residence as of January 1st
- Must be N.C. resident
- Honorably discharged veteran – 100% disabled (service related) or receive benefits for specially adapted housing under 38 U.S.C. 2101
- There is no age or income requirement

Applications available online or call (336)228-1312

Mr. Fowler stated the North Carolina General Statutes require each County to conduct at least one revaluation every eight years. He shared that Alamance County had elected to conduct a revaluation every four years. He stated that a revaluation was not a means to increase property tax revenue; it was simply to re-evaluate and re-assess properties.

Mr. Fowler stated that Vincent Valuations had been taken on by the County to conduct the 2027 revaluation. He stated they were currently re-listing and re-measuring every homeowner's property and every commercial property in Alamance County. They have been doing this for over a year.

Mr. Fowler shared that, in September, the County Commissioners would begin determining the schedule of values for Alamance County. He stated that each County was required to adopt a schedule of values related to its revaluations. By the end of the year, most values will be set. He noted that during this time, there would be numerous community engagements.

He stated that by February 1, 2027, all values will be finalized, and valuation notices will be sent out to everyone who owns property in Alamance County. Once notices are received, the appeals process can begin. The appeals process will begin informally, and if no resolution is met, then it will go before the formal process, the Board of Equalization and Review, beginning in April and concluding in May. July 2027 would be the first time the tax bill would reflect the new valuations.

Mr. Fowler shared the Homestead Exemption qualifications. To qualify, applicants must be 65 years of age or older, own the property, have a maximum salary of \$38,800 (single or married), or be totally or permanently disabled. He stated that if anyone qualified for this exemption, then the County would exclude 50% of the tax bill.

With the Disabled Veterans Exclusion, one would receive the first \$45,000 of the assessed value. You must own the property, be an NC resident, and be honorably discharged with 100% service-related disability. There is no age or income requirement.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A.** To approve the December 9, 2025, City Council minutes, December 15, 2025, Special meeting minutes, and the December 22, 2025, Special Closed Session meeting minutes.
- B.** To approve a budget amendment for \$1,500 for the purchase of a memorial bench to be placed at the Graham Regional Park.
- C.** To approve a contract extension for \$7,771,440 for the water replacement project, Phase I, and to include a portion of Phase II to maximize cost savings while contractors are mobilized. (The funding for this project has already been received.)
- D.** To approve an amendment to the audit contract with Stout, Stuart, McGowen & King to allow for a time extension to February 28, 2026.
- E.** To approve tax refunds in the amount of \$278.92 and tax releases in the amount of \$370.19.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Council Member Whitaker. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

ITEM 1: OPERATING HOURS – GRAHAM REGIONAL PARK – BILL COOKE PARK – SOUTH GRAHAM PARK

City Council considered setting the following operating hours for Graham Regional Park, Bill Cooke Park, and South Graham Park to allow for early morning/late evening walking and summer tennis/pickleball and basketball using the lighted courts.

6:00 am – 9:00 pm – March – October
6:00 am – 7:00 pm – November – February

Director of Parks and Recreation Brian Faucette requested that the park hours be changed from sunrise to sunset to 6 am to 9 pm, March through October, and 6 am to 7 pm, November through February. Signage would be replaced at minimal cost, and lighting for the tennis and basketball courts would be required to enable use of those facilities. He shared that walking trails would not be lit.

Mayor Dickey asked about expanding the closing time by an hour.

Mr. Faucette stated he was open to expanding the hours, but would not go much later than 10:00 pm.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall shared that some neighbors may be calling in who live near South Graham Park.

Mayor Dickey asked whether the City had experienced this before.

Mr. Faucette stated there were issues with the tennis court lights: the timer was outdated and was turning on and off, and he had recently received an email indicating the lights stayed on all weekend.

Council Member Chin shared we needed to be respectful of neighbors around the park and thought 10:00 pm was too late.

Council Member Young stated he had no issue with expanding the hours to 8:00 pm and 10:00 pm.

Council Member Whitaker stated if complaints started coming in, Council could re-address it later.

Council Member Young asked Captain Flood what he thought about the park staying open to 10:00 pm.

Captain Flood shared he did not see an issue with being open until 10:00 pm.

