

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

April 6, 2015

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular session on Monday, April 6, 2015 at 5:30 P. M. in the Assembly Room at Town Hall.

PRESENT Mayor: Tommy Roberson
Commissioners: Herman B. Daniels, William Coffield, Jerry Knox and Junious J. Horton
Town Administrator: Eric Pearson
Town Clerk/Executive Assistant: Christina Craft
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
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
Town Attorney: Daniel A. Manning

ABSENT Mayor Pro Tem Al Chesson

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order and asked Commissioner Knox 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:

VI: New Business

- (1) Letter Opposing HB-390
- (2) I-44 Initiative Letter of Support
- (2) Remove Brent Kanipe's name from Departmental Reports as he was not present

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Horton 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 March 2, 2015 Meeting**
- (2) **Budget Amendment – General Fund for Chipper**

General Fund

General Fund Balance	\$	7,500.00
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The purpose of this amendment is to budget funds for the purchase of a chipper for the Sanitation Department. This purchase should save the Town in Landfill fees that would be paid to Martin County. Additional funds approved for the Chipper by the Board on March 2, 2015.

- (3) **Budget Amendment – Highway 17 Additional Payment**

General Fund

General Fund Balance	\$	500.00
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The purpose of this amendment is to budget funds for the additional contribution to Highway 17 Commission. The additional amount approved by the Board on March 2, 2015 is \$500.00. The funds are transferred from Administration training budget.

(4) Budget Amendment – E J Hayes Contribution

Community Development Fund

Community Development Fund Balance	\$	3,472.00
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The purpose of this amendment is to budget funds for the contribution made by the E J Hayes Association to support the E J Hayes Project. The amount of the contribution is \$3,472.00.

WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed State Representative Shelly Willingham, and Martin County Commissioners Dempsey Bonds and Ronnie Smith (Chairman) who were in attendance at the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Edgar Taylor of 317 Halifax Street requested an adjustment to his current water bill and would like to have the water turned back on. He had previously requested an adjustment in June 2014 for \$80. Mr. Taylor reported that he had a leak which has been repaired by a plumber which contributed to the current bill total of over \$4,000 in a month. Mr. Taylor reported that he has health issues and cannot afford to pay that amount on a fixed income.

The Mayor asked staff to review Mr. Taylor's water bill account and get back with Mr. Taylor.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Approves Appointment of Martin Memorial Library Board Member

The Mayor presented a request for the appointment of Glinda W. Fox to her first term on the Martin Memorial Library Board.

It was moved by Commissioner Daniels, seconded by Commissioner Knox and unanimously passed to approve the appointments as requested. Ms. Fox first term on the Martin Memorial Library Board will expire in April 2021.

Purchase Parks and Recreation Truck

Allen Overby reported that the truck has been in the budget for \$20,000. The quote received from the Dixie Motor Company is \$21,813. Mr. Overby requested an additional \$2,000 to cover the \$1,813 plus tags and taxes. He did not receive other quotes as the truck quoted is the state contract price. Eric Pearson reported that the vehicle acquisition was setup in the budget through a leasing type arrangement over a 4-year budget period.

It was moved by Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to approve an additional \$1,813 to purchase the vehicle.

Kehukee Park Utility Fee Payment

Allen Overby reported that he and the Town Administrator, under the direction of the Board, had reviewed with Gary Manning, President of the Williamston Youth's Baseball, turning the Kehukee Park Water and Power Utilities over to the Youth League Park and the Town will assist with a \$3,500 annual payment to be used toward the electric bill. Gary Manning, President of the Williamston Youth's Baseball, requested that the Town contribute an additional \$500 towards the water usage with the understanding that if the cost of the water is more than \$500, the Park would be responsible for the remainder. There was no charge for water previously. Since the Town will have to purchase water from MCRWASA, this cost is being transferred to the

Park. Mayor Roberson reported concern over paying the payments directly to the Kehukee Park. Mr. Pearson stated the reimbursement could be requested monthly, with the total amount not to exceed the approved amount.

It was moved by Commissioner Daniels, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to approve reimbursing the Kehukee Park utilities on a monthly basis, with an annual cap of up to \$3,500 towards the electricity bill and up to \$500 towards the water bill.

Resolution 2015-109 Authorizing the Mayor to Seek Assistance for Skewarkee Funding

Eric Pearson reported that the Skewarkee Drainage Project will cost approximately \$1.1 million to complete. One of the ways to cover the cost to finalize the project is to find a grant. A grant application has been submitted to the NCDENR Water Resources Development Grant for about \$500,000. The proposed resolution will add local support for and authorize the Mayor to seek Legislative assistance to allocate this grant as a line item to the State budget.

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Horton and unanimously passed to approve Resolution 2015-109 to authorize the Mayor to seek Legislative assistance for Skewarkee Funding.

Ordinance 2015-74 Amending Taxi Cab Ordinance

Per the board's recommendation during the January 2015 retreat, Eric Pearson reported proposed changes to the Taxi Cab Ordinance to make it easier to enforce but still be efficient. The proposed changes were submitted for the board to review with items to be removed have strike-through and added language is highlighted. All changes were reviewed and approved by Attorney Dan Manning prior to the meeting. Personal references are still required, but the references are no longer required to live in Williamston. The Chief of Police will approve all applications and must submit denials in writing to the Town Administrator. The board retains final control of authorizing franchises. Any appeals will go directly to the Town Administrator. Inspections are to be done twice per year instead of quarterly.

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Horton and unanimously passed to approve the Ordinance 2015-74 Amending the Taxi Cab Ordinance. This resolution is hereby attached with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book.

