

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL
RETREAT/ PLANNING SESSION
FEBRUARY 20, 2026**

THE FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL held a special strategic planning session on Friday, February 20, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at Fontana Lodge, Fontana Dam, NC.

1. CALL TO ORDER – MAYOR STACY GUFFEY

Mayor Stacy Guffey called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the following members present:

Vice Mayor Mike Lewis, Council Members Travis Higdon, Joe Collins, Robbie Tompa, Jeff Berry and Rita Salain.

Staff members present: Town Manager Amie Owens, Finance Director Sarah Bishop, Deputy Finance Director Alison Stamey and HR Director/Town Clerk Nicole Bradley.

Russ Harris Executive Director Southwestern Commission was the facilitator.

Mia Overton from The Franklin Press was also present.

2. STRATEGIC PLANS – RUSS HARRIS

Russ Harris, Executive Director Southwestern Commission, gave background of the Southwestern Commission and explained the Strategic Planning Exercise.

He asked Town Council members their thoughts on what went well in 2025:

- All Abilities Playground/Park started
- New Mayor (Stacy Guffey)
- Women’s History Statue
- Bike/Ped Plan grant
- Town’s great financial shape
- New Board makeup
- Fully staffed Police Department
- Best Staff
- Substandard Housing clean-up
- Clearwell Project @ WTP
- Fire Substation interior completion
- Mission focused Board

He then asked Town Council Members what could have been done better:

- Partner Relationships
- Beautification implementation efforts
- Town/County Communication (efforts being made/improving)
- Better Code Enforcement

Mr. Harris presented Town Council with nine (9) Focus/Goal areas. Town Council narrowed those down to focus on two (2): Town Infrastructure and Economic Development.

Town Council then brainstormed objectives for Town Infrastructure: neighborhood revitalization, water/sewer projects, pedestrian friendly downtown, repaving city streets, EV town fleet, cleaner roadsides, improve Main Street appearance and flow/redesign, speed safe streets, 2nd floor activation, Sunnyside Park development, sidewalk (new) expansion, multi-modal connectivity, better long-range planning, multi-jurisdictional utility issues, and parking.

Town Council then selected to focus on Main Street redesign and neighborhood revitalization.

3. RECESS MEETING

Mayor Stacy Guffey adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Stacy Guffey, Mayor

Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk