

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE TOWN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON, NC

July 10th, 2023

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular called meeting on Monday, July 10th, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Assembly Room at 102 East Main Street, Williamston, NC.

PRESENT Commissioners: Mayor Joyce Whichard-Brown, Mayor Pro-Tem Alton Moore, Jerry Knox, Dean McCall, and Darnell Scales
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Jackie Escobar
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain
Public Works Director: Stacy Stalls
Parks and Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Finance Officer: Mandy Bullock
Internal Auditor: Linda Harrison
Planning and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy
Town Attorney: Watsi Sutton

ABSENT Commissioner William Coffield

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order. First, Commissioner Moore led the pledge of allegiance, and Commissioner Knox offered the invocation. The Mayor extended a special welcome to Martin County Commissioner Dempsey Bonds. There was a moment of silence for Mrs. Dottie Mizelle due to the recent fire of her business, Forget Me Not Florist.

AGENDA APPROVED

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda or if the Board wished to remove or add to the agenda. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved the regular agenda.*

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Scales, and unanimously approved the consent agenda.

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of June 5, 2023
- (2) Approve of June 26, 2023 Special Called Meeting minutes
- (3) Budget Amendment – Martin County Chamber of Commerce
 - Martin County Chamber \$2,500.00
 - Undesignated Fund Balance \$2,500.00
- (4) Budget Amendment – AMI Water Meters
 - Water Fund Contribution \$98,500.00
 - Sewer Fund Contribution \$98,500.00
 - \$197,000.00
 - AMI Fortiline-Equipment & Project Management \$197,000.00
- (5) Budget Amendment – AMI Water Meters Capital Project Fund
 - Retained Earnings – Water \$98,500.00
 - Retained Earnings – Sewer \$98,500.00
 - \$197,000.00
 - Transfer to Capital Projects Fund \$197,000.00
- (6) Budget Amendment Library Pavilion
 - Capital Outlay Buildings \$163,000.00
 - Undesignated Fund Balance \$163,000.00

OATH OF OFFICE – FINANCE OFFICER

The Mayor swore in Mandy Bullock as the new Town of Williamston Finance Officer.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ruth Coffield expressed her gratitude for the Town of Williamston's support and care as she grieved the death of her husband Commissioner William Coffield. She noted that each Town department reached out in some fashion. Mrs. Coffield stated that her husband enjoyed working with the Town and his fellow board members.

OLD BUSINESS

Michael Weeks Nuisance Enforcement Concern

The Town Administrator reported that at the July 5th, 2023, regular Board meeting, Michael Weeks presented his request to have the Board overrule staff on a nuisance enforcement action at his rental property at 202 S. Smithwick Street. As is the Board's normal process, the Board took the presentation under advisement and further discussion. The staff's position on this matter remained consistent; to follow the current policy and ordinance. *It was moved by Commissioner Scales, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously moved to take no action.*

Rivers and Associates Task Order #3 – Skewarkee Gut Rehabilitation

Greg Churchill of Rivers and Associates stepped in for Blaine Humphrey to present Task Order #3 for the Skewarkee Gut Rehabilitation. He reported that the Town accepted a Revolving Loan of \$2.5 million with \$500,000 principal forgiveness from the NC Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) to partially rehab the Skewarkee Gut sewer outfall line. Greg Churchill included that the Town requested an extension for the Phase 2 Sanitary Sewer Survey, moving the due date from July 3rd, 2023, to October 2nd, 2023. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore and seconded by Commissioner McCall. It unanimously approved Task Order #3 – Skewarkee Gut Rehabilitation.*

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 2023-07 Donation of Ambulance to MCC

The Fire Chief requested Board consideration to donate the 2013 Ford E450 MedTech Ambulance to Martin Community College. The Fire Department typically remounts ambulance units to save money. However, due to discontinued manufacturing of this ambulance, the Fire Department cannot remount this ambulance. The Fire Department would transfer the ambulance upon receipt of the new ambulance. Commissioner Moore questioned if the community college knew they could not sell the ambulance. The Town Attorney clarified that the state statute allows the Town to donate surplus equipment under the condition that it must be for public use, and the Resolution listed that statute. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Scales. It unanimously approved Resolution 2023-07 – Donation of Ambulance to Martin Community College. Resolution 2023-07 is hereby attached with the meeting minutes and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