Motion by Whitaker to approve the park hours 6:00 am – 10:00 pm – March through October and 6:00 am – 8:00 pm – November through February, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed 3-2; Council Member Chin and Mayor Pro Tem Hall voted no.

ITEM 2: SESQUICENTENNIAL PARK DISCUSSION

City Council discussed options for the Sesquicentennial Park Project.

Mayor Dickey stated that this item is back on the agenda because the Council needed to provide City

Staff with clear direction. She stated that we currently have a project in which a park is closed and fenced, right in the middle of our downtown. She noted the need to set a path for the community and staff. She stated that we need pedestrian safety downtown, a vibrant and welcoming downtown, and that we want to be responsible and respectful stewards of City funds.

Mayor Dickey noted the City of Graham received \$600,000 from the State designated for downtown improvements. She shared that these funds had been allocated for stamping concrete crosswalks. She stated that, in her understanding, Mayor Talley had noted that these textured surfaces would serve as traffic-calming measures and enhance safety. She shared that she had researched and asked staff to research, and could not find where those safety measures were impacted by stamped concrete. She said that our Public Works Director, Burke Robertson, had received quotes for Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons, which have significantly increased pedestrian safety. She continued that Mr. Robertson had a quote of approximately \$100,000 to construct all the crosswalks in the downtown circle. She stated the quote was between \$4,500 and \$20,000 per crosswalk. She added that if the goal was safety, and it should be, she would consider moving towards these Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons. She added that this would significantly reduce the cost of funds from our downtown grant. She stated that \$500,000 was earmarked for pedestrian crosswalk improvements and that, if the cost could be reduced to \$100,000, \$400,000 would remain from the grant to fund foundation shoring and proceed with opening Sesquicentennial Park. She stated that the stamped crosswalks were an aesthetic addition to downtown, but removing the closed park fences would also be an aesthetic addition to downtown.

Mayor Dickey asked for Council comment.

Council Member Young asked about the cost of installing the beacon lights and their power source.

Public Works Director Robertson stated that it could be either electric or solar-powered. He stated that you had several options for automatically detecting pedestrians, and that the cost would depend on the option selected.

Council Member Young asked about the life span of the lights.

Mr. Robertson stated that most of the solar equipment he has researched indicates that batteries are 8 to 10 years, solar panels are 20 years, and everything else is standard electronics.

Council Member Whitaker asked where the lights would be positioned.

Mr. Robertson stated that you would buy a sign with a beacon light and locate it where the motorist could see it before they reach the crosswalk.

Council Member Young asked whether the \$100,000 was just for the lights or for installation.

Mr. Robertson stated it was for cost and installation.

Council Member Whitaker asked how much of the funds had been spent, including engineering work for the park that had been approved.

Assistant City Manager Holland stated funds were used for engineering work, as well as for upgrades to the lights around downtown.

City Manager Garner stated that the amount spent on pedestrian crosswalks was \$13,105, but may not include the December invoice for engineering services.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall stated he would like to select a different location for the park and had prepared a presentation and plans for a new site.

Sesquicentennial Park New Park Location Proposal



History and Uses of the Park

The park has historically served as a venue for weddings, photo ops, social gatherings, and local engagements.

Sesquicentennial Park

- ❖ Sesquicentennial Park is a small pop-up and gazebo style park, located in downtown Graham on the traffic circle. (Per City of Graham and definition)
- ❖ The current park configuration measures approximately 2,700 square feet, with only 1,132.56 square feet of useable space.
- ❖ There is a considerable amount of city and traffic noise, around the park which is overwhelming to some residents and guest with special needs. (Community resident complaints)
- ❖ The current brick floor, is continually shifting, along with sinking bricks, which is causing a tripping hazard. (Community resident complaints) .
- ❖ The Park has no grass or open space and minimal seating.

A pop-up park is defined as a temporary, flexible public space created by transforming underutilized urban areas, like parking spots or vacant lots, into community gathering spots with seating, plants, and art, to encourage social interaction, or vibrant focal points for events and local commerce.

As by define Google, Bing, Copilot, Gemini and Wikipedia web sites

The property deed for the Sesquicentennial Park (Deed 1218 Page 689) calls for a total of 3110.0 sq ft including the alleyway.

The current park covers approximately 2,700.72 sq. ft. (0.062 ac.)

With approximately 1,132.56 sq. ft. (0.026 ac.) of useable space

The alleyway is approximately 409.28 sq ft. (0.0939 ac)



To repair the park in the current condition, it will require a total demolition. Then excavation down to a depth of approximately 9 to 15 feet to reach solid ground. This calculates to removing 40,000 to 55,000 cubic feet of dirt, debris and in-fill. Then transporting the material to a certified landfill location.(approximately 2,500 ton)



I'm proposing moving the Sesquicentennial Park to the City owned parking (shown here) lot behind Roasted Coffee, Graham Museum and Maple Street Travan



The new park will encompass the entire parking lot, plus the courtyard area behind the Graham Museum and two additional spaces from the city parking lot to the right. The new location would only need minor grading to remove the asphalt, grading for site drainage, drainage around the Museum and a retaining wall construction.

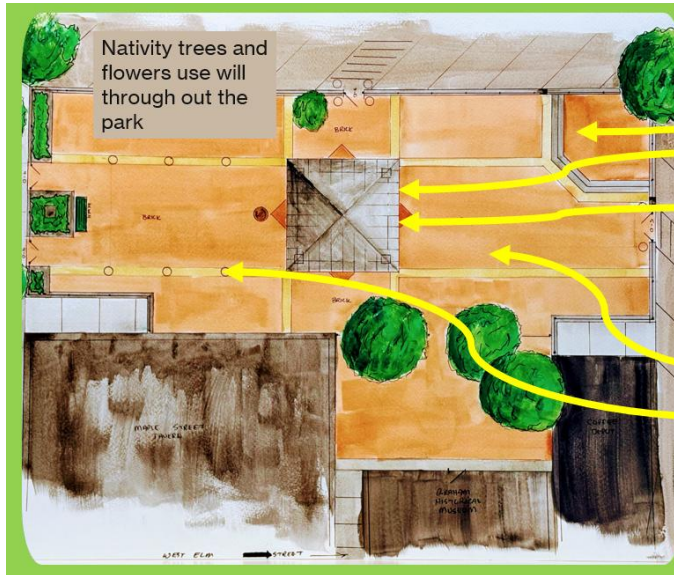


The new park will be approximately 7,710 sq ft of useable space. This doubles the square footage compared to the current park square footage.





- ❖ The new location plans focus on increasing park size and areas to provide more room for outdoor activities, community and multi-use events.
- ❖ The new location will provide easier access for people with varying mobility accessibility.
- ❖ The new park location aims for a sustainable, inclusive, and vibrant future for all visitors.



Some of the Park's features.

- ❖ Stage for performances.
- ❖ Original arbor will be moved to this location.
- ❖ Original memorial bricks, benches and metal medallions will be moved to the new park.
- ❖ The memorial bricks will be placed in a diamond pattern under the arbor.
- ❖ Concrete or a stamped concrete flooring will be used through out the park.
- ❖ Moveable flower plots.
- ❖ The Park will be located away from City and traffic noise.
- ❖ New flagpole installed for the American Flag..



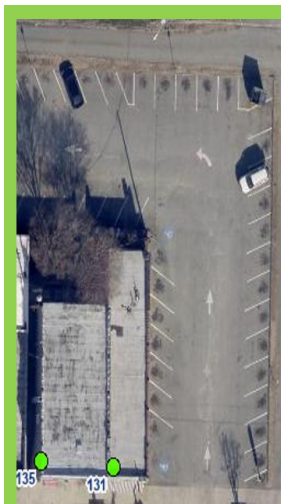
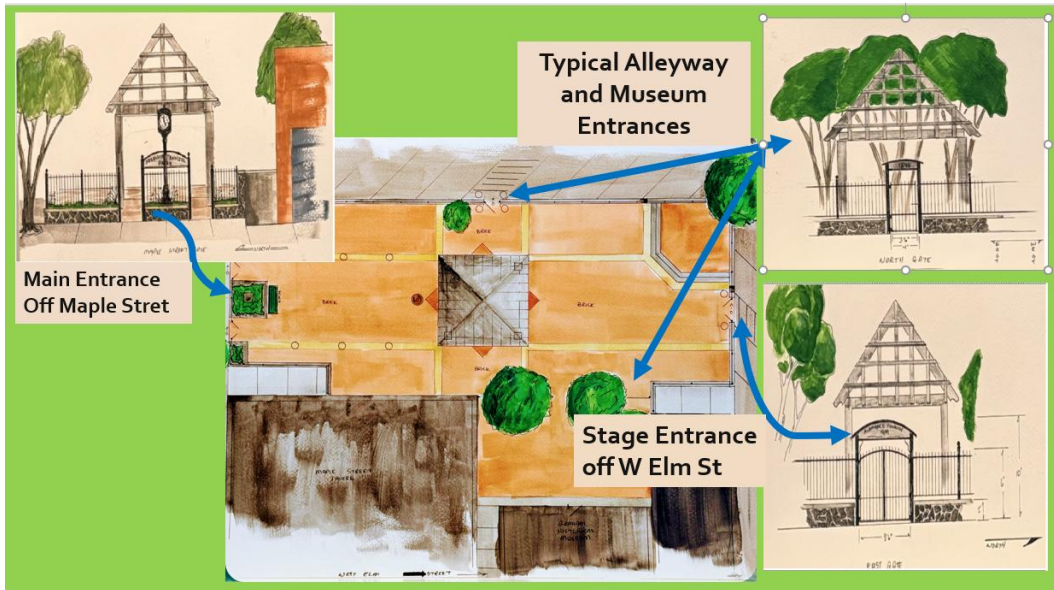
Additional Park features

- ❖ The new park location will be a big economic draw for our city, by hosting large events.
- ❖ The new location should help cut down on road closures along W Elm Street on the weekends.
- ❖ This new location can host twenty to thirty vendor tents.
- ❖ Large pots with planted trees that can be reconfigured as needed.
- ❖ 30, 50 and 110 Amp electrical services for food trucks at various locations along the outside edges of the park.
- ❖ A water connection, will be include in the design.



Park Security

- ❖ The park will have gates installed at the two main and two side entrances.
- ❖ A 3'- 4' foot high retaining wall topped with wrought iron fencing will be installed around the entire perimeter of the park.
- ❖ Gates will be closed and locked nightly after closing hours.
- ❖ There will be security cameras installed throughout the park.



Phase Two Expansion of the new park:

Would use the entire City parking lot beside the Roasted Coffee Shop as a floating parking lot, Monday through Friday. If an event requires its use, the lot would be closed to parking during events. Proper notice will be given to the surrounding businesses in advance of any event. Closed signs will be posted, and traffic prevention devices will be moved into place.



Council Member Whitaker inquired about renting the park and asked whether pricing for relocation costs had been set.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall stated it could be leased for a day or a weekend. He stated they had spoken with the Public Works Director and determined that relocating the park would cost between \$600,00 and \$800,000 and could be completed in six months. He noted that the portion of the proposed park behind the museum would be encompassed in the new park, and the drainage issues would be addressed.

Council Member Young stated he liked the idea, that it would be an opportunity to bring the community together, and having electrical connections for food trucks would be beneficial.

Council Member Whitaker stated it was a good presentation and liked that there would be more use of the space; where it is right now, you would not get much use, even when it was open. A new park would generate revenue for the City by renting out spaces. She liked the security aspect but had concerns when digging began in the existing park, and she preferred to let someone else worry about it.

Council Member Chin stated that the current park was contaminated, that he liked the incorporation of a stage, and that he liked the controlled access via the gates. He stated it was large enough to accommodate celebrations, birthdays, and weddings, and to host up to 30 vendor spots for farmers' markets and other events.

Mayor Pro Hall stated it would be a great place for a Christmas village.

Mayor Dickey stated that it was a great plan and that the drawings were excellent. She noted her only hesitation was the recent public hearing, and only one person came forward in favor of moving the park. She said everyone else who spoke asked that it remain in its current location. She stated that Council was up here for the good of the community, and while this was an awesome concept, she had some comments on the details, but could not, in good conscience, move forward with this because the community had not come forward and told us they wanted to move it but have told us they wanted to keep it on the corner.

