

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

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July 13, 2015

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular session on Monday, July 13, 2015 at 5:30 P. M. in the Assembly Room at Town Hall.

PRESENT Mayor: Tommy Roberson
Commissioners: Mayor Pro Tem Al Chesson, William Coffield, Herman B. Daniels and Junious J. Horton
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk/Executive Assistant: Christina Craft
Police Captain: Beth Coltrain
Fire Chief: James B. Peele, III
Planning and Development Director: Brent Kanipe
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey
Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Finance Director: Linda Harrison
Rivers and Associates: Mark Garner
County Manager: David Bone

ABSENT Commissioner Jerry Knox

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order and asked Commissioner Chesson to give the invocation.

AGENDA/CONSENT AGENDA APPROVED

The Mayor asked if there were any adjustments to the Regular Agenda or if the Board wished to have any items removed from the Consent Agenda and added to the Regular Agenda.

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

- (1) Closed Session for attorney/client privilege in accordance with NC General Statute 143-318.11 (a) (3) Attorney Client Privilege.
- (2) Move item VI Old Business (1) Consider Availability Charge to the end of the agenda.

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

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

1. Approval of the minutes of the June 1 & 29, 2015 Meetings
2. Resolution 2015-116 Notifying the NCDOT of Intent to Take Over Road Maintenance in Annexation Area.

INTRODUCTION TO UNITED WATER KEY PERSONNEL

Eric Pearson introduced Gary Steinback and Joe Thaxton. Mr. Steinback reported that United Water is very excited to partner with and serve the citizens of the Town of Williamston, as well as Martin County. United Water operates 17 facilities in North Carolina and has been established in the state for 30 years. He reported that Mr. Thaxton, formerly of Texas, has approximately 22 years experience from construction to management of waste water treatment plants. Mr. Thaxton reported that the plant in Texas was a design/build/operate job. He welcomes the challenge of the new plant. He has been pleased with the training for the new plant. The testing for the new plant will most likely be in mid-August with the plant to come online hopefully in September. There will be a 28-30 day commissioning test, before the plant can go live, that

will encompass testing all unit processes to assure they perform as expected. The state must give final approval before the new plant will be fully operational.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Michelle Pittman of 205 Halifax Road, Williamston, NC reported that she was very displeased that the Town business hours have changed to Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm as having the department open 10 hours per day was much more convenient with her work schedule. The longer hours allowed her to pay bills and handle business after her normal working hours.

Electric and Water at Kehukee Park

Allen Overby reported that he and Mr. Pearson have been communicating with Doug Baker regarding putting the water and electrical bills in the Williamston Youth Baseball Association's name as directed by the Commissioners. The Board had previously approved contributing \$3,500 annually towards the power bill and \$500 to assist with the water bill with the provision that the utility accounts be transferred to the Williamston Youth Baseball Association by July 1, 2015. The deadline has passed and Mr. Baker reported that he thought the power account had been changed but the utility company requires the group to be incorporated or at least, a limited liability corporation (LLC). They have started the process to become an LLC and will switch as soon as possible. The group has disputed the water bill as they feel that the meters are incorrect as the usage is very high. Kerry Spivey, Public Works Director, has inspected the meters to insure that the meters are accurate. Gary Barmer monitored the account for six days straight. He found that a toilet was running, contributing to the high water usage. Mayor Pro Tem Chesson reported that, per the usage, it is understandable to have an increase during the summer months due to increased use of the park and sprinkler systems. Mayor Roberson reported that it is the responsibility of the Williamston Youth Baseball Association to monitor and fix leaks at the park, not the Town of Williamston. The Town of Williamston is only responsible for leaks in the Town's water lines but not that on an individual's property. The Board directed Mr. Overby to proceed with the change of the water account to the Williamston Youth Baseball Association and urged that the Williamston Youth Baseball Association use proper due diligence with water leaks.

Resolution 2015-115 Requiring Board Authorization to Submit Grants

Mayor Roberson reported that it has been understood that the Board is to authorize all grants prior to submittal. There was some confusion on this as prior authorization is not in writing anywhere. Mayor Roberson requested a resolution to support the unwritten procedure to avoid any future confusion.

It was moved by Commissioner Daniels, seconded by Commissioner Horton and unanimously passed to approve Resolution 2015-115 Requiring Board Authorization to Submit Grants. Resolution 2015-115 is filed in the Town Clerk's office for future reference.

Resolution 2015-117 Accessible Playground Grant

Allen Overby reported that moving forward with the East Carolina Behavioral Health grant for the accessible playground was approved at the last meeting. The three grant applications require a Board approved resolution to be included with all three submittals. The priority for the grants is the Godwin Coppage Park. The Perry Park has a couple of noted drawbacks as the park is not open at all times and the bathrooms need to be closer to the playground. Mayor Roberson inquired as to whether the new playground equipment could be placed closer to the bathrooms. Mr. Overby reported that the bathrooms are aged but in working order. He reported that he will further investigate the issue with the bathroom location before the grant is submitted on July 21, 2015.

It was moved by Commissioner Daniels, seconded by Commissioner Chesson and unanimously passed to approve the submittal of the three grant applications to the East Carolina Behavioral Health.

It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Horton and unanimously passed to approve Resolution 2015-117 Accessible Playground Grant. Resolution 2015-117 is filed in the Town Clerk's office for future reference.

Reauthorize Purchase of Parks & Recreation Truck

Mr. Overby reported that, during the previous fiscal year, the Board had approved the purchase of a new Parks & Recreation truck to replace a 1988 Chevrolet truck. After approval, Mr. Overby went back to Dixie Motor Company with a purchase order but found that the quote was for a 6-foot bed instead of the 8-foot bed. The quoted price from Dixie Motor Company for a truck with the correct bed was over the Board approved price of \$21,813. Feyer Ford quoted the requested truck for under the approved price. There is a backorder on the chassis for the ordered truck and the estimated arrival time is September. Since the Town was unable to receive the truck in the approved budget year, Mr. Overby requested that the money to be moved to the

current budget year to cover the purchase of the truck, to include tax and tags. The Town Administrator reported that money not spent as of June 30, 2015 was moved to the Fund Balance in July.

It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Horton and unanimously passed to reauthorize the purchase of a Parks and Recreation truck for no more than \$21,813.

Ordinance 2015-77 Amending Appearance Commission

Brent Kanipe reported that the Appearance Commission has traditionally had seven members. The Town strives to select people from different neighborhoods throughout the community to serve on the Appearance Commission. It has become increasingly more difficult to get people to serve on the committee. He is requesting that the Board approve an adjustment to the Town Ordinance to change the number of Appearance Committee members from seven to six.

It was moved by Commissioner Daniels, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to approve Ordinance 2015-77 Amending Appearance Commission. Ordinance 2015-77 is filed in the Town Clerk's office for future reference.

Request to Abandon Street

Brent Kanipe reported that Michelle Pittman contacted the Zoning Office concerning a request to dedicate a green space to be located on a street right of way located on East Church Street Extended. This is a platted street, not a Town street. The Town of Williamston has never maintained or improved upon it. Attorney Manning reported that, although the families may have dedicated that area, the Town has never recognized that dedication. Dedications such as this are subject to be withdrawn by the descendents owners and no action is necessary. If the dedication is reversed, the property would revert to back to the original owner. Ms. Pittman was hoping to maintain a respite area with a couple benches and keep that area cleaned. The Town would have to formally accept the dedicated property and the Town has no interested in accepting the property. The Board took no action on this request.

Martha Vick Taylor Property Deed

Eric Pearson reported that the Williamston Library Advisory Board wants the Town of Williamston to purchase the Martha Vick Taylor property. Beaufort-Hyde-Martin Regional Library will pay for the purchase using Library Trust Fund money but wants a resolution to show the property will be used for library purposes. Mr. Kanipe negotiated a purchase price for the property of \$8,000. While it is the responsibility of the seller to prepare a deed, the library board requested that the Town Attorney prepare that on their behalf. Mr. Manning

It was moved by Commissioner Daniels, seconded by Commissioner Chesson and unanimously passed to approve the unsigned deed in form only to send to the Williamston Library Advisory Board for consideration of the purchase of the Martha Vick Taylor Property.

Resolution 2015-118 Stating the Intended Use of the Martha Vick Taylor Property

Eric Pearson reported that the Williamston Library Advisory Board requested a Resolution that would state for the Martha Vick Taylor property will be used for library purposes.

It was moved by Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to approve Resolution 2015-118 Clarifying the Intended Use of the Martha Vick Taylor Property. Resolution 2015-118 is filed in the Town Clerk's office for future reference.

Ordinance 2015-78 Amending Taxi Cab Ordinance

Eric Pearson reported that the recently approved Taxicab Ordinance needs to be amended to remove the fingerprint requirement on the actual license and to require the fingerprint on the application. Another change noted was the method the ordinance was numerated. He requests that Ordinance 2015-74 is repealed and Ordinance 2015-78 Chapter 111: Taxicab to be enacted in its stead.

It was moved by Commissioner Daniels, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to approve Ordinance 2015-78 Amending Taxi Cab Ordinance. Ordinance 2015-78 is filed in the Town Clerk's office for future reference.

Ordinance 2015-80 Amending Water Use Ordinance

Eric Pearson reported that administrative changes are needed to the Water Use Ordinance as there is a separate ordinance that changed the water bill cycle as previously approved by the Board.

It was moved by Commissioner Daniels, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to approve Ordinance 2015-80 Amending Water Use Ordinance. Ordinance 2015-80 is filed in the Town Clerk's office for future reference.

Skewarkee Settlement Agreements

Eric Pearson reported that the Skewarkee Settlement agreement has been prepared, in which the Town of Williamston will accept payments totaling \$125,000 from the Cincinnati Surety Company. In addition to the contract, there is a letter in connection with the contract from the Bugg & Wolf, PA stating that the Young Construction Company LLC retains title and ownership interest in and to the casing pipe, trench boxes and related equipment which provide support for the trench boxes. The Mayor was concerned that the company may not retrieve the equipment and supplies in a timely manner and the Town would be burdened with the responsibility of storage. Mr. Pearson reported that representatives from the Young Company had contacted him on several occasions, very eager to retrieve the trench boxes but Mr. Pearson did not give permission while the parties were still in litigation.

