

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

March 7, 2016

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular session on Monday, March 7, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the Assembly Room at Town Hall.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro Tem Al Chesson, Ronell Rodgers, Jerry Knox, William Coffield,
and Junious J. Horton
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk: Christina Craft
Finance Officer: Linda Harrison
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey
Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Director of Planning and Development: Brent Kanipe
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Fire Chief: James B. Peele, III
Town Attorney: Daniel A. Manning

ABSENT None

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Commissioner Rodgers led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Chesson offered the invocation.

AGENDA APPROVED AS ADJUSTED

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 or the Consent Agenda.

The Town Administrator asked to have the following added to the Regular Agenda:

VI: New Business

- (4) Ordinance 2016-85 Amending Section XII of the Williamston Water Use Ordinance – Changing the Due Date for the Town of Williamston Utility Bills

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approval of the Minutes of the January 29-30, 2016 Meeting
- (2) Approval of the Minutes of the February 1, 2016 Meeting
- (3) Budget Amendment – Accessible Playground
- (4) Budget Amendment – E J Hayes CDBG Grant
- (5) Budget Amendment – Brownsfield Assessment Grant
- (6) Budget Amendment – FEMA Radio Grant
- (7) Budget Amendment – 2012 Sewer Rehabilitation Project
- (8) Budget Amendment – Department of Commerce Grant – Access Medicine
- (9) Approve Job Description – Parks Maintenance Technician
- (10) Set Town Board Facility Tour Dates – March 15 & 22, 2016

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Horton and unanimously passed to approve the agenda as amended.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Glenda McEachern of 305 North Smithwick Street, Williamston, reported to the board that she had a water leak that has been fixed. As she rents the property, she is requesting a bill adjustment as she does not own the property. The Mayor thanked her for concern and will take the situation under advisement. The Mayor reported that someone from Town Hall will be in contact with her.

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB

Roy Lilley, a Boys and Girls Club representative, appealed to the Board for some financial assistance. He had previously approached the Board on the initiative to open a Boys and Girls Club in Robersonville and Williamston. He believes this club would be beneficial for the children and the entire community in promoting a healthy lifestyle, academic success, good character and citizenship for the children. The club has been opened in Robersonville and noted that several of the Board members were in attendance at the grand opening. There is a precedent for county and municipal support for the club. The EJ Hayes School has offered to allow a Boys and Girls Club to be housed at the school. The Mayor reported that funding for the school will be discussed in the upcoming budget workshops.

OLD BUSINESS

ANNEXATION AREA "A" CHANGE ORDER #1

Blaine Humphrey, Rivers and Associates Project Manager, reported that Mark Ross had requested changes as he did not want to split his two properties. Revisions to the water and gravity sewer installation between STA 10+62 and 16+18 to accommodate easement revisions at the end of the WT Ross Road. The Roanoke Country Club has agreed to open cut installations of the water and sewer in lieu of bored casings and carrier pipe. The estimated increase in contract price is \$13,653. Mr. Humphrey requested board approval of the Work Change Directive No. 1 as it is necessary to expedite the water and sewer installation.

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Chesson and unanimously passed to approve the Work Change Directive #1 presented.

ELECTRICITY AT KEHUKEE PARK

Allen Overby, Parks and Recreation Director, requested guidance on a Board directive received at the 2015 Retreat. The Town has historically assisted the Williamston Youth Baseball Association (Association) at the county-owned Kehukee Park. The program is very successful and is run by volunteers. For many years, the Town mowed Kehukee, did minor maintenance, provided water at no charge and paid the electric costs for all uses, to include the ball field lights. The Town ceded mowing the park several years ago and still does very minor maintenance work upon request. In the 2015 Retreat, issues with the increasing electric bill and the change as to how the Town gets and pays for water that has been given to the Association were discussed. The water usage was very high due to running toilets and other issues found by Town staff. The electric issue was driven by an increasing yearly total billing. It was noted that the ball field lights were being used for practice and not being judiciously attended to when not required. Based on the discussion from the 2015 Retreat, staff was directed to inform the Association that the Town's intent was to take the electric account out of the Town's name and put into the Association's name. The Association was to open their own water account, which would not have a minimum bill but would cover the cost billed from MCRWASA. The Board agreed to pay the Association \$3,500 per year to defray the costs of the electricity and \$500 per year towards the water bill. The Association requested the water meter to be removed and began using an existing well. The electric account is still in question as the Association is having difficulty opening an electric account as the Association is not officially incorporated and is run solely by volunteers. The Town agreed to leave the account in the town's name in the interim while the Association works toward becoming incorporated but urged them to rush the paperwork. Mr. Pearson reported that the Town truly appreciates the Association and what it does for the Town but the Board wanted the Association to be more prudent in the utility usage.

Mr. Pearson reported that there are several options, such as turning the park back over to Martin County, which is not his recommendation. The Town Administrator reported that if the Town leaves the account in the Town's name, he recommends some sort of formal agreement in place stating that the Association is responsible for the electric fees that surpass the \$3,500 Town portion of the costs.

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Commissioner Chesson and the Mayor stated that it would be cleaner to put the electric bill in the Association's name and the Town send the Association \$3,500 toward payment of the electric bill. Steve Barnes, Williamston Youth Baseball Association volunteer, informed that the Association brings many visitors to the town by holding District and State tournaments. Mr. Barnes reported that the Board should continue to pay the entire bill as the Town will lose more in revenues if the District and State tournaments were not held in Williamston. *Commissioner Chesson made a motion to table this until after the budget process second by Commissioner Horton.*

NEW BUSINESS

RENEW DEBRIS REMOVAL CONTRACT

Brent Kanipe, Director of Planning and Development, reported that the pre-storm contract for debris management services with Phillips and Jordan, Inc. is due for renewal. This company will only be called in during disaster cleanup. In the original contract with Phillips and Jordan, there are two additional one-year renewal options available. At the end of both renewals, the contract will then be open for bid. There were no price increases in the renewal contract presented. This offer is made at the same terms and conditions as in the original contract.

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Horton and unanimously passed to approve the Pre Storm Contract for Debris Management Services between the Town of Williamston, NC and Phillips and Jordan, Incorporated presented.

Set Mid-Month Meetings

Eric Pearson, Town Administrator, presented several options for mid-month meetings to discuss long-range plans and to further budget discussions. There is already a mid-month meeting scheduled for April. He is requested the Board approve the addition of two mid-month meetings scheduled March 21, 2016 and May 16, 2016.

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Rodgers and unanimously passed to accept the addition of two mid-month on March 21, 2016 and May 16, 2016 as presented.

CGI VIDEO PROGRAM

Eric Pearson presented a CGI Communications contract for Board approval. CGI Communications had previously contracted, at no cost to Williamston, to create videos introducing the Town to people logging onto the Town of Williamston's website. CGI offers this free service to the town in return for a letter of introduction to our businesses and a signed contract. CGI will produce videos for those businesses at a contracted cost to the businesses.

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Rodgers and unanimously passed to authorize the Town to enter into the CGI contract and to authorize the Mayor to sign the agreement and introductory letter.

ORDINANCE 2016-85 AMENDING SECTION XII OF THE WILLIAMSTON WATER USE ORDINANCE – CHANGING THE DUE DATE FOR TOWN OF WILLIAMSTON UTILITY BILLS

Eric Pearson requested approval for Ordinance 2016-85 Amending Section XII of the Williamston Water Use Ordinance – Changing the Due Date for the Town of Williamston Utility Bills to comply with North Carolina General Statute 160A-314. The only change to be made is to change the bill due date to the 10th day of the month from its current 15th day of the month. Late penalties will still not be applied until the 20th day of the month and disconnects will still be done on or after the 21st day of the month.

It was moved by Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Rodgers and unanimously passed to adopt Ordinance 2016-85 Amending Section XII of the Williamston Water Use Ordinance – Changing the Due Date for the Town of Williamston Utility Bills as presented. Ordinance 2016-85 is hereby attached with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief was absent due to a death in the family. The Town Administrator has his monthly report for review.

Police

The Police Chief reported that the department had the Criminal Justice Education Training and Standards Commission Audit. The only issue, which was fixed immediately, was that one officer missed one training course.

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In conjunction with central communications, the department is implementing new CAD software. This is a county project at no cost to the town. This is a mobile CAD system that will allow 911 communications to communicate with the officers on radio and in the patrol cars. This will allow the Williamston Police Department, County deputies and other agencies to see the information at their fingertips. Chief reported that he has two more sessions and will complete the Administration Course at the School of Government at UNC Chapel Hill. The Piney Grove Baptist Church and the department will hold their annual public Easter Egg Hunt on March 19th at the Godwin-Coppage Park. The Chief introduced the newest officer, Kevin Banks. He is a native of Williamston. Mr. Knox read an accommodation letter written by District Attorney Seth Edwards to the Town Administrator's office regarding Chief Cowan. The District Attorney stated the open line of communication has created a relationship between the Williamston Police Department and his office that is second to none.

Public Works

The Public Works director reported that the month was normal except an increase in leaks for a total of 16 leaks. Typically, new asphalt is unavailable this time of year but was able to obtain new and recycled seven tons of old asphalt. Due to the fairly recent addition of an asphalt reclaimer, there were 27 street areas patched that would normally have been filled with stone until spring. Sanitation tonnage was down due to the street sweeper that was down to mechanical repairs. Staff went door to door to over 100 businesses to inform them of the possibility of sediment in the water when the treatment plant comes online. There were 5 grease trap inspections and all passed.

Parks & Recreation

The Parks & Recreation director reported that the Trillium Healthcare grant funds have been received and equipment ordered for the new inclusive playground at Godwin-Coppage Park. It is anticipated that the equipment installation should be completed by mid-May 2016. There are 5 All-Star teams this year. Softball registration begins next week. One staff member has obtained playground certification in Raleigh. The Parks and Recreation department is hosting the State Wide Athletic Committee (SWAG) which will bring multiple teams and visitors to the town. Commissioner Chesson requested that an electrician inspect the power usage at the park while it is still under the Town's control.

Planning

The Planning Director reported that there has been an increase in permit applications. There will be 10,000 feet of retail space developed this year that will be spread out over several areas in town. There are a couple projects downtown. There are two vacancies on the Planning Board and will hopefully have recommendations for their replacement at the next meeting. He reported that he is reviewing a catalyst grant to complete some demolition and assist some with improving some houses. The due date for the Letter of Intent is May 16 and needs Board approval to pursue the grant. He does not believe that matching funds will be required. If the Board approves, the grant application will be completed and presented to the Board prior to submittal. Hopper the Easter Bunny will distribute candy from 3:30pm to 5 pm March 24, 2016 on Main Street and will be in the Barnes Plaza at 5pm for games and pictures.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor