

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL
June 12, 2018
Whitsett Town Hall Building

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

The regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council was held on Tuesday, June 12, 2018 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, *The Alamance News* reporter Tomas Murawski, and six area residents. Absent was Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia.

Following the public hearing, Mayor Fennell called the regular Council meeting to order at approximately 7:09 p.m., and noted that a quorum was present.

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 May 8, 2018 regular monthly 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; motion seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler. By unanimous vote, the May minutes were approved.

2. Adoption of Budget Ordinance Amendment to Close Out FY 2017-2018

Mayor Fennell asked for a motion to adopt the budget amendment for the current fiscal year that will end June 30, 2018. Council Member and Finance Officer Jerry Rice made a motion to accept the amendment as presented; motion seconded by Council Member Lee Greeson. The motion to adopt the budget ordinance amendment for FY 2017-2018 carried by unanimous vote.

3. Adoption of Town Operating Budget for FY 2018-2019 and New Budget Ordinance

Mayor Fennell asked for a motion to adopt the proposed operating budget and budget ordinance for FY 2018-2019; and a motion to adopt the new operating budget and ordinance was made by Council Member Jerry Rice and seconded by Mayor Fennell. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

4. Discussion and Action on Sewer System Fees

Mayor Fennell asked for any further discussion on the recommended \$500 tap fee for each sewer tap and water tap for the proposed residential development on Burlington Road; and hearing none, asked for motion to approve the proposed fee. Council Member Cindy Wheeler made a motion to accept the \$500 fee for each tap; motion seconded by Council Member Jerry Rice. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Discussion and Vote on Conversion to a Central Depository Fund

Mayor Fennell looked to Town Administrator Jacobs to brief Council Members on the topic, who explained that now that we have worked with the accounting firm of Cobb, Ezekiel, Loy & Company (CEL) for a year, discussions with Wanda Baldwin of CEL have addressed some changes, tacks, and ultimately benefits for the town accounting system.

Right now, the Town has separate accounts for the General Fund, the Water Fund, and the newly-established Capital Project Fund. Baldwin would recommend that the Town consider converting to a Central Depository Fund, whereby monies would be pooled into one checking account, and deposits and expenditures designated for General, Water, or Capital by way of coding from the chart of accounts. Jacobs also felt that this merging would allow more flexibility among funds and ease of fiscal management.

Council Member Lee Greeson questioned the comingling of the Water Fund based on his understanding of when the Town received the block grant for its water system. Jacobs explained that he, too, thought those funds were restricted; but, CEL says not. Council Member Jerry Rice iterated that, in essence, the Water Fund would still be separate [and protected] due to the coding and categorizing recorded.

Council Member Jerry Rice continued with a motion to use the Central Depository method of bookkeeping; motion seconded by Council Member Lee Greeson. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

6. Approval of Contract for Annual Financial Audit

The accounting firm had submitted its annual contract for the 2017-2018 financial audit, which reflected a \$150 increase over last year's \$7,950 amount. Town Administrator Jacobs remarked that he had been very pleased with the meetings, suggestions, and services provided by the firm and that we have a grip on the Town's financial welfare more than ever. Jacobs clearly supported renewing the contract. Council Member and Finance Officer Jerry Rice agreed and added that CEL does an outstanding job.

Given the nod from across all Council Members, a motion to approve the contract was made by Council Member Lee Greeson; motion seconded by Council Member Jerry Rice. The motion carried by unanimous vote, and the contract would be executed following the meeting and delivered to CEL tomorrow.

7. 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

The June Board meeting had been cancelled because of no substantive issues. Town Administrator Jacobs offered, however, that although Board meetings had been cancelled for the past three months, he found that attendance was better and productivity more keen when there was a full agenda.

2. Enforcement Committee

Enforcement Officer Ken Jacobs stated that there had been no committee activity this month.

3. Enforcement Officer

Enforcement Officer Jacobs reported that he had been keeping watch on three cases. A letter of violation had been sent to a resident on NC Hwy 61 involving unsafe refrigeration appliances sitting in a yard, along with an old car and a carport full of junk and overgrowth likely riddled with rodents.

Guilford County had investigated the case in Dow Acres involving junk vehicles, and since all vehicles had legal tags, ruled that no violations existed. Jacobs had begun looking into the complaint about property on Greeson Road, and would continue to assess.

Jacobs reported that since last month's Council meeting, three development clearance certificates had been issued to: (1) Johns Plumbing to install Rinnai water heater at 212 Brightwood Church Road, (2) John Moore to install privacy fence at 7010 Dow Drive, and (3) Nance Heating & Cooling to add gas line for installation of gas logs at 524 NC Hwy 100.

4. Town Administrator

Town Administrator Jacobs deferred his report to New Business.

NEW BUSINESS

1. NC Small Town Development Grant – Award and Objectives

Jacobs continued to preside and stated that as soon as he heard from State Representative Hardister of the \$25,000 grant likely to be approved by the General Assembly, the wheels started turning. Jacobs recalled reading about a state matching grant solely for parks and recreational initiatives.

If the Town applied for the matching grant program and were approved, the \$25,000 level would automatically double. In looking at the allotted amounts for parks and recreation and for building and grounds in the 2018-2019 budget just approved, however, that \$50,000 could be maximized to some \$83,000 if the Town could prove eligibility to the state's satisfaction.

Council Member Lee Greeson asked about an expiration date for the grant monies, and Jacobs replied there is none, i.e., the projects could span years, until the money runs out.

Jacobs had provided Council a list, not in priority order, of suggested projects using the grant monies. The items involved rehab, improvements, additions, and new construction—all pointing to a major expansion of the parks and recreation facilities at Town Hall. [The list is part of the official file for this meeting.]

Mayor Fennell asked for any discussion or for a motion to take action with respect to the grant awarded and the objectives presented. Council Member Lee Greeson made a motion to authorize Town Administrator Ken Jacobs to delve into the grant process as soon as official notification is received from the state. Motion seconded by Council Member Jerry Rice, and passed by unanimous vote.

2. Proposed Signage for Town Hall Grounds

Council Members were provided in their packets, a signage proposal for replacement or new signs to be posted at or near the ball field pertaining to ball field rules, prohibitions, trespassing curfew, and parking directives.

Town Administrator Jacobs stated that so far he had received two bids using the City of Burlington and its subcontractor; a third bid would be solicited.

Mayor Fennell asked for any discussion, and hearing none, made a motion to authorize Jacobs to approve the lowest bid of three or more received. Motion seconded by Council Member Jerry Rice, and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

3. Any Items from Council Members

Mayor Fennell asked for any items from Council Members; and none heard.

4. Announcements

Mayor Fennell asked for any announcements, and no one had any.

3. Speakers from the Floor

Mayor Fennell asked if there were any speakers from the floor; and no one asked for the floor.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Council, Mayor Fennell invited a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn was made by Council Member Lee Greeson; motion seconded simultaneously by Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown and Council Member Jerry Rice. The motion passed by unanimous vote; and the June 12, 2018 Town Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:50 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, July 10, 2018 at the Whitsett Town Hall.

/s/

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

Richard Fennell, Mayor

APPROVED: July 10, 2018