

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL
May 9, 2017
Whitsett Town Hall Building

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

The regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council was held on Tuesday, May 9, 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 four 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, at this time, there were none.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Adoption of the Minutes

Mayor Fennell asked for any changes to the minutes from the April 11, 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 Cindy Wheeler; motion seconded by Council Member Lee Greeson. The motion to adopt the April regular monthly 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 Planning Board had completed its work on the development of a proposed procedure for residents to lodge a zoning violation or nuisance complaint, with major input having come from Town Administrator Ken Jacobs. Chairman Maccia read the document which would be part of the official file on this topic with plans to have it restructured into an ordinance and placed on the docket for the June public hearing.

Chairman Maccia then reported that all Board members had individually documented on Town zoning maps their ideas on how they would like the Town to be zoned and developed in the future. All submissions had been overlaid on a larger-sized master map, which would remain open for refinement; but, in the mean time would be subject to the June public hearing as well.

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, one Development Clearance Permit Certificate had been issued to contractor Triad HVAC, Inc. out of Browns Summit to upgrade the heating system at 7000 Stella Drive.

4. Town Administrator

Town Administrator Jacobs reported that he had attended an excellent financial workshop geared towards small municipalities. Two major aspects that struck Jacob's interest dealt with annual financial audits and the need for an annual evaluation of water system rates and fee. These two areas have been of current concern, and needed to be heeded, especially in light of this past year's audit reflecting a loss for the Town's water system.

Conflicting findings from the audit need to be discussed, resolved, and remedied so that this occurrence does not repeat. Consequently, a rapid analysis of water rates and fees has been perpetuated in order for increases to be included in the Water Fund budget for the upcoming year. Supportive projections will be presented to Council Members in June for adoption along with the aggregate operating budget for 2017-2018.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Presentation of Proposed Operating Budget for FY 2017-2018

Council Members were sent copies of next fiscal year's proposed operating budgets in their packets. Mayor Fennell asked for any discussion on the preliminary budgets for the General Fund or the Water Fund; and it was pointed out that, as a result of Town accountant review, one adjustment had been made to the draft—that being an increase in the contract fee for conducting the Town's annual financial audit. This change will be reflected in the final document for the public hearing, followed by the regular meeting where the operating budget for 2017-2018 shall be adopted.

2. Discussion on Increased Fire Code Inspection Rate and Invoicing Customer

Town Administrator Jacobs explained that effective July 1, 2017, the hourly fee for fire inspection services would double from \$25/hour to \$50/hour. In the past, the Town had been absorbing the costs for fire code inspections and investigations of Whitsett businesses and other facilities under contract with Guilford County Emergency Services. Due to this proposed increase and the already strapped General Fund budget, Jacobs would like to propose that the Town invoice the owners inspected, which would include 16 facilities.

Mayor Fennell asked for any discussion; and Council Member Jerry Rice readily made a motion to bill the institutions for fire marshal services. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown, and passed by unanimous vote.

3. Set Public Hearing Date for June 13, 2017

Mayor Fennell made a motion to set the public hearing date for June 13, 2017; motion seconded by Council Member Jerry Rice. By unanimous vote, the motion carried for the standard June public hearing.

Proposed items on the docket include: (1) 2017-2018 Operating Budget, New Water Rates, Fees, Policies, (2) Article VI on Subdivisions, (3) Text Amendments to Article IX on Enforcement (complaints, fines), and (4) Text Amendments on Fences.

4. Any Items from Council Members

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

5. Announcements

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

6. Speakers from the Floor

Mayor Fennell asked for any speakers from the floor; and Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia stated that the Planning Board had moved its monthly meeting time to 6:00 p.m. and suggested to Council Members that they may want to entertain the same change. Discussions concluded that a 6:00 start time would present a hardship for some Council Members; and the suggestion was dismissed. Town Council meeting time will remain at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Fennell asked for any other speakers; and Tyler Harris of 802 NC Highway 61 came forward to report progress on two of four projects he presented to Council Members at April’s meeting. Harris stated that he had met with representatives of the Asolare Art Foundation, and would like to schedule a time for them to tour the Town Hall with the prospect of displaying works from local artists in the foyer and hallways of the building.

With respect to beautifying the front yard memorial and flag court area with perennials and mulch, Harris expects to complete the project within the next two weeks.

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 May 9, 2017 Town Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:21 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council will follow the public hearing that has been scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, June 13, 2017 at the Whitsett Town Hall.

/s/

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

Richard Fennell, Mayor

APPROVED: June 13, 2017