

**MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL**  
**February 14, 2017**  
**Whitsett Town Hall Building**

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

The regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council was held on Tuesday, February 14, 2017 at the Whitsett Town Hall. The following members of the Town Council were present: Mayor Richard Fennell, Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown, and Council Members Jerry Rice, Cindy Wheeler, and Lee Greeson.

Also present were Town Administrator Ken Jacobs, Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia, *The Alamance News* reporter Tomas Murawski, and seven area residents.

Mayor Fennell called the meeting to order, and asked Council Member Jerry Rice to offer the invocation.

**SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR**

Mayor Fennell asked for any speakers from the floor; and James Blaylock and David Fortner came forward to request Council's consideration in awarding the ball field contract to them as co-directors of the ball league for the 2017 seasons. The two were energetic and excited in presenting their plans for repairs and improvements to the field and to bring the league back into respectable atmosphere of sportsmanship and fellowship. Council members were receptive and encouraged by their spoken intentions.

Mayor Fennell thanked them for their attendance and time; and stated that action would be taken on their request under New Business.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**1. Adoption of the Minutes**

Mayor Fennell asked for any changes to the minutes from the December 13, 2016 regular monthly meeting; and hearing none, asked for a motion to adopt the minutes as written. A motion to adopt the minutes as written was made by Council Member Jerry Rice; motion seconded simultaneously by Council Members Cindy Wheeler and Lee Greeson. The motion to adopt the December regular meeting minutes carried by unanimous vote.

## **2. Any Other Old Business**

Mayor Fennell asked if there were any other old business to be discussed; there was none.

## **BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **1. Planning Board**

Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia reported that the Board had held its election of officers for 2017; and both Maccia and Ella Efird will remain as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, of the Planning Board for the coming year. Council members had received a listing of the election results with the terms of the two officers extended to 2019.

Mayor Fennell asked for a motion to formally appoint Board members for 2017. Council Member Jerry Rice made a motion to approve the 2017 Planning Board roster as presented; motion seconded by Council Member Lee Greeson. The motion carried by unanimous vote, followed by a recurring announcement that the Planning Board had many vacancies to fill.

### **2. Enforcement Committee**

Enforcement Officer Ken Jacobs stated that no committee activity had taken place this month.

### **3. Enforcement Officer**

Enforcement Officer Jacobs reported that since the last (December) Council meeting, four Development Clearance Permit Certificates had been issued to: (1) First Baptist Church of Whitsett for remediation of its failing septic system, (2) Sarah Berrier for approved subdivision of 7042 Kivette House Road parcel, (3) Sears subcontractor for replacement of gas pack at 7061 Kivette House Road, and (4) to Crown Castle on behalf of Verizon for upgrades to existing cell tower.

### **4. Town Administrator**

Town Administrator Jacobs reported that NC Rural Water Association staffer Al Slover had stopped by Town Hall for a standard visit to remind the Town of assistance the NCRWA can provide. The subject of grant money for non-sewer communities came up; and Mr. Slover gave the name of NCRWA Marty Wilson to the Town Clerk, and said he would also have Mr. Wilson contact the Town.

Town Administrator Jacobs then stated that lately, the Town had been trying to once and for all iron out delinquent water bills and look at establishing policies

with some teeth in it, e.g., due dates for payment of bills vs. “due upon receipt” and late fees. Once finalized and approved by Council, these policies would be mailed in water bills and implemented.

With respect to Town finances and banking vehicles, Town Administrator Jacobs stated that the Town should look to maximizing returns on investments, and proved the fact by showing current dividends on our Money Markets accounts as compared to what could be if we moved some accounts and also invested in CDs using a [staggered] “ladder” method. This would involve setting up five CDs with terms one year apart—1, 2, 3, 4, and 5-years. At the end of each year expiration, the CD would then be renewed for a 5-year term, resulting in staggered maturity of a CD each subsequent year. Mayor Fennell moved further discussion to New Business.

Town Administrator Jacobs reported that he and the Town Clerk had met with planners from Guilford County to discuss Article VI on Subdivisions and text amendments to various ordinances affected by new state laws. Also, in light of the prospect of development of a 24.5-acre tract at the east edge of Town, Jacobs hoped to glean some insight from the county on ways to control such development and protect the Town. The project being proposed by a Greensboro-based real estate broker/developer who specializes in active adult communities for seniors 55+ would comprise 66 units, or 33 double dwellings.

By the close of the two-hour meeting, those present had gone page by page through Article VI to make it compatible with county requirements; and the draft with highlighted modifications would be handed off to the Planning Board for review and recommendations to Council with plans to reach adoption during the June public hearing. As for a “protection” ordinance relative to development, the county would forward for Town consideration a sample document that Pleasant Garden had used in similar circumstances.

Town Administrator Jacobs continued reporting that Mayor Fennell, the Town Clerk and he had attended a meeting with Burlington City Manager Hardin Watkins, Water Resources Director Bob Patterson, and City Attorney David Huffman on sewer capacity from the City of Burlington—a need precipitated by the proposed development at the east end of Town. Jacobs stated that he is slated to give a presentation to Burlington City Council at its March 6 work session. Watkins and Patterson would also be delivering their perspectives and recommendations.

With respect to the non-remedied rusting of Town Hall columns, Jacobs stated that he had sent a letter to contractor Wilson-Covington explaining that payment of their final invoice would be withheld until the columns had been repaired to the Town’s satisfaction. The recommended fix to the condensation problem by Wilson-Covington’s Hayes Wauford sounded like a good plan; but, needed to be carried out.

Town Administrator Jacobs then reported that he had received a phone call from Jennifer Hamby (a relative to deceased resident Dewey Fogleman) with plans to live at the property on NC 61, and inquired about the feasibility of connecting to the Town's public water system. Jacobs told her that since the Fogleman property borders Coleman Road where a water line is located, the access would seem to be doable, and informed her that the Town's tap fee is \$1,700. It occurred to Jacobs that the current fee, which was set back in 2009, may now be a money loser; and prompted him to request a tap estimate from local contractor Willie Saul & Son and others. Jacobs would report findings next month.

Jacobs commented that the meeting to review the ball field and concession stand contracts with the two gentlemen employed by Elon University proved promising and a move in the right direction for future use. The Town was assured that the contracts would be adhered to implicitly, and simply wanted the opportunity to bring goodness back to the Town.

The master meter vault had once again been pumped out, and Jacobs was awaiting contact from the electrical contractor for scheduling service installation.

Jacobs mentioned that he had represented the Town at the dedication of a stretch of I-40 named for once NC Representative Howard Coble.

And finally, Jacobs stated that he would like to see some major renovations and rearranging of the Town Hall office to increase efficiency of operations and to protect the Town Clerk and working projects from public eyes. Proper disposal of old office records (those more than 8 years) will also be determined. This project will be a work in progress.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Ball Field and Concession Stand Contracts**

Mayor Fennell asked for any further discussion on the two contracts; and hearing none, asked for a motion. Council Member Jerry Rice made a motion to approve the contracts for the Whitsett Church League; motion seconded by Council Member Lee Greeson. The motion carried by unanimous vote, and James Blaylock and David Fortner will serve as co-directors of the league for 2017.

### **2. Town Bank Accounts and Alternative Banking Vehicles**

Mayor Fennell looked to Finance Officer Jerry Rice for his opinion on Town investments who stated that the Town should be looking to other methods that would bring better returns. Council Member Rice followed up with a motion to authorize moving forward with investing in CDs. Motion seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler, and passed by unanimous vote.

### **3. Lawn Care Proposals for 2017**

Prior to the meeting, a one-page comparison of submitted groundskeeping proposals had been distributed to the Council. Mayor Fennell asked if Council Members wanted to take action tonight or table a decision. Given the warming weather conditions of late, however, Council chose to move on approval. Town Administrator Jacobs added that in reviewing the five proposals, all vendors appeared equally capable.

A motion was made by Council Member Jerry Rice to accept the contract from the lowest bidder Hunter Byrd of Pride Landscaping. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **4. Water System ORC Replacement Completed**

Town Administrator Jacobs reported that the official switchover of ORC duties and responsibilities from current ORC Rob Elliott to ORC David Murphy had seamlessly been completed. A letter of appreciation to Rob Elliott awaited Council and Town staff signatures, and would be presented to Rob along with an honorarium. Jacobs read the letter for the record.

### **5. Any Items from Council Members**

Mayor Fennell asked for any items from Council members; and Council Member Jerry Rice spoke up to propose a \$1.00/hour raise for the Town Clerk. Motion made by Council Member Lee Greeson to approve the raise; motion seconded by Council Member Jerry Rice. The motion carried by unanimous vote, and the wage will increase to \$18.00/hour.

Council Member Lee Greeson then broached roadway and traffic conditions that would engage NCDOT evaluations. These areas include reduced speed limits on Brightwood Church Road and Kivette House Road, and a past plan to install a stoplight at the intersection of Brightwood Church Road and U.S. 70. Town Administrator Jacobs will contact NCDOT Mike Mills on the matters.

### **6. Announcements**

Mayor Fennell asked for any announcements; and there were none.

### **3. Speakers from the Floor**

Mayor Fennell asked for any speakers from the floor; and a resident who resides at 723 NC Highway 61 requested that the passing zone that runs in front of the property be eliminated and restriped with solid lines. This project would added to the list to Mike Mills.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business before the Council, Mayor Fennell invited a motion to adjourn. Council Member Jerry Rice made the motion to adjourn; motion seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler. Motion passed by unanimous vote; and the February 14, 2017 Town Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:03 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 14, 2017 at the Whitsett Town Hall.

/s/

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Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

/s/

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Richard Fennell, Mayor

**APPROVED:** March 14, 2017