

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

September 9, 2019

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular session on Monday, September 9, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. in the Assembly Room at Town Hall.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Jerry Knox, Ronell Rodgers, Alton Moore, and William Coffield
Town Administrator: John O'Daniel
Town Clerk: Christina Craft
Finance Officer: Linda Harrison
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain
Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey
Town Planner and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy
Town Attorney: Daniel Manning
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Human Resources Administrator: Martha-Brown Lilley

ABSENT Mayor Pro Tem Al Chesson

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. She requested a brief moment of silence for the families of those who lost their lives as a result of Hurricane Dorian. Commissioner Knox led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Coffield offered the invocation.

WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed Martin County Commissioner Dempsy Bond and all present to the meeting.

AGENDA APPROVED

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the Regular Agenda or if the Board wished any items to be removed or added to the Regular Agenda. The Town Administrator requested the addition of the consideration of the Williamston Housing Authority Request to Old Business. This item was tabled at the August meeting. Commissioner Rodgers requested the addition of a Closed Session to address a Personnel Matter. *It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously passed to approve the regular agenda as amended.*

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the Consent Agenda or if the Board wished any items to be removed or added to the Consent Agenda. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously passed to approve the consent agenda as presented.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approval of the Minutes of the August 1 and August 5, 2019 meetings.
- (2) Tax Relief Order

Year	Name	Remarks	Total
2019	Dexter Batts	Tax Payer no longer resides in city limits	\$ 42.91
2019	Terry Holliday	Trailer was over valued	\$ 64.39
2018	Steve Peele	Item was double listed	\$ 8.29
2019	Patti West	Listed in Beaufort County	\$105.52
2019	BB&T	Combined bills need to be separate	\$248.54
2019	Little Caesars	Double billed for personal property	\$479.53
2019	First Pentecostal	Church Building should be exempt	\$1,375.15
2019	T F Harrison Heirs	Cannot locate property	\$ 27.65

- (3) Approval of Budget Amendment - Close the Skewarkee Canal Phase IV Project
Capital Projects Fund
Engineering & Inspections \$127,000

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Legal & Administration	\$ 37,000
Construction	\$732,000
Contingency	\$ 73,000
Transfer to Other Project	\$125,000

The purpose of this amendment is to close the Skewarkee Canal Phase IV Project as recommended by Auditors. This Capital Project has been completed.

(4) Approval of Budget Amendment - Close the Skewarkee Canal Phase IV-A Project

Capital Projects Fund

Technical Services	\$221,500
CSXT Engineering & Inspections	\$ 18,000
CSXT Track Panel Removal	\$ 62,000
Legal Services	\$ 5,000
Project Administration & Permitting	\$ 15,000
Technical Services	\$ 5,000
Construction	\$935,000
Contingency	\$134,940

The purpose of this amendment is to close the Skewarkee Canal Phase IV-A Project as recommended by Auditors. This Capital Project has been completed.

(5) Approval of Budget Amendment - 2011-2019 Annexation Project

Capital Projects Fund

Technical Services	\$ 20,000
CSXT Engineering & Inspections	\$110,000
CSXT Track Panel Removal	\$770,000
Legal Services	\$143,050
Project Administration & Permitting	\$4,334,000
Technical Services	\$758,000

The purpose of this amendment is to close the 2011-2019 Annexation Project as recommended by Auditors. This Capital Project has been completed.

(6) Approval of Budget Amendment -2018 Pierce Enforcer Pumper Project

Capital Projects Fund

Construction Contract-Pierce Enforcer Pumper	\$565,395
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The purpose of this amendment is to close the 2018 Pierce Enforcer Pumper Project as recommended by Auditors. This Capital Project has been completed.

(7) Approval of Budget Amendment – Brownfield Grant II Project

Community Development Projects Fund

Travel-Royster Clark	\$ 2,500
Travel – Windsor Oil	\$ 2,500
Supplies – Royster Clark	\$ 1,500
Supplies – Windsor Oil	\$ 1,500
Contract Services – Royster Clark	\$164,000
Contract Services – Windsor Oil	\$162,800

The purpose of this amendment is to close the Brownfield Grant II Project as recommended by Auditors. This Capital Project has been completed.

