town of bethlehem
LITTLE TOWN UNDER THE STAR

Town council meeting
July 6, 2026

Present: Mayor Chris Lelle; Councilmen, Sally Brown, Sharon Johnson, Mike Camp and Doug Koestel; Kathy Bridges, clerk, Jack Samuels, attorney

The meeting opened at 7:01 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor opened the public hearing on the adoption of text amendments to the Unified Development Codes to incorporate a new Planned Industrial Campus (PIC); general text updates to update Tables 2.3- Principal uses and 2.4-accessory uses and for other purposes.

The second item is the rezone of Wayne Sanderson Farms, 84 Smith Mill Road from M-1 to PIC for the expansion of an existing poultry/egg production facility.

Stan Porter, the attorney representing Wayne Sanderson explained the new zoning category fits the property. Jason Orr, a senior director with Sanderson explained the goal was to increase production at the processing plant.

Several citizens spoke including Scott Morgan Jean Ross, Burgundy Hensley, Nancy Davidson and Evette Maddox

At 7:50 the public hearing was closed, and the meeting went into regular session. Shron Johnson made the motion to approve the June 1 minutes and with a second by Sally Brown the motion carried unanimously. Sally Brown made the motion to approve the June 1 executive session minutes and with a second by Sharon Johnson the motion carried unanimously.

The council reviewed the financials then went on to new business.

First was the adoption of the text amendments. The Mayor went through the principal use table removing the PIC designation from uses that were not pertinent to the hatchery. Sally Brown made the motion to approve the amendments with the changes, Sharon Johnson seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous for approval.

Next was the rezone of 84 Smith Mill Road from M1 to PIC for the expansion of the hatchery. Sally Brown made the motion to approve the rezone, Doug Koestel seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to approve. Koestel made a motion that Sanderson Farms attend the Jan 4 council meeting to report on the progress of the construction. Sally Brown seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Next the council approved the 2026 ARPA budget with a motion by Brown, a second by Johnson and a unanimous vote.

The council reviewed the request of Stella Byrd to lease a 10 x 10 space to put a cemetery monument display. Byrd also asked how much the rent for 742 Manger would be.

The Mayor said the road contract and the Notice to Proceed would be processed tomorrow and the council would get an update.

The business license for On Point Mobile Diagnostics home office was approved with a motion by Sharon Johnson, a second by Mike Camp and a unanimous vote.

The council discussed the renovation of 742 Manger Avenue. Doug Koestel said CPL would perform the inspections along with the fire marshall. He made a motion to continue the project without architectural plans, Sharon Johnson seconded the motion, Mike Camp voted yes and Sally Brown voted no. The Mayor vetoed the motion claiming he would not allow the project to continue without architectural plans.

The council discussed replacing CPL as planners. Doug made the motion to use Rich Atkinson on all new projects, Sharon Johnson voted yes, Mike Camp voted yes and Sally Brown voted no. The motion carried, but the Mayor vetoed the motion saying he did not agree with using Atkinson on all new projects.

The council discussed a deadline for agenda approval. Sharon Johnson made the motion to have a draft of the agenda by the Monday before the meeting; finalize the agenda by Wednesday and send it out by Thursday. Doug Koestel seconded the motion, and it passed by unanimous vote.

The duties of the Mayor and Mayor Pro-tem regarding signing checks were discussed.

At 9:20 Sharon Johnson made the motion to enter executive session to discuss litigation, Sally Brown seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The council came out of executive session at 9:45 with a motion by Koestel, a second by Brown and a unanimous vote and the meeting was adjourned.