West Main Street Sidewalk Agreement with NCDOT

Eric Pearson reported that the NCDOT has approved Phase II of the N. Main Sidewalk project. Darrick Lee, our Division Engineer with the NCDOT, has done the preliminary design and cost estimate of the project. The project is approximately \$225,000. The NCDOT has grant funds available to cover \$180,000 and the matching portion for the Town is \$45,000. Darrick had a contract developed between NCDOT and the Town to enter into the project. The funds can be spent from Powell Bill and must be paid in advance. It is unknown exactly when the state will start the project. Dan Manning has reviewed and approved the contract.

It was moved by Commissioner Daniels, seconded by Commissioner Horton and unanimously passed to approve the contract as presented and authorize the payment of \$45,000 to the NCDOT from the Powell Bill Funds.

SB-369 Letter of Concern to Senator Brown

Eric Pearson reported that a letter of concern signed by all Town Commissioners has been sent to NC Senator Brown in regards to the Senate Bill – 369, the Tax Fairness Act, which changes the way the sales tax is distributed. The concern noted is that the sales tax redistribution will primarily go to the county with a small portion to the town. It is vital that Williamston continues to receive the sales tax to support businesses that have been built up here. A copy of the letter is on file with the Town Clerk.

It was moved by Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to approve the Letter of Concern to Senator Brown.

I-44 Corridor Support Letter

Eric Pearson reported that he was invited to a meeting to discuss the I-44 Corridor and all were requested to bring letters of support. The I-44 initiative is being put together by the NCEast Alliance in an effort to promote the I-44 / I-495 corridor. The letter was presented for approval. A copy of the letter is on file with the Town Clerk.

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Horton and unanimously passed to approve the Letter of Support of the I-44 Initiative to be sent on behalf of the Town of Williamston.

Resolution R-2015-111 Authorization Opposing HB 390

Eric Pearson reported House Bill 390 would allow Beaufort Community College to expand services into Washington County which will eliminate services currently performed by Martin Community College. Martin County has adopted a resolution to oppose that bill.

It was moved by Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to approve Resolution R-2015-111 Authorization Opposing HB 390.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Town Administrator

The Town Administrator reported:

- April 20, 2015 at 5:30 pm is the scheduled budget workshop;
- Funding research for the Skewarkee Canal project is underway:
 - Authorize the Mayor to seek Legislative assistance to allocate this grant as a line item to the State budget.
 - Assistance from Kevin Richards with the MidEast Commission
 - Assistance requested from the NC League of Municipalities
- A meeting has been scheduled with Mark Garner and the USDA to discuss grant opportunities but USDA requires a storm water utility fee, which will require certain legal steps that will be discussed at a later date.
- Negotiations continue with EMS Partnership agreement to provide the EMS services to the Town.
- I & I Project has one item left on punch list so the project will should be closed out this month.
- The additional OPEB contribution of \$50,000 was made this month as required by the Board.
- I-495 meeting sponsored by the Hwy 17 Commission was held to garner new members by expanding their role of lobbying for the completion of the Hwy 17 completion to include lobbying for I-495.
- NCEast Alliance will hold a meeting to garner support for the I-44 / I-495 project this month.
- Still serving on the NC Environmental Legislative Action Committee, sitting in on Martin County Comprehensive Transportation Plan Committee since a part of the plan is specific to the Town of Williamston.
- NCDOT and Board of Education will hold a meeting to discuss the stoplight at the middle school on Hwy 17
- Attending a Hwy 125 meeting Thursday April 16th with Brent Kanipe
- Brent Kanipe has been receiving multiple inquiries for businesses downtown.

Police

The Police Chief reported:

- Met with the Linx coordinator concerning a grant to cover the cost programming our system to communicating with the NCIS Intelligence Database.
- The next Police Advisory board meeting is April 27, 2015.
- Ballistic vests have arrived
- Homicide related to a home invasion in a targeted incidence. The suspect was fatally wounded by the occupant of the residence. Investigations continue with the assistance of the NCSBI.

- The local Piney Groove Church Easter Egg hunt went very well with police and citizen participation.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- There were 214 EMS responses this month and a reduction in house fires from the previous month
- Focused on prevention by installing 10 smoke detectors, 3 CO2 detectors, 4 prevention programs, 8 building inspections, 2 planned reviews and 4 car seat checks. Four staff members were sent to Robersonville to assist in a car seat clinic, installing approximately 48 car seats.
- Providing and offering 45 hours of fire and rescue training each month plus 9 hours of EMS training.
- Two employees sent for a week nuclear radiation training class at the Nevada Nuclear Test Site.

Parks & Recreation

The Parks & Recreation director reported the following:

- Girls Fast-pitch Softball registration was held March 25-28. There are about 10 or 11 teams.
- Softball infield to be redragged if the weather permits.
- Park usage has picked up as the weather warms and children are on spring vacation.
- Travel tournaments scheduled through August.
- Filled open fulltime position.

Public Works

The Public Works Director reported:

- The workload completed is up and sanitation work tonnage has doubled in March.
- Asphalt recycling equipment and heater has arrived and training has begun.
- The chipper has been received and saved approximately \$7,000 already in fees alone by processing the limbs and yard debris.
- 1-ton of asphalt has been reclaimed for training staff.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:50 p.m., it was moved by Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Knox 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 7:18 p.m., it was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Daniels and unanimously passed to go out of Closed Session and back into Open Session.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Christina Craft, Town Clerk

Tommy Roberson, Mayor