

TOWN BOARD MEETING – REGULAR MEETING

March 5, 2024

Present: Mayor George Holleman
Mayor Pro Tem Eric Bumgarner
Councilwoman Tamara Odom
Councilman Jack Simms
Councilwoman Kim Brown

The regular meeting was opened for business by Mayor Holleman at 5:30 p.m. The invocation was given by Mayor Holleman.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Brown and seconded by Councilman Simms to approve the minutes as presented from February 6th, 2024 regular meeting and February 20th, 2024 workshop as presented. The motion was passed unanimously.

Open Forum:

Attorney Monroe Pannel spoke regarding the open forum part of town hall meetings. Recently in other towns, the open forum had people making controversial comments on various subjects which were later publicized. Although the 1st Amendment allows freedom of speech, the incidents create the need to have established procedures in place on time limits and subject content. It was suggested a statement be read before the open forum section to make sure all speakers and attendees have complete and accurate information on what is allowed.

A motion was made by Councilman Simms and seconded by Councilman Bumgarner to open the public hearing on the proposed text amendment to the Towns Code of Ordinances, Title VII Traffic Code – Chapter 70. One concern is trucks making a right turn from Hwy 16 South onto Main Ave. Dr. and hitting the retaining wall at Adam's Funeral Home with their trailer. The retaining wall has been damaged numerous times. NCDOT will place a sign from the traffic light for a no right turn for trucks if we have an ordinance in place not allowing trucks to turn right at that intersection. Section 70.21 will address that issue. Other concerns are extremely tight turns with tractor trailers when they are making a left turn from Hwy 90 onto NC Hwy 16 North and right turns onto NC Hwy 16 South. When vehicles are sitting in the turning lanes, it makes it very difficult for the truck to make the turn. 70.20 would designate routes for trucks that are not making stops in town to use the bypasses and will decrease difficult intersections or allows them to go straight through the intersection instead of making a turn. Another useful text to our ordinance would be to add to cover areas where we have no truck signs already in place but don't have an ordinance to justify/regulate it. These text amendments are not meant to create ordinance violations and issue tickets, they are to help trucks navigate through town more efficiently and safely and to help with traffic and pedestrian safety. Jason Durmire representing Adam's Funeral Home was present and spoke in favor of the text amendment to the traffic code. No further discussion was had and the meeting was closed.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Brown and seconded by Councilwoman Odom to approve the text amendment to the Towns Code of Ordinances, Title VII Traffic Code – Chapter

70, effective immediately. The motion was passed unanimously. See attachment A, which is hereby incorporated and made a part of these minutes herein.

A motion was made by Mayor Holleman and seconded by Councilman Simms to remove 2 members from the original 9 members of the Downtown Revitalization Committee. Law enforcement and fire department representatives will be removed and consulted on an advisory basis as events are planned. The motion was passed unanimously.

By unanimous decision, the Rules of Procedure for the Downtown Revitalization Committee will be reviewed and return for discussion at the April meeting.

A motion was made by Councilman Simms and seconded by Councilman Bungarner to approve the following people being named to the downtown revitalization committee. Town Manager/representative, County Manager/representative, Town Council member, County Commissioner, business owner Kim Brown, Tyler Johnson, downtown property owner, Tommy Cothran, town resident. The motion was passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Brown and seconded by Councilwoman Odom to approve the new fee schedule for permit parking at the hospital parking lot. Beginning April 1, 2024 all vendors will be required to purchase a permit to park there. The cost will be \$20.00 for a weekend pass, consisting of Thursday, Friday and Saturday or a monthly permit for \$50.00 consisting of Thursday, Friday and Saturday's during a month. A pass will be issued at town hall to be displayed in the vendor vehicle. The motion was passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Simms and seconded by Councilwoman Brown to approve the hospital lease agreement with owner, Tim McCullen on a month-by-month basis for the sum of \$210.00 per month for the use of the hospital grounds. The motion was passed unanimously.

Staff Reports: Police Chief, Mike Millsaps.

Chief Millsaps states there were 191 staff-initiated responses, 285 dispatched responses for the month of February 2024. He has hired 3 new part-time officers and they are in the training process. Hopefully training & standards will have the proper paperwork completed soon which will allow those to be added to the full-time roster. The pd will be fully staffed at that point and the o/t will decrease. It was noted by Town Manager Wike that the Chief has been working every other weekend a road shift to help out due to the shortage of personnel.

Town Manager/Public Utilities Manager: Aaron Wike

Aaron Wike stated that he has discussed the on-going verbal agreement with Greg Kiziah regarding his property across from town park. Over the course of years that the verbal agreement has been in place allowing the town to use a portion of his property for parking, the town has maintained the property regarding mowing and placement of gravel on the parking area in exchange for use during events and for parking. After discussion of additional verbal requirements by Mr. Kiziah and the total annual expenses incurred by the town to maintain the original verbal agreement, it was unanimously agreed to end the verbal agreement for the use of Mr. Kiziah's property effective immediately. The maintenance of his property will be his sole responsibility, events and spectators using the property do so at their own risk using private

property. Other public parking areas are close by for spectators and citizens to use. In other topics, Mr. Wike stated that Duke Energy has been awarded a rate hike of street lighting of 23.8% which will affect our upcoming budget by a projected cost increase of \$15,000 additional annual expense. The State Dinner is set for April 3rd, 2024 with local representatives. The crane truck is here finally and is the final component of the VW diesel vehicle replacement grant we received last year. We were 1 of only 10 municipalities in the state that received funding. The entire program totaled 11 million and we received \$131,000.00 of which we matched \$81,212.98 totaling \$211,212.98.

Town Attorney – Monroe Panel
No business to address for this meeting.

Jason Durmine, Adams Funeral home requested that the Town Council consider the removal of the median in front of the funeral home. He suggested that possibly the county and town could work together to remove the median which would create additional parking and useable vendor spaces during festivals and events near the courthouse park.

Due to staffing issues in was requested that the next regularly scheduled meeting be moved. A motion was made by Councilman Simms and seconded by Councilwoman Brown to set the next meeting for the second Tuesday in April which is April 9th, 2024 at 5:00 pm in the Council Chambers instead of 5:30 pm. The motion was passed unanimously.

With no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 pm by a motion from Councilman Simms and seconded by Councilman Bumgarner. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mayor

Councilman

Councilman

Councilman

Councilman

Attest: _____
Yolanda T. Prince, Town Clerk