

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL
June 13, 2017
Whitsett Town Hall Building

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was held at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, June 13, 2017, at the Whitsett Town Hall. The following members of the Town Council were present: Mayor Richard Fennell, Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown, Council Members Jerry Rice, Cindy Wheeler, and Lee Greeson. Also present were Town Administrator Ken Jacobs, Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia, Planning Board Member Ella Efird, *Creekside Chronicle* reporter Tomas Murawski, and three additional residents.

Mayor Richard Fennell requested Council Member Jerry Rice to offer an invocation. Mayor Fennell then asked for a motion to officially open the June public hearing; and a motion was made by Council Member Jerry Rice to open the hearing. Motion was seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler, and following the unanimous vote, Mayor Fennell declared the hearing in session.

Mayor Fennell stated that the four items open for discussion and public comment during the hearing would be: (1) the proposed 2017-2018 Town budget, including new water rates, fees, and policies, (2) a proposed overhauling of Article VI on subdivisions to correlate Guilford County and Town requirements, (3) proposed text amendments to Article IX on enforcement pertaining to violation complaints and fines, and (4) proposed text amendments to a section of an ordinance dealing with fences.

Preview copies of the documents were available for the public after publication of the hearing notice in a newspaper of general circulation, as well as at the hearing. All documents were provided to the members of the Town Council in their advance packets.

1. Proposed 2017-2018 Whitsett Town Budget

Mayor Fennell opened the floor for public comment with respect to the 2017-2018 proposed operating budget for Whitsett, and no one from the audience asked to be acknowledged.

Town Administrator Ken Jacobs asked to give an overview of the changes in water sales rates, additional fees, and policies that would have an impact on the Water Fund budget, explaining first that there had not been a water rate increase since the inception of the system in 2012. A proposed increase of \$2.50 per 1,000 gallons would result in a minimum monthly charge going from \$36.00 to \$43.50.

Tap fees would also increase from a flat \$1,700 to \$2,100 for a near side tap and \$2,850 for a far side tap, provided no subsurface problems, e.g., bedrock, were encountered, which may increase those new tap fees. A payment term of net 20 would be instituted, and when payments were received later than 30 days from billing, a late fee of \$5.00 would be added to the next cycle.

Jacobs admitted that these increases and new policies would likely create some hardships; but, the Town is prone to be compassionate and make concessions as long as the customer communicates with the Town. Bottom line is that the Town has an obligation to run the system at a profit—however minimal—and with so few customers supporting the system, higher charges are necessary. In addition, the Town should be in preparedness for repairs and maintenance of the system.

Mayor Fennell asked Council members for any questions or comments. No further discussion on the budget presented in May was forthcoming; and Mayor Fennell moved on to the next item.

2. Proposed Revision of Article VI on Subdivisions

Mayor Fennell asked the public for any comments on the major redo of Article VI on Subdivisions; and there were none from neither the audience nor from Council members.

3. Proposed Text Amendments to Article IX on Enforcement

Mayor Fennell asked for any public comments on the text amendments to Article IX on Enforcement, which initiated procedures for residents to lodge zoning violation or nuisance complaints. There were none.

4. Proposed Text Amendments to Section of Ordinance on Fences

Mayor Fennell asked for any public comments on the amendments to the section on fences in the ordinances; and there were none.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Fennell offered a final invitation for any public comment on the above documents as proposed; and hearing none, asked Council members for any further questions or comments.

With no further comment on the items presented, Mayor Fennell asked for a motion to adjourn the public hearing. Motion made by Council Member Jerry Rice to close the public hearing; motion seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown. Motion carried by unanimous vote, and the June 13, 2017 public hearing was adjourned at 7:09 p.m., to then proceed with the regular Council meeting, at which final actions would be taken.

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

/s/

Richard Fennell, Mayor

APPROVED: July 11, 2017