

TOWN OF RANLO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING

RANLO LODGE

2000 SPENCER MOUNTAIN ROAD, RANLO, NORTH CAROLINA 28054

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7TH, 2026

MINUTES

Governing Body Present

Mayor Corey Creech

Mayor Pro-Tem Robin Conner

Commissioner Ronnie Laws

Commissioner Effie Locklear

Commissioner Schivette Hill

Commissioner Doug Moore (Virtually)

Staff Present

Town Manager Charlie Hansen

Police Chief Jimmy Lunsford

Public Works Director Charles Harper

Finance Director Reagan Day

Lawyer Nick Tosco

I. Call to Order

Mayor Creech called the Special Meeting of the Board to order on Wednesday, January 7, 2026, at 6:30 PM at the Ranlo Lodge.

II. Roll Call

Mayor Creech conducted the roll call. All the Commissioners were present with notation Commissioner Doug Moore would be joining virtually

III. Adoption of the January 7th, Agenda

Motion to adopt the agenda was made by Commissioner Laws and seconded by Commissioner Hill. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Comments from Attendees

Frank- 2908 Teton Dr.

Frank a resident from 2908 Teton Drive, addressed the Board with two concerns:

1. Property tax rates - He expressed frustration that while Charlotte and Gastonia lowered their tax rates after property valuations tripled, Ranlo had maintained the same rate. He stated this was causing financial hardship for him as a retiree.
2. Speed bumps - He expresses concern about the number of speed bumps throughout Ranlo, particularly noting that some are placed in areas with no nearby homes. He suggested replacing speed bumps with occasional police presence to ticket speeders, which would generate revenue for the town while not inconveniencing all drivers.

The Mayor assured the resident they would look into his concerns.

Commissioner Hill commented that since the resident lives in Mountain View, which has an HOA, that organization might be able to provide insight regarding the speed bumps.

New Business:

V. Introduction of Project Planning Board

The Mayor introduced a new project planning board that has been created to track issues raised during meetings and their resolution. He emphasized the commitment to addressing residents' concerns systematically.

The Mayor displayed the project board which included items such as:

- Police presence in the Mountain View area - The Chief has been addressing this issue by logging police visits to the area.
- Building system payment issues – Town Manager, explained they had met with a resident who experienced difficulties using the town's billing system. Hansen noted they had found ways to make minor improvements but were excited about implementing new financial software in the coming months. The North Carolina League of Municipalities is paying for this new cloud-based software for three years, which will significantly improve both internal functions like payroll and external functions like bill payment.

The Mayor noted that the project board would be accessible to all commissioners and that they welcomed ideas from anyone who wanted to suggest potential projects. He mentioned that he had already added items he heard about while campaigning. The Mayor expressed concern that there hadn't been much change in Ranlo during his 20 years living there and emphasized that funding would be needed to implement desired projects.

VI. Discussion of Funding Sources-Town Hall & Police Station

The Mayor discussed the need for funding sources for a municipal building. He mentioned that they were working on securing funding and had already been in contact with Tim Moore's office. They were also planning to speak with Brad Overcash (Senator) and John Torbett.

The Mayor discussed several potential funding sources for the Town Hall and Police Station project. He emphasized the need for the town to look for various revenue streams, including:

1. Seeking grants for town projects
2. Moving approximately \$1 million from town funds to show commitment to building projects
3. Attracting businesses to increase the tax base

The Town Manager clarified that the Town was working to get off the "unit assistance list" by August of the coming year. He noted that towns similar to Ranlo's size normally have about 60% available fund balance, while Ranlo is currently at approximately 150%, having grown close to 40% in the previous year.

The Town Manager also explained that any appropriation of \$1 million or more would require approval from the Local Government Commission (LGC) in Raleigh. He mentioned that the town has already received \$722,690 in grant money through the SCIF grant for sidewalks on Spencer Mountain Road.

The Mayor emphasized that having proper designs ready before asking for grants was crucial to securing funding.

The Mayor spoke on Will Cauthen from Withers Ravenel, whom the board had previously approved for the design phase of the project. The Town Manager and Mayor had met with him the previous day, and the Mayor noted that Cauthen had done similar projects before and had excellent ideas.

The Mayor indicated that they hoped to have the police department and municipal building up and running within a year to a year and a half.

VII. Discussion of Potential Land Sale- Water Plant

The Mayor introduced the possibility of selling town-owned land where an old water plant is located to generate funds for other projects.

The Town Manager provided background information about the property:

- Approximately 20 acres
- Currently only used for the police firing range
- Located at Bottom of mountain (on G W Hardy Rd)
- Between one-third and two-thirds of the property lies within a floodplain
- Described as "riverfront" and "pristine"

The Town Attorney explained the legal process for selling town property, noting that there are three options:

1. Upset bid process - where initial bids can be followed by additional bids over a 10-day period
2. Sealed bid process - where all bids are opened at once and the highest is selected
3. Public auction - less commonly used for real property

The Town Attorney also mentioned an exception for economic development projects that could allow for a different sales process.

