

**TURIN TOWN HALL  
COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
Minutes  
26 S.HUNTER STREET  
JANUARY 6, 2026 @ 6:00PM**

**WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

- **OPEN MEETING DECLARATION**
  - Mayor Sprouse welcomed everyone to the work session and called the meeting to order.
- **INVOCATION**
  - Mayor Sprouse headed the invocation.
- **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
  - Everyone in attendance.
- Attorney Mark Mitchell swore in newly elected Council member Kimbely Barnett.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

- Mayor Sprouse wanted to acknowledge a few former Council members of the Town of Turin, Tony Crunkleton and Susan Reimer. Polly Garlington Council member from Sharpsburg was also in attendance.

**STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:**

- Council members in attendance, Kimbely Barnett and Lydia Wallin, Water Superintendent Rusty Russell and Town Clerk Rena Screws.

**LEGAL COUNSEL IN ATTENDANCE:**

- Attorney Mark Mitchell

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **BUDGET 2026-27 | FISCAL | INVESTMENTS**
  - Mayor Sprouse acknowledges that Clerk Rena Screws has been in control of the budget for quite some time and she can give us some insight. Mayor Sprouse wants the budget for 2026 ready to be adopted with all the public hearings in place by May.
  - After the 2026 budget is approved and adopted, we need to promptly start working on the budget for 2027, so Town does not miss any opportunities for Grants or other programs.

- Town Clerk Rena Screws told the Mayor and Council for 2025 the water fund came up negatively with \$60,000.00. Our CPA suggested that we take more percentage of payroll from the general account than the 30% that we are currently doing. She also suggested that we go up on the water rate to be more competitive with our surrounding areas.
- Water Superintendent Russell advised the Mayor and Council that some of the downfall was the Town had several major water leaks that were not budgeted for.
- Attorney Mittchell advised that the Town needed to have a rate study performed, Water Sup. Russell agreed and that Georgia Rural Water Association would assist the Town in getting that completed.
- Council Barnett wanted to get a copy of the latest budget and audit, Clerk Screws has their copies in the Clerk's office.
- Mayor Sprouse advised the Council that he wanted to have the workshop at the old community building so as making the budget in the future to keep this building in mind to do remodeling in stages. Council Wallin wanted to know what the problem with the building was. Mayor Sprouse advised that the previous Mayor ruled the building unsafe to occupy. When the church behind the Town Hall burned down, he allowed them to occupy the building being deemed unsafe to occupy. They have continued to use the building as you can see all the items here that does not belong to the Town. The 3 piano's that are here in the building only the upright one belongs to the Town. Mayor Sprouse has not seen any engineering report deeming the building safe or unsafe, also need all the items out of the building except what belongs to the Town. Mayor Sprouse asked Attorney Mittchell is there something that needs to send out to whom the items belong to have the building cleaned out in a timely manner. Attorney Mittchell advised that sending a registered letter giving them a deadline to have the building cleaned out.
- Mayor Sprouse wanted to advise the Council that the monies that we have in the bank accounts as of now are not at the best rate and that the previous Mayor and Council approved shopping around for better rates and services that will better benefit the Town. Clerk Screws advised that the rate that we are getting at the current bank is 0.05 % and she is working with First People's Bank and Truist and getting information on what they have that will work better for the Town's money

- **COMMUNICATIONS**

- Mayor Sprouse wanted to speak about the communications with our emails for the Town. We are paying for all the Town's emails and they should be used. If you need help setting up our provider will come out and help set those emails up. If you want to use your personal emails that your personal device can be subpoenaed if needed.
- The Town's web page needs some work done to improve the lay out and how the information is stored within the page.

- The Town's logo has been talked about being changed. The Town's can reach out to STEM program and students at the local high school can have a contest and the Town can offer a small prize and recognize the winning student.
- Council Wallin wanted to suggest that the Council meetings be taped and/or recorded and placed on the website for the public who can't attend the meeting will be able to watch or listen. Mayor Sprouse wanted to advise Council members, Mayors and Mayor Pro Tem's are allowed 2 zoom calls per year to join the meetings if they cannot physically attend the meeting. Attorney Mitchell advised that you as Mayor, Council to attend meetings electronically several times per year per zoom or call in.

- **PLANNING & ZONING**

- Mayor Sprouse wanted to make sure that all the Town's ordinances are being adhered to. Some recent constructions are not following the ordinances.
- Mayor Sprouse wants everyone to be treated with respect.
- The Town no longer has an engineer and no longer has a Planning and Zoning administrator. In absence of the P&Z administrator the Council becomes the administrator until one is appointed. As of now we have 2 vacancies on the board and have 3 applications for those vacancies.
- Mayor Sprouse says that the Town needs to be looking for an engineer that has several levels of engineering. Mayor Sprouse has reached out to a couple of firms; Council Wallin wants the Town to get 3 bids for the engineer.

- **SET MEETING DATES FOR 2026**

- Mayor Sprouse wanted the Council to consider the day and times of the Council Meetings. The meetings are usually the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 7pm, he would like to have the work session and Council meetings on the same day. Have the work session at 6 and Council meetings at 7.

- **DRAFT CHARTER**

- Mayor Sprouse wants the Council to look over the draft Charter that was sent out by Attorney Mitchell to see if we need to amend the Charter. The Charter needs to be brought forward to be more in line with how the Town is and should be operated. Changing the Charter is a lengthy process, it must be submitted to the Legislature, they start meeting later this month through the end of March first of April.

- **VACANT COUNCIL SEAT**

- Mayor Sprouse wants to start looking for a member to fill that seat as soon as possible. Attorney Mitchell will investigate putting an application for the interested person to fill out.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Water Sup. Russell wanted to advise the Mayor and Council that the current water tower will need to be painted, and he has reached out and has 2 quotes. Council member Wallin and Council member Barnett would like to have 3 quotes to look over and decide. Russell also mentioned that for the budget for 2027 the inside of the water tower needs to be cleaned. After that the water tower will be good for several years.
- Water Sup. Russell also advised the Mayor and Council that the Town needs to install more water valves so that when a leak occurs, he can cut off sections of the Town instead of shutting off the whole Town to make the repairs.
- Water Sup. Russell wanted to let everyone know to look out and thank Mr. Floyd, he has been working for the Town and knows a lot about the water system that no one else does.
- Polly Garlington, Council member from Sharpsburg wanted to let everyone know what an outstanding job that Clerk Screws, Water Sup. Russell and Mr. Floyd made for her 2 years ago during an emergency she had at her home. They treated her like family and done everything they could to help her and get things straightened out for her.

## **ADJOURN**

- Mayor Sprouse adjourned the meeting.