

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL
February 13, 2018
Whitsett Town Hall Building

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

The regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council was held on Tuesday, February 13, 2018 at the Whitsett Town Hall. The following members of the Town Council were present: Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown, Council Members Jerry Rice, Cindy Wheeler, and Lee Greeson. Absent was Mayor Richard Fennell.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Brown called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., noted that a quorum was present; and asked Council Member Jerry Rice to offer the invocation.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Mayor Pro Tem Brown asked for any speakers from the floor; and there were none.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Adoption of the Minutes

Mayor Pro Tem Brown asked for any changes to the minutes from the January 9, 2018 public hearing; and with none made, asked for a motion to adopt the minutes. A motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Council Member Jerry Rice; motion seconded by Council Member Lee Greeson. The motion to adopt the January public hearing minutes carried by unanimous vote of those present.

Mayor Pro Tem Brown asked for any changes to the minutes from the January 9, 2018 regular meeting; and hearing none, asked for a motion to adopt the minutes. Council Member Jerry Rice made a motion to accept the minutes as written; Council Member Lee Greeson seconded the motion. The motion to adopt the January regular meeting minutes passed by unanimous vote of those present.

2. Approval of Annual Financial Audit by Cobb Ezekiel Loy & Company, P.A.

Mayor Pro Tem Brown asked for a motion to formally approve the annual audit conducted by the accounting firm of Cobb Ezekiel Loy & Company and then presented to the Town Council at last month's regular meeting. Council Member Jerry Rice commended the firm on a "fantastic" job, and made a motion to approve the financial audit. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler also extending kudos; and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of those present.

3. Rewrite of Ball Field Contract; Rules and Regulations

Council Members received in their mailed packets a proposed revised ball field contract and newly-developed rules and regulations that would accompany the contract to any prospective league requesting seasonal use of the ball field. Mayor Pro Tem Brown asked for any discussion on the two documents, adding that the contract appeared quite strict. This tack, unfortunately, was necessitated by and well warranted by past irresponsibilities of the last two league directors.

In agreement, Council Members gave a nod for both the overhauled contract and the original rules and regulations. Council Member Lee Greeson made a motion to approve the documents, and initiate their use in 2018. Motion seconded by Council Member Jerry Rice; and the motion passed by unanimous vote of those present.

4. Any Other Old Business

Mayor Pro Tem Brown asked if there were any other old business to be discussed; and there was none.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Planning Board

Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia reported that the Board, along with Town Administrator/Planning Board alternate Ken Jacobs, had been working on an agreement between the Fire Department and the Town, whereby a more equitable split of costs for repairs and maintenance of shared utilities could be reached and implemented. To date, a casual understanding of a 50/50 split existed; and an 85/15 split is what was now being proposed, with the Fire Department for some time now proportionately using the load due to firefighters who had established full-time residency at the fire station. Jacobs would elaborate on other aspects later.

Chairman Maccia reported that at last week's Board meeting, the officers for 2018 had been elected. Maccia would continue as Board Chair, and new to the office of Vice Chair would be 2017 Planning Board inductee Tyler Harris.

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, two development clearance permit certificates had been issued to: (1) Michael Herron of 6744 Fernway Road to begin construction on additions to existing dwelling (which is the instance that prompted a need to adopt decreased front setbacks for secondary roadways), and (2) Brightwood Self Storage, LLC for electrical control additions to an elevator in the new climate-controlled facility at 6601 Burlington Road.

4. Town Administrator

Town Administrator Jacobs stated that items for reporting were included under New Business, which would begin now.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Revised Fire Department Agreement for Shared Utilities

Town Administrator Jacobs continued the subject reported earlier by Planning Board Chairman Maccia, stating that in addition to the 85/15 split of utility R&M costs for the Fire Department and the Town Hall, respectively, he would also like to propose a sharing of electricity charges for the water pump (commensurate with actual usage), which the Town now pays in full. Jacobs had attempted to determine what a fair share of the electric bill might be for the Fire Department after consulting Leon at Willie Saul & Son; but, had been unable to have a figure by meeting time.