Council Member Whitaker stated that only 8 people showed up to speak.

Council Member Chin stated that since the public hearing and the election, he had spoken to people who had no objections to moving it. He stated the original suggestion to move it was when Mr. Compton restricted it to the area immediately behind the museum, which would occupy the same square footage. He stated that at the time, they were not discussing a real park versus a small pocket park. He noted they were asked to be good stewards of City funds for the renovation of the current location, and the cost would be about half a million dollars. He shared that when the quote came in, no soil testing had been done, but he has since learned that the area that comprised the old basement at the corner was contaminated with heavy metals.

Mayor Dickey asked Mr. Robertson whether, during their conversation, it was stated that we could mitigate the sinking foundation at the current location for \$400,000.

Mr. Robertson stated the price was based on the assumption that nothing further would be found beyond what we had discovered in the limited testing. He stated that if you start finding asbestos or an oil tank, that price would be insignificant. Based on the date, the Council was looking at approximately \$400,000. He stated he had also priced the grout injection and that, to raise the area alone, it would cost \$200,000. He said we still did not know how much more void there was.

Mayor Dickey stated they were there tonight to provide clarity for staff and a path forward for our community. She asked about the next steps. She stated that she strongly believes they should do what the community wants: keep the park in its current location. She told Council Member Young that, in his surveys, he indicated he wanted to keep the park.

Council Member Whitaker reiterated that only 8 people spoke and that they were keeping the park, just relocating and improving it. She stated it was a great way to serve the City.

Council Member Young stated this was the first time he had seen the plan and that it was a compelling argument for relocating the park. He stated this would benefit the community, that everything at the current Sesquicentennial Park would be moved to the new location, and it would be much safer than it is now. He stated the current location could be auctioned off to someone, and they would deal with the headache, so the City would not have to. He stated he knows what his answers were to the surveys in the Alamance News, but that was well before this proposal, and that he would be a fool not to have an open mind to change. He stated that this was a good idea and well thought out.

Council Member Whitaker stated that we needed to give City staff a path forward and do so now. She stated the Council had been hashing this out for two years, and the yellow police tape looked bad.

Council Member Chin noted the park's disturbance was raised in 2016 and had been an issue for 10 years, and that the Council had been kicking it down the road. He stated the Council needed to stop kicking the can. He shared it was a great opportunity for the community. He also noted the park was built in recognition of the 150th Anniversary of Alamance County and is now a City of Graham Park, which incorporates memorial bricks. He noted if others wanted to buy bricks, they could.

Mayor Dickey asked whether Council would be comfortable holding one additional public hearing to allow the community to come forward. She stated she did not feel comfortable moving it without being told by the people that they wanted it moved. She stated that if people wanted it moved, she would jump on board, but she understood they did not.

Council Member Chin stated that they have held public hearings and forums where people could speak on this, but ultimately kicked the can down the road. He stated this plan was for the betterment of the community.

Motion by Council Member Chin to move the Sesquicentennial Park from its current location and relocate it behind the Graham Historical Museum, as proposed in Mayor Pro Tem Hall's presentation.

Council Member Young asked Mr. Robertson how long it would take to restore the park to a safe condition at its current location.

Mr. Robertson stated that it would have to be done by a contractor and rebid because all prior bids were no longer valid. It would also depend on the contractor's schedule and could take 45-60 days for work to begin. He stated this work was more specialized.

Mayor Dickey stated that she and Mr. Robertson had discussed it being under a year, more like six to eight months.

Mr. Robertson stated that it was correct.

Mayor Dickey noted that \$400,000 is available to repair the park in its current location. She stated they did not have the funds to relocate it for \$600,000 to \$800,000, which exceeds the grant amount, and funds would need to be pulled from another source.

Council Member Whitaker stated the funds were for a different purpose.

Mayor Dickey stated they could reallocate it, but it would not cover \$600,000 to \$800,000, and securing funding within the six-month timeframe would take longer.

Council Member Whitaker stated that the City would generate revenue from renting it out as a venue to offset the shortfall.

Mayor Dickey asked if Recreation would handle the rentals.

Council Member Chin stated no.

Council Member Whitaker stated the City would, and that could be determined later.

