

City of Graham

City Council Meeting Minutes

May 12, 2026



The City Council of the City of Graham held a regularly scheduled meeting on May 12, 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

- Invocation by Pastor Matthew Edwards, Community Baptist Church

PROCLAMATION:

- Preservation Alamance – Council proclaimed the Month of May 2026 as Preservation Month in the City of Graham.



PRESENTATION:

Burlington Animal Services Director Jess Arias shared the following presentation highlighting programs, pet intakes, pets saved, and positive outcomes.



BAS Focus Areas

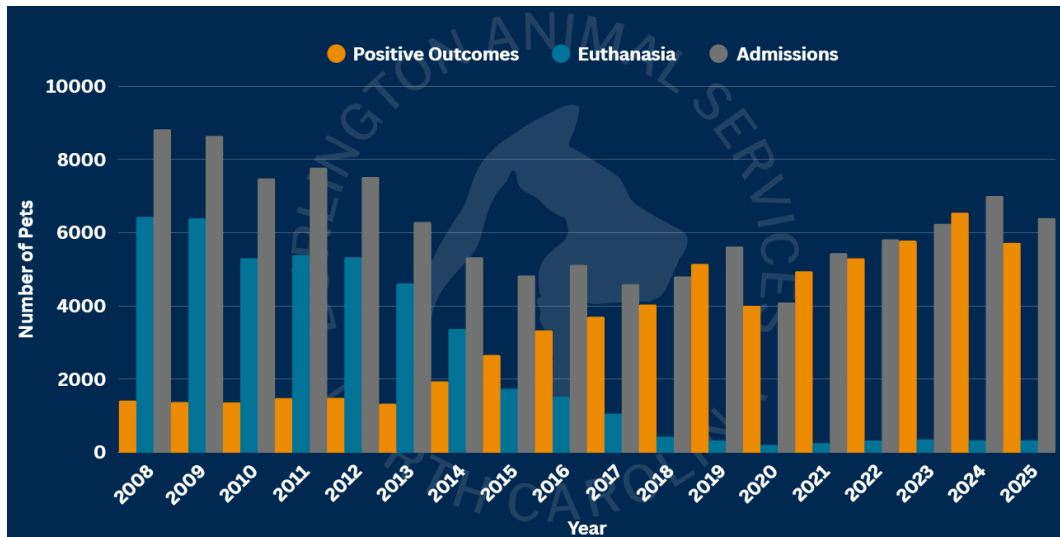
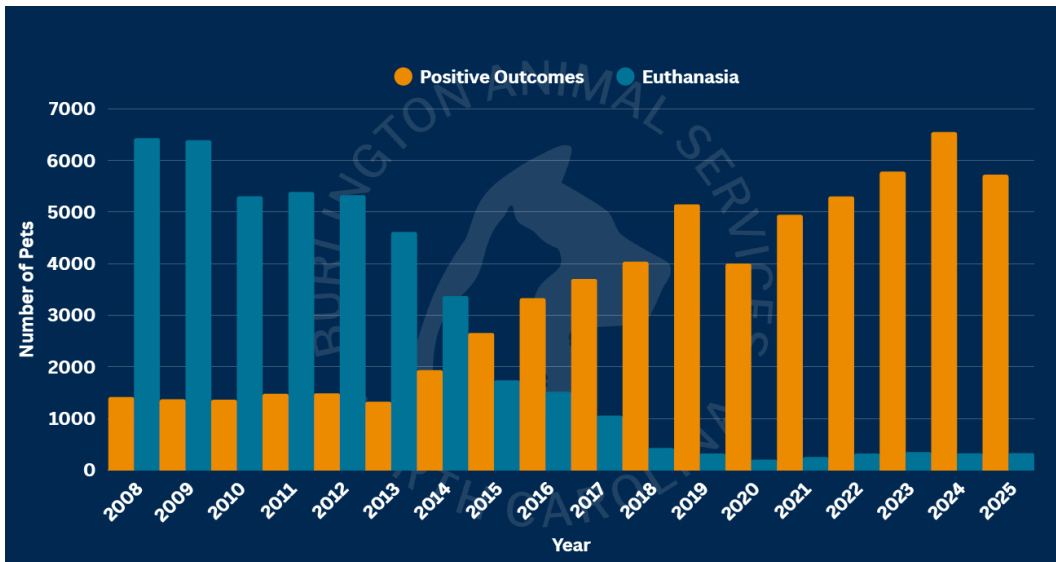
Intake Prevention

- Pet Help Support Programming
- Accessible, Affordable, Sustainable Spay/ Neuter & basic wellness (BAS Clinic)
- Focused outreach, Education & Ordinance Enforcement
- Partnerships & Collaboration
- Regulatory Compliance

Positive Outcomes for Pets, Families & Community

Pet Placement

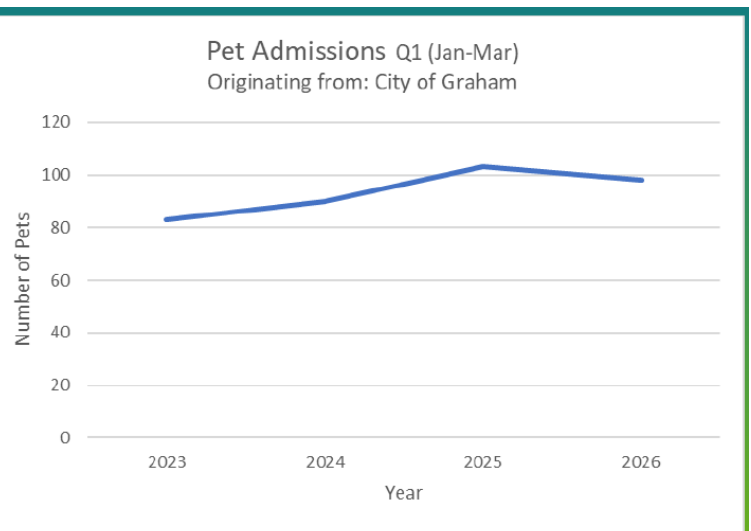
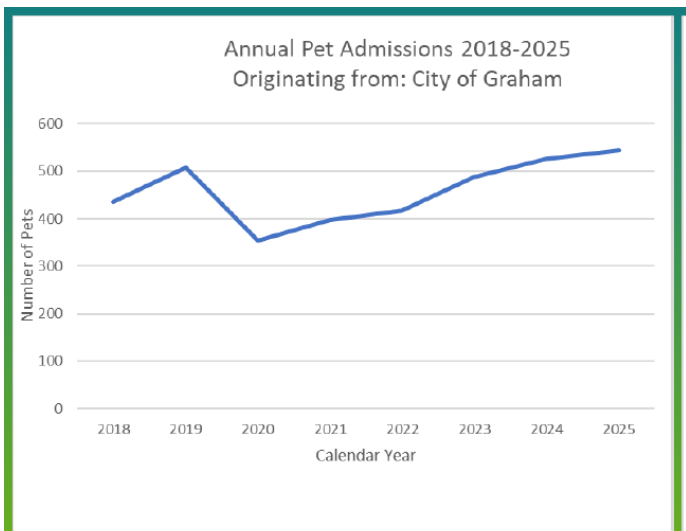
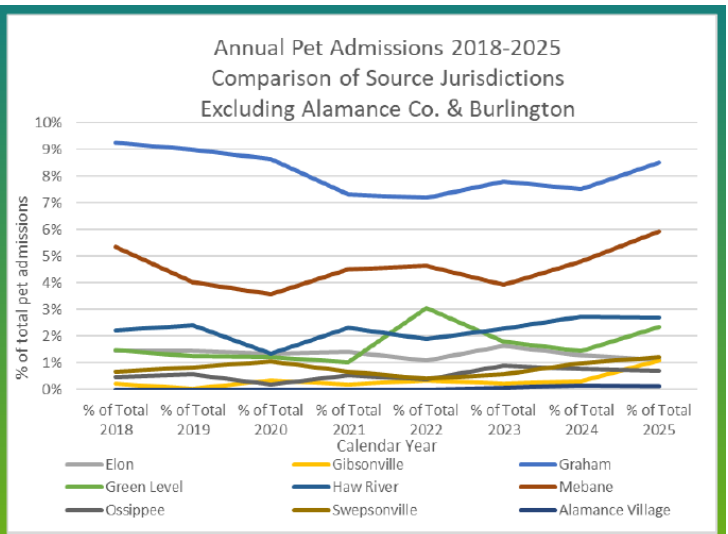
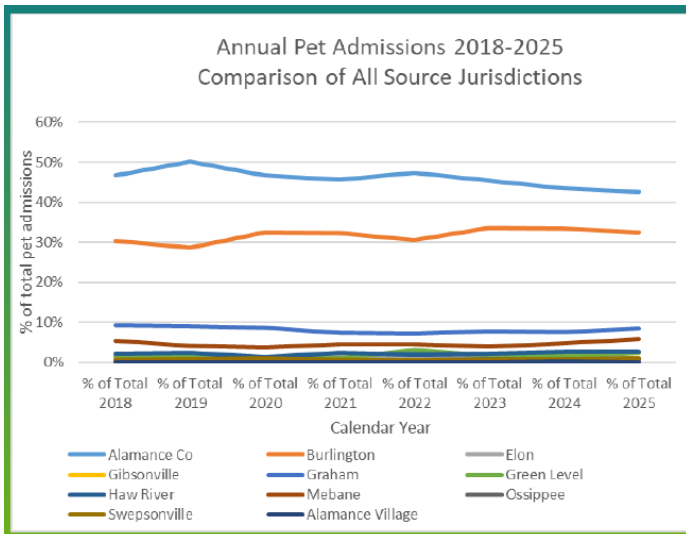
- Adoption, Foster, Return to Home
- Marketing & Advertising
- Veterinary and Behavioral Care of Admitted Pets
- Community Outreach & Engagement
- External Funding Support for Programs



Impact 2025:



Pet Admissions:



Community Programming:

Community Centric Programming

BASFIX
Spay/Neuter Assistance

MIGHTY MOUSER
Community Cat Program

Pet Food

Pet behavior and training resources

Veterinary Care

Volunteer at BAS

BAS CLINIC
AFFORDABLE
HEALTHY PET SERVICES
SPAY/NEUTER VACCINES WELLNESS
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
BY APPOINTMENT

Our community is our most important partner in keeping pets & families united.

Microchip Scan Station
Help lost pets get back home

Lost & Found Pets

DOG ADVENTURES PROGRAM

DOGS

CATS

OTHERS

Meet a Pet to FOSTER

Foster

Low-Cost Spay/Neuter

BURLINGTON ANIMAL SERVICES
PET ADOPTION & RESOURCE CENTER
Admissions & Rehoming

Young or Orphaned Kittens

Pet-Friendly Housing

Donate

COURT ORDERED ADOPTER RECOMMENDED COMMUNITY SERVICE

REGISTER FOR PET YOGA

Fencing

Contact Animal Control in your locality

Local Animal Ordinances

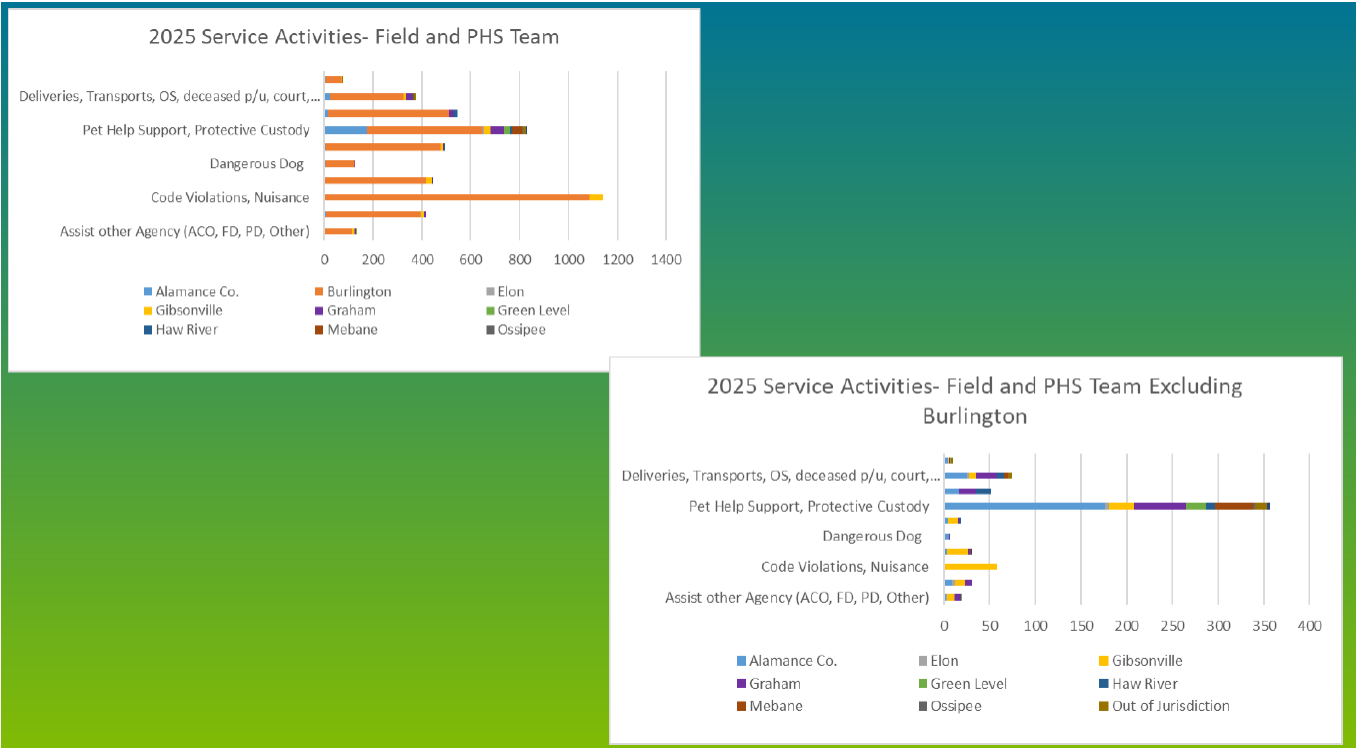
Wildlife Concerns

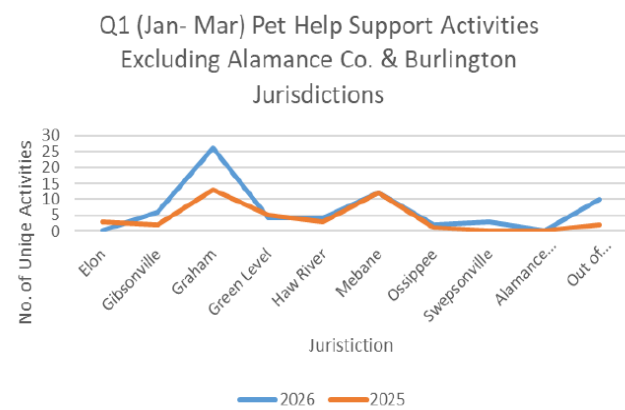
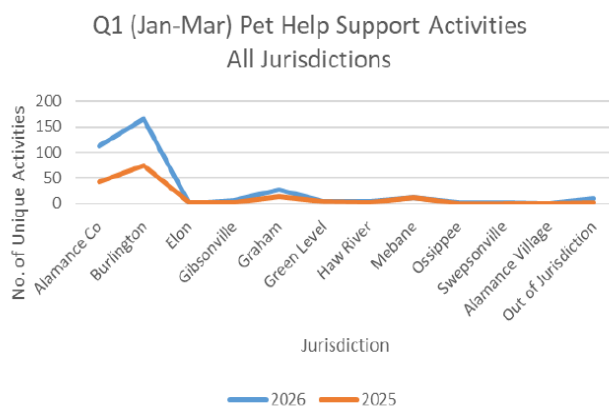
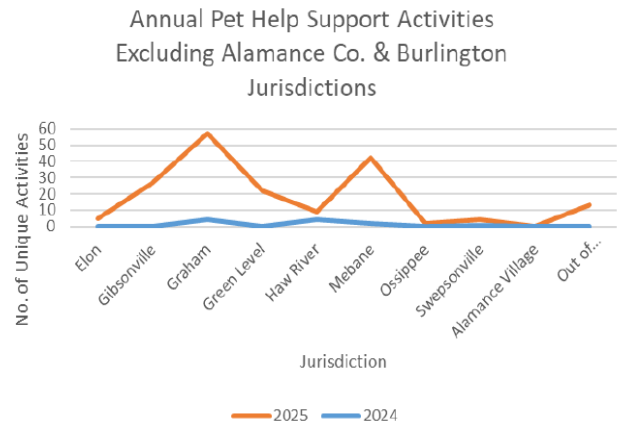
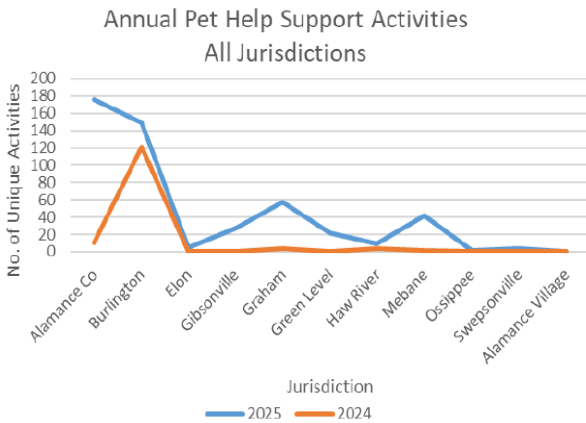
Tethering Restrictions

Rabies

Dangerous Dog Permits (Burlington)

Helpful tips to prevent dog bites





HEALTHY COMMUNITY



1,705

Alamance families assisted with pet food



810

Rabies vaccinations provided at Community Pet Resource Events



228

Pets microchipped at Community Pet Resource Events



339

Core vaccinations provided at Community Pet Resource Events

COLLABORATION

5,722

Pets Fostered

4,121

Outcomes From Foster

4,557

Volunteer Hours

1,118

Adventures Participants



UNIFIED VISION



9M Views/ 28k Followers



1M+ Advertising Impressions



1M Views/ 4.9k Followers



408K Web Page Views



124 K Views



40 K Views/ 106 hours watch time



26K Visits/ 15K visitors



4.5 Stars/ 728 Reviews

ADD-ONS:

- 1) Closed Session - N.C.G.S. Section 143-318.11(a)(3), City of Mebane versus City of Graham, Case #25CV007126-000
- 2) Grant Funds Review

ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to adopt the agenda with the add-ons, seconded by Council Member Chin. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A.** To approve the minutes of the April 14, 2026, City Council meeting and Closed Session minutes and the April 27, 2026, Special Meeting minutes.
- B.** To approve an audit contract for \$33,150, with Stout Stuart McGowen & King, LLP for fiscal year ending June 30, 2026.
- C.** To approve a revision to the previously adopted ARPA-Enabled Project Ordinance to include \$65,000 for a salt shed.

**RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE BUDGET FOR
ARPA ENABLED FUNDS GRANT ORDINANCE**

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into law by the President;

WHEREAS, Section 9901 of ARPA amended Title VI of the Social Security Act (the Act) to add section 602, which establishes the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund, and section 603, which established the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (together, the Fiscal Recovery Funds);

WHEREAS, on June 8, 2021, the City Council of the City of Graham hereby created an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Local Fiscal Recovery Fund.

WHEREAS, the Grant Project Ordinance was amended numerous times to include various projects throughout the City Departments; and

WHEREAS, on April 9, 2024, the City Council of the City of Graham approved to use the revenue replacement option for use of the ARPA funds.

WHEREAS, on May 12, 2026, the City Council of the City of Graham approved a revision to the project ordinance for the inclusion of a salt shed;

WHEREAS, by such action, the previously designated ARPA projects are now considered ARPA enabled projects;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAHAM, NORTH CAROLINA, that pursuant to Section 13.2, Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the following Project Ordinance is hereby revised to include additional projects:

- Section 1. The Project authorizes the use of ARPA Funds to be designed as revenue replacement, which allows funding previously designated for personnel-related expenses to be transitioned to ARPA-enabled projects.
- Section 2. The officials of the City of Graham are hereby directed to proceed with this project within the terms of the project. Staff is authorized to execute change orders within the budget ordinance.
- Section 3. The following revenues are available to the City to complete the project:

ARPA-Enabled Revenue Replacement	<u>\$4,986,340</u>
TOTAL	\$4,986,340

- Section 4. The following amounts are appropriated for this project at this time:

Project	Department	Total
10" Water Line Replacement	Utilities	\$ 3,500,000
SROs & COPS Position Equipment	PD	\$ 62,101
3 Vehicles	PD	\$ 204,033
Fuel Master System Upgrade	IT	\$ 18,000
Civic Center Repairs - Roof & Floor	REC	\$ 66,343
Cameras at Parks - Entrances	IT	\$ 11,128
GM Lake – Ramp Renovation	Lake	\$ 195,000
Albright Ave Water Line Replacement	Utilities	\$ 550,000
Garage Addition	Public Works	\$ 215,000
Fire Department Equipment	FD	\$ 33,016
Employee Dental	All	\$ 54,000
Salt Shed	Public Works	\$ 65,000
Subtotal		\$ 4,973,621
ARPA Funding Allocation		\$ 4,986,340

- Section 5. The Finance Director shall report on the financial status of this project as directed by the City Council and will inform the Council of any unusual occurrences.
- Section 6. Copies of this project ordinance shall be made available to the City Manager and the Finance Director for direction in carrying out this project.
- Section 7. This ordinance shall take effect upon passage.

D. To approve a Project Ordinance in the amount of \$2,200,000 for the Home, Banks, Wards, Holt, and Gilbreath Waterline Replacement Project.

**CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE
HOME, BANKS, WARD, HOLT, AND GILBREATH STREETS
WATERLINE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAHAM, NORTH CAROLINA, that pursuant to Section 13.2, Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the following Capital Project Ordinance is hereby adopted:

Section 1. The Project authorized is the Home, Banks, Ward, Holt, and Gilbreath Street Waterline Replacement Project.

Section 2. The officials of the City of Graham are hereby directed to proceed with this project within the terms of the project. Staff is authorized to execute change orders within the budget ordinance.

Section 3. The following revenues are anticipated to be available to the City to complete the project:

Proceeds from Retained Earnings – Water/Sewer	\$ 2,200,000
TOTAL	<u>\$ 2,200,000</u>

Section 4. The following amounts are appropriated for this project:

Professional & Contracted Services	\$ 2,200,000
TOTAL	<u>\$ 2,200,000</u>

Section 5. The Finance Director shall report on the financial status of this project as directed by the City Council and will inform the Council of any unusual occurrences.

Section 6. Copies of this project ordinance shall be made available to the City Manager and the Finance Director for direction in carrying out this project.

Section 7. This ordinance shall take effect upon passage.

- E.** To authorize Staff to effectuate a contract with Terracon Consultants, Inc., for the Graham-Mebane Lake spillway repair project.
- F.** To approve a five-year contract extension with Motorola Solutions to provide body-worn camera, in-car camera service, and digital video evidence storage. The new contract extends the current service for an additional five years for a total of \$332,011, which will be paid over a five-year period and includes a \$19,179 annual reduction over the previous contract.
- G.** To approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$212,660, due to an anticipated cost increase for goods, nearly doubled in certain cases for the following departments: IT (\$122,660), Fire (\$20,000), and Public Works (\$70,460).

CITY OF GRAHAM					
BUDGET AMENDMENT ORDINANCE					
2025-2026					
BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAHAM THAT					
THE 2025 - 2026 BUDGET ORDINANCE SHALL BE AND IS HEREBY AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:					
Section 1.					
EXPENDITURES					INCREASE
DEPARTMENT/ACCOUNT	APPROVED	AMENDED	INCREASE	(DECREASE)	(DECREASE)
IT - Contracted Services	49,700.00	54,200.00	4,500.00		4,500.00
IT - Small Equipment	79,000.00	119,000.00	40,000.00		40,000.00
IT - Capital Outlay Equipment	79,400.00	157,100.00	77,700.00		77,700.00
Fire - Small Equipment	-	20,000.00	20,000.00		20,000.00
Property Maintenance - Capital Outlay Other Improvem	-	70,460.00	70,460.00		70,460.00
	208,100.00	420,760.00	212,660.00	-	212,660.00
Section 2.					
REVENUES					INCREASE
DEPARTMENT/ACCOUNT	APPROVED	AMENDED	INCREASE	(DECREASE)	(DECREASE)
Refuse Fees	\$950,000.00	\$1,092,200.00	142,200.00		142,200.00
Local Sales Tax	\$6,900,000.00	\$6,970,460.00	70,460.00		70,460.00
	\$7,850,000.00	\$8,062,660.00	212,660.00	-	212,660.00
Adopted this 12th day of May 2026.					

H. To approve a budget amendment recognizing \$7,000 in State Drug Forfeiture revenue.

CITY OF GRAHAM					
BUDGET AMENDMENT ORDINANCE					
2025-2026					
BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAHAM THAT					
THE 2025 - 2026 BUDGET ORDINANCE SHALL BE AND IS HEREBY AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:					
Section 1.					
EXPENDITURES					INCREASE
DEPARTMENT/ACCOUNT	APPROVED	AMENDED	INCREASE	(DECREASE)	(DECREASE)
Police - Small Equipment	3,000.00	10,000.00	7,000.00		7,000.00
	3,000.00	10,000.00	7,000.00	-	7,000.00
Section 2.					
REVENUES					INCREASE
DEPARTMENT/ACCOUNT	APPROVED	AMENDED	INCREASE	(DECREASE)	(DECREASE)
State Drug Monies	\$3,000.00	\$10,000.00	7,000.00		7,000.00
	\$3,000.00	\$10,000.00	7,000.00	-	7,000.00
Adopted this 12th day of May 2026.					

I. To approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$61,976 for contracted audit services with Cobb Ezekiel Loy & Company and Stout Stuart McGowen & King.

CITY OF GRAHAM					
BUDGET AMENDMENT ORDINANCE					
2025-2026					
BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAHAM THAT					
THE 2025 - 2026 BUDGET ORDINANCE SHALL BE AND IS HEREBY AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:					
Section 1.					
EXPENDITURES					INCREASE
DEPARTMENT/ACCOUNT	APPROVED	AMENDED	INCREASE	(DECREASE)	(DECREASE)
Finance - Audit	78,000.00	139,976.00	61,976.00		61,976.00
	78,000.00	139,976.00	61,976.00	-	61,976.00
Section 2.					
REVENUES					INCREASE
DEPARTMENT/ACCOUNT	APPROVED	AMENDED	INCREASE	(DECREASE)	(DECREASE)
Current Year Tax	\$7,707,921.00	\$7,769,897.00	61,976.00		61,976.00
	\$7,707,921.00	\$7,769,897.00	61,976.00	-	61,976.00
Adopted this 12th day of May 2026.					

- J.** To approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$27,860 for NeoGov software maintenance and changes to be allocated across applicable expenditure and revenue accounts.

CITY OF GRAHAM					
BUDGET AMENDMENT ORDINANCE					
2025-2026					
BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAHAM THAT					
THE 2025 - 2026 BUDGET ORDINANCE SHALL BE AND IS HEREBY AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:					
Section 1.					
EXPENDITURES					
DEPARTMENT/ACCOUNT	APPROVED	AMENDED	INCREASE	(DECREASE)	INCREASE (DECREASE)
Administration - Software Maintenance & Changes	-	13,930.00	13,930.00		13,930.00
Admin Water-Sewer Billing - Software Maintenance & CI	20,000.00	33,930.00	13,930.00		13,930.00
	20,000.00	47,860.00	27,860.00	-	27,860.00
Section 2.					
REVENUES					
	APPROVED	AMENDED	INCREASE	(DECREASE)	INCREASE (DECREASE)
Miscellaneous Income	\$40,000.00	\$53,930.00	13,930.00		13,930.00
Miscellaneous Income	\$15,000.00	\$28,930.00	13,930.00		13,930.00
	\$55,000.00	\$82,860.00	27,860.00	-	27,860.00
Adopted this 12th day of May 2026.					

- K.** To approve tax releases in the amount of \$18.37.

CITY OF GRAHAM				
RELEASE ACCOUNTS				
MAY				
<u>ACCT #</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>REASON FOR RELEASE</u>	<u>AMOUNT RELEASED</u>
18460	2025	WHITFIELD, LOGAN RUSSELL	BOAT NOT IN CITY LIMITS OF GRAHAM	\$15.58
15062	2024	WHITFIELD, LOGAN RUSSELL	BOAT NOT IN CITY LIMITS OF GRAHAM	\$2.79

- L.** To approve a resolution in support of the Safe Streets and Roads For All (SS4A) Grant application for planning and demonstration activities.

CITY OF GRAHAM, NORTH CAROLINA
RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL (SS4A) GRANT
APPLICATION FOR PLANNING AND DEMONSTRATION ACTIVITIES

WHEREAS, the City of Graham is committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of its residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, roadway safety is a critical priority, and the City seeks to reduce traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries for all users, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program provides funding to support comprehensive safety planning and demonstration activities that advance the Safe System Approach; and

WHEREAS, the City of Graham desires to undertake planning efforts to develop and enhance a data-driven Safety Action Plan that identifies high-risk locations, prioritizes safety improvements, and establishes measurable performance outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the City of Graham proposes to implement demonstration activities to pilot low-cost, temporary, high-impact safety improvements, evaluate their effectiveness to inform future infrastructure investments; and

WHEREAS, these planning and demonstration efforts will improve the City's ability to collect, analyze, and apply transportation safety data to support evidence-based decision-making; and

WHEREAS, the City of Graham recognizes the importance of coordination with regional partners, including the Burlington–Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization, the North Carolina Department of Transportation, local schools, and public safety agencies, to advance shared safety goals.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Graham that:

1. The City of Graham hereby supports and approves the submission of an application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program for planning and demonstration activities.
2. The City commits to providing the required 20 percent non-federal match, which may include a combination of in-kind and cash contributions, in accordance with SS4A program requirements.
3. The City commits to carrying out the proposed planning and demonstration activities in accordance with program requirements, if awarded.
4. The City will utilize the results of these efforts to inform future safety improvements, policies, and investments aimed at reducing traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries.
5. The City will coordinate with the Burlington–Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO) to incorporate findings from the demonstration activities and integrate the completed Safety Action Plan into regional transportation planning efforts.
6. The City authorizes the City Manager, or their designee, to execute all necessary documents and take all actions required to submit the application and, if awarded, to implement the project.

