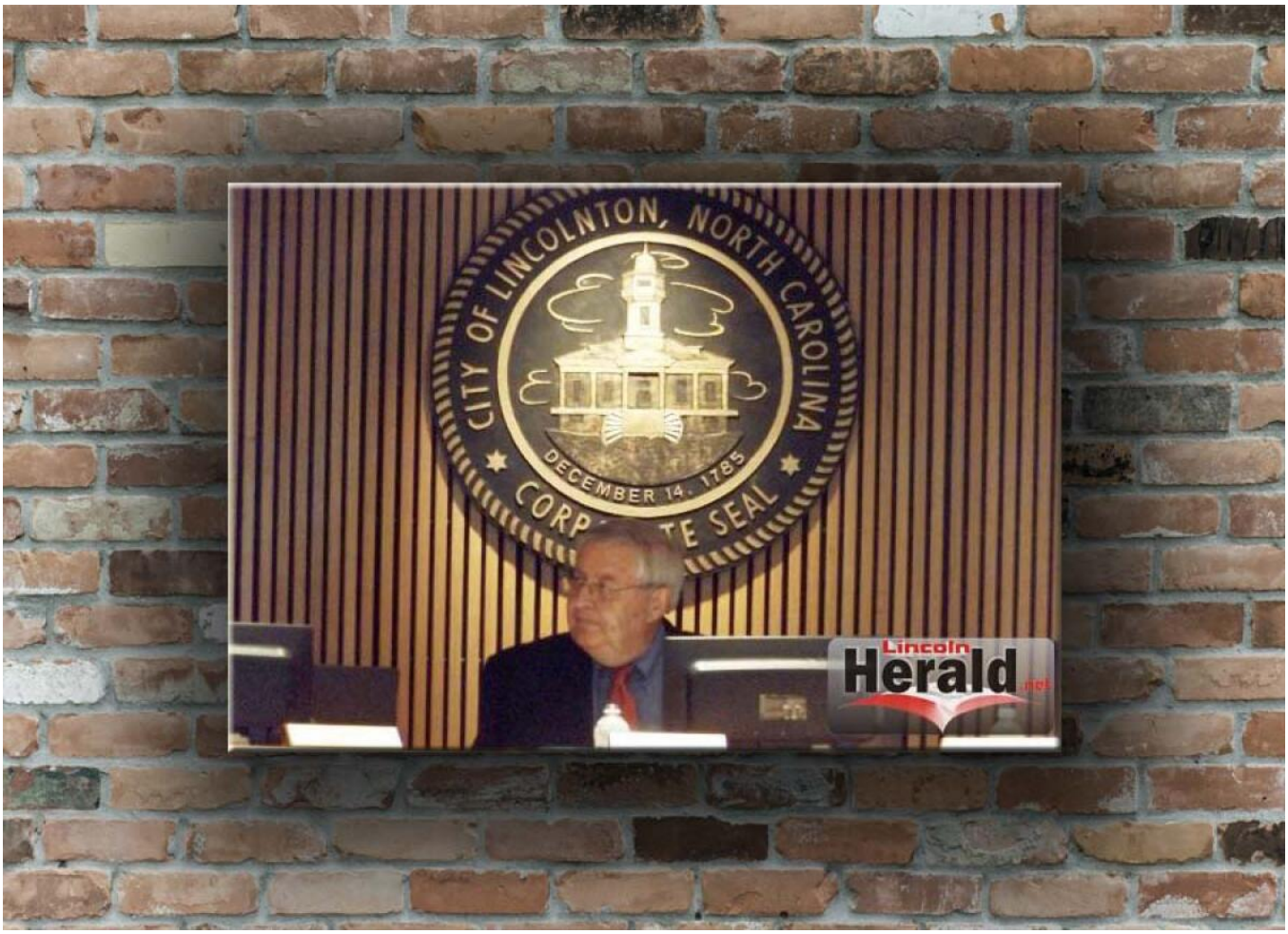



# City Council Rescinds State Of Emergency

## Editor , Thomas Lark

LINCOLNTON––The Lincolnton City Council has officially rescinded the City's declared state of emergency.

The action came at the council's regular meeting Thursday. Councilwoman Christine Poinsette made the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Ed Hatley recounted how he and city manager Ritchie Haynes followed the County's lead on Sept. 27, after Lincoln County Government declared a state of emergency in the wake of Hurricane Helene, one of the most destructive such storms in American history. Flooding, downed trees and powerlines and multiple electrical power outages were among the hurricane's local results.

Hatley explained that such states of emergency must be declared before municipalities and counties may pull in any monies from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (or FEMA).

"We didn't know at that time how much the damage would be," the mayor explained, "and didn't want to wait until it was too late."

Hatley added that he and Poinsette conferred with North Carolina State Sen. Ted Alexander and told him to put such federal monies to entirely better use in Appalachian Mountain areas that were exponentially more harder hit by Helene's related and devastating floodwaters. On behalf of the City, Hatley extended thanks to Alexander for his vigilance.

Haynes shared the sentiment.

“As bad as it was here,” he said, “we were very fortunate, compared to our neighbors in the mountains.”

Citing the months ahead, Haynes also stressed the importance of assisting these mountain communities in any way possible and getting supplies to them.

“These issues won’t go away,” he said, adding that the infrastructure of many mountain communities has been ruined by the historic flooding, and it may take years for some places to fully recover. “It’s almost like starting from scratch.”

Poinsette observed that Chimney Rock was one of her favorite places.

“And it’s gone,” she added.

Haynes said he’d conferred with his counterparts in Burnsville, Black Mountain, Old Fort and other such mountain municipalities hurt by Helene.

Haynes reiterated the long-term nature of the coming recovery. He added that the main thing to consider is not what can be done today but what can be done “in three to six months.”

Haynes revealed that the City of Lincolnton is working in partnership with its neighbor municipalities in the mountains. Personnel from the Lincolnton Fire and Police departments have already been to Old Fort and Asheville, he said, citing examples of this commendable co-operation.

“I will keep you abreast of what we’re doing as a town to help our neighbors,” he added.