

TOWN OF RANLO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING
RANLO LODGE
2000 SPENCER MOUNTAIN ROAD, RANLO, NORTH CAROLINA 28054
THURSDAY, JULY 9TH, 2026

MINUTES

Governing Body Present

Mayor Corey Creech
Mayor Pro-Tem Robin Conner
Commissioner Effie Locklear
Commissioner Ronnie Laws
Commissioner Schivette Hill
Commissioner Doug Moore

Staff Present

Town Manager	Charlie Hansen
Police Captain	Ralph Dowd
Public Works Director	Charles Harper
Finance Director	Reagan Day

I. Call to Order and Invocation

Mayor Creech called the Regular Meeting of the Board to order on Thursday, July 9th, 2026, at 7:00 PM at the Ranlo Lodge. Mayor Creech then led the Pledge of Allegiance and invocation.

II. Roll Call

The Town Clerk conducted the roll call. All members were present.

III. Adoption of the July 9th, Agenda

Commissioner Locklear made a motion to amend the agenda to add item 15 under new business to consider updating to the rules and procedure. Commissioner Laws seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Moore Made a motion to adopt the amended agenda for July 9th Board meeting. Commissioner Conner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Years of Service Recognition- Pam Moore:10 Years, Assistant Chief Holland: 25 Years

The Town Manager recognized two long-serving employees on behalf of the Town. Ms. Pam Moore was honored for 10 years of dedicated service to the Town of Ranlo, during which she has served in multiple roles including Office Administrator for Police, Planning, Zoning, and HR Director. The Town Manager noted her professionalism, organizational skills, warm welcome to residents, and commitment to her team and the Town.

Assistant Chief Brian Holland was honored for 25 years of service. The Town Manager noted that the town did not have a pin available in the denomination of 25 years, a testament to how rare and significant the milestone is. Holland was praised for his courage, integrity, and unwavering commitment to protecting the community, including working in conditions where chunks of concrete were literally falling into his office. The Town Manager remarked that his years of service stand as an inspiring example of dedication and expressed confidence that his best years are still ahead.

The Mayor thanked both honorees on behalf of the Board, expressing genuine appreciation for the time they had dedicated to the betterment of the community.

V. Comments from Attendees

Mark Williams- 2433 Lewiston Drive

Addressed two items. First, he inquired about the status of a property at 2636 Sherry Lane, noting that the code enforcement sign that had previously been posted there appeared to have been removed. The Town Manager directed him to the Town's New Code Enforcement Officer David L. who was present and would be providing an update later in the meeting.

Second, Mr. Williams formally requested that the Town explore integrating Ranlo's zoning districts and overlay maps into the Gaston County GIS system. He noted that several neighboring municipalities including Dallas, Kings Mountain, Lowell, and Stanley are already accessible on the platform, but Ranlo is not. He argued this would improve public transparency, reduce routine staff inquiries, and support economic development by allowing residents, property owners, developers, and prospective businesses to easily access land use and zoning information without having to contact Town staff directly. The Mayor and Board acknowledged it as a good observation, particularly in the context of the Town's efforts to attract more business.

Sobhy Abdelmalik (Sam)- 2327 Sunset Dr.

Addressed concerns about a neighbor's property at 2621 Sunset Dr and how it was overgrown. He goes on to state he had already talked with code enforcement officer and wanted to bring it to the Board's attention. Sam then provided the Board with pictures of the property and stated he had just moved here and was concerned with the risks of the unmanaged yard for the safety of kids. The Town Manager advised he would be happy to set up a meeting with him to go over the property more in depth.

Melvin Dent- 800 Joselynn Drive

Addressed the Board regarding speeding concerns on his street. Mr. Dent reported that within the last three months, two children had nearly been struck by vehicles, and that a motorcyclist had been observed speeding repeatedly in the area. Mr. Dent stated that he and neighbors canvassed the street, approximately 72 homes, and collected approximately 46 signatures on a petition requesting street markings to address the speeding issue. He confirmed that the signed petition had been submitted to the Town. The Town Manager indicated that staff would go out, assess the location, obtain cost estimates, and bring a proposal back to the Board.

Commissioner Moore made a motion to direct staff to research the location and costs for street markings and bring the findings back to the Board and seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Conner. The motion carried with no opposition.

Old Business:

VI. Adoption of the June 11th, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes of the Board

Commissioner Moore made a motion to adopt the meeting minutes for the June 2026 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Laws seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Rollback Jack Discussion

Representatives of Rollback Jack returned before the Board to present their proposal for a residential trash can management service. The lead presenter explained that what began as an effort to raise funds for church renovations had grown into a company with a pending patent application for an IOT ("Internet of Things") device they call an "IOT puck." The puck, intended to be placed inside the lid of a trash can, would measure heat, odor, location, tilt, and the presence of radioactive materials providing the Town with real time data on its trash receptacles

The service itself described as "curb to house, house to curb, and wash and rinse" would move trash cans out before the trash truck arrives, return them to residents' properties within an hour after pickup, and wash and rinse the cans to help the Town avoid potential EPA violations. The presenter cited research showing that over 17 cities in the United States already use similar IOT-based technology and noted that trash cans left in sidewalks can constitute ADA violations if left for extended periods.