PUBLIC HEARING

Rezoning Request for 607,609, and 611 East Main Street

The Mayor opened the floor for a public hearing to review the rezoning request for 607, 609 and 611 East Main Street. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported the public hearing request was made to rezone the three parcels from R-8 (Residential) to TRD (Tourism Related District). The property owner wished to open an attraction destination for snow cones, light food production, and activities for children and families.

With no other comments received, the Mayor closed the Public Hearing.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lorraine Gardner, Park Avenue Resident, requested assistance with the sink holds and flooding around her home. She requested the town, county or state to help the water flow from Highway 64/Main Street area and clean properties to help the water flow more freely. She plans to follow up with a letter to the State and the Board. Sarah Baker, West Main Street resident, presented pictures of the draining and sinkhole issues. She reported there are drainage designs to alleviate flooding issues. There is flooding and sinkholes in the West End property. There are four drains, two on West Main Street and two on Hutchinson Street, that run into the same pipe. Two drains on West Main Street were damaged in Hurricane Matthew and were not properly fixed but were only patched. She questioned who to contact to verify the drainage pipes are draining properly. She requested dedicated personnel to maintain the drains. Henry Gray, pastor of the West End Baptist Church, reported assisting Mr. Gardner, who lives across from his home, with failed attempts to keep the water from entering his home. He requests help for others in the area as the yards are flooding and the church is willing to help through the "Operation in as Much" with the Town to clean the canals and ditches. Commissioner Rodgers questioned if it is necessary to leave the homes due to flooding. Pastor Gray reported not to his knowledge. Kenneth White, Fairview Street resident, reported the poor drainage issue is getting worse at his place of employment.

OLD BUSINESS

Williamston Housing Authority Request

The Town Administrator reported the Board had tabled the additional funding request received from the Williamston Housing Authority (WHA). The WHA had received funding for a drainage project and the project was underfunded by \$11,111. Commissioner Chesson reported the drainage issue is a long-term problem and all parties need to gather to discuss, to include Public Works, NCDOT, and other state agencies. WHA should have approached the Town prior to beginning and completing the project to see if the Town would partner. The Town Administrator reported the Town cannot afford to take on the responsibility to maintain all stormwater drainage in the town. Commissioner Rodgers questioned if the Williamston Housing Authority is a separate entity from the Town. The Town Administrator reported WHA is a separate entity. Commissioner Knox reported the WHA has paid for the project and is now requesting the Town to help pay without involving the Town. Commissioner Chesson reported the biggest issue is this is private property and the Town cannot go on private property to fix issues. The other issue is a collective issue as the water goes under highway 64 to behind the high school area. *It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Knox and unanimously passed to deny the request from the Williamston Housing Authority to expend money for the storm water drainage project.*

NEW BUSINESS

Tabled Consideration of Rezoning Requests

The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported a request from property owner, Darius Coley, to rezone his property located at 607, 609 and 611 East Main Street from R8 Residential to Tourism Related District. The property owner has interest in creating an attraction destination. The request has been approved by the Planning Board. Commissioner Rodgers questioned if the rezoning will disrupt other property owner's land. The Planning and Zoning Administrator reported there are no residents living adjacent to the properties. All property owners were sent letters, notifying them of the request and notice of the public hearing has been advertised in the local paper. The Town Attorney recommends the request to be postponed to the October meeting. Commissioner Chesson rescinded his motion. The Mayor requested the rezoning request to be tabled to the October meeting to allow the Town Attorney time to review the request.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Planning

The Town Planner and Zoning Administrator reported:

- He has spoken with two contractors that have provided quotes to the property owners for the CDBG project. One has not provided a quote for the Mitchell's building due to further required engineer drawings. Without these, they say they cannot provide an accurate quote. We are currently reaching out to a third contractor through an economic development firm we have worked with in the past and are hoping to hear back from them within a week or two. The property owners will be select which contractor they would like to complete the work, if any. So far, the quotes have come in high. Commissioner Chesson requested a realistic timeline for the renovation of the three buildings.
- N-Focus presented a 95% complete draft of the Comprehensive Plan to the steering committee on August 29th. They are waiting on some maps to be drawn. The plan includes a downtown strategic plan as well as goals and objectives for the town as a whole. They will present the final plan to the planning board on September 23rd and to the Board of Commissioner's at the October meeting.
- We have all the paperwork ready for the demolitions this year. We have processed 5 properties. They may not all be able to be completed within the budget but, we wanted to have them ready to go if the quotes came in we were able to complete them all. The five properties are 405 Blount Street, 416 Blount Street, 407 New Avenue, 416 New Avenue, and 203 Morris Street.
- Zach Dickerson and I attended the NC Main Street Manager's Meeting in Mount Airy which is a conference geared towards economic development strategies for downtown agencies. There were several sessions including the town's role in downtown economic development, business recruitment, organization of the downtown nonprofit board, downtown design, and more.
- Zach helped the Arts Council in the planning of their music in the streets event which had a good crowd show up last Saturday night.
- Mowing and other code enforcement procedures have been going steady. July through October are the busiest months for mowing so, we have been steadily working towards getting them completed. We still have many active violations open and more to come. Some bigger violations, such as the Magnuson Hotel, have been put on hold due to budget constraints. If the town wishes to pursue these, we can discuss the procedure for paying for cleanup. We have the documentation to begin cleanup but, with these bigger projects, costs are higher.

Public Works

The Public Works Director reported:

- The department has been preparing for the Stampede along with cleanup from Hurricane Dorian
- There were five grease trap inspections in compliance with the exception of the car wash.
- Commissioner Chesson questioned if there were any clogged drainage in the area. The Public Works Director reported many of the ditches are privately owned. Some have converted ditches to underground culverts. It is not the policy of the town to work on private property.

Parks & Recreation

The Parks & Recreation director reported the following:

- Summer programs were finished in August.
- The football league will begin this Saturday.
- The Martin County Church Softball League will finish soon.
- The travel tournaments began August 31st. There are 15 teams.
- One tree fell in the park during Hurricane Dorian but no other damage was noted.
- He invited the Board to join the staff and committees at the Carolina Country Stampede. His staff prepares meals for the Stampede workers at the Scout Hut.
- The Back to School event at the Godwin Coppage Park was a success. He was thankful for all the support from the Fire and Police Departments, and the Head Hunters Motorcycle organization.
- Football practice was last week. There was not enough response for flag football. There are five tournaments booked this fall.

Police

The Police Chief reported:

- The mandatory 20 hour/employee training has been completed for this year plus the last round of active shooter refresher training.
- The new cars have a new marking scheme with one car featuring stealth markings.
- He has met with the architects for a more detailed view of the new Police Building.
- The department will be very busy in September with multiple weekend events planned, such as the Williamston Homecoming Parade, the Martin County Arts Council Event and the Stampede.
- The department is participating with the Martin County Sheriff's Office and Robersonville Police to have an active shooter drill that will involve school systems.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- There were 243 responses in July.
- The Hazmat team attended outreach programs to two departments in the area.
- 124 fire hydrants have been inspected in August.
- The next shooter drill is to be held in July or August of 2020.
- Some employees attended the South Atlantic Expo and placed 8th in the competition.
- Martin General Hospital has issued a service announcement to several media outlets noting their intentions to close the Labor and Delivery department at the facility. They plan to keep the OB physicians. If time is allotted, EMS will have to transport pregnant patients to another facility outside of Martin County.
- The generator at the Fire Department failed during Hurricane Dorian.

CLOSED SESSION

It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Moore and passed to go out of regular session into closed session to address a matters of Attorney-Client Privilege per N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3), Property Acquisition per N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5), and Personnel Matter N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (6).

It was moved by Commissioner Chesson to go out of closed session and into regular session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Coffield and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor