

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

December 2, 2019

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular session on Monday, December 2, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. in the Assembly Room at Town Hall.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro Tem Al Chesson, Jerry Knox, Ronell Rodgers, Alton Moore, and William Coffield
Town Administrator: John O'Daniel
Town Clerk: Christina Craft
Finance Officer: Linda Harrison
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Town Planner and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy
Town Attorney: Daniel Manning
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Human Resources Administrator: Martha-Brown Lilley
Judge Regina Parker

ABSENT Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Commissioner Coffield led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Chesson requested a moment of silence for the families of those lost in house fires and the first responders and offered the invocation.

WELCOME

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

SWEARING IN CEREMONY FOR MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

The Town Clerk presented the members of the Williamston Town Board of Commissioners who will be serving the town for the next four years. She then introduced the Honorable Regina Parker, District Court Judge for the Second Judicial District, to administer the oaths of office to the following:

Commissioners: Al R. Chesson, Alton Moore, Ronell Rodgers, Jerry W. Knox and William Coffield
Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown

Each commissioner and the mayor were sworn in.

ELECTION OF AND SWEARING IN OF MAYOR PRO TEMPORE

The Mayor asked for a motion to elect a Mayor Pro Tempore. Whereupon, Commissioner Knox made a motion, to elect Al R. Chesson as Mayor Pro Tempore, seconded by Commissioner Rodgers. Commissioner Knox reported Commissioner Chesson has many years of experience and also an engineer. Commissioner Rodgers reported General Statute 160A states the Mayor Pro Tempore can be picked by rotation and nominated Commissioner Moore as Mayor Pro Tempore. Commissioner Coffield made a motion to nominate Commissioner Rodgers. The Mayor asked for a show of hands to appoint Commissioner Chesson as Mayor Pro Tempore. Commissioners Knox and Chesson voted to appoint Commissioner Chesson as Mayor Pro Tempore. The Mayor asked for a show of hands for Commissioner Moore. Commissioner Rodgers voted for Commissioner Moore. The Mayor asked for a show of hands for Commissioner Rodgers. Commissioners Moore and Coffield voted for Commissioner Rodgers. The Mayor reported a tie and she voted for Commissioner Rodgers and congratulated him as the new Mayor Pro Tempore.

Judge Parker then administered the oath of office of Mayor Pro Tempore to Ronell Rodgers, his first term in this capacity.

Mayor Announces Commissioner Departmental Assignments

The Mayor announced that it has been the practice of the Board over the years for the Mayor to assign departments to members of the Board at the first meeting of the newly elected board. She presented the following departmental assignments to the Board of Commissioners:

Ronell Rodgers	-	Police Department
Jerry Knox	-	Fire Department
William Coffield	-	Sanitary/Cemetery
Alton Moore	-	Recreation/Administration
Al Chesson	-	Streets/Garage/Water/Sewer
Joyce Whichard-Brown	-	Planning and Zoning

The Mayor asked for a motion to approve the department assignments. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously passed to approve the department assignments. Judge Parker offered invocation for the elected officials.*

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 the Regular Agenda. The Town Administrator requested the addition of Public Comment on the agenda. A sign-in sheet was in place in the meeting room and no one has requested to be heard, but needs to be added to the agenda. He also requested the correction under Old Business for the consideration of the PARTF Grant Contract, not application. *It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Chesson, 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 Coffield, 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 November 4 and 18, 2019 meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of the PARTF Grant Contract

The Recreation Director reviewed the renovations to the Gaylord Perry Park which include a picnic shelter with restrooms, accessible playground, skate park, adult fitness area, outdoor basketball court renovations, accessible routes, expanding the parking area, utilities, landscaping and other site amenities to include picnic tables, flag pole, benches and receptacles. The PARTF grant application was approved by the NC Division of Parks and Recreation in October 2019. PARTF grants are paid on a reimbursement basis. The town must first spend its own funds on the project and then be reimbursed. He is recommending the approval of the contract as the Town Attorney has previously reviewed the contract. *It was moved by Commissioner Rodgers, seconded by Commissioner Moore and unanimously passed to approve PARTF Grant Contract for the Gaylord Perry Park Renovation Project as presented.*

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Waste Water Treatment Plant Surcharge Rate Adjustment

The Town Administrator reported the Public Works Director was unable to attend the meeting. All sewer surcharge rates are established by the Town. The rate has not been adjusted in over 30 years. Requested sewer surcharge rate changes are as follows: BOD in excess of 350 mg/l are \$.075 to \$.25/lb.; TSR in excess of 350 mg/l from \$.085/lb. to \$.25/lb.; NH3 as N in excess of 40 mg/l increased to \$.75/lb.; and TKN in excess of 40 mg/l are \$.75/lb. *It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Knox and unanimously passed to approve Waste Water Treatment Plant Surcharge Rate Adjustments as presented.*

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Parks & Recreation

The Parks & Recreation director reported the following:

- Recreation staff Donna Gooding and Don Torrence (athletic supervisor) have both retired.
- Basketball registration has begun.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- November was busy with a total of 241 calls
- The hazmat team participated in the Statewide Hazmat training exercises at Nutrien Plant in Aurora, NC.
- Three technicians went to Wilson for Hazmat Training.
- The Hazmat team did an outreach program for 3 shifts in Greenville.
- RRT inventory was performed this week.
- The Public Safety Building ribbon cutting was this week which will result in better insurance rates.
- There was a live burn on November 24, 2019.
- Over \$6,000 was raised for muscular dystrophy in the "MDA Boot Drive" campaign.
- Junie Wynn retired yesterday after 25 years of service.
- There was a fatal house fire on Oak Street. This was the second fatal house fire recently in Williamston. Neither home had batteries in the smoke detectors.

Police

The Police Chief reported:

- There were no issues during the holiday.
- The department participated in Organized Crime and Drug Task Force training.
- Two officers are to go to the NC Justice Academy for PLI training.
- One officer is to attend instructor training.
- The department partnered with the Interact club to deliver turkeys.
- The No Shave November has raised over \$4,850 so far for the Hope Lodge. Sargent Henry Poston raised the most money. As his reward, he will be allowed to wear his beard for one more month and have a steak dinner, provided by the Chief.

Planning

The Town Planner and Zoning Administrator reported:

- The Comprehensive Plan should be submitted to the Board in January.
- There will be a hearing for demolitions on November 7th.
- There are three owner-initiated demolitions this year.
- He has submitted the request for Elm and Houghton Streets to return to two-way traffic pattern.
- The sidewalk project has been pushed back to 2025.
- The Small Shop business opened on Main Street during the Stampede.
- The Cidery is to open soon on Railroad Street.
- Notice of Intent letters have been sent to the three property owners involved in the CDBG project. Two owners are working towards getting bids from contractors and Mitchell is to give a hard plan of action in the next couple of weeks. The grant deadline is June 2020 and the Department of Commerce may allow for 2 extensions if contracts are signed. Commissioner Chesson wants owner's intentions in writing with a plan of action as there seems to be no sense of urgency. It takes times to get drawings, permits and contracts and is questionable if the owners will be able to get any of this done in six months.

CLOSED SESSION

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, 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).

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 7:07 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor