

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

July 1, 2019

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular session on Monday, July 1, 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 Chief: Travis Cowan
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. Commissioner Coffield led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Rodgers offered the invocation.

WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed NC House Representative Shelly Willingham, 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. *It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Knox, and unanimously passed to approve the regular agenda as presented.*

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. The Town Administrator requested the addition of a Tax Relief Order to write off taxes for 1001 N. Haughton Street due to town foreclosure. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously passed to approve the consent agenda as amended.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approval of the Minutes of the June 3, 2019 meeting.
- (2) Approval of appointment to the Planning/Zoning Board – Tami Spence
- (3) Tax Relief Order

Year	Name	Remarks	Total
2011	Marian Brown-Cannon	Write off taxes (town foreclosure)	\$ 369.33
2012	Marian Brown-Cannon	Write off taxes (town foreclosure)	\$1,272.37
2013	Marian Brown-Cannon	Write off taxes (town foreclosure)	\$1,201.12
2014	Marian Brown-Cannon	Write off taxes (town foreclosure)	\$1,129.87
2015	Marian Brown-Cannon	Write off taxes (town foreclosure)	\$1,058.47
2016	Marian Brown-Cannon	Write off taxes (town foreclosure)	\$ 987.32
2017	Marian Brown-Cannon	Write off taxes (town foreclosure)	\$ 811.11
2018	Marian Brown-Cannon	Write off taxes (town foreclosure)	\$ 747.87

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of Formal Commitment of USDA Loan

Kim Daniels, Area Specialist for the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development, reported her purpose today was to make the formal commitment from the USDA for the Fire and Police projects. She reported an error in the documents previously received as the interest rate has dropped in the town's favor from 4.25% to 3.5%. She reported this change will be reflected in both the Fire Department Renovation packet and the Police Department Project. The loan for the Fire Department Project totals \$1,633,550 and the Police is \$1,996,200. She reported conditions of the loan to include a provision that the town must contribute \$50,000 to each project. This contribution will be considered the first funds expended, followed by the Rural Development loan funds. It is estimated the Fire Department Project will complete in a year and the Police will take one year, 6 months to complete. The loan is a simple interest loan with no pre-pay penalty. The first payment to the loan will be due one year after construction has been completed. The security requirements will consist of an installment/purchase agreement secured by a deed of trust. The security position for the Deed of Trust and the Security Agreements will be a first lien. The annual payment will be auto-drafted from the Town's bank account. If the Town wishes to make an extra payment, it is recommended to do so on the due date so the funds will be applied solely to the principle. The interest listed in the project cost is estimated higher than expected. These funds can be moved to other items, such as furniture. The construction bids must be public and requires three bids to open. The architect does the production monitoring. To move forward with the loan, Ms. Daniels requests the Board to approve the loan resolution. If the board decides to cancel the one or both projects, this can be done without penalty prior to signing of the construction contract. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Coffield, and unanimously passed to approve USDA Loan resolution for the Fire Department Expansion Project and the Loan Resolution for the Police Department Relocation Project. The Fire Department Expansion Project Loan Resolution and the Police Department Relocation Project Loan Resolution is hereby attached with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Resolution Book for future reference.*

Residential Parking Ordinance

The Town Administrator reported the Board had discussed the issue of parking in front of the residences on unimproved surfaces. It was the Board's direction to have the Appearance Commission to send letters to make the owners and tenants aware of the citizen complaints and to revisit the situation in July. The Mayor reported the issue she had previously referred to has been addressed but visitors to the Town have questioned why Williamston citizens park in front of their homes. Parking on the grass tears holes in the ground and degrade the appearance of the homes. Commissioner Rodgers expressed concern over the difficulty to tell citizens what they can do on their private property and some park on their property to deter vandalism as their parking is on the street. Commissioner Knox reported it does look terrible and the letters sent seemed to work. He recommends to continue with the letters. The Town Administrator requested direction of the Board as to whether continue with the letters and revisit at the Retreat in January. The Mayor reported she wanted to continue this discussion in August.

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Audit Contract FY 2018-2019

James Overton, Supervising Senior with Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC, presented a standard audit contract with one noted change that any litigations will be handled in North Carolina per the Town Attorney's request. Due to the \$75,000 threshold for grant funds, the audit will most likely be a single audit. If it is not, the fee will be reduced. *It was moved by Commissioner Rodgers to approve the Carr, Riggs & Ingram audit contract for fiscal year 2018-2019 as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Knox and unanimously passed.*