Mayor Dickey stated there were many details to iron out before we move forward with this plan. She stated she would like one more public hearing before we consider a big move.

Council Member Whitaker stated they were not locking in every detail, but rather that it be moved to another location.

Council Member Chin stated this would allow City staff to begin the process of moving it.

Mayor Dickey stated that moving it without a funding apparatus would be difficult.

Council Member Chin stated that, until we receive bids for relocating the park, we can allocate funds for the relocation.

Mayor Dickey stated if Council wanted a park in six months, they needed to know where the funding would come from.

Council Member Chin stated it could be worked out once the price is known.

Council Member Chin restated his motion.

Motion by Council Member Chin that Sesquicentennial Park be relocated and re-established in the parking area behind the Graham Historical Museum, and City staff be directed to begin seeking proposals for the work necessary for construction, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed 4-1. Mayor Dickey voted no.

Mayor Dickey stated that as of now, we have \$500,000 allocated to stamping the crosswalks, and if we want that to continue, no need for a motion, but if the Council wanted any of that funding to go towards the flashers or to the Sesquicentennial Park in any capacity, we needed to amend the vote.

City Manager Garner said the project was proceeding because it had been approved by the City Council, and that any amendments would require a majority vote of the City Council to amend the project ordinance.

Council Member Chin asked what needed to be amended.

City Manager Garner stated that when the City Council adopted the Project Ordinance, there was a contingency/unencumbered amount of \$84,000 approved by the City Council in the project ordinance that is not allocated to any of the three projects that were approved. As a recap, the three projects were streetlight improvements, pedestrian crosswalk improvements, and tree replacement, all downtown. The unencumbered amount was \$84,044. She stated that the amount had not been allocated to any specific project for consideration by the City Council.

Motion by Council Member Young to amend the project ordinance by \$84,044 to go toward downtown improvements to allocate the \$84,044 for Rapid Flashing Beacons at the four crosswalks identified downtown around the square, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hall. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Dickey asked whether Council wanted to keep the crosswalk stamping as is or reallocate that money to Sesquicentennial Park.

Council Member Chin stated the stamping was being replaced by flashing lights.

Mayor Dickey stated that was not the motion; the motion was use the contingency money towards the flashing lights. \$500,000 was allocated for Crosswalks, and only \$13,000 had been spent on design and engineering.

City Manager Garner stated that the December billing had not been accounted for.

Motion by Council Member Young to take the money originally intended for the stamped crosswalks to go towards the moving of the park, seconded by Council Member Whitaker. The motion passed 4-1. Mayor Dickey voted no.

City Manager Garner asked that, depending on the bids, we may need to come back to City Council to amend the project ordinance again. She stated that, as of now, the balance was \$486,895, less December, to be reallocated to the proposal tonight, with the understanding that additional funds may be required.

Council Member Chin clarified that the remaining \$500,000, originally intended for the crosswalks, would now be reallocated to the park.

City Manager Garner stated it is correct, and the engineers would be directed to cease work on the stamped crosswalk project and to relay this to DOT because it was their street. The rapid-flashing beacons would also require DOT approval before we can proceed with that process.

For clarification, the motion by Council Member Young to reallocate and amend the project ordinance for the stamped crosswalks to the new location of the Sesquicentennial Park, seconded by Council Member Whitaker. The motion passed 3-2. Mayor Dickey and Mayor Pro Tem Hall voted no.

ITEM 3: BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS APPOINTMENTS

City Council will consider making appointments to the Planning Board/Board of Adjustment and Historic Resources Commission.

Applicants for Planning/Board of Adjustment – One Vacancy

Daniel Alvis

Corbin Craig (1st choice)

Ricky Hurtado (1st choice)

Elizabeth Kirkpatrick

Jenson Roll

Richard Shevlin

Council Member Whitaker nominated Elizabeth Kirkpatrick, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hall. The motion passed unanimously.

Applicants for Historic Resources Commission – Two Vacancies

Emma Stapleton

Corbin Craig (2nd choice)

Ricky Hurtado (2nd choice)

Richard Shevlin

Council Member Young stated the City Clerk had several people who wanted to apply but missed the deadline, and that he also knew of people who wanted to apply. He asked that this appointment be tabled for a month and re-advertised.

Mayor Dickey stated she would like to proceed with replacing these two seats, given the many more opportunities for people to join this spring.

Motion by Council Member Young to table reappointments to the Historic Resources Commission and readvertise on social media for more applicants, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hall. The motion passed 4-1. Mayor Dickey voted no.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mr. Keith Westbrooks, 6-4 Trockwilder Ct, Graham, expressed displeasure about a developer burning construction materials on Elm Street.

Mr. Todd Mundy, 1624 Granda Lane, Graham, spoke in reference to building an 800 square foot cottage on his property, but per the ordinance, an additional dwelling was not allowed.

Mr. Griffin McClure, 622 Johnson Ave, spoke in opposition to moving the park and expressed displeasure with the Council.

Mr. Daniel Alvis asked to speak, but had not signed up before the public comment period began.

Motion by Council Member Young to allow Mr. Daniel Alvis to speak, seconded by Mayor Dickey. The motion failed, 3-2. Mayor Dickey and Council Member Young voted yes, Council Member Whitaker, Council Member Chin, and Mayor Pro Tem Hall voted no.

CITY STAFF COMMENTS

City Manager Garner:

- Requested from Council to appoint a member to serve with her on the ABSS Rezoning Advisory Committee. Mayor Pro Tem Hall volunteered. Motion by Council Member Young to appoint Mayor Pro Tem Hall to serve on the ABSS Rezoning Advisory Board, seconded by Council Member Whitaker. The motion passed unanimously.
- Inquired about the Special meeting scheduled for January 20, 2026, (Budget Planning Session) at 8:00 am and was scheduled to be held at the Alamance County Board of Elections, and asked to confirm where the Council wanted to hold the meeting. Mayor Dickey stated she had spoken with the City Manager about hosting the meeting at City Hall, so it could be live-streamed for the

community to review. Council Member Whitaker shared this would be a working session, and breaking into groups, and the Council Chamber was not set up for that.

Council Member Young stated that he had the equipment and would set it up for live streaming.

The consensus was to record and upload the meeting to the City's YouTube channel.

- Asked Council about holding a Special meeting with financial advisors, Davenport & Associates. She shared after Council set priorities for the upcoming fiscal year, it would then be communicated to the Department Heads, who would draft their budgets in accordance with those priorities. Council Consensus was to hold a Special Meeting on February 9, 2026, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm in the Council Chamber.
- Informed Council of the new branding efforts with the help of our new Public Relations Specialist and a graphic designer. She stated she would like to move forward with the new logo and design.



CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Whitaker asked about discussing R-7 zoning at the next Council meeting. She shared it was too condensed and did not think it needed to be in the ordinance. Consensus was to discuss R-7 zoning at the February meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall stated, for the record, that the Sesquicentennial project he presented tonight was 100% his own, and that no one had seen it until today. He said he worked on it during downtime from foot surgery.

Mayor Dickey:

- 1) Mr. Mundy said an amendment to the development ordinance was needed to allow a second dwelling – consensus was to bring it to the Planning Board and then present it to the Council. The consensus of the Council was to send it to the Planning Board.
- 2) She asked Chief Cole to speak about the burning complaint from Mr. Westbrook. Chief Cole shared that he had been notified and personally visited the site. The construction crew was notified that they were not permitted to burn and that no other debris could be burned.
- 3) Invited those interested to attend the January 20, 2026 planning session at 8:00 am at the Board of Elections.
- 4) Congratulated Detective Diezel for earning the Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate.
- 5) Shared that she had been in conversation with Alamance County Assistant Manager Brian Baker to identify economic development opportunities for underutilized properties or vacant properties.
- 6) Thanked City staff for all they do.

CLOSED SESSION:

City Council considered going into closed session to consult with the attorney in accordance with N.C.G.S. Section 143-318.11(a)(3), City of Mebane versus City of Graham, Case #25CV007126-000.

Motion by Council Member Whitaker to go into closed session, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hall. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to return to open session, seconded by Council Member Chin. The motion passed unanimously.

No action was taken.

ADJOURN

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to adjourn, seconded by Council Member Chin. The motion passed unanimously. (8:07 p.m.)

Renee M. Ward, CMC
City Clerk