ADOPTED Tuesday, May 12, 2026.

Mayor Dickey asked to correct the April 27, 2026, Special meeting minutes, Page 2, to add that Council Member Chin had no comment.

Mayor Dickey requested the minutes from the closed session be made available to the public. She stated the closed session was supposed to be a personnel meeting, but in actuality, it was a performance review of her as mayor, which was an improper use of a closed session. She stated that all the performance reviews of our Council should be done in the open. She voted that the closed session minutes not be sealed.

City Attorney Ward stated that, with respect to Mayor Dickey's remarks and the closed session minutes, he asked that this matter be discussed in closed session pursuant to GS 143-318.11(a)(3) and, at the same time, to discuss the lawsuit.

City Manager Garner stated for the record that she did not waive any right to her confidentiality regarding her personnel file as she was entitled to under the law.

Tom Boney of Alamance News stated that, based on the Mayor's description, he did not think the meeting qualified as a closed session meeting. He stated if the closed session was about any member of the Council, it was not allowed under the statute.

Council Member Young stated the meeting was a continuation of a previous closed session in which the Council had been discussing a personnel issue.

City Attorney Ward stated for the record that he was perfectly familiar with the law that Mr. Boney recited, and this legal issue was not necessarily what Mr. Boney identified as a legal issue, and that he needed to speak to Council about it in that context.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed 4-1. Mayor Dickey voted no on the approval of the closed session minutes.

City Manager Garner asked if the Council wanted to add the change to the special meeting minutes.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to approve the correction to the minutes, seconded by Mayor Dickey. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

ITEM 1: ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT TEXT AMENDMENT

A public hearing was continued from the April 14, 2026, City Council meeting to consider approving an amendment to the Development Ordinance for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).

Assistant City Manager Holland stated City Council directed staff to draft language addressing Accessory Dwelling Units. He shared Planning Board recommended approval of the amendment with the revisions of dropping the maximum square footage for attached and detached ADUs from 1,600 to 1,200 square feet, requiring a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet, and allowing ADUs to be served off of existing private connections to the primary dwelling if capacity allows it.

The public hearing was held, and the following spoke:

Maria Clapp, 2217 Whitsitt Street, representing the Burlington Alamance County Association of Realtors, spoke in favor of the dwelling units based on the housing crisis in Alamance County. She asked that staff add accessory dwelling units to the Unified Development Ordinance.

Harold Davis, 858 Forth Ct., Gibsonville, also with the Realtors Association, spoke in favor of dwelling units due to the need for affordable housing and veterans needing housing.

Eric Crissman, 208 Albright Avenue, spoke in favor of dwelling units that were similar to a garage or storage unit.

Jeff Benes, 1407 E. Gilbreath Street, Graham, spoke in opposition to accessory dwelling units.

Molly Whitlatch, 531 N Main Street, Graham, spoke in favor of ADUs and asked to consider designated driveways for dwelling units.

Nathan Pittenger, 2743 Cliff View Drive, Graham, representing builders, spoke in favor of dwelling units and that they would allow taking care of family members.

Ian Baltutis, 702 West Davis Street, Burlington, spoke in favor of ADUs to provide affordable housing and to age in place on the property they own.

Eric Boyer, 2755 Darrell Newton Drive, Graham, asked for the square footage of ADUs to be less than 1,000 square feet.

Jennifer Talley, 808 Sideview Street, Graham, spoke in opposition to dwelling units. She also asked the Council to wait until the State Legislators have researched and passed something.

Eithiel Estes, 3368 Southern High/Mt. Herman Road, Graham, spoke in favor of accessory dwellings to offer aging family members a place to live.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to close the public hearing, seconded by Council Member Whitaker. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Whitaker stated ADUs would not solve housing issues and voiced concerns when those living in an ADU moved out, it could become an Airbnb or rental property, which would change the look of neighborhoods. She relayed that she did not like dense housing, and it would not be a revenue source for the city.

Council Member Chin also spoke in opposition to ADUs and stated when the government tries to define requirements, someone will find a way to circumvent them.

Mayor Dicky read out an email sent to her from Jensen Roll, who was in favor of ADUs. He asked that Council consider making ADUs permissible on all residential lots zoned R-7 and larger.

Mayor Dickey spoke in favor of ADUs due to the increase in the aging population. She shared that people needed to make \$54,000 annually just to afford market rent. She shared the Land Use Plan stated the median household income in Graham was \$45,000. She noted this was not the solution, but it was a step in the right direction.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall stated he disagreed with the Mayor and did not see how ADUs could help many people except for real estate agents. He said you could have people with rental income go in and build ADUs.

Council Member Young stated there was a need for this type of development, but was unsure and more in favor of considering cases as they come forward. He stated he could not approve it right now.

Mayor Dickey stated she had also considered building one for her grandmother.

Council Member Chin suggested considering on a case-by-case basis.

Mayor Dickey shared that the Planning Board suggested the property needed to be at least a 20,000 square foot lot and could not exceed 50% of the heated gross floor area of the primary residence or 1,200 square feet.

Council Member Whitaker suggested waiting until the State had placed its regulations on ADUs and recommended a case-by-case basis.

Motion by Council Member Whitaker to deny the text amendment for accessory dwellings, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed 4-1. Mayor Dickey voted no.

ITEM 2: FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

A public hearing was continued to review the draft Future Land Use Plan, draft comments from the Planning Board, and to consider approval.

Mayor Dickey thanked the Planning Board for all its hard work on completing the Land Use Plan.

Assistant City Manager Holland thanked the Planning Board for all its work on the plan. He introduced Sam Stalder to highlight some of the changes.

Sam Stalder, Regional Planner, Piedmont Triad Regional Council, shared how the steering committee's worked to collect community input. They received 201 survey responses, attended public events, Thursdays at Seven Concerts, and asked people what they would like Graham to look like. He stated they gathered and collected the data over a year and incorporated it into the final document.

The public hearing was held, and the following spoke:

Jeff Benes, 1407 E. Gilbreath Street, stated Graham was a special and unique place to live. He referenced a potential development for the corner of Moore Street and Hanford, consisting of 27 homes, and 17 of those would be mini homes on six acres of land.

Maria Clapp, 2217 Whitsett Street, 29 new small homes would be great for Graham, and when looking at the UDO, asked Council to take into consideration affordable housing, allow smaller lot sizes, and small homes.

Tom Boney, Alamance News, 114 E. Street in Graham, cautioned Council about the importance of notifying surrounding neighbors when land around them was being changed, as noted in the Land Use Plan.

Victoria Bemer, 207 N. Marshall Street, spoke about the need for sidewalks and asked Council to consider finishing the sidewalk from East Gilbreath Street down N. Marshall Street to the National Historic District.

Mayor Dickey read an email from Jerome Bias, 205 Albright Avenue, asking Council to protect the historic districts and the historic homes.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to close the public hearing, seconded by Council Member Chin. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Young agreed with the need for more sidewalks. He thanked the Planning Board and PTRC for a great job.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall thanked the Planning Board for their diligent work.

Council Member Chin thanked the PTRC for their efforts in developing this plan. He stated there were no large areas where you can grow out communities and shopping areas together. He said the Future Land Use plan read beautifully, but when you look at Graham, he challenged to find a way to incorporate some of the recommendations, such as building more sidewalks, which would cost over a million dollars to build a sidewalk down E. Elm Street to Graham High School. If the City could secure state and federal funding to build the sidewalk would be great, but using taxpayer monies would be at a cost.

Council Member Whitaker thanked the Planning Board for all the hard work. She noted on Page 6 that the City needed to go after as many grants as possible. She agreed with the need to protect our history and land.

Council consensus was to delete the last sentence on Page 33 – Developing one of these facilities in Graham should be a high priority.

Council consensus was to remove strip centers and to recommend only commercial centers.

The Graham Comprehensive Land Use Plan seeks to encourage the development of ~~both strip centers and~~ commercial centers where most appropriate, with respect to acreage and the surrounding infrastructure, while incorporating the more positive characteristics of each. ~~Strip~~ Commercial centers should have varying facade heights, which break up the individual units, and should vary in color and material types (brick, stucco, stone, etc). ~~Strip~~ Commercial centers development should include green space (minimum 5-10%), such as landscaping and trees in parking areas. Outside seating is also welcome. Interconnectivity between uses, shared parking, fewer curb cuts, clustering of multiple uses, and pedestrian/bike-friendly accommodations are encouraged.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to adopt the Land Use Plan as written with the changes as discussed by Council, seconded by Council Member Chin. The motion passed 4-1. Mayor Dickey voted no.

ITEM 3: BENCHES - DOWNTOWN

A public hearing was scheduled to consider the placement of benches in the downtown area.

Assistant City Manager Holland shared that at the last Council meeting, Mayor Dickey asked to have the benches placed back in the downtown area, and that Council consensus was to hold a public hearing to ask the downtown businesses what they preferred.

The public hearing was held, and the following spoke:

Randy Phillips, 130 Burton Street, spoke in favor of bringing the benches back out, similar to where they were before.

Jeff Benes, 1407 E. Gilbreath Street, stated to just put them back out and shared that during the day, it helped people relax and enjoy the downtown.

Jennifer Talley, 808 Sideview Street, shared that she was not against benches being put back out, but they did not need to be in areas where there were tables and chairs.

Keith Westbrook, 604 Trock Wilder Court, spoke in favor of placing the benches back.

Eric Chrismon, 208 Albright Avenue, spoke in favor of placing the benches back.

Tom Boney, Alamance News, stated that business owners should not be the ones deciding, but that it should be handled administratively.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to close the public hearing, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Council Member Chin to place the benches back and allow staff to decide the placement, seconded by Council Member Whitaker. The motion passed 4-1. Mayor Pro Tem Hall voted no.

NEW BUSINESS:

ITEM 4: AMEND CODE OF ORDINANCE – PENALTIES – SOLID WASTE ORDINANCE

City Council will consider an amendment to add penalties for violation of the Solid Waste Ordinance.

First Offense	Written Warning
Second Offense	The applicable penalties shall be outlined in the City’s Rates and Fees schedule on file in the office of the City Clerk.
Third Offense	The applicable penalties shall be outlined in the City’s Rates and Fees schedule on file in the office of the City Clerk. (Container removed until fee paid.)
* Subsequent violations after the third offense will incur the same penalty, until a one-year reset from the first offense.	

If approved, the Fee Schedule would include the chart below, effective July 1, 2026, with the adoption of the new budget.

First Offense	Written Warning
Second Offense	\$50
Third Offense	\$150 (container removed until fee paid)
* Subsequent violations after the third offense will incur the same penalty, until a one-year reset from the first offense	

Assistant City Manager Holland stated in the wake of amendments to ordinances due to the passage of HB 300, certain penalty sections of the Code of Ordinances were amended. In particular, the Solid Waste Ordinances were impacted by this change and require a penalty section to be re-established. The following amendment would provide an escalated penalty for violators and provide enforcement tools for staff. The Code of Ordinances will reference the Fee Schedule for penalty fees, which allows any

future changes to be reflected in the Fee Schedule at that time. He stated staff recommends the penalty be put in place on July 1, 2026, and educate the public on the penalties. Council asked that in Sec 16-5, #3 needed to be changed from “remove promptly” to “remove within 24 hours.”

Motion by City Council Member Young to approve the fee change to the fee schedule, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hall. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Consensus was to reflect the change with the adoption of the budget and fee schedule at the June 9, 2026, Council meeting.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAHAM, AMENDING CHAPTER 16, TO THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GRAHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

The City Council of the City of Graham, North Carolina, does ORDAIN:

Sec. 1. That the Code of Ordinances, City of Graham, North Carolina, is hereby amended by adding section(s) 16-22, which said sections read as follows:

Chapter 16-22. – Penalty.

ADD:

Any person violating any provision of the Solid Waste Ordinance shall be charged as follows:

First Offense	Written Warning
Second Offense	The applicable penalties shall be set forth in the City’s Rates and Fees schedule on file in the office of the City Clerk.
Third Offense	The applicable penalties shall be set forth in the City’s Rates and Fees schedule on file in the office of the City Clerk. (container removed until fee paid)
* Subsequent violations after the third offense will incur the same penalty, until a one-year reset from the first offense	

Sec. 2. That this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect on July 1, 2026, and upon publication, as provided by law.

ITEM 5: AMEND CODE OF ORDINANCE – CHAPTER 4 – ANIMALS AND FOWLS PENALTIES

City Council considered an amendment to Chapter 4, Sec. 4-39 and 4-41, to add a criminal penalty in addition to, or in lieu of, such civil penalties or other remedies. A violation of this section shall constitute a Class 3 misdemeanor, pursuant to N.C. G.S. 160A-175 and N.C.G.S. 14-4.

Police Chief Brian Neil stated with the passing of HB 300, they lost the ability to enforce a criminal penalty for dangerous dogs. He asked the Council to approve a Class 3 misdemeanor pertaining to dangerous dogs.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to approve the ordinance amendment, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed unanimously.

City Ordinance Chapter 4
Sec. 4-39 Running at large.

It shall be unlawful for any owner or keeper of a dog to permit any dog, at any time, to run at large on the streets or sidewalks of the city or off the premises of the owner or keeper. Outdoor enclosures cannot be smaller than ten feet by ten feet. Criminal penalty. In addition to, or in lieu of, such civil penalties or other remedies. A violation of this section shall constitute a Class 3 misdemeanor, pursuant to G.S. 160A-175 and G.S. 14-4, as amended.

Sec. 4-41. - Restraint of dangerous or potentially dangerous dogs.

- (a) It is unlawful for an owner or keeper to permit a dangerous or potentially dangerous dog to go beyond the owner's or keeper's property unless the dog is adequately restrained and muzzled or to leave a dangerous or potentially dangerous dog unattended on the owner's or keeper's property unless the dog is confined indoors or in a securely enclosed and locked pen as herein described or in another structure designed to adequately restrain the dog.
- (b) Although each police officer shall enforce the provisions of this article, the determination of a dog being dangerous or potentially dangerous shall be made by the chief of police or the authorized officer as described herein.
- (c) Notice of a violation of this article or a determination a dog is dangerous or potentially dangerous shall be made within 24 hours of a reported violation or determination if the owner or keeper of the dog is readily known. If the owner or keeper is not readily known after reasonable efforts are made to determine the owner or keeper, notice shall be given to a person who may own or reside on the premises where the dog is known to inhabit, be kept or found.
- (d) The chief of police or the authorized officer shall give notice in writing to the owner or keeper, if the owner is not available or known, giving the reasons for the determination or possible determination, the right of hearing and appeal of such a determination, where the appeal shall be filed and the deadline to file an appeal.
- (e) The owner may appeal the determination of the chief of police or the authorized officer to the review board by giving written notice of the appeal to the city clerk within five days of receipt of the determination. The dog will be subject to the provisions for restraint of dangerous or potentially dangerous dogs as provided under section 4-42 until a final determination. Appeal from a determination by the review board shall be by writ of certiorari to the court of proper jurisdiction.
- (f) Criminal penalty. In addition to, or in lieu of, such civil penalties or other remedies, a

violation of this section shall constitute a Class 3 misdemeanor, pursuant to G.S. 160A-175 and G.S. 14-4, as amended.

ITEM 6: AMEND CODE OF ORDINANCE – TRAFFIC AND VEHICLES - WAGON

City Council considered an amendment to Chapter 20 – TRAFFIC AND VEHICLES, Article I., Section 20-21 to remove “wagon” from prohibited motive devices.

Mayor Dickey stated she thought the ordinance referred to kid wagons, but instead it referred to a horse-drawn wagon.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to approve the ordinance amendment to remove wagon, seconded by Council Member Whitaker. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 7: AMEND PERSONNEL POLICY – JUNETEENTH HOLIDAY

City Council considered an amendment to Section 7-2 of the Personnel Policy to add Juneteenth as an additional holiday for City employees, effective May 13, 2026.

Council Member Young suggested adding Juneteenth as an additional holiday for City employees.

Motion by Council Member Young to approve Juneteenth as an additional holiday, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hall. The motion passed 4-1. Council Member Chin voted no.

ITEM 8: DOWNTOWN SOCIAL DISTRICT DISCUSSION:

City Council discussed the potential of adding a social district in downtown.

Mayor Dickey asked Erin Nettles to speak about starting a social district.

Erin Nettles, Country Club Drive, Burlington, discussed social districts being seven days a week, a few days a week, or for only special events.

Mayor Dickey shared there were conversations had with Burlington, Gibsonville, Elon, and Mebane, and all reported having no issues.

Mayor Dickey stated she knew of five businesses that would like to have a social district.

Council Member Young stated that people had to drive a good distance from the interstate to get to their downtowns, but with Graham’s downtown located right off the interstate, it would make a difference. He voiced approval of having a social district at special events.

Council Member Whitaker stated if people were already bringing alcohol to special events, she did not see the benefit for Graham to have open containers walking from bar to bar. She said she spoke to some businesses that were for it and one that was against it. She did not think it was something Graham needed and was not sure it would help businesses.

Mayor Dickey read an email submitted by Dr. Matthew Haley. He stated in his email that he enjoyed the venues of those selling alcohol. He stated it was important to separate facts from emotions, and having

them at special events would make more sense without changing the atmosphere of every day of the week. He also added that businesses should post on their doors whether they allow alcohol in their places of business. Again, he asked the Council to base its decision on facts and how it would affect Graham.

Council Member Whitaker stated a social district was not the right fit for Graham. She agreed with having a designated place during special events, but not walking around with alcohol.

Council Member Young suggested holding a public hearing and receiving public input.

Little Oblivion stated the problem was with other businesses that sell alcohol. He stated it would not affect his business either way.

Daniel Alvis, of Maple Street Tavern, stated it did not matter to him if there was a social district or not, and if businesses did not want to participate, place a sticker on the door.

Council Member Young stated he would like to hear from other business owners during a public hearing. He shared that times had changed, and it was more of a social gathering.

Motion by Council Member Young to hold a public hearing, seconded by Council Member Whitaker. The motion passed 4-1. Mayor Pro Tem Hall voted no.

Council took a five-minute recess.

ITEM 9: LEGAL NOTICES VENDOR

City Council discussed authorizing staff to utilize The Times News as the primary vendor for legal notices.

Mayor Dickey shared the readership of Alamance News was 3,337, and The Times News was 1429. She added that the cost of ads was 40% higher than Alamance News.

Tom Boney, Alamance News, highlighted key points from a letter he submitted to the Council.

Mayor Dickey stated we should be good stewards of City tax dollars.

Council Member Whitaker stated she did not believe the Council should be regulating how to advertise, that it should be under the City Manager and City staff. She stated the City had always had the right to advertise with whomever and there was no contract.

Council Member Young stated the City's goals of publications were to inform as many citizens as possible, and right now, Alamance News was the best newspaper according to the facts, and we should stick with them.

Motion by Council Member Whitaker to leave the decision to the City Manager to determine with whom we advertise, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 10: ALCOVETS – ANTIQUE CAR SHOW – FOLLOWING ARTS AROUND THE SQUARE

City Council considered a request from ALCOVETS to open E. Elm Street at 3:45 p.m. for an antique car show to begin following Arts Around the Square.

Council Member Chin stated he was an officer for the ALCOVETS organization and had no financial gain in this request. He asked the Council if he should be recused.

Council consensus was that Council Member Chin did not need to be recused.

Richard Shevlin, representing the ALCOVETS, asked the City to continue the Arts Around the Square event to coincide with their antique car show. He shared last year they worked it out with Recreation and Parks staff, but that the band needed to get inside the parking lot behind Colonial Hardware to set up. He asked for the Elm Street side with the food trucks and kids' activities to break down earlier.

City Manager Garner stated City Staff does not override a Council's decision, and this year, the road closure extends until 6:00 p.m., but could possibly be re-opened before that time. She reiterated the need to get everyone out safely.

Jennifer Talley stated that the food trucks were normally on South Main Street and that Shamrock would be closed and would not conflict with any restaurant.

Assistant Police Chief Sisk said that an established road closure was until 6:00 p.m. and they would not let vehicles access during the road closure until it was cleared and safe. He shared it does not mean it would be closed until 6:00 p.m., but would only re-open when it is safe.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Council Member Young for the ALCOVETS to communicate and work it out with the Police Department when it would be safe to bring in the antique cars, seconded by Council Member Whitaker. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 11: FISCAL YEAR 2026 – 2027 BUDGET PRESENTATION:

City Manager Garner presented the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget Proposal to Council.

City Manager Garner presented the following budget presentation to Council, highlighting major priorities.



General Fund (10)

- ☐ Balanced at \$27,693,815 with a \$0.03 increase to the tax rate
- ☐ One penny on the tax rate is estimated to generate \$280,215 based on a 97% collection rate
- ☐ No interfund transfers
- ☐ Street resurfacing proposed to increase for 13th consecutive year

General Fund Revenues

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM



General Fund (10)

- ☐ Deferred maintenance/capital items/debt service equate to nearly \$2,000,000
- ☐ Mandatory employer retirement contribution increase
- ☐ Health insurance increase of 6%
- ☐ Expenditures for public safety (\$10,667,146) are expected to exceed all of the ad valorem tax levy \$9,406,502 by over \$1,260,644

General Fund (10)

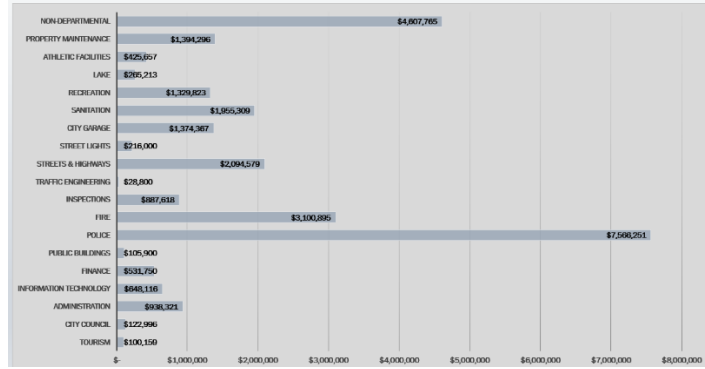
- ☐ Cost of living increase 3%
- ☐ New full-time positions funded:
 - ☐ General Maintenance Worker (Property Maintenance)
 - ☐ PC Technician (Information Technology)
 - ☐ Division Chief (Fire Department)
 - ☐ One entry-level firefighter position per shift (not intended to be career ladders)