Approval of Right of Way Purchase Offer R-4705 211

The Town Administrator reported the receipt of a right of way purchase request from NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) for the 0.070 acres and another area of 0.032 acres of permanent utility easement located at the Godwin Coppage Park. This is due to the expansion of Prison Camp Road. He has discussed with the Town Attorney and, as the upgrades to the road is beneficial to the Town, advise the Board to move forward with the agreement. The price for this section is \$500. The second permanent utility easement is adjacent to the lift station also located on Prison Camp Road. The area requested is larger and the offer for this area is \$2,200. Commissioner Coffield questioned what would happen if the Town doesn't accept the offer. The Town Attorney reported the process is to have the areas appraised and make offers based on the appraisal. If the town disagrees with the amount, the town could also obtain an appraisal. The Town could spend the money for an appraisal and negotiate with the NCDOT. The NCDOT has to obtain right of ways from all property owners in the area as the plan is to widen

the road all the way to Greenville. *It was moved by Commissioner Coffield to approve the NCDOT purchase of real property due to the acquisition of Right of Way for permanent utility easements as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Knox and unanimously passed.*

Nuisance Ordinance Update

The Town Planner and Zoning Administrator reported N-Focus has reviewed the Town's current Nuisance Order. It is the recommendation to repeal Part 1 and add this portion to Chapter 93 which will allow for quicker action on overgrown vegetation on properties. Commissioner Coffield questioned if the Nuisance Ordinance would also address neglected homes in need of repair. The Town Attorney reported there are other codes that cover buildings and this ordinance does not abolish the other ordinances. Commissioner Rodgers questioned what happens if there is a creek on a citizen's property that causes a nuisance to include mosquitos and snakes, especially in the Willow Drive area. Mr. Braddy reported he would look into that area. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore to approve the Nuisance Order as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed.*

Proposed Paving Street Selection

The Public Works Director reported there are many streets in need of repair. Staff has reviewed and rated streets with the highest need and a price estimate for each. He is requesting Board approval to move forward with the street paving project. There is \$75,000 currently in the budget. The Mayor reported that the street paving estimates are well over the \$75,000. The Public Works Director reported the contractors will give more definitive estimates. *It was moved by Commissioner Rodgers to approve the street project as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moore and unanimously passed.*

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Public Works

The Public Works Director reported:

- The waterline flushing project is underway at nights due to the changeover in the disinfectant program per state requirements.
- There has been a decrease in the month on asphalt work with 4 repairs and 5 tons purchased.
- He has been working to renew the service agreement for sludge removal. There is a slight but reasonable increase in fees.
- The Hwy 125 Bypass project is complete
- Sanitation has been very busy cleaning storm debris.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- There were 243 responses in June.
- The Fire Prevention Officer has been busy with building and fire hydrant inspections.
- NCOEMS inspected the new engine and other equipment.
- Two employees were sent to Baltimore, MD to the International Association of Hazmat Conference.
- 10 members attended the PALS training has been completed. This is not state mandated but needed.
- The Carolina Brotherhood Bicycle Group stopped in Williamston as their first stop on the 610-mile bicycle run.
- Construction of the Training facility at the Martin Community College has begun.
- Car seat inspections are free to the public at the department.
- He attended "Blessing of the Badge" hosted by a Clergyman Group from Pitt and Beaufort County.
- He met with the architects to review blue prints for the building renovations.

Parks & Recreation

The Parks & Recreation director reported the following:

- Summer programs at the Perry Park include basketball camp, art class, Zumba class and arts/crafts.
- Softball season has ended with 2 All-Star teams, 8U and 10U in the SWAT tournament.
- Pickleball lines have been drawn on the tennis courts

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- Dominion did a study and have found the electrical service at the Gaylord Perry Park gym is a Phase 1 and the a/c units are a Phase II. He is in the process of obtaining new quotes and will do a load level to see what upgrades are needed. He is also checking on the building code requirements for insulation

Police

The Police Chief reported:

- Two officers attending crisis training and one to the child safety seat training.
- Taser training was conducted.
- They attended the Bomb threat exercise at the Martin Enterprise.
- There was a large multiagency drug bust.
- There was a shooting at the Andrews Park Apartments Friday morning.
- The department participated in an active shooter drill with Martin Enterprise.
- The department has been preparing for their own active shooter exercise.
- Dale Musselwhite has been promoted from detective to the Lieutenant.

Planning

The Town Planner and Zoning Administrator reported:

- A release of funds has been received and funds are available to spend for the three buildings associated with the CDBG project. It is the property owner's responsibility to obtain contractors but he has lined up a couple of contractors to speak with the owners to help facilitate that process.
- There were 55 documented violations, mostly associated with tall grass, with 25 of those that had to be abated by the Town.
- Five notices were sent to homeowners related to demolition. An owner has reached out concerning his plans to demolish his property on MLK Street.
- The Town has been recertified as an Audubon Sustainable Community. This is the 10th year of this designation and only 10 in the world have received such a designation.
- The mural has been completed between the hair salon and Main Street Monogramming building. The Boys and Girls club filled in the drawing.
- He and Mr. Dickerson plan to attend the NC Mainstreet Conference in August.
- He distributed a Downtown Event Flyer.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor