

REGULAR BOARD MEETING of June 15, 2005, with Mayor Buck Trott and Commissioners Amy Patterson, Hank Ross, H. N. James, Alan Marsh, and Dennis DeWolf present.

Also present were Richard Betz, Lamar Nix, Kim Lewicki, Adam Thompson, Phil Carlton, David Bock, John Shearl, Dennis Perkins, Sally Green, Bill Nellis, and others.

I. Call to Order.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Approval of Agenda.

Copies of the agenda had been distributed by mail. The Town Administrator requested that an application for part-time parking enforcement officer be reviewed in the closed session already scheduled at the end of the meeting.

MOVED BY COMM. MARSH, SECONDED BY COMM. PATTERSON, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

III. Approval of Minutes.

Copies of the minutes of the June 1 Special Meeting, Public Hearing, and Regular Board Meeting had been distributed by mail. Comm. DeWolf pointed out a typographical error.

MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. DEWOLF, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED.

IV. Reports.

1. The Mayor reported that local resident Irene James had turned 100 the previous Sunday, and he offered congratulations on behalf of the Board of Commissioners.

He also reported that a joint meeting had been scheduled between the Lake Sequoyah Improvement Association, the Mirror Lake Improvement Association, and the Upper Cullasaja Watershed Association for 7:30 p.m. on June 20 at the Civic Center. A representative from the Town's lobbying firm would be present to discuss future funding for the Lake Remediation Project. It was reported that most of the documents for the application for funding had been submitted to USDA but that the Environmental Report still needed to be submitted before the end of June; Comm. Ross offered to provide assistance with the report.

2. The Town Administrator invited the Board to attend a drop-by retirement party for Jerry Cook at the Conference Center from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on June 17.

He also reported that \$73,000 in funding had been received from Macon County for the Holt Knob Water Project, and that \$35,967 had been received from FEMA for Hurricane Ivan.

He also said that the final reimbursement requests for the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital Water Line project had been prepared and sent to the Appalachian Regional Commission and the N. C. Rural Center. He commended McGill & Associates for its work on the project, not only in engineering and construction observation, but also in assisting with the complicated requests for reimbursement from federal agencies. He also said that the Hospital had arrived at a temporary agreement with the entities receiving water from its well. Town Engineer Lamar Nix reported that the Hospital was now prepared to received Town water.

He also distributed a letter from the Town's auditing firm, Martin Starnes & Associates, concerning the upcoming audit, and reminded the Board of the June 29 Budget Hearing at 8:00 a.m.

He also told the Board that he had been communicating with Bob McEver, a resident on Little Bear Pen, concerning a proposal to paint the adjacent water tanks at his expense, provided the method of painting met Town standards; he displayed the proposed color and asked if the Board had any objection. Comm. Ross felt that all of the Town's water tanks should be painted the same color, and he suggested that the Appearance Commission review the request and make a recommendation on a color.

Comm. Patterson asked about the sequence of events for the Land Use Plan; she wondered if the Plan should be adopted now, before public meetings were held. The Town Administrator said that he understood the Committee had asked for the Board's input on the draft Plan before public meetings in order to eliminate those items it did not want to pursue, but that it would not be adopting it until after the Board discussed it at a series of meetings beginning on July 20.

V. Old Business.

1. The Board discussed permits issued at previous meetings for use of Town right-of-way for construction activities by Old Edwards Inn and Wolfgang's on Main, which had expired on this date. It was noted that construction work had not been completed on South Fourth Street by OEI; Comm. James did not think the permit should be renewed if it had not been requested, and said that the work should have been finished. No motion was made to extend the permit.

MOVED BY COMM. JAMES, SECONDED BY COMM. ROSS, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE CONTINUATION OF THE PERMIT ISSUED AT THE PREVIOUS MEETING TO WOLFGANG'S ON MAIN UNTIL JULY 6.

2. Nominations for various Boards and Committees had been tabulated and distributed.

MOVED BY COMM. ROSS, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPOINT BILL CONWAY TO THE ZONING BOARD AS A REGULAR MEMBER FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM.

MOVED BY COMM. MARSH, SECONDED BY COMM. ROSS, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO RE-APPOINT ALAN FREDERICK TO THE ZONING BOARD AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM, AND TO APPOINT JAMES MANLEY TO THE ZONING BOARD AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM.

MOVED BY COMM. ROSS, SECONDED BY COMM. DEWOLF, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO RE-APPOINT DOUG CAMPBELL TO THE PLANNING BOARD FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM.

MOVED BY COMM. DEWOLF, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPOINT ALLAN JAMES TO THE APPEARANCE COMMISSION TO FILL AN UNEXPIRED TERM.

MOVED BY COMM. ROSS, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO RE-APPOINT LUKE OSTEN TO THE APPEARANCE COMMISSION FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM.

MOVED BY COMM. ROSS, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPOINT MARC PITTMAN TO THE APPEARANCE COMMISSION TO FILL AN UNEXPIRED TERM.

