

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL
January 11, 2022
Whitsett Town Hall Building

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

The regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council was held on Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at the Whitsett Town Hall. The following members of the Town Council were present: Mayor Richard Fennell, Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice and Council Members Cindy Wheeler, Lee Greeson, and Craig York.

Also present were Town Administrator Gary Deal, Planning Board Chairman Tyler Harris, *The Alamance News* reporter Tomas Murawski, and one resident.

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

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Mayor Fennell asked for any speakers from the floor, and no one asked to be acknowledged.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Adoption of the Minutes

Mayor Fennell asked for any changes to the minutes from the December 14, 2021 regular monthly meeting; and Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice asked that the words “interest in” be inserted in the last paragraph under Item 7, page 4, about the Greater Vision Academy (GVA) wanting to use the Town’s ball field, whereby the sentence would now read: “[GVA] had expressed ”interest in” using the field...” Council Member Craig York made a motion to adopt the minutes as amended; motion seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler. Motion to adopt the December minutes with changes carried by unanimous vote. [Changes reflected in the revised December minutes approved January 11, 2022.]

2. Any Other Old Business

Mayor Fennell asked if there were any other old business; and there was none.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Planning Board

Planning Board Chairman Tyler Harris reported that there was not enough attendance to hold an official Board meeting this month. Even though no business could be conducted and acted upon, a Griggs family member was present to introduce the possibility of repurposing the property at 723 NC Highway 61 into a leased event/business center. Chairman Harris stated that the representatives will develop an order of operations for the estate to be proposed at a future Board meeting.

Mayor Fennell suggested that the Board research nearby communities with similar offerings; and pointed out that the proposal for conversion will likely require public hearings actions, i.e., possible parcel rezoning, an addition to the Town's permitted use schedule, special use permit application, etc.

Chairman Harris also reported that the Board is continuing its work on a revised fee schedule for various development requests, as well as continuing its contact with NC Representative Jon Hardister on NC Commerce and other grants available for primarily the Town's extension of its water lines down NC 61.

Finally, Council Member Cindy Wheeler stated that with the confusion over January's meeting being held or not, could a practice be set that Board meetings will take place unless participants are notified otherwise. This will be the policy heretofore.

2. Enforcement Officer

Enforcement Officer Gary Deal reported that a letter had been sent to the property owner of the abandoned mobile home at the end of Whitsett Park Road., and nothing to date has been heard. Since there has been no contact with the Town, Guilford County was informed to monitor and pursue enforcement of the matter.

3. Town Administrator

Town Administrator Gary Deal explained that in preparing for tonight's Council meeting, it was noticed that the Town Hall heating system was not fully firing; and HVAC vendor for the Town J&W Small was called for attention by meeting time if possible. Jerry Small responded swiftly to service the unit to operation, and again recommended that the Town consider replacing the unit completely. This replacement would be a prime candidate to be funded by grant monies for which the Town may be eligible and apply for.

In follow up to last month's action item to see if the Fire Department would be willing to mow the Town's ball field, Town Administrator Deal responded that it would handle this. However, the clearing of the leaves that had collected on the periphery of the field, Deal felt was a stretch, and asked for suggestions. Council Member Craig York suggested that with Greater Vision Academy (GVA) wanting to use the ball field, perhaps the youngsters could chip in and clean up the leaves for credit towards community service points recognized by the school.

Deal then reported that in efforts to continue to attempt winterizing the new restrooms, the contracted electrician will install two ceiling-mounted heaters at a cost of \$2,400 each. In addition, the electrician will correct some electrical problems and some unfinished jobs in the Town Hall building.

Finally, Deal stated that NC Representative Jon Hardister has planned to attend the February Council meeting to present the Town with a \$50,000 legislature-approved grant and discuss its parameters.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Any Items from Council Members

Mayor Fennell asked for any items from Council Members; and Council Member Lee Greeson had several issues: (1) Town Hall generator no longer ignites, and a replacement needs to be budgeted. During power outage, the generator maintains surge to the water pump, which is, most importantly, shared with the Whitsett Fire Department that has round-the-clock firefighters in house. This purchase would be another item to be considered for grant funding.

(2) The reserve roll-out carts from Republic Services that used to be stored in the former concession stand, now converted to restrooms, need to be stored elsewhere other than around the restroom and attached utility/storage building. The carts that were housed for switch out when resident carts had been damaged are now sitting outside the building; and the Town needs to determine sufficient space to store the extras, or to assess a practical, manageable number of spare roll carts to keep, and return the surplus to Republic.

(3) In that same vein of the former concession building, the locked utility/storage section on the back side of the building needs shelving storage to get all the stuff on the floor and up the walls organized higher in order to maneuver the space. Council Member Greeson and Town Administrator Deal volunteered to make this improvement. Mayor Fennell made a motion to purchase the materials and install shelving for the project. Motion seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler; and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

(4) GVA has agreed to pay \$20/hour for the use of ball field lights if needed. Since the academy will most times use the field in afternoons, the use of lights is not likely; but the agreement will exist and be honored, if applies. Since the Town's ball field use is under contract with Gibsonville parks and recreation department, GVA will be informed to contact Gibsonville's Mike Dupree for coordinating and confirming scheduling.

2. 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. The motion to adjourn was made by Council Member Cindy Wheeler; motion seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice. The motion carried; and the January 11, 2022 Town Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:41 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 8, 2022 at the Whitsett Town Hall.

/s/

/s/

Gary Deal, Town Administrator

Richard Fennell, Mayor

APPROVED: February 8, 2022