The presenter acknowledged that a legal concern had been raised at a prior meeting regarding whether the Town could participate in a service that not all residents would use and clarified that their plan calls for every trash can in Ranlo to be managed making it a town wide service rather than an opt-in offering.

Commissioner Locklear stated the Town does offer a service where seniors could call the Town Hall for trash can assistance, noting that seniors are also served through the Town's senior Thanksgiving dinner program.

Following discussion, the Board moved to decline the proposal.

Motion to decline the Rollback Jack proposal was made by Commissioner Hill and seconded by Commissioner Laws. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

VIII. Consideration of the Artificial Intelligence Policy

The Town Manager presented the Town's proposed Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy, crediting Commissioner Hill for initiating the effort and acknowledging assistance from staff member Mr. Tosco, as well as guidance drawn from the City Vision conference in Raleigh and the City of Cary, North Carolina, one of the first municipalities in the state to adopt an AI policy. The Town Manager noted the policy was intentionally tailored to Ranlo's specific circumstances rather than simply adopting another municipality's language wholesale. Key provisions highlighted include: no procurement or expenditure decisions are to be made using generative AI; no patrol reports or official documents are to be generated solely by AI tools such as ChatGPT; and any proposals, RFPs, or RFQs submitted to the Town that include generative AI content must disclose that use. The Town Manager emphasized that persistent human oversight would be

maintained over all government processes, consistent with existing practices around expenditure review and approval. The Town Manager noted that Gaston County has an AI policy of only a paragraph or two, and that this policy would likely make Ranlo one of the first municipalities in the county with a comprehensive AI governance document. Motion to adopt the Artificial Intelligence Policy was made by Commissioner Hill and seconded by Commissioner Moore. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Fund Balance Projects

The Town Manager presented a fund balance project list of potential one-time appropriations from the Town's unassigned fund balance. The Town Manager clarified the distinction between recurring operating costs and one time capital expenditure, noting that fund balance appropriations are appropriate for the latter. The items presented included:

Personnel Policy Manual & Merit-Based Evaluation System:

An exact quote was received from an outside firm to revamp the Town's personnel policy manual and introduce a merit based raise and evaluation process. Commissioner Hill made a motion to move forward with the overhaul of the personnel policy. Commissioner Locklear seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Swings at Park:

Town staff obtained quotes from two vendors for new swing sets with shade structures, including infant swings, an ADA-accessible swing, standard swings, and permanent shade canopies. One vendor provided a quote of approximately \$69,125 for a six-bay swing set with shade. A second, more comprehensive proposal that incorporated multiple shade structures throughout the park layout was also presented. Staff noted that a third vendor was contacted but did not respond.

Multi-Use Recreational Court:

Staff obtained a quote for a multi-use recreational court to replace the deteriorating basketball. The court would be constructed of concrete with replaceable tile (lasting an estimated 15–20 years), branded with the Ranlo logo, and designed to accommodate multiple uses including basketball, pickleball, shuffleboard, and others. Staff noted the asphalt at the existing Garden Park court is breaking apart from tree roots, the retaining wall is failing, and bog holes have been damaged. A full rehabilitation of the Garden Park court was quoted at approximately \$100,000. A larger installation at Fullbright Park requiring significant grading, as the area behind the splash pad would need to be raised approximately six feet, was quoted at approximately \$160,000. Staff noted these are not apples-to-apples comparisons given the scope differences between the two sites. The Town Manager and Mayor suggested that rather than funding individual park improvements piecemeal, the Board consider commissioning a long-term master plan for the park system, like the approach taken for the new Town Hall, to ensure that all future investments are coordinated and strategically placed.

Ranlo Experience Committee Appropriation:

The Experience Committee Chair, Drew Horine (1616 Allegheny Drive), addressed the Board to explain the request for a \$30,000 one-time appropriation (in addition to the

\$50,000 already in the operating budget). Mr. Horine explained that when the committee took over Town events, they found approximately \$1,200 remaining in the events budget for the fiscal year. The committee went out and obtained real pricing from real vendors, finding that costs including fuel, fireworks, and event services have risen significantly. He acknowledged the committee is actively polling community members at events to determine what residents want and noted that event dates for calendar year 2026 were set before the committee was formed. The committee is currently reviewing the 2027 calendar.

Commissioner Moore made a motion to approve the \$30,000 extra funding for the event committee. Mayor Pro-tem Conner seconded the motion. The motion failed with Commissioner Locklear, Laws, and Hill opposing.

Commissioner Hill raised concerns about the quantity of events relative to quality, suggesting that removing or consolidating some events would give the committee more capacity to execute each one well, citing difficulty securing Christmas parade floats as one example. Commissioner Locklear disagreed, expressing strong support for the volume of events given the community engagement they generate. Mr. Horine indicated the committee is actively reviewing the number, timing, and format of events for 2027, including considering alternatives such as a drone show in place of fireworks. A request was made by the Board for Mr. Horine to resubmit the line-item budget spreadsheet for each event, which he agreed to do.

Ranlo Resource Network Appropriation:

Commissioner Hill made a motion to appropriate \$6,000 to the Ranlo Resource Network as a starting allocation. It was noted by the Town Manager that the Resource Network currently has no operating budget allocation whatsoever, making any appropriation meaningful. The discussion on the full \$8,000 requested amount was briefly discussed, and the motion was amended to reflect a starting figure. Commissioner Locklear seconded the motion to allocate \$8,000 from the unassigned fund balance to the Ranlo Resource Network. The motion passed unanimously.

X. RFP/Q for Design of Public Works Complex

The Board discussed issuing an RFP/Q for the design of a new Public Works Complex. Town staff described the current Public Works building located at 120 Duff Street as severely outdated, having remained essentially unchanged since approximately 1975. The only recent addition has been a two-bay structure for housing water trailers. Staff described conditions including a shop bay, a break room roughly the size of a kitchen, and a single bathroom for 15 employees. Staff indicated they are open to any design concept, provided it is a meaningful improvement over current condition.

Commissioner Locklear suggested that rather than engaging a large outside design firm at significant expense, the Town could leverage local talent by advertising the RFQ through the water bill newsletter and other channels to solicit interest from local designers or architects noting that even student or emerging professionals could participate. The Town

Manager agreed this approach aligns with how the Town Hall design was approached and noted it would be a straightforward advertisement process.

Commissioner Hill made the motion to issue an RFP/Q for the design of the Public Works Complex. Commissioner Laws seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

XI. Committee Updates

Ranlo Resource Network —Karen Creech

The Ranlo Resource Network successfully connected with the summer feeding program, which operates Monday through Thursday from 12:15 to 1:00 PM near the park and splash pad area. A van provides free meals for anyone under 18. Participants are required to eat on site rather than take meals to go. The representative noted that participation has been low and called for greater outreach through social media and Milltown Night events. At recent Milltown Nights, the committee set up a resource table providing information on 2-1-1 rental assistance, utility assistance, housing, transportation, food banks, and senior services. Participating partners included United Way of Gaston County, Gaston County Arts Council, and Gaston County Adult Aging Services.

The Network's next meeting is Wednesday, July 15th at 6:30 PM at Ranlo Lodge. The committee meets every third Wednesday at 6:30 PM.

Upcoming focus areas include monthly senior resource events, proposed to include agency presentations followed by bingo to encourage attendance, and a planned health fair in 2027 in partnership with a Nigerian physician group, which would offer free services including A1C checks, cholesterol screenings, and mental health provider access.

Ranlo Experience Committee — Drew Horine

Mr. Horine stated the June 19th Milltown Nights, held on Juneteenth, was described as a success. Despite a rainy morning, the weather cleared for the evening, and the event featured a DJ, inflatables, multiple food vendors, and one retail vendor. Mr. Horine noted strong crowd turnout even though several other Gaston County municipalities held their own Juneteenth celebrations on the same night. He recognized committee members for coordinating with the organizers of Ebony Fest, a separate Juneteenth celebration held in the area the same weekend, which helped broaden community engagement.

The next Milltown Night is scheduled for July 17th and will feature live blues music from a local musician known as "The Gift", returning car show facilitated by resident Mark Connor, and inflatables. Mr. Horine requested that commissioner volunteers to serve as car show judges, noting that if the full Board attends, it would need to ensure it does not constitute an official quorum gathering. Vendors interested in participating were encouraged to contact the Town.

Mr. Horine also reported that the committee is actively working to tighten procedures around planning, booking, staffing, and volunteer coverage. He noted that volunteer

coverage at the June 19th event was sufficient. The committee is also working to obtain multiple quotes for event vendors even when not required by procurement thresholds. Upcoming events include a Milltown Night on August 21st (back-to-school theme), the Fall Festival, Senior Thanksgiving, and the Christmas parade.

The Experience Committee meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM at Ranlo Lodge. Residents are encouraged to attend.

A special committee meeting was noted for the following day (July 10th) at 7:00 PM at Ranlo Lodge, to be led by Vice Chair Tammy Love in Mr. Horine's absence.

XII. Consideration of Budget Amendment 2627.1

The Town Manager briefly explained that Budget Amendment 2627.1 reflects the movement of an internal revenue appropriation previously approved by the Board for the purpose of paying off Police body cameras. The amendment formalizes that line item in the budget.

Commissioner More made the motion to approve Budget Amendment 2627.1. Mayor Pro-Tem Conner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

XIII. Presentation of Monthly Financial Report

The Town Manager presented the year end Monthly Financial Report to the board notating the Town ended the fiscal year without a deficit.

XIV. Discussion of Updating Rules and Procedure

Commissioner Hill advised that amending Number 30 (what's in Red) would make sure that the majority agrees with having staff and/or Town attorney doing extensive work being asked by a Governing Body. Commissioner Moore made a motion to revise the Rules and Procedure to amend number 30 with what's highlighted in red. Commissioner Locklear seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Other Business:

XV. Town Manager's Report

South Ranlo Waterline Project: The Town Manager clarified the full scope of the project for the benefit of residents who had raised questions prior to the meeting. The project encompasses the east side of Spencer Mountain Road (Redland, Brooker, and Neely Branch areas) funded by ARPA funds, as well as the west side funded by HUD money. Construction began on the east side first because the ARPA funds have a year-end calendar deadline, and starting on the west side would have risked forfeiting approximately \$1.2 million. The Board previously voted to reduce the scope of the east side after initial quotes came back higher than expected. However, the Town was subsequently selected as one of the projects in Congressman Tim Moore's Congressional Directed Spending appropriations, which could bring \$1.8 million in federal funding to restore the cut scope, pending passage of the federal budget. The project is under construction as of June and is expected to be completed by spring of next year.

Spencer Mountain Road Sidewalk Project: Matt E. with the Wooten Company described a two-part sidewalk improvement project along Spencer Mountain Road. Part

one addresses the south and east side of Spencer Mountain Road, replacing older broken sections of existing sidewalk between E. Long Avenue and Ranlo Lodge. Part two involves constructing new sidewalk on the north and west side of Spencer Mountain Road from East Long Avenue to Burmill Rd, including crosswalks. The design includes a potential crosswalk near Town Hall, which has not yet been finalized and requires additional justification with NCDOT. Staff noted coordination is underway to ensure sidewalk construction does not conflict with the upcoming Town Hall construction entrance, so as not to waste grant funds.

Fire Department Report: The Fire Chief reported the incident statistics for the period to the Board

Police Department Report: Captain Dowd on behalf of Police Chief, reported police calls ran for the month to the Board.

Public Works Report: The Director of Public Works Town reported meeting with Two Rivers (City of Gastonia) to discuss a contract for a secondary water interconnect for Monterey Park. The meeting went well. Staff noted that Gastonia representatives sit on the regional water commission that manages drought restrictions, and relayed that the Stage 2 water restriction currently in effect is expected to remain in place for the foreseeable future. The splash pad will therefore remain closed until further notice.

Code Enforcement Update: Code Enforcement Officer David L. provided an update on enforcement activities, including work on properties with inoperable vehicles, overgrown lots, and abandoned structures. He described an ongoing effort to bring in licensed contractors for abatement work, rather than using Town crews, to limit the Town's liability exposure. He referenced a prior incident in which a Town crew boarded up an abandoned property and a shelf fell, resulting in a \$14,000 liability claim against the Town. The use of contractors with appropriate liability coverage would help prevent similar situations. David indicated he is developing contractor agreements to formalize this process and that property owners are generally given a 10-day compliance window before the Town takes action. He noted that code enforcement represents an investment in the community, as residents and prospective residents make decisions about where to live based on the appearance and upkeep of a town.

XVI. Comments from the Mayor

The Mayor offered closing remarks reflecting on the Town's overall trajectory. He expressed enthusiasm about the impending groundbreaking for the new Town Hall, anticipated for the end of the year, and noted that the Town is likely to secure partial federal or state funding for the building, potentially through Congressman Tim Moore, who toured the project and expressed interest in funding the building in the coming year. The Mayor emphasized the Town's broader strategy of investing in beautification and

infrastructure to attract businesses and increase Town revenue, which in turn supports competitive employee salaries and long-term sustainability. He praised the attitude and dedication of Town employees and encouraged the Board and staff to continue their momentum.

XVII. Comments from the Board

Mayor Pro-Tem Conner thanked attendees for their presence and support, as well as thanking Town Staff for all the hard work and dedication.

Commissioner Moore advised that Larry Black, a former long term Town employee, had recently passed away and wanted to send flowers.

XVIII. Adjournment

Commissioner Laws made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Locklear seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

ATTESTED TO:

Mayor Corey Creech