MOVED BY COMM. JAMES, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPOINT MIKE THOMPSON TO THE ABC BOARD FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM.

MOVED BY COMM. JAMES, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPOINT GEORGE SCHMITT TO THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM.

MOVED BY COMM. ROSS, SECONDED BY COMM. JAMES, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO RE-APPOINT J. T. PUTNEY, LOUISE DEMETRIOU, AND RANDY POWER TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT FUND FOR THREE-YEAR TERMS, AND TO APPOINT MARK THOMAS TO THE COMMITTEE TO FILL AN UNEXPIRED TERM.

MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPOINT BOB HOUSTON TO THE CEMETERY COMMITTEE FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM.

VI. New Business.

1. In a wide-ranging discussion, the Board discussed various items in the FY 05-06 budget presented on May 18:

- The Town Administrator recommended adding \$12,000 to the Police Department for Separation Allowance, and increasing capital outlay for Town Hall from \$20,000 to \$30,000.
- Comm. Ross had prepared an estimate on improvements to the Ball Field, as discussed at earlier meetings; the total would be \$139,072, and would greatly improve drainage on the field. Town Engineer Lamar Nix said that neighboring property owner Dennis Wilson had agreed to participate in the drainage work, which could lower the estimate. John Shearl was present and discussed the deficiencies in the existing field; he urged the Board to proceed with the improvements.

MOVED BY COMM. ROSS, SECONDED BY COMM. DEWOLF, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ADD THE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE FY 05-06 BUDGET.

- The Board discussed the recommended increase from \$100,000 to \$150,000 for capital outlay additional paving/sidewalks in the Street Department, intended to fund trash cans, handrails, tree planters, Christmas decorations, etc.
- Comm. Marsh said he thought the Town should consider contracting out the pole-changeouts discussed at previous meetings. It was noted that the re-conductoring project would replace many of those poles and that progress was being made on the change-outs by Northland. Comm. James suggested that the GIS/Field Technician provide a report on progress to date.
- The Board agreed to discuss sewer connection policy at the August 3 meeting.
- Comm. Ross asked about the funding proposed for the Library; the amount was \$10,000 this year, but in the past had been \$12,000. Comm. Patterson explained that the Finance Committee had felt that the purchase of books was not as immediate a need as other requests, such as repairs to the roof of the Peggy Crosby Center. Comm. Ross said he was satisfied with the explanation.

2. MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. DEWOLF, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO G. S. §143-318.11(A)(6) TO REVIEW APPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND TO REVIEW INDIVIDUAL SALARY INCREASES FOR THE YEAR. All present left the room except the Clerk.

- A. The Town Administrator reported that Interim Police Chief Willy Houston had requested employing Ryan Angel as a part-time Parking Enforcement Officer at the hourly equivalent of 9-1.
- B. The Town Administrator reviewed his recommended merit and longevity salary increases for all employees.
- C. The Board reviewed applications for Police Chief and agreed to interview several candidates for the position.

MOVED BY COMM. DEWOLF, SECONDED BY COMM. PATTERSON, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO GO INTO OPEN SESSION.

3. MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. ROSS, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO EMPLOY RYAN ANGEL AS A PART-TIME PARKING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER AT THE HOURLY EQUIVALENT OF 9-1.

4. MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. DEWOLF, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE A 3% COST-OF-LIVING INCREASE FOR ALL EMPLOYEES.

5. MOVED BY COMM. DEWOLF, SECONDED BY COMM. ROSS, AND CARRIED TO APPROVE ALL OF THE MERIT AND LONGEVITY SALARY INCREASES RECOMMENDED BY THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR. Comms. DeWolf, Ross, and James voted "aye;" Comms. Marsh and Patterson voted "nay." The increases are as follows:

Hilda Brown	15-4
Gail Reese	12-5
Larry Gantenbein	17-12
Dawn James	10-5
Matt Shuler	15-8
Clifford Ammons	11-7
C. D. Jenkins	11-4
Wade Wilson	16-11
Richard Bradshaw	8-4
George Wilson	9-7
Robert McMahan	9-6
Jonathan Shaheen	10-4
Tommy Carpenter	9-4
Jim Carver	9-4
Norman Houck	9-7
John Smith	5-14
Craig McCall	20-14
Greg James	19-14
David Leffler	18-14
James Ramey	10-10

The following were approved contingent on certification:

Kenneth Norris	9-7
Richard Bradshaw	8-5
George Wilson	9-8
Robert McMahan	9-7

6. MOVED BY COMM. ROSS, SECONDED BY COMM. JAMES, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO SET A SPECIAL MEETING FOR JUNE 29 AT 7:00 P.M. TO INTERVIEW CANDIDATES FOR POLICE CHIEF IN CLOSED SESSION.

7. Comm. Marsh asked that the moratorium on non-conforming buildings, which had expired the previous day, be placed on the agenda of the next Board meeting; the Board agreed by consensus.

VII. The Board agreed by consensus to adjourn.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was declared adjourned by the Mayor at 9:45 p.m.

Richard Betz, Town Clerk