General Fund Expenditures

WHERE THE MONEY GOES



General Fund Departments

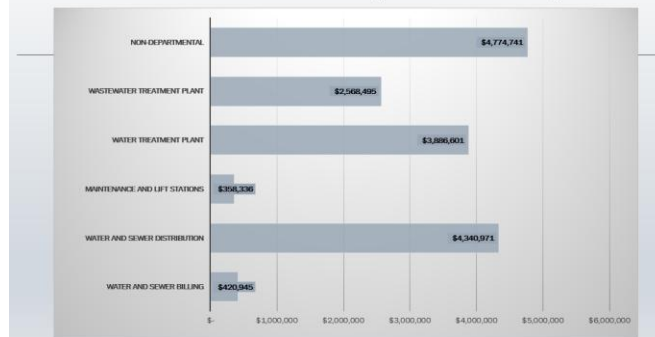


Water and Sewer (Fund 31)

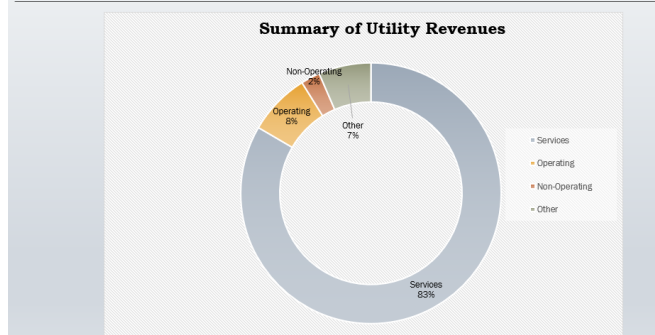
- ☐ Balanced at \$16,350,089
- ☐ Proposed rate increase of 6%
 - ☐ Increase for 1,000 gallons ~\$1.43/month
 - ☐ Increase for 5,000 gallons ~\$5.35/month
- ☐ New full-time positions funded
 - ☐ Water Treatment Superintendent
 - ☐ Wastewater Operator I
 - ☐ Water Quality Technician

	1,000 gallons		5,000 gallons
Current water	\$10.35	Current water	\$28.42
Proposed water	\$10.97	Proposed water	\$30.18
Current sewer	\$13.43	Current sewer	\$59.72
Proposed sewer	\$14.24	Proposed sewer	\$63.30

Water and Sewer (Fund 31)



Water and Sewer (Fund 31)



Upcoming Dates

☐ May 20, 2026 – Council work session

☐ June 9, 2026 – Public Hearing

Budget Availability

☐ Available in the office of the City Clerk

☐ Available on our website (www.cityofgraham.com) Wednesday, May 13th

City Manager Garner thanked the Council for the input and the goal-setting session. She shared that the staff did a fantastic job of including goals set by the Council. She reminded Council of the May 20, 2026 Budget Work Session set for Council to ask questions about and discuss the proposed budget.

Council Member Chin asked to change the time of the May 20, 2026 Budget Work Session to 1:00 p.m. due to several members having conflicts.

Mayor Dickey asked to hold the meeting after 5:00 p.m. so more people could be present.

Motion by Council Member Chin to change the May 20, 2026, Budget Work Session time to 1:00 p.m., seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hall. The motion passed 4-1. Mayor Dickey voted no.

SESQUICENTENNIAL PARK:

Mayor Dickey asked City staff to put out a bid for the Sesquicentennial Park to get a real cost. She stated the community was asking for it, and if the bids came back really high, then they would be okay with saying no to repairing the park.

After a brief discussion, a motion by Mayor Dickey to direct City staff to put out bids to repair the Sesquicentennial Park was seconded by Council Member Young. The motion failed 2-3. Mayor Pro Tem Hall, Council Members Chin and Whitaker voted no.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Daniel Alvis stated the public comment section should be moved to the beginning of the agenda. He spoke in favor of a social district and said that it would not promote public drunkenness.

Randy Phillips, 130 Burton Street, spoke in reference to the lack of parking in downtown, and it needed to be addressed.

Todd Pierce, 109 Albright Avenue, invited Council and others to the premiere of Welcome Home and Oxford House Story at The Historic Carolina Theater, 310 South Greene Street, Greensboro, on Wednesday, June 3, 2026. Doors open at 2:00 p.m., 5:45 p.m. opening remarks, 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Film Viewing.

Keith Westbrook, 604 Trock Wilder Court, spoke in reference to a historic building located at 104 E. Elm Street, and that it was an eyesore, and something needed to be done.

Ian Baltutis, 702 E. Davis Street, spoke in reference to the climate of adopting a civility policy to govern boards and lead with dignity.

Jeff Benes, 1407 E Gilbreath Street, stated he disagreed with Council Member Chin on the time of a public meeting, that it was more important for the citizens to be a part of the budget session. He also spoke to the parking needs for downtown and did not want to lose 26 parking spaces. He shared a lot of people were upset the park was shutting down.

Jane Albright, 231 South Marshall Street, Graham, spoke in reference to repairing the park, and that it could be a large expense. She asked to keep the park in its current location.

Beth Belsher, 2152 Lake Point Drive, Graham, stated she supported Jane Albright and asked to get the park back in order. She also spoke about the parking times downtown.

Shante Williams, 308 Plaid Street, spoke about a registered sex offender living next to her and her kids, and that she and the neighbors no longer felt safe.

Kurt McVey, 415 West Pine Street, spoke in reference to an incident with a violent dog that killed a small dog. He stated he had been in touch with the police department, and the dog was given back to its owner, but no one knows why. He shared that the tenants were living in fear of this dog.

CITY STAFF COMMENTS

Assistant City Manager Holland asked to place a street closure on the May 20, 2026, Budget Work Session for the Alamance County War Memorial Committee event to be held on May 25, 2026.

Council Consensus was to place the street closing request on the May 20, 2026, Budget Work Session agenda.

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Whitaker asked Staff to review Ordinance Chapter 8 – No solicitation. Council consensus was to amend the ordinance, reinstate penalties, and place on the June 9, 2026 City Council meeting agenda.

Council Member Whitaker stated it was time Council took action and start removing the Sesquicentennial Park. She stated to store the bricks at Public Works until the future was decided, remove the clock, send it off for repair, relocate it to City Hall, and possibly place the bricks around the clock. She stated Council had been giving Staff mixed messages, and it was time to move forward. She reiterated that the floor was structurally unsound and was not safe.

The consensus of the Council was to begin taking the park down.

Mayor Dickey asked to get bids for repair and use grant funds.

Jane Albright also asked to get bids.

Council Member Whitaker stated to move forward and make the park area safe.

Council Member Young shared that he had a conversation with a red-light camera company while attending CityVision and asked if the Police Chief would interview companies and come back with information for the Council to consider cameras in school zones.

Council Member Young read the following statement: *“Mr. Boney speaks at length about 'fairness' and 'objectivity,' while simultaneously accusing council members of improper motives simply for discussing a city vendor relationship. The First Amendment protects his right to criticize elected officials. It also protects elected officials from being intimidated into avoiding legitimate public discussion. No newspaper is automatically entitled to receive city advertising dollars forever. The council has a responsibility to periodically review vendors, costs, accessibility, compliance, and what best serves the taxpayers of Graham.*

It is also difficult to take lectures on “fairness” seriously from a publication whose editorials and coverage are often anything but objective when discussing those he disagrees with politically.

This decision should be based on what best serves the citizens of Graham — not on threats, assumptions, or political theater.”

Mayor Dickey:

- 1) Asked if the Board could put something together for a Graham Civility statement. Council consensus was to get the NCLM statement put out for all municipalities for consideration.
- 2) Tree planters need attention. Council Member Young shared they were already being addressed and repaired.
- 3) Asked if the staff had any word back from NCDOT about rerouting log trucks. Assistant City Manager Holland shared he had not received any word.

CLOSED SESSION:

City Council will consider 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 Young to go 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, seconded by Council Member Whitaker.

The closed session was held.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to go out of closed session, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Council Member Whitaker to return to open session, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed unanimously.

There was no comment regarding the closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Hall to adjourn, seconded by Council Member Young. The motion passed unanimously. (10:14 p.m.)

Renee M. Ward, CMC
City Clerk