Morrisville Town Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 25, 2025, 6:00 p.m.

NOTE: Minutes are summaries only, reflecting Council action and main points of discussion. For the full meeting audio and/or video, the meeting agenda, presentations, and other related agenda materials please click here.

Present: Mayor Cawley, Mayor Pro Tem Garimella, and Council Members Fender, Johnson, Rao, Robotti, Scroggins-Johnson, Town Attorney Frank Gray, and Assistant Town Attorney Lori Jones.

Staff: Brandon Zuidema, *Town Manager*
Giselle Rodriquez, *Deputy Town Manager*
John Letteney, *Assistant Town Manager*
Jeanne Hooks, *Director of Management Services*
Kayla Bertling, *Town Clerk*
Kimberly Conley, *Sustainability Coordinator*
Rachel Cypher, *Planner II*
Byron Hayes, *Chief Financial Officer*
Erin Hudson, *Communications & Outreach Director*
Brittany Johnson, *Planning Manager*
Cindi King, *Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Assistant Director*
Bret Martin, Transportation Project Manager
Shelly Mayo, *Planner III*
Tiffany McNeill, *Economic Development Director*
Anu Mishra, *Communications Specialist*
James Owens, *IT Support Technician*
Justin Rosser, *Chief of Police*
Michele Stegall, *Planning Director*

1. **Call to Order –** Mayor Cawley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. **Recognition of Sergeant at Arms –** Officer Gul

3. **Invocation –** delivered by Council Member Rao

4. **Pledge of Allegiance –** led by Mayor Cawley

5. **Adoption of Regular Agenda**
No conflicts of interest with the proposed agenda were reported.

MOTION: **Council Member Rao moved to adopt the Regular Agenda. The motion was seconded by Council Member Johnson and carried unanimously (7-0).**

6. **Consent Agenda**
6.a. Resolution Authorizing Land Dedication for Watkins Road Public Right-of-Way Improvements (2025-405-0)
Mark Spanioli, P.E. - Director of Engineering

MOTION: **Council Member Rao moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion**

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was seconded by Council Member Robotti and carried unanimously (7-0).

6.b. 2026 PZB Chair and Vice Chair Appointments (2025-402-0)
Michele Stegall, Planning Director

MOTION: **Council Member Rao moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Council Member Robotti and carried unanimously (7-0).**

6.c. Approval of October Town Council Meeting Minutes

MOTION: **Council Member Rao moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Council Member Robotti and carried unanimously (7-0).**

6.d. Resolution to Approve Wake County Quarterly Tax Reports (2025-412-0)

MOTION: **Council Member Rao moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Council Member Robotti and carried unanimously (7-0).**

6.e. Resolution to Approve Local Government Records Retention Schedules (2025-411-0)
Kayla Bertling, Town Clerk

MOTION: **Council Member Rao moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Council Member Robotti and carried unanimously (7-0).**

6.f. Resolution Appointing Advisory Committee Members (2025-413-0)
Kayla Bertling, Town Clerk

MOTION: **Council Member Rao moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Council Member Robotti and carried unanimously (7-0).**

6.g. Resolution Authorizing the Surplus of a 2008 KME Predator LFD Fire Truck (2025-414-0)
Byron Hayes, Chief Financial Officer

MOTION: **Council Member Rao moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Council Member Robotti and carried unanimously (7-0).**

6.h. Resolution Authorizing an Amendment to the Town Manager Employment Agreement (2025-415-0)

MOTION: **Council Member Rao moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Council Member Robotti and carried unanimously (7-0).**

7. Items Pulled from Consent (if any)
No items were pulled for discussion.

8. Proclamations

8.a. Proclamation Recognizing Hanukkah and the Menorah Lighting (2025-401-0)

Council acknowledged a proclamation recognizing Hanukkah and the Menorah Lighting.

9. Morrisville Speaks: Public Comment

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Savitha Ravishankar, 613 Royal Tower Way, celebrated Community Member Saroj Sharma for her Honorary Doctorate degree. Community Member Ravishankar highlighted the recipient's inspirational nature and unwavering commitment to the community. She thanked the recipient's husband for his support, noting their combined impacts to the community.

Munisankara Mugachintala, Cary, spoke about a recent unsanctioned Diwali event. Community Member Mugachintala stated that their family could not celebrate at home due to apartment restrictions, fireworks were purchased legally, and believed fireworks were permitted due to past events. He also noted attendees cleaned up after the event. Following social media posts from the Town that stated the event was illegal, Community Member Mugachintala reached out to the police to cooperate. He felt with such a large group, it was impossible to know who caused damage. He sought guidance for future celebrations.

Subbareddy Madireddy, 113 Elmhaven Way, spoke about a recent unsanctioned Diwali event. He advocated that any harm caused was unintentional and asked Town leadership to reconsider citations issued. Community Member Madireddy noted potential immigration impacts. He advocated for compassion and education.

Bhavana Veeravalli, 1601 Carrington Park Circle, submitted public input online, which was read by Town Clerk Kayla Bertling. Community Member Veeravalli spoke in opposition of the Airport Boulevard Extension Project, expressing concern for pedestrian safety.

Patty Cheng, 304 Millet Dr., spoke about an ongoing transportation improvement project on Airport Blvd. She appreciated the Town's efforts to provide information to the community and Council Member Scroggins-Johnson's advocacy on the issue. Community Member Cheng expressed concern about the project being led by staff and the project's impact. She questioned the need for the project and the history of the project. She thanked Council Member Fender for her advocacy for lowering the speed limit along the road. Community Member Cheng felt concerned that citizen concerns were not addressed.

10. Presentations

10.a. 20th Annual MESC Poster Contest Winners
Kimberly Conley, Sustainability Coordinator

Kimberly Conley, Sustainability Coordinator, presented the winning posters and Council celebrated the young artists.

10.b. Morrisville 101 Graduation
Erin L. Hudson, Communications & Outreach Director

Erin L. Hudson, Communications & Outreach Director, celebrated the graduates of the Morrisville 101 program.

11. Public Hearings

11.a. Annexation of 0 Watkins Road (2025-382-0)
Shelly Mayo, Planner III
November 12 - Brief and Action (Resolutions A & B)
November 25 - Public Hearing and Action (Ordinance)

Shelly Mayo, Planner III, shared there were no updates on the annexation request for 0 Watkins Road.

Mayor Cawley declared the Public Hearing open. No comments were made.

MOTION: **Council Member Johnson moved to close the Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Council Member Robotti and carried unanimously (7-0).**

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MOTION: **Council Member Johnson moved to adopt Ordinance 2025-382-0 of the Morrisville Town Council Pertaining to the Extension of the Town of Morrisville Corporate Limits to Include Property Located at 0 Watkins Road (ANX-25-0014). The motion was seconded by Council Member Robotti and carried unanimously (7-0).**

11.b. Annexation of 429 Airport Boulevard (2025-341-0)
Rachel Cypher, Planner II
November 12 - Brief and Action (Resolutions A & B)
November 25 - Public Hearing and Action (Ordinance)

Rachel Cypher, Planner II, shared there were no updates on the annexation request for 429 Airport Boulevard.

Mayor Cawley declared the Public Hearing open.

Subbareddy Madireddy, 113 Elmhaven Way, spoke in reference to an ongoing transportation improvement project along Airport Blvd. He was concerned residents were uninformed of the project. Community Member Madireddy stated he was in favor of development. He called for Council to reevaluate the transportation project.

Amy Croute, on behalf of applicant Duke Energy, noted the annexation was part of a project approved with a Special Use Permit from the year before.

MOTION: **Council Member Johnson moved to close the Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Council Member Robotti and carried unanimously (7-0).**

Council Member Johnson clarified for the community, the action to annex solely brought the property into the Town's corporate limits.

