

**TOWN OF CARTHAGE  
APPEARANCE COMMITTEE - REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 13, 2026  
5:30 P.M.**

**AGENDA**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**  
Members of the committee may add or remove items on the agenda. A majority vote or unanimous consent is required before proceeding with the meeting.
- 3. PUBLIC COMMENT**
- 4. REPORTS**
  - a. Manager's Report
- 5. NEW BUSINESS**
  - a. Approve the minutes of the March 4, 2026, regular meeting.
- 6. OLD BUSINESS**
  - a. Updates on downtown planting.
- 7. FINAL COMMENTS**
- 8. ADJOURNMENT**

**Meetings are held in the Board Room inside the McDonald Building  
located at 207 McReynolds Street.**

# Manager's Report

**TO:** Appearance Committee  
**FROM:** Emily D. Yopp, Town Manager  
**DATE:** April 13, 2026

---

## **Update on Downtown Revitalization Project**

The Town only received two bids for the project, triggering an extension on the deadline for submitting bids to satisfy the statutory requirements for a minimum of 3 bids. No other bids were received and so the bidding closed with only the 2 original bids. General statute allows towns to proceed with less than 3 bids after the extension. Bids were received from Fred Smith and SQ Civil with SQ Civil being the lowest responsive, responsible bidder. Town staff will now proceed with negotiations with SQ Civil. Once all costs and contract negotiations are complete, the Board of Commissioners will need to vote to accept the contractor and the contract terms before construction proceeds. It will likely be May or June before this occurs.

## **Update on New Town Hall Project**

We received 9 valid prequalification letters for a variety of companies for the renovation of the new Town Hall. This project has generated a lot of interest! We will now proceed into the bidding phase and hope that we receive as many bid packages and preferably with competitive prices since there was so much interest.

## **Public Works Informed of Planting Day**

I have asked Public Works Director Allen Smith to plan on having the downtown planters prepared with soil and mulch for this years plantings.

## **Tablecloth Ordered**

I have ordered a black, fitted table cloth for the APC's folding table for the Buggy Festival.

**Town of Carthage**  
**Appearance Committee Regular Meeting - March 4, 2026**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Erin Rembert called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM. Also present was committee member Pam O'Connor and Town Manager Emily Yopp. Committee member Ashley Coates was running late but expected to arrive.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Rembert moved to approve the agenda as written. Pam O'Connor seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no members of the public present for comment.

**REPORTS**

**Manager's Report (Updated from February)**

Town Manager Emily Yopp provided updates on several ongoing projects. She explained that her report was essentially the same as February's but with current updates.

**Downtown Revitalization Project:**

Yopp reported that the project has moved into the bidding phase after waiting the statutory 30 days. She noted they are receiving questions from contractors, which is encouraging for getting the minimum of three bids required to proceed. The town is moving forward without Moore County participation after the county declined to install rain gardens on courthouse property due to their upcoming courthouse renovation project over the next couple of years. County officials expressed concerns that rain gardens would prohibit access for trucks, HVAC equipment, and other renovation needs. As a result, the project has reverted to the original Phase 1 and Phase 2 plan, with Phase 1 including pedestrian islands and curb work, and Phase 2 covering the northwest parking corner area.

**New Town Hall Project:**

The project is in the pre-qualification stage for general contractors, with the deadline for submissions set for March 16. Only contractors who demonstrate experience with historic properties and meet minimum scoring requirements will be eligible to bid.

**Budget Season:**

Yopp noted she is working on budget preparation for FY 2026-27 and encouraged any committee requests to be submitted now. She reported the committee's current account balance is \$6,621, with the annual allocation of \$800 still planned for the new budget.

Chair Rembert explained that the committee has been conserving funds in anticipation of the downtown changes. She expressed concern about the Board of Commissioners potentially reducing the committee budget allocation if they see a high balance without specific projects planned. The committee discussed the aging Christmas garlands and the need for replacement, with Manager Yopp suggesting this could be handled either through the committee's budget request or as a separate town expense under Buildings and Grounds.

Committee members preferred the garlands be handled as a separate town expense to preserve their funds for downtown enhancement projects when downtown revitalization construction is completed.

Regarding the downtown project timeline, Manager Yopp hopes to start construction by May 2026 and complete it by November, as her funding expires December 31, 2026. The committee discussed concerns about construction during the holiday season, which could negatively impact downtown businesses. Manager Yopp acknowledged these concerns but noted that detailed scheduling depends on contractor selection and negotiations.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Approve the January 12, 2026, and February 9, 2026, regular meeting minutes**

Chair Rembert and committee member Pam O'Connor reviewed the minutes. Mrs. O'Connor noted the February meeting was extremely brief, consisting mainly of a recess motion due to the chair's absence.

The committee approved both sets of meeting minutes by unanimous consent.

### **2025 Recap and 2026 Planning (Tabled from February)**

The committee discussed their upcoming planting schedule, typically done in the last week of April before Buggy Festival to avoid frost damage. They planned to schedule planting for April 27 at 5:00 PM, with April 28 as a rain date. The committee will continue using SuperTunias, which have performed well in previous years, requiring 58 six-inch plants total for all planters. Some planters on the corner where Phase 2 construction will occur may be removed, but the blue planters around the circle and other locations will remain.

For Buggy Festival on May 9, the committee confirmed they will want a booth next to the Garden Club, and will be selling merchandise as they did last year. They discussed payment methods, with one member offering to accept card payments through personal devices and reimburse the town. The committee will design and create merchandise themselves to keep costs low.

### **Adoption of 2026 Meetings Calendar (Tabled from February)**

The committee reviewed the proposed calendar and made several adjustments:

- June 8 meeting will proceed with the committee taking their own minutes since Town Manager Yopp will be out of the country June 5-14.
- July meeting is canceled due to travel conflicts and lack of committee business during summer months.
- October meeting moved from October 12 (town holiday) to October 5.
- Committee will meet in June but may not need August meeting due to minimal business and potential ongoing construction. Matter to be considered at the June meeting.

The town manager will provide a template for the June meeting to assist the committee with the minutes they take themselves.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Chair Rembert emphasized the importance of staying informed about downtown construction progress, as business owners frequently ask her questions about the project. Town Manager Yopp encouraged people to call the office directly with questions.

The committee discussed the potential impact of the elementary school rebuilding project on the town park. County commissioners have offered to fund a new school on the current site rather than the previously planned Vass-Carthage location, but this may require use of the town park for construction staging and/or permanent use for the school. Manager Yopp indicated that any such arrangement would require town commissioners' approval.

The committee also discussed ongoing trash problems in the county parking lot and requested that Manager Yopp contact the county manager about installing trash cans in the parking area.

## **FINAL COMMENTS**

Committee members expressed appreciation for the detailed updates on downtown projects and discussed the importance of coordinating construction timing to minimize impact on local businesses, especially during the crucial holiday shopping season.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Rembert moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:39 PM.