Mayor Pro Tem Brown declared the subject tabled until a final document could be completed that incorporated a sharing of electric charges between the Town Hall and the Fire Department.

2. Establish Capital Project Fund for Sewer Project

Town Administrator Jacobs reported that an inordinate number of man-hours had been devoted by the Town Clerk and himself to the anticipated collaborative sewer project with the City of Burlington and the Town of Gibsonville. Those hours are currently being tracked and paid by the General Fund and the Water Fund; and Jacobs felt should, more appropriately and accurately, be charged to a Capital [Sewer] Fund, even though the Fund would presently be a non-revenue bearing account.

Town Finance Officer Jerry Rice, the Town Clerk, and Town Administrator Jacobs met with Wanda Baldwin of the Town's CPA firm of Cobb Ezekiel Loy & Company to learn of options and logistics involved in setting up just such a Fund, whose recommendation was to establish a Capital Project Fund that would temporarily be funded primarily by the General Fund until such time as loan or grant monies became available for the sewer project.

Once financing has been secured and funds released, the Capital Project Fund would reimburse the General Fund, for past administrative costs; and future costs attributed to the sewer project would be charged to the Capital Project Fund. Ms. Baldwin recommended that a capital fund budget of \$750,000 with a handful of line items at the outset, e.g., Administration, Engineering, Construction, etc. could be supported. Jacobs provided to Council Members a breakdown of various project phases and line items justifying the aggregate \$750,000. [The budget page is part of the official file for this meeting.]

Mayor Pro Tem Brown asked for any discussion on this budgetary procedure; and hearing none, asked for a motion to establish a Capital Project Fund. Council Member/Finance Officer Jerry Rice made a motion to this effect; and Council Member Cindy Wheeler seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote of those present.

3. Discuss Residential and Commercial Tap Fees

Town Administrator Jacobs explained that for months we've been waiting to get a residential water tap for the rental property at 714 NC Hwy 61 owned by Jim Griggs and near the Town's water line on Coleman Road. Some utility contractors were nonresponsive to our request simply due to more profitable demands. And, other NCDOT unbeknown requirements for clearances added to the time lapse.

Nonetheless, when quotes were finally received, the Town looked to lose as much as \$350 on a \$2,100 tap fee that the Town set not long ago. Setting a fixed fee, in Jacobs' opinion, has proved to not be an affordable practice to use; and Jacobs would propose a revised policy based on a case-by-case basis. The policy recommended would be to solicit bids from three licensed contractors; and in addition to the awarded contractor's price, a fee to cover administrative costs, as well as the cost of the meter would be added; these three costs would constitute the final tap fee charged the customer or requestor. Jacobs would suggest that an administrative fee of at least \$150 be considered.

If Council Members favored this revamped policy, Jacobs would work up a final proposal for further discussion and approval at next month's Council meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Brown asked for any discussion; and with Council Members in seeming concurrence, then asked for a motion for action.

Council Member Jerry Rice made a motion to move forward with documenting the revised policy of seeking bids for tap fees, adding the \$150 for administrative processes and the cost of the meter, in order to attain a total tap fee amount that would be conveyed to the party requesting the tap. Motion seconded by Council Member Lee Greeson; and the motion passed by unanimous vote of those present.

4. Any Items from Council Members

Mayor Pro Tem Brown asked for any items from Council members; and Council Member Lee Greeson brought attention to the traffic hazard that exists at the Brightwood Self Storage construction site on Burlington Road. Town Administrator Jacobs said he would contact owner Kevin Sasser about the conditions, which should bring resolve.

5. Announcements

Mayor Pro Tem Brown asked for any announcements; and there were none.

6. Speakers from the Floor

Mayor Pro Tem Brown asked for any speakers from the floor; and no one asked to be recognized.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Council, Mayor Pro Tem Brown 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 of those present; and the February 13, 2018 Town Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:32 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 13, 2018 at the Whitsett Town Hall.

/s/

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

Richard Fennell, Mayor

APPROVED: March 13, 2018