Diana Palmer, a citizen, raised concerns about selling the property, noting that the Carolina Thread Trail is planning a trail that would go through the property. The Town Manager confirmed that the property is part of a planned state trail system that would eventually connect to Spencer Mountain trail

Another Citizen added to the discussion about mentioning the land be gear for ecotourism which would be a great way to improve community and keeping it here verse big companies and give revenue so it would tie everything together.

VIII. Discussion of Repaving Spencer Mountain Road

The board discussed the need for repaving Spencer Mountain Road. The Town Manager clarified that the town wouldn't use local money to repave Spencer Mountain Road as it's under DOT jurisdiction. He mentioned that DOT has the stated that the road would be repaved in either 2026 or 2027.

The Town Manager noted that he's been in discussions with DOT about the intersection of Park Road, Ranlo Avenue, and Spencer Mountain Road, which he described as "a nightmare" with five streets converging. He explained that DOT processes typically take years to complete.

A citizen mention a concern of the road being repaved to see if it was possible to cross check with the utilities to ensure the road would not be paved and repaved repeatedly. The Town Manager advised we are being proactive and looking at the lines beforehand to see what conditions the pipes are in. Commissioner Conner mentioned about possible widening of the road. The public works director mention that anytime you repave a road the machine vibrates the ground so hard and breaks the pipes so water leaks unfortunately will happen and that with any municipalities

The Mayor expressed concern that Ranlo had been overlooked for road improvements in 2012 and again in 2020 like Commissioner Laws mention, emphasizing the need to ensure the town stays on DOT's list for improvements.

IX. Discussion of Monthly Board Work Sessions

The Mayor proposed holding monthly board working sessions to discuss ongoing projects and develop timelines. He emphasized that "nothing gets done unless it's written down and you got some timelines on it."

Commissioner Conner requested to ask a question to Frank (Teton Dr) about what he mentioned before with the tax rate. He responded with Ranlo didn't go down on tax rate and his property value tripled so his taxes also tripled. Jeff Moore, another citizen interjected and stated Ranlo's rate did decrease like 5 cents but wasn't a lot and still high

so he doesn't understand where this money the Town needs isn't there already cause the residents are paying their share. The mayor advised they will do some research on this. The Town Manager stated and confirmed the town went down 5 cents, which was before he was town manager, and that since then it has maintained that rate and this would be great discussion as we start budget workshops for the upcoming year. Commissioner Hill stated that a majority of the tax rate is coming from Gastonia/Gaston County.

The Town Attorney provided guidance on the legal framework for work sessions, explaining that there are three types of meetings under North Carolina law:

1. Regular official meetings
2. Special meetings
3. Emergency meetings

He advised that if the board wanted to establish regular work sessions, they would need to amend the regular meeting schedule, with at least 7 days' notice as required by state law. He noted that some jurisdictions hold work sessions immediately before regular meetings, while others make them separate events.

Commissioner Locklear made a motion to table the discussion on the structure of Board work sessions. Commissioner Conner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Town Hall and Police Station Discussion

The Mayor discussed plans for the Town Hall and Police Station, mentioning that there have been multiple designs created previously, including some by Moseley and other designs from Creech & Associates dating back to 2020.

The Town Manager clarified that Moseley has been awarded a contract to create designs, not that they have already produced designs. He explained that the design process would include stakeholder engagement and public forums where residents could provide input. The Town Manager noted that the Creech & Associates designs from 2020 were pre COVID and the costs would likely be much higher now - potentially \$18-20 million for what was previously a \$10 million project.

The Town Manager also mentioned that Moseley's team includes financial specialists who help find funding for clients, having brought over \$1 billion to their clients across North Carolina.

Other Business:

XI. Comments from the Mayor

The Mayor expressed optimism about Ranlo's future, stating that "God has his hand on Ranlo" in the town's affairs and that residents will see positive changes, though it will take time. He praised the commissioners, town manager, and town attorney, as well as the residents. He mentioned participating in a Toys for Tots event with the police chief, which showed how much love Ranlo spread around the county.

XII. Comments from the Board

Commissioner Conner inquired about water bills, expressing concern about the 5% increases for water and sewer rates. The Town Manager clarified that the increases were not specific to Ranlo but applied to all municipalities buying from Two Rivers Utilities. He explained that Ranlo works with the North Carolina Rural Water Association to conduct annual rate studies, and that based on Ranlo's customer profile, they were able to implement smaller increases (3.25%) than the 5% suggested.

Commissioner Conner mentioned being excited about the new large banner for Kaylyn Brown (dimensions noted as 20 feet by 18 feet) that had been installed on a building, expressing pride that Ranlo had something positive to showcase.

XIII. Adjournment

Commissioner Locklear made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Laws seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous 5-0 vote.

ATTESTED TO:

Mayor Corey Creech