

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL
April 11, 2017
Whitsett Town Hall Building

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

The regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council was held on Tuesday, April 11, 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 Cindy Wheeler and Lee Greeson. Absent was Council Member Jerry Rice.

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

Mayor Fennell called the meeting to order, and asked that a moment of silence be observed.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Mayor Fennell asked for any speakers from the floor; and Tyler Harris of 802 NC Highway 61 asked for the floor to propose to Council Members four projects for Town enhancements. These included beautifying the front memorial and flag court area with flora and by repairing the benches, displaying local art in the foyer and hallways of the Town Hall, improving the Town's website, and devising a brochure showcasing local history and townsfolk.

The Town Council immediately favored the front garden area improvements, and Mayor Fennell made a motion to allow Mr. Harris to proceed with the project. The other projects will be taken into account for future consideration; and Council Members thanked Mr. Harris for his willingness and generous offers.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Adoption of the Minutes

Mayor Fennell asked for any changes to the minutes from the March 14, 2017 regular monthly meeting; and hearing none, asked for a motion to adopt the minutes. A motion to adopt the minutes as written was made by Council Member Lee Greeson; motion seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown. The motion to adopt the March regular monthly meeting minutes carried by unanimous vote of those present.

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 Planning Board was working on several projects, with the major undertaking being development of a formal Town-wide land-use plan. Town Administrator Ken Jacobs had distributed to Board members current zoning maps with instructions charging each member with individual formulation of how they would like the Town to be zoned and developed in the future. Ideas will be collected and overlaid on a larger-sized master map for further discussion and recommendation.

Chairman Maccia stated that the Board had also been working on an improved procedure by which residents can file a complaint. The agreed method would then be recommended for inclusion in an ordinance, along with amended increased violation penalties, which Council Members had before them for review and reaction. Recommended assessed penalties would now be \$25 for the first violation, \$100 for the second, and \$250 for the third and any succeeding violations thereafter. The Town Attorney will be consulted on the new complaint procedure and revised fines. It is planned to have both documents placed on the docket for the standard June public hearing for apparent adoption.

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 last month's Council meeting, three Development Clearance Permit Certificates had been issued to: (1) Rod Manring at 323 Brightwood Church Road to convert LP to natural gas and connect appliances, (2) Town of Whitsett to install a small electric service for the pump at water system master meter, and (3) Griggs Associates, LLC to make general repairs, improvements to principal dwelling at 7210 Burlington Road.

4. Town Administrator

Town Administrator Jacobs reported that on March 21, the City of Burlington had approved the Town's request for 40,000 GPD sewer capacity, and a copy of the executed resolution had been provided to Council Members.

In addition, Council Members were given an engineering proposal from Davis-Martin-Powell & Associates, Inc. to design a sewer and water system in three phases—one for the prospective development at the east edge of Town, one to stretch along U.S. 70 to the NC 100 juncture, and one for NC 61 south to the interstate. A lump sum fee of \$9,600 had been proposed; and Jacobs requested Town Council approval due to time-sensitive nature of services. The item will be discussed for action under New Business.

Jacobs stated that attorney Joe Kalo had met with the Town on zoning options for the prospective development, and Council Members were provided a copy of Mr. Kalo's rendered opinion to use conditional zoning, RS-40 for the project, which would afford the Town maximum control of contingencies for zoning approval.

With respect to water issues, Jacobs stated that we recently received last year's annual financial audit that reports an alarming \$2,000 loss for the water fund. This occurrence leaves the Town no choice but to increase water rates and other fees. An initial reaction would be an upcharge by about \$2 to \$3 per 1,000 gallons, resulting in a minimum billing jump of \$6 to \$9 a month—accounting for around 75% of the customers. A hike in tap fees should likely be considered from the current \$1,700 to \$2,100 for near side and \$2,800 for far side. More concrete projections will be worked up for presentation to Council Members in conjunction with the preliminary operating budget for 2017-2018.

Jacobs mentioned that he had attended NCLM Town Hall Day in Raleigh, which became a wasted trip because all the legislators had been called to chambers concerning HB2. Also, he is scheduled to attend a financial workshop for utilities in Winton, NC, which hopefully would prove useful in his search for grants.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Davis-Martin-Powell & Associates, Inc. Proposal for Engineering Services

Mayor Fennell asked for any discussion on the proposal from Randy McNeill; and Council Member Cindy Wheeler asked about expenses that would be the responsibility of the developer proposing the senior community for the acreage at the Town's eastern boundary. Town Administrator Jacobs replied that any water and sewer system development costs for the 25-acre project, including a portion of the contract proposed by David-Martin-Powell, that can be attributed to the land-development community would be paid by the developer. To date, however, the property has not been rezoned, nor purchased from the current property owner.

Jacobs stated that he estimates that the upscale community could generate from \$20,000 to \$25,000 in tax revenue for the Town. Council Member Lee Greeson commented that if the Town is to remain a town, it needs more revenue; and this is a good start.

That having been said, a motion was made by Council Member Lee Greeson to approve the Davis-Martin-Powell proposal for engineering services. Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown seconded the motion, and Mayor Fennell asked for a vote on the motion. Three yea votes were firmly spoken; and the motion passed.

2. Any Items from Council Members

Mayor Fennell asked for any items from Council members; and there were none.

3. 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 no one asked to be recognized.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Council, Mayor Fennell invited a motion to adjourn. Council Member Lee Greeson made the motion to adjourn; motion seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler. Motion passed by unanimous vote of those present; and the April 11, 2017 Town Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:46 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 9, 2017 at the Whitsett Town Hall.

/s/

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

Richard Fennell, Mayor

APPROVED: May 9, 2017