It was moved by Commissioner Daniels, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to approve the Skewarkee Settlement agreement and the allow Young Construction Company to retrieve the approved inventory when the removal can be done safely, without compromising the stability of the existing railroad embankment. The Skewarkee Settlement Agreement is filed in the Town Clerk's office for future reference.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Administrator

The Town Administrator reported:

- More formalized reports from all directors will be distributed at the August meeting.
- Customers now have the ability to make payments through the Town's website.
- The Town and County Offices has received numerous inquisitions concerning the Department of Wildlife drilling wells while no citizens in the Town are allowed to do so. The old well is in the upper Cape Fear. The six new wells are not in the upper Cape Fear as it is protected. The wells are for the duck compound.
- There is a meeting scheduled July 22, 2015 with the USDA to discuss further funding for the Skewarkee Canal Project and the Stormwater utility fee.

Police

The Police Captain reported:

- The Police Advisory Board held a work session on June 17, 2015 to identify ways to engage the target population.
- Sweepstakes places update their software to make it legal and the courts will deem it illegal again. The PD is waiting for clearer judicial guidance in this matter.
- An attempted murder occurred on July 3rd. Six people have been charged as a result of the investigation.

Planning

The Planning Director reported:

- The new website is online with a special thanks to Jamie Heath and Christina Craft.
- There have been quite a few real estate sells in Williamston this month.
- The Carolina Country Stampede will be held September 25-26, 2015. The Band of Oz will perform Friday night. The gospel segment will be held Saturday morning, with various groups throughout the day. Trick Pony will perform Saturday night.
- As part of the Strategic Economic Development, the planning department in conjunction with Martin County Tourism is in the process of setting up the Martin County Geocaching Trail which is a modern day treasure hunt. There are approximately 10 different locations throughout the county. Participants will follow the trail and receive plastic coins from each location. When all the coins are collected, the coins can be turned in for prizes. After 6 months, the sites will be moved to start the process again.
- Overgrown land in the township is not to be tolerated. Many properties are being mowed, with the cost to be added to the property taxes.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- June was a routine month with 198 EMS responses.
- Prevention officer had a busy month which included:
 - installing six smoke alarms
 - conducting the prevention program which reached approximately 70 people
 - 15 building inspections
 - 3 planning reviews
 - 2 car seat checks
 - attended the Fire Life Safety Conference in Concord.
- They presented a Prevention Program at the Public Official's meeting in Washington County. The Mayor informed that no invitation was received from Washington County attend the meeting.
- 30 hours were dedicated towards driver's training of emergency vehicle to fulfill an insurance rating requirement.
- EMS is has scheduled classes to be able to provide Advanced Life Support. The Board has been insisting on having the increase in the level of care incorporated in the County contract.

Parks & Recreation

The Parks & Recreation director reported the following:

- The regular softball season is over.
- Parks and Recreation is hosting the Statewide Athletic Conference state softball tournament July 17-19, 2015.
- Williamston Fire and Rescue and the Police Department will be onsite for the tournament.
- The Art Class and Basketball camp both had a very good attendance.
- The Zumba class and football camp are ongoing.
- The Movie in the Park series started a couple of weeks ago. The attendance was very low for the first movie, hopefully due to inclement weather. It has been rescheduled this Friday night during the tournament. The next movie in the series will be shown July 31st in conjunction with the Williamston Fire and Rescue department.
- Community Football League registration began today.
- The programs and events are being posted on the new Town of Williamston website.

Public Works

The Public Works Director reported:

- Sanitation tonnage for the June 138 totaled tons.
- 526 hours in the water department, largely due to changing meters, meter readings and cut offs due to nonpayment.
- A sweeper operator was hired but only worked one day. They are currently recruiting a replacement.
- A shortage of 5 employees has caused some minor delays in the work load.

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:36 p.m., it was moved by Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to go out of Open Session into Closed Session for attorney/client privilege in accordance with NC General Statute 143-318.11 (a) (3) Attorney Client Privilege.

At 8:22 p.m., it was moved by Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to go out of Closed Session and back into Open Session.

Water Availability Charge

It was moved by Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Chesson and unanimously passed to align ourselves with the Martin County Water Connection Policies, the Town of Williamston will no longer charge customers in Water Districts I and II who are not connected to our water system a minimum charge. Additionally, those customers that have been paying the minimum charge can connect at no charge by

December 31, 2015. Otherwise any customers who have not been paying the minimum charge or are delinquent thereto or desires to come on after December 31, 2015, will have to pay the regular connect rates.

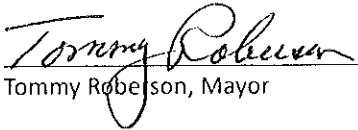
ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:


Christina Craft, Town Clerk


Tommy Roberson, Mayor