MOTION: **Council Member Johnson moved to adopt Ordinance 2025-341-0 of the Morrisville Town Council Pertaining to the Extension of the Town of Morrisville Corporate Limits to Include Property Located at 429 Airport Boulevard (ANX-0013). The motion was seconded by Council Member Robotti and carried unanimously (7-0).**

11.c. Resolution Authorizing an Economic Incentive Grant Agreement with Novartis Gene Therapies, Inc. (2025-408-0)
Tiffany McNeill, Economic Development Director
Public Hearing/Action - November 25

Tiffany McNeill, Economic Development Director, presented the Economic Incentive Grant Agreement with Novartis Gene Therapies, Inc. She shared the company's history and noted closed sessions previously held with the Town Council to discuss the incentive. The company would invest $231 million and create 100 new jobs with an average wage of at least $121,080 excluding bonuses and benefits.

Company representatives thanked Council and staff, sharing excitement about the partnership. They noted Economic Development Director McNeill was outstanding in her work compared with national peers.

Mayor Cawley declared the Public Hearing open.

Subbareddy Madireddy, 113 Elmhaven Way, thanked the Town for bringing innovative projects and asked for the projects to be exposed to local youth.

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MOTION: **Council Member Johnson moved to close the Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Council Member Robotti and carried unanimously (7-0).**

MOTION: **Council Member Robotti moved to adopt Resolution 2025-408-0 Authorizing an Economic Incentive Grant Agreement with Novartis Gene Therapies, Inc. The motion was seconded by Council Member Scroggins-Johnson and carried unanimously (7-0).**

12. Action Items

12.a. Alternative Transit Study Final Report and Recommendations (2025-389-0)

Bret Martin, Transportation Project Manager
Jorge Luna, South Atlantic Director - Transit and Rail, VHB
November 12 - Brief/Presentation
November 25 - Action

Bret Martin, Transportation Project Manager, reviewed the Alternative Transit Study Final Report and Recommendations. He highlighted that further discussion on implementation was scheduled for the upcoming Council retreat and noted a few minor clarifications added to the presentation and report. He introduced the Town's new Senior Planner – Transportation, Phillip Vereen.

Council Member Scroggins-Johnson indicated support for accepting the report, if the suggested fixed route was altered. She asked for an alternative proposal to evaluate cost and benefit. Council Member Scroggins-Johnson clarified she wanted to reevaluate the circular route. She encouraged staff to explore partnerships with GoCary for funding. She sought clarity on how stops would be affected by the intertwined borders with Cary. Staff reminded Council that the final report was conceptual. Council Member Scroggins-Johnson stressed that even conceptually, the Town needed to determine where else to place routes, as there were limited opportunities to make changes. She noted the inability to use the service for time-sensitive needs. In response to Council Member Scroggins-Johnson, staff clarified that the circular route was not one of the recommended options. Council Member Scroggins-Johnson reiterated the need for further discussion on how best to improve the service.

Council Member Fender agreed with Council Member Scroggins-Johnson that the circular route did not meet the Town's needs. She expressed concern that the route was included in the report and questioned whether its inclusion in the survey predetermined the outcome. She stated the route did not meet needs due to exclusion of key areas. She expressed concern that recommendations and theoretical routes in the report could create confusion if Council voted to accept it. She noted that future residents or Councils might assume the recommendations were approved. Council Member Fender emphasized that the route excluded two of the largest subdivisions in town and stated that data-driven results were irrelevant if they did not meet community needs. She reiterated her concern about potential confusion created by the written report.

Council Member Robotti agreed with Council Member Fender. Council Member Robotti felt the study did not meet community needs. She expressed concern about the exclusion of Kitts Creek, Breckenridge, and the Senior Center. She sought clarity on the need to accept the results. Transportation Project Manager Martin clarified that the study was commissioned, scoped, and completed, and the action was to accept the results, not take action on specific recommendations. He advised Council that the results were based on transit best practices and survey data. Council Member Robotti expressed concern over the results and questioned the value of the process. Transportation Project Manager Martin sought clarity on Council's goal and noted the challenge of serving all areas within financial constraints. Town Manager Zuidema advised that the study was intended to identify alternative methods, not create detailed recommendations. He noted that the Smart Shuttle met certain needs but not new ones and

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emphasized that the study was informational. He suggested modifying the motion to accept the report with the understanding that further discussion would occur.

Council Member Robotti asked about next steps and emphasized the need to clarify that accepting the report did not mean endorsing recommendations. Town Manager Zuidema recommended using the resolution to provide that clarity. Staff noted that the study was not intended to guide Council through the next steps. Council Member Robotti indicated support to accept the study was completed, however she noted her discontent with the results and recommendations.

Mayor Cawley indicated support to accept the study's results and recommended not accepting the recommendations. He looked forward to further discussion at the upcoming Council retreat.

Council Member Rao indicated support to accept the study's results, noting that future Councils could determine the best options for implementation. He emphasized the importance of reliability and the ability for changes to the implementation plan. Transportation Project Manager Martin advised Council that they had completed a similar process in 2019. At that time, Council accepted the results of a transportation study which eventually led to the Smart Shuttle program following implementation discussions by Council. Council Member Rao advocated for consideration for seniors, emphasizing reliability and safety.

Mayor Pro Tem Garimella noted a disconnect between staff and Council perspectives. He highlighted staff's focus on transit and funding principles and suggested using the upcoming retreat as an opportunity to educate Council.

Council Member Johnson advised Council that concerns raised at the last meeting were prioritized for retreat discussion. She emphasized that the most important part of the resolution was the "Therefore" clause, which accepted only that the report would only be used when considering future improvements. She recommended changing the resolution's title so that it reflected Council's concerns as well. She indicated support for adopting the resolution with the title change.

Town Manager Zuidema suggested simplifying the title. He drew attention to the last "Whereas" clause, which clarified Council may decide whether or not to implement the recommendations.

Council Member Fender acknowledged the recommendation but reiterated her concerns about language in the study. Discussing the neighborhood loop option, the study states that it is recommended due to it serving all major destinations. She did not agree with the validity of the statement. She also asked to receive routes studied but not included in the report.

Council Member Scroggins-Johnson felt the report was incomplete and needed modifications before acceptance. She stated the report would be a standalone document and the resolution would not correct inaccuracies. She was not in favor of accepting the study until a more complete version was created.

Council Member Robotti clarified her appreciation for Transportation Project Manager Martin's work and expertise.

Mayor Cawley felt that work would continue regardless of action taken tonight.

Council was not in favor of voting on the resolution. Town Manager Zuidema recommended tabling the item. He advised Council could disagree with the recommendations, but he cautioned against changing a report that was created by a consultant.

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Mayor Cawley encouraged Council to view the study as data. Council Member Fender felt the data was not valid.

Council Member Fender expressed concern about accepting the report as a standalone document, reiterating that the resolution would not fix inaccuracies. She stated Council wanted a report that reflected their priorities and expressed frustration about the process. She emphasized that Council was the customer and should be satisfied with the end result.

Mayor Cawley requested a broader scope for future studies.

Planning Director Stegall emphasized that staff was hearing Council's concerns. She noted that Transportation Project Manager Martin had worked with consultants to gather more details after the November 12 meeting. She anticipated further discussion at the retreat.

Council Member Robotti asked if the consultant could return. Staff confirmed that was possible due to remaining budget.

Staff sought clarity on Council's expectations.

Council Member Robotti emphasized the need for recommendations that were realistic. She questioned the value of the process and stated the report did not translate data into realistic recommendations. Staff advised the scope was standard and not intended for detailed implementation planning, which would occur after Council agreed on a conceptual direction.

Council Member Fender offered to draw a map of her preferred routes.

In response to Council Member Robotti, staff sought clarity on Council's consensus of what was the correct direction for implementation. Council Member Robotti stated it meant connecting residents to key amenities and services, particularly focused on seniors and youth.

Council Member Robotti felt Council did not have an opportunity to share their expectations at the start of the study.

Council Member Scroggins-Johnson thought changes would be made to the report based on discussion from November 12. She felt Council did not have an opportunity to share their expectations at the start of the study.

Staff clarified that the study did not recommend fixed route and explained that option increased reliability but decreased coverage without multiple routes. Transportation Project Manager Martin noted financial constraints limited options but stated he could provide scenarios without those constraints. Council Member Scroggins-Johnson supported that approach and emphasized the importance of understanding tradeoffs.

Mayor Cawley stated the report was informational and suggested postponing any additional consultant funding until after the retreat discussion.

Council Member Johnson supported accepting the report, noting continued discussion would occur. She emphasized that Council was involved in creating expectations and that Council received a presentation early in the process from staff and the consultants. She acknowledged dissatisfaction with the results.

Council Member Fender stated that Council had communicated priorities, including Breckenridge, Kitts Creek, and the Senior Center. She expressed concern that the proposed neighborhood loop option excluded those areas and reiterated her concerns with documenting

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an unacceptable route. Staff noted financial constraints influenced the recommendations. Council Member Fender advocated for Council to review options without those constraints.

Mayor Cawley emphasized the Town was not committed to the recommendations. Council Member Fender reiterated her concerns about future interpretation.

Staff recommended tabling the item until the retreat.

MOTION: **Council Member Robotti moved to table discussion until January 23, 2026. The motion was seconded by Council Member Fender and carried unanimously (7-0).**

Recess – 8:03 p.m.
Reconvene – 8:23 p.m.

13. New Items

13.a. Public Art - Icon Selection (2025-203-0)
Brittany Johnson, Planning Manager

Brittany Johnson, Planning Manager, presented the Icons for consideration as part of the Town's public art program, highlighting public engagement and next steps for implementation. The top three icons recommended for Council decision were dragonfly, peacock, and butterfly.

Mayor Cawley sought clarity on whether the five statues throughout town would be identical. Planning Manager Johnson clarified that while the statues would share the same mold for fabrication, each sculpture would have a unique design through decorations by artists.

Council Member Scroggins-Johnson suggested different poses for different locations. She noted this could create identity and excitement throughout Town, even if more expensive. Planning Manager Johnson advised that costs significantly limited the ability to create different poses and noted that other communities had similar constraints. She emphasized that each sculpture would be decorated uniquely. Council Member Scroggins-Johnson reiterated her desire for a sense of place.

Council Member Robotti noted examples from other communities where identical statues were decorated differently. She cautioned against any religious associations in the designs. Town Attorney Frank Gray agreed and advised avoiding any connection to religion as a reason for choosing an icon.

Council Member Johnson expressed excitement for the project and clarified that each icon would be completely different in design. She asked about the review process and emphasized the importance of uniqueness. Planning Manager Johnson explained that artists would submit 2D drawings for review by staff and the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Committee (PRCRAC). If designs were too similar, they would likely not be selected together. Council would ultimately approve the final selections. Council Member Johnson requested that the peacock mold have the tail feathers open to maximize design space.

Mayor Pro Tem Garimella noted that while peacocks appear in Hindu beliefs, he did not view the icon as religious. He emphasized that the quality of the artist's work would matter most. He sought clarity on the process.

Council Member Rao sought clarity on how the icons were selected and suggested considering options that represent first responders or diversity. Planning Manager Johnson explained that the selection process included multiple rounds of public engagement, starting with open-ended

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suggestions that were then narrowed down through community voting.

Council Member Robotti requested removal of the statue planned for the dog park.

Mayor Cawley expressed interest in placing a statue along a greenway and referenced the scattered trolls at Dix Park in Raleigh as an example. He asked staff to explore pre-designed options for the mold.

Council shared preferences for the icon selection. A majority of Council indicated preference for the peacock prior to discussion.

Council Member Scroggins-Johnson felt that the peacock did not represent Morrisville and expressed concern about religious affiliation. She preferred the butterfly for its association with sustainability. She also emphasized its design flexibility. Council Member Fender agreed, noting the butterfly was found naturally in town and aligned with the Town's sustainability initiatives.

Council Member Johnson emphasized that the peacock offered more design space and could serve as a creative canvas. She acknowledged the sustainability argument. Planning Manager Johnson confirmed that the statue could be designed to allow for additional surface area.

Council Member Rao asked about the timeline and suggested waiting for the new Council. Planning Manager Johnson advised that making a decision now was necessary to meet grant requirements.

Council selected the butterfly icon.

Council Member Robotti was not supportive of staff negotiating the final design details for the statue's mold.

Mayor Cawley was supportive of staff negotiating the final design details for the statue's mold.

Council Member Scroggins-Johnson was not supportive of staff negotiating the final design details for the statue's mold.

Council Member Johnson was supportive of staff negotiating the final design details for the statue's mold. She encouraged staff to maximize design space.

Mayor Cawley sought clarity, and Planning Manager Johnson confirmed staff could bring a design back to Council for input. Council indicated support for staff to select the manufacturer and return with a design for Council approval.

In discussing PRCRAC's proposed role of reviewing artist applications prior to Council selection, Council Member Scroggins-Johnson requested that Council be notified of their meetings. Council expressed support for PRCRAC's proposed role.

14. Future Meetings, Events and Resident Involvement Opportunities

For a full listing of events, please see the Town Calendar at www.MorrisvilleNC.gov

15. Council and Manager Comments

Council Member Johnson stated she was unaware of citations given following an unsanctioned Diwali event, as brought up during public comment. She asked staff to share information on the situation. She wished the community a happy Thanksgiving.

Mayor Cawley congratulated Saroj Sharma for her Honorary Doctorate, noting her and her

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husband's inclusive vision for Morrisville. He wished the community a happy Thanksgiving. He noted a recent staff appreciation lunch from the self-titled Morrisville Indians. Mayor Cawley invited the community to the upcoming Christmas tree and Menorah lighting events. He thanked staff for their work to open a disc golf course and encouraged the public to visit.

Council Member Robotti noted her attendance at a recent silent reading event at the Pugh House, noting she talked with many residents who cared for the house. She was open to new ideas for the space. Council Member Robotti wished the community a happy Thanksgiving. She noted the upcoming term end for Council Members Rao and Fender.

Council Member Fender was sad that the evening was her last full Council meeting. She was honored to have been part of Council.

Council Member Rao shared he was emotional, noting his 14 years on Council. He thanked staff and his family. He encouraged the public to visit Dix Park, noting its innovative redevelopment. Council Member Rao spoke about World Entrepreneurs Week and thanked event organizers for a recent idea summit. He commented on the economic development announcement, noting the intentional work by Economic Development Director McNeill. He was honored to have been a part of it and shared excitement for the future of life sciences in Morrisville.

Council Member Scroggins-Johnson wished the community a happy Thanksgiving. She encouraged the public to attend the upcoming Christmas tree lighting event. She thanked Council Members Rao and Fender for their years of service, noting they had made a difference.

Mayor Pro Tem Garimella was surprised by citations mentioned during public comment and shared concerns about immigration impacts. He wanted to be made aware of the situation and asked staff for additional details. Mayor Pro Tem Garimella advised staff and Council about removal of property taxes in other states. He wished the community a happy Thanksgiving.

Town Manager Zuidema sought feedback on the upcoming Town Council retreat. Council Member Robotti and Mayor Cawley requested discussion of sustainability.

Town Manager Zuidema sought feedback on the 2026 Council Meeting Schedule. Council discussed timing of Work Sessions and expressed support for them to remain scheduled primarily on the 4th Thursday.

Town Manager Zuidema recommended the first two meetings for future annexations be placed on the consent agenda. Council indicated support.

Town Clerk Bertling reviewed parking and guest information for the upcoming Organizational Meeting and Swearing-In Ceremony.

17. Adjournment

MOTION: Council Member Rao made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Fender seconded the motion which carried unanimously (7-0).

Mayor Cawley adjourned the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

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