Budget Amendment – Powell Bill Reserve Allocation

The Town Administrator reported that the Powell Bill reserve allocation budget amendment was not listed in Consent Agenda to provide additional information. The NC Department of Transportation administers the Powell Bill program providing state street aid to qualified, incorporated municipalities within North Carolina. This funding resurfaces municipal streets and maintains, repairs, builds, or widens streets, bridges, and drainage areas. The Powell Bill Reserve is part of the Town's Fund Balance, but it is restricted and can only be used for qualified Powell Bill Projects. As listed in the recent Fiscal Year Budget 2022 audit, the Powell Bill Reserve has over **\$400,000**. The Town Administrator requested Board approval to move \$200,000 from the Powell Bill Reserve into the current Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budget. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously approved Budget Amendment – Powell Bill Reserve Allocation.*

Proposed Street Improvements for FY 24

Public Works Director Stacy Stalls presented the list of proposed streets to rehab with the Powell Bill Reserve allocation of \$200,000.

Street Projects 2023

Priority One (P1) Projects

1. Peaks St. Construct a new road base and repave from Union Ave. to E. Blvd (US Hwy 13-17).
2. Union Ave. Construct a new road base and repave from Jamesville Rd to Peaks St.
3. Carolina Ave. Patching and overlay from Washington St. to Pinecrest Ave.

Priority Two (P2) Projects

1. N. Biggs & Grace St. overlay 1.5 in. (from Franklin Street around to School Dr.)
2. White St. Overlay from Haughton St. to MLK Dr.
3. Melbourne Ave. Construct a new road base and repave from MLK Dr. to Hill St. Consider drainage improvements in the curve (piping and catch basins).

Priority Three (P3) Projects

1. Haines St. Patching and overlay from W. Church St. through Haines Circle construct new road base and repave.
2. Little St. Patching with 1, overlay or construct new
3. Hill St. From MLK Dr. to road base and repave.
4. Rhodes St. Overlay from White St. to Pine St.

Priority Four (P4) Projects

1. Victoria Ave. Patching and one overlay from W. Main St. to Weaver Dr.
2. First St. Patching and 1" overlay from McCaskey Rd. to Victoria Ave.
3. Factory St. Asphalt pavement.
4. Williams St. Repair the sidewalk in front of 204 Williams St. and extend the sidewalk from 213 Williams St. to Park St.

Priority Five (PS) Projects

1. Williams St. Replace the damaged sidewalk from E. Main St. to Williams St.
2. Lee St. Repair/replace damaged curb/gutter.
3. N. Pearl St. Construct a new road base and repave from railroad tracks to Wilson St. Consider drainage improvements in the same area. Existing 12" piping empties to 15" piping at Wilson St. and continually bottlenecks during less than significant rain events.
4. E. Main St. Replace the sidewalk in front of 401 E. Main St.
5. S. Biggs St. Remove tree (Pine), replace curb/gutter across from 303 S. Biggs St., remove trees (2), and repair sidewalk in front of 303 S. Biggs St.
6. Hatton St. Overlay from Watts St. to Harrell St.
7. Beech St. Overlay from S. Biggs to Harrell St.

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, and unanimously approved the Proposed Street Improvements for FY 24.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Public Works

The Public Works Utilities Director reported the following:

- The department completed their annual flushing project. The Public Works crew flushed an estimated 200 hydrants.
- The Director announced a new hire: Joseph Robeson.
- Staff ordered necessary signs and lights to mow DOT (Department of Transportation) Right-of-Ways within Town.
- Staff will meet on July 13th, 2023, to discuss the completion of the Advanced Metering Infrastructure project by installing the remaining large meters.
- Town of Williamston Employee Spotlight featured Tyrone Higgs of the Sanitation Department.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- The Hazmat Regional Response Team (RRT) did outreach in Nash County.
- Fire Prevention staff inspected hydrants.
- The Fire Chief met with Andrew Brownfield, Town Hall intern, to discuss the cost of running the Fire/EMS department and the potential grants available.
- The Fire Chief thanked Bear Grass Fire Department, Griffins Township Fire Department, Jamesville Fire Department, Martin County Communications, and the Town of Williamston Fire Department for their assistance during a building fire on Main Street on July 2nd.

Police

The Police Chief provided the following report:

- The Police Chief noted he was very impressed with the amount of assistance with the recent fire on Main Street.
- Police staff participated in a lockdown drill and fire drill at Martin Enterprises.
- The Police Department hosted the annual Shred Event on June 6th, 2023.
- Police officers attended training for Domestic Violence.
- One officer went to ARIDE (Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement) Training.
- Vehicles purchased in Fiscal Year 2021-2022 are now fully equipped with radios.
- He announced the Fun in the Sun Event on Friday, July 14th, 2023, at 10 am at Godwin-Coppage Park.

Planning

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported:

- The Town was awarded the Rural Transformation Grant for the River Landing Project. This project is now in the permitting stage.
- The Planning Department has contacted the owner of Forget Me Not Florist to assist her after the recent fire.
- *Summer Music Series* - The department hosts a music show on the Main Street stage every other Friday.
- The Code Enforcement Officer issued 60 violations in June.
- Commissioner Moore questioned if the County inspects the wiring of buildings downtown before opening. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported that his department issues a Zoning permit, and the Fire department performs a Fire Inspection. The Planning department then sends the zoning permit to the County, but he was unsure of the County's inspection process. The Fire Chief included that the Fire Department inspect using the fire code. However, they could not enforce the electrical code.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Director reported:

- The department hosted a Painting and String Art class from June 12th to June 14th.
- Football and soccer camps would occur in July.
- A new gym floor would be installed at Gaylord Perry Park. The removed floor would be sold on GovDeals.com.
- The playground at Gaylord Perry Park is almost complete.

Finance

The Finance Director reported:

- Southern Software, the new software system, had technical support on-site for the ongoing conversion and training.

Closed Session – Attorney Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3) and Employment Matter N.C. 143-318.11(6)

Commissioner Knox moved with a second by Commissioner Scales, to go out of regular session into closed session for Attorney Client Privilege N.C. 143-318.11(3) and Employment Matter N.C. 143-318.11(6) at 6:31 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore, to go out of closed session into a regular session at 7:37 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

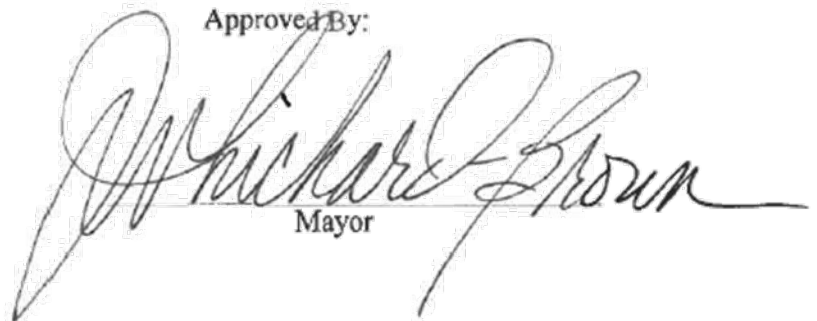
The Town Administrator reported that letters of interest were requested from the interested candidates for Commissioner Coffield's unfinished term. Of the three interested candidates, only Mrs. Ruth Coffield submitted a letter of interest. The Board reached a consensus to select Mrs. Ruth Coffield to fill Commissioner Coffield's term. The official vote and swearing in would be at the August 7th Regular Board of Commissioner's meeting.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Submitted By:


Town Clerk

Approved By:


Mayor