

**HIGH POINT TRANSPARENCY, ENGAGEMENT, & COMMUNICATION  
COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, January 21, 2026 - 9:00 AM**

**Municipal Office Building**

**211 S. Hamilton Street**

**High Point, NC 27260**

**Transparency, Engagement, and Communications Committee - Council Member  
Michael Holmes, Chair**

**CALL TO ORDER**

*Chair Holmes called the Transparency, Engagement, and Communication Committee to order at 9:00 a.m. and stated all members were present.*

**Present:** Chair Michael Holmes, Council Member Britt Moore, Council Member Patrick Harman, and Council Member Chris Williams

**PRESENTATION OF ITEMS**

2026-9

**Consideration of a License Agreement with 725 Print Lab, Inc.**

City Council is requested to consider a license agreement with 725 Print Lab, Inc., for the operation of the City's official merchandise store and authorize the appropriate City Official(s) to authorize all necessary documents.

*Jeron Hollis, Managing Director, explained that the proposed license agreement was the result of internal coordination to leverage the City's branding and intellectual property. He stated that the agreement would allow 725 Print Lab to use the City's trademarks and branding elements to produce official City merchandise for public sale. Orders would be placed online and fulfilled by the vendor. Mr. Hollis noted that the City would receive ten percent of gross merchandise sales revenue and that the agreement would eliminate the need for City staff to manage inventory. He explained that the agreement was structured as a one-year pilot program.*

*Councilman Harman asked for additional information about 725 Print Lab. Mr. Hollis responded that the company is a local High Point vendor with an established printing operation serving other businesses and organizations. He stated that the company has the facilities and experience necessary to provide the type of merchandise contemplated and that the City conducted an internal review to identify a qualified vendor. He emphasized that the one year pilot allows the City flexibility and maintains control over branding, merchandise types, and design approvals.*

*Councilman Harman asked whether the City would retain veto power over the types of merchandise offered. Mr. Hollis confirmed that all merchandise and designs would be submitted to the City for approval before being offered to the public. He stated that the City would have creative control over colors, designs, and overall appearance.*

*Councilman Moore asked whether the agreement was subject to a bidding process. Mr. Hollis explained that because the agreement does not involve the purchase of goods or services such as employee uniforms, it does not rise to the level requiring a formal RFP. He stated that the agreement is intended to test demand and assess feasibility as a small initial step.*

*Councilman Moore asked how sales and revenue would be monitored during the year. Mr. Hollis confirmed that the agreement requires monthly sales reporting and monthly payment of the City's revenue share.*

*Councilman Moore asked whether the City would approve not only designs but also the actual items being sold. Mr. Hollis confirmed that the City would approve both the merchandise items and the designs.*

*Councilman Moore asked about the physical location of the vendor. Mr. Hollis stated that the company is located in High Point and currently fulfills orders both online and through bulk production for clients. He added that the company has expressed interest in potentially opening a walk-in retail space in the future, though that would be at their discretion.*

*Chair Holmes asked whether the vendor currently operates strictly online. Mr. Hollis responded that the company uses a mix of online sales and production fulfillment and that the proposed platform would function as an online merchandise store for City items.*

*Chair Holmes asked whether there was a revenue threshold that would trigger a brick and mortar store. Mr. Hollis explained that the City is licensing branding elements and does not control the vendor's broader business operations. He stated that if the vendor chose to open a physical location or sell at events, those decisions would be subject to City approval as outlined in the agreement.*

*Chair Holmes asked whether the City's ten percent share would apply if merchandise were sold through large retailers. Mr. Hollis responded that his understanding was that the revenue share would still apply.*

*Meghan Maguire, City Attorney, clarified that the agreement currently contemplates an online merchandise store with City approved in-person sales and pop-up shops. She stated that any in-person sales would require City approval and that the agreement includes monthly reporting, payment requirements, and audit rights throughout the term of the agreement and for five years thereafter. She also noted that the agreement could be amended if the City determined changes were needed based on experience during the pilot year.*

*Chair Holmes asked who would be responsible for marketing the merchandise. Mr. Hollis stated that the City would promote awareness through its normal marketing channels and that the vendor would manage the sales platform. He added that the City could support sales at events as appropriate.*

*Mr. Hollis introduced the City's new Marketing Manager, Cortni Bhardwaj, and presented examples of sample merchandise. Ms. Bhardwaj stated that the merchandise would be available in multiple colors and would align with City branding guidelines.*

*Chair Holmes welcomed Ms. Bhardwaj to the City.*

*Councilman Williams raised a comment regarding accessibility and the importance of ensuring residents can easily access merchandise. He also asked about the anticipated effective date if approved. Mr. Hollis responded that merchandise could be available as early as February.*

*Councilman Harman asked how the ten percent revenue share would be affected if the vendor staffed City events. Mr. Hollis explained that staffing costs would be part of the vendor's business operations and would not impact the City's revenue share.*

**A motion was made by Council Member Holmes, seconded by Council Member Moore, to approve agenda item 2026-9.**

**Motion passed with the following vote:**

**Aye:** Council Member Holmes, Council Member Moore, Council Member Harman, and Council Member Williams

**Nay:** None

*Councilman Moore requested that committee members be kept informed through sharing of monthly sales reports. Staff indicated agreement.*

2026-10

**Presentation of the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan Update**

Staff will provide a presentation on the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan update.

*Ms. Meredith Martin, Strategic Initiatives Manager, presented the Strategic Plan update for the second quarter of the current fiscal year, covering the period from October through December 2025. She explained that the update addressed progress across the City's six strategic goals and provided a high-level overview of accomplishments, challenges, and upcoming priorities. Ms. Martin reported that eighty-one percent of initiatives are on track, twelve percent have been completed, and seven percent have experienced disruption, noting that several of the disrupted initiatives reflect delays carried forward from the first quarter. She stated that overall progress has been made on forty-three percent of the initiatives within the Strategic Plan. She also noted that additional details are available through the City's public dashboard.*

*Ms. Martin reviewed Goal One, Thriving Economy, and highlighted continued momentum in catalyst area projects, including the successful opening of the SpringHill*

*Suites hotel and an agreement with the Congdon Foundation regarding the Congdon Yards parking lot for future development of a parking garage and apartments. She reported that Gallimore Dairy Industrial Park is fully leased and that plans are underway for an additional speculative building, with similar momentum occurring at the South Point Commerce Center. She noted that the Economic Development team has continued entrepreneurship and business outreach through presentations and collaborations. Challenges discussed included competition for industrial sites due to utility capacity limitations and coordination with private partners on capital projects such as the Washington Street electric underground work. Upcoming priorities include advancing the shared use commercial kitchen project, bidding the Phase One roof and building envelope work at 300 Oak, and continuing research into investment opportunities associated with the Opportunity Zone 2.0 program.*

*Ms. Martin then reviewed Goal Two, Effective Communication and Engagement. She reported that the City met its community engagement targets in the previous calendar year and has begun the current year with strong participation, citing recent MLK related events and the Walk for Peace. She discussed internal branding efforts focused on the City's core values and noted improvements in transparency through the launch of the City dashboard, continued live-streaming of meetings, and expanded multimedia efforts. She identified challenges related to capital funding for large scale venues and staffing constraints within the Communications and Public Engagement Department.*

*Councilman Moore asked for clarification regarding staffing constraints and requested more detail on how short-staffed the department had been and what positions were being addressed. Jeron Hollis, Managing Director, explained that the primary challenge had been filling the Marketing Manager position due to market competition and confirmed that the position has now been filled.*

*Chair Holmes asked whether the department is now fully staffed or if additional needs remain. Mr. Hollis responded that one additional full-time position remains to be filled, but interim measures have allowed the department to continue operations effectively.*

*Councilman Williams asked for examples of large scale venues referenced in the presentation. Ms. Martin responded that the primary example is Oak Hollow and referenced the recently adopted master plan, noting that future efforts involve implementing enhancements identified in that plan.*

*Ms. Martin reviewed upcoming priorities under Goal Two, including continued expansion of multimedia efforts, ongoing branding initiatives throughout City facilities and the community, and preparation for the 2026 biennial resident survey, which will be conducted later in the calendar year.*

*Ms. Martin then reviewed Goal Three, Proactive Urban Design and Planning. She reported that design and environmental review work for the Elm Street segment of the Build Grant project has been completed. She stated that public engagement for development ordinance updates has concluded and that a work group is reviewing the first draft with the goal of adoption in late summer. She also noted continued efficiencies*

*within the Plan Review and Inspections Department, with review times remaining well below the five-day target. Challenges discussed included coordination with external agencies, environmental reviews related to sidewalk projects, and reduced NCDOT funding opportunities due to statewide priorities. Upcoming priorities include review of the final transit study report and initiation of right of way acquisition for the Build Grant project.*

*Ms. Martin reviewed Goal Four, Resilient Community. She highlighted the development of a housing fund in partnership with the High Point Community Foundation, ongoing mental health initiatives at the Library, and progress toward establishing an alternative response team, including the posting of three positions. She also noted that the Community Development Department has been shifting toward more proactive code enforcement, focusing on nuisance and zoning cases.*

*Councilman Williams asked about staffing levels within Code Enforcement. Ms. Martin responded that recruitment remains challenging and that several vacancies exist, but efforts are underway to fill positions prior to the increased workload typically experienced during the summer months.*

*Ms. Martin reviewed Goal Five, Effective Infrastructure and Public Utilities. She reported that more than fifty percent of automated metering infrastructure meters have been deployed and are operational. She discussed progress on Public Services projects, including the West Green stormwater project, City Lake Dam design work, completion of survey work for the Shadybrook Lift Station, and progress on the Gallimore Dairy Road and Burton widening projects, with Gallimore Dairy Road anticipated to be completed by late spring. Challenges include monitoring construction and material cost escalation and balancing short-term and long term infrastructure investment needs.*

*Chair Holmes asked whether construction costs have remained relatively flat or have increased compared to prior years. Ms. Martin responded that recent bids are generally coming in near estimates, though cost trends continue to be closely monitored.*

*Chair Holmes asked for an update on pedestrian initiatives, specifically the Greenway extension. Assistant City Manager, Damon Dequenne, responded that design work for the Build Grant and Elm Street portions of the project is complete and that the next phase involves right of way acquisition, with overall project completion anticipated in 2028.*

*Ms. Martin noted additional upcoming priorities under Goal Five, including the anticipated launch of the AML customer portal following final testing and continued design work on ongoing infrastructure projects.*

*Ms. Martin concluded with Goal Six, High Performing Organization. She reported that the Workday system implementation has been completed, employee recognition events were successfully held, and employee training efforts have resumed following the Workday rollout. Challenges included statutory onboarding changes for employees working with children and temporary process adjustments related to Workday implementation. Upcoming priorities include review of the compensation and*

*classification study findings, completion of the annual audit by the revised February deadline, and continued review of an employee survey by the Employee Engagement Committee.*

*Councilman Moore asked about downtown development activity, referencing reports of a proposed commercial project on Washington Street. Greg Ferguson, Deputy City Manager, acknowledged the report and indicated that additional information would be provided once available. Councilman Moore commented on the importance of intentional efforts to energize downtown, increase foot traffic, and support businesses that have invested in the area.*

*Councilman Harmon asked whether the Strategic Plan dashboard is generating significant public traffic. Ms. Martin responded that Google Analytics are in place and that usage data can be provided to the committee.*

*Chair Holmes asked for clarification regarding the composition and operation of the Employee Engagement Committee. Ms. Martin explained that the committee includes employees from a range of departments and job classifications, including management and field staff, meets regularly, and provides recommendations to leadership that help inform budget and operational decisions.*

*Chair Holmes thanked staff for the presentation and noted this item was for information only.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

*Councilman Harman offered comments expressing appreciation to City staff, Police, Fire, and stadium personnel for their work on the Walk for Peace event, noting that the event was well coordinated, impactful, and contributed to increased downtown activity.*

*Councilman Moore also commented on the positive atmosphere created by the event.*

*Chair Holmes echoed the comments of the committee, stating that he was extremely proud of the City and emphasized the collaborative efforts of City departments, community members, and cultural groups. He noted that the event reflected the City's motto and demonstrated the community's ability to come together in a meaningful way, highlighting the national and international attention the event received. He encouraged residents to remain mindful of approaching weather conditions and to stay safe.*

*There being no further business to come before the Transparency, Engagement, and Communication Committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:41 a.m.*

Respectfully Submitted,

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Michael Holmes, Chairman

Attest:

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Sandra Keeney, City Clerk