

**MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL**  
**March 8, 2022**  
**Whitsett Town Hall Building**

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

The regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council was held on Tuesday, March 8, 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 two area residents.

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 Representative Jon Hardister of the North Carolina General Assembly was invited to preside. The purpose of Representative Hardister's attendance was to honorably and proudly present an oversized facsimile of a \$50,000 legislative check for grant funds awarded to the Town. Hardister explained that the state budget realized surplus, nonrecurring funds that reverted back to a number of small towns.

The funds would be directly deposited into the Town's bank account earmarked for specific objectives approved by the NC Department of Commerce that included (1) replacement of the Town's generator, which also serves the next-door Whitsett Fire Department; (2) construction of a picnic shelter in the rear yard of Town Hall grounds, (3) replacement of an HVAC system that services Council chambers; and (4) procurement of engineering services for the extension of a water main to provide public water access primarily to the Fire Department and the Town Hall.

Representative Hardister briefed Council members on several other recent topics, i.e. congressional redistricting which resulted in Whitsett remaining in his District 59; the formula reconfiguration of the state fuel tax used solely for transportation repairs and initiatives; and his hopes to arrange for a public Town Hall session with NCDOT to educate and solicit public comment relative to major planned future projects, namely, for example, the widening of U.S. 70—its timetable and impact.

Representative Jon Hardister thanked Council members for allowing him to spend time with them; and Council members expressed their gratitude to Representative Hardister for the legislative monetary allocation as well as his interest in the Town of Whitsett. [A photo op followed before his departure.]

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. Adoption of the Minutes**

Mayor Fennell asked for any changes to the minutes from the February 8, 2022 regular monthly meeting; and Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice asked to revisit the 3-month probationary period set for the new clerk hire and amend it to a 6-month probationary period for this requirement to be more in keeping with past hiring practices. With this change, Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice made a motion to adopt the February 8 minutes; motion seconded by Council Member Craig York. Adoption of the amended February minutes carried by unanimous vote.

[The posted February 8, 2022 minutes would be revised to reflect the above amendment.]

### **2. Adoption of 2021 Annual Financial Audit by Cobb Ezekiel Loy & Company as Presented at Last Month's Council Meeting by Becky Loy**

Mayor Fennell asked for a motion to adopt the Town's annual financial audit, as required by the NC Treasurer's Local Government Commission (LGC). Council Member Craig York made the motion to adopt the bound booklet and its contents distributed at February's meeting. Motion seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice; and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Becky Loy shall be notified of this official action and for forwarding to LGC.

### **3. Approval of Ball field Contract with Greater Vision Academy (GVA)**

The proposed contract, which earlier had been signed by GVA, was included in Council packages for review. Mayor Fennell asked for a motion to approve the agreement; and a motion to approve was made by Council Member Cindy Wheeler; motion seconded by Council Member Craig York. The motion passed unanimously; and a copy executed by the Town will be given to GVA promptly.

### **4. 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 he had in hand a Planning Board application from Charles Sedoris who, at last month's Council meeting, introduced himself to the community and stated his desire to serve on the Board. Chairman Harris asked Council for Mr. Sedoris' formal appointment.

A motion was made by Council Member Craig York to accept Charles Sedoris as the Planning Board's newest member; motion seconded by Council Member Lee Greeson. The motion to appoint passed by unanimous vote.

Chairman Harris then reported that any proposed rezoning of the Griggs estate on NC 61 had been tabled for further consideration of its impact on the residential area. Likewise, water system issues, particularly associated fees, had been moved out for further discussion.

Meanwhile, Chairman Harris continues to solicit for alternates to serve on the Board, and asked Council for its continued help in doing so as well.

### **2. Enforcement Officer**

Enforcement Officer Gary Deal reported that since last Council meeting, one development clearance certificate (DCC) had been issued to Arthur Stewart at 705 Woodward Drive to situate a shed with electrical service in the backyard of his property.

### **3. Town Administrator**

Town Administrator Gary Deal reported that he will be involved in ARP grant application training in Raleigh on February 28, along with a representative from the Town's engineering firm of Davis-Martin-Powell for infrastructure funds to extend the existing water line on NC 61 to at least as far as the Fire Department and Town Hall. The deadline for submission of the application is May 2.

Town Administrator Deal then reported that all parties working through the proposed Hudson Way development—Guilford County, Town, Keystone, and respective attorneys—convened to hash out its status and the processes still needed to move forward. Deal stated that the proper review of the proposed subdivision had essentially returned to square one, with the county's Technical Review Committee scrutiny of the preliminary plat scheduled to begin March 15.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

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

Mayor Fennell asked for any items from Council Members; and Council Member Lee Greeson stated that he had been approached by Gerald Phillips, connected with Greater Vision Academy (GVA), who would like to set up a hot dog stand at GVA ball games. Council Member Greeson offered Mr. Phillips the floor to request permission from Council to operate his refreshment stand 10:30 to 3:30 Monday through Friday, weather permitting. The station is self-contained and commercially approved for use with a certificate of liability issued by the company.

Mayor Fennell asked for any objection, and with none, a motion was made by Council Member Craig York to allow Mr. Phillips to set up his hot dog stand for ball games, provided a copy of the certificate of liability is registered with the Town. Motion seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Also related to the academy's use of the ball field, Council Member Greeson had been given a list by GVA of proposed improvements to the field specific for GVA use since GVA would like to make the Town ball field their home field now and in the future. These initiatives included changes to the infield to accommodate baseball, a portable fence to service softball, and a major addition of a portable storage building. All approved improvements and items would be at the expense of GVA.

Following Council discussion and concerns, Mayor Fennell directed that the list be shared with Gibsonville who is under contract for use of the Town's ball field and that any proposed changes be coordinated with and accepted by Gibsonville.

Meanwhile, the top need for immediate purchase and use being requested is that of the storage building, which would require Council's action. With no Council objection, Mayor Fennell asked for a motion; and Council Member Craig York made a motion to approve a portable storage shed that shall be no-larger-than 8' x 12' and shall be placed at the discretion of the Town. Motion seconded by Mayor Richard Fennell; and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Mayor Fennell asked for any other items from Council Members; and Craig York stated that the topic of moving the time of Council meetings from 7:00 to 6:00 had been raised from time to time, and he would like to bring that discussion back to the floor. Council Member Lee Greeson voiced some hesitation, and then gave a nod along with the other members. Mayor Fennell asked for action, and a motion was made by Council Member Cindy Wheeler to have Council meetings start at 6:00 p.m. heretofore. Motion seconded by Council Member Craig York; and the motion passed unanimously.

**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 Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice; motion seconded by Mayor Richard Fennell. The motion carried; and the March 8, 2022 Town Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council is scheduled for the new time of 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at the Whitsett Town Hall.

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Gary Deal, Town Administrator

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Richard Fennell, Mayor

**APPROVED:** Approved April 12, 2022