

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

March 4, 2019

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular session on Monday, March 4, 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  
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** None

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

The Mayor called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Commissioner Ronell Rodgers led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Coffield offered the invocation.

**WELCOME**

The Mayor welcomed 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 the Regular Agenda. *It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Coffield 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 Census Agenda. *It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Knox to approve the consent agenda as presented.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Minutes of January 7, 18 and 23, 2019 meetings and February 4, 11, and 20, 2019 meetings

2. Approval of Budget Amendment – Code Enforcement

Revenue Account

Undesignated Fund Balance	\$10,000
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The purpose of this amendment is to budget additional funds for the code enforcement line item. These funds will be used to demolish dilapidated homes to give the neighborhood a cleaner more positive environment.

3. Approval of Budget Amendment – Annexation Project Settlement

Expense Account

Easement Acquisition & Misc	\$43,050
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The purpose of this amendment is to budget revenue and expenditure for the settlement with the Williamston Country Club for the Annexation Project. This is final payment to the Country Club. Payments were Williamston Country Club \$42,750 plus Mediator costs with Irvin Lawn Firm \$300. Revenue is divided between funds: Water 8.5% and Sewer 91.5%.

*It was moved by Commissioner Moore seconded by Commissioner Rodgers to approve the consent agenda as amended.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS****Approval of Carr Riggs & Ingram (CRI) Audit Contract Amendment**

Michael Jordan, with Carr Riggs & Ingram, LLC reported the Town of Williamston audit for fiscal 2018 was reassigned to a different office and engagement partner. The audit service delivery date was affected by Hurricane Florence in the fall of 2018. There was also a delay in receiving the GASB 73 actuarial report for Law Enforcement Officers Special Separation Allowance. CRI is seeking to modify the due date of the audit report until March 18, 2019. *It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Moore and unanimously passed to approve the amendment to the Carr, Riggs & Ingram Audit contract for 2018 Fiscal Year to audit accounts to extend the contract to March 18, 2019.*

**Carr Riggs & Ingram Audit Presentation**

James Overton, with Carr Riggs & Ingram, LLC, reported the Town of Williamston received an unmodified opinion for the Fiscal year ending June 30, 2018. Unmodified opinion means the financial statements are presented fairly and correct as is. The total net position of the Town is \$23,989,161. Of this amount, the total unrestricted funds are \$6,118,668. The total revenues were \$10,518,187 with a change in net position of \$93,485. With the loss of Parkdale Mills and the revaluation of property values, the Town did well to have the small profit. The General Fund has a balance of \$4.4 million. He stated that Town is in good financial shape as the Town has nine months set aside for expenses. The Local Government Commission requires a minimum of three months but recommends the amount to be more than three months due to the size of the town. Expenses increased by \$100,000 in the General Fund, with the total General Fund balance increased \$381,000. The Enterprise Fund revenues were decreased by \$306,784 due to the loss of Parkdale Mills. The change in Net Position in the Enterprise Fund was a negative \$82,310 due to the depreciation. The net position of the Storm Water Fund is \$114,080. He also reviewed the changes in Long-Term Debt, which includes a USDA Loan for \$1,030,000, for a total balance in long-term debt of \$6,308,034. He commended the Town as the Town has taken the initiative to fund the Other Post Employment Benefits Fund (OPEB). The old method to record the OPEB liability was to only record the current liability. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) has changed the standard to record the entire OPEB liability. The OPEB obligation for 2017 was \$1,389,413 and for 2018 the number changed to \$4,892,518. The Town funded the plan by \$100,000 in 2018 and \$200,000 in 2017. He urges the Board to continue to fund the plan. This number has doubled or tripled for every town and county. The Town did cap the number of employees that are eligible for the OPEB plan in 2013 as no employees hired after 2013 are eligible for OPEB. Total property values decreased by almost 7%. In response to the decrease, the Town increased by the tax rate by \$.05 per \$100 of assessed value. The tax collection percentage is 93.3%. He cautioned the Town that the tax collection percentage is low in comparison to the state average of 98%. Most of what is not collected in the first year is collected in the second year with garnishments at a rate of 99%. The future challenge will be the Water and Sewer fund with the loss of industry. The water and sewer lines will need to be replaced in the future at a high cost with fewer customers. The audit has been sent for internal review and will then be sent to the Local Government Commission. He commended the staff during the audit for their prompt attention and well organized records. *It was moved by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Chesson and unanimously passed to approve the 2018 Audit presentation.*

**BHM Library Budget Presentation**

Amanda Corbett thanked the Town Board for the continued support of the library operations. She reported the 2019-2020 budget request includes an increase due to cost of living adjustment, potential merit wage increase for the Martin Memorial employee, the rising cost for healthcare coverage for the fulltime librarian, and ongoing support for the landscaping maintenance. She reported there has been an increase in traffic in the Martin Memorial Library. She requested an increase of \$10,200 this year for a total appropriation of \$112,200.

**Martin County Arts Council Budget Presentation**

Kathy Daly, Martin County Arts Council Chair, expressed appreciation for the continued support of the Town for the Martin County Arts Council (MCAC). She requested \$7,500 allocation for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. The MCAC has expanded the duties of an existing position and appointed a part-time executive director. An added benefit has been a substantial increase in the numbers of citizens and visitors who have attended our performances and activities due to expanded outreach and publicity. The funding requested will help MCAC maintain the executive director position and will also aid in our operating expenses. She provided the Board with a listing of upcoming MCAC events and extended an invitation to the Board to attend.

**Consideration of Donation of Property Parcel #0502257 by Ila Parker**

Ila Parker, property owner, reported that she would like to donate property parcel #0502257 which is located at on the corner of S. Watts and the Rail Trail. The Mayor reported the land appears to be a ditch and was concerned that the land was a portion of the Town drainage system. The Public Works director reported he does not believe the land is not a portion of the Town drainage system. The land on the northern side of the railroad is low land. He believes at some point it was a natural drainage and the Town's drainage system is handled by underground piping or land constructed by the Town of Williamston for the removal of storm water. He is not aware of any right of way or drainage improvements of the property and will have to research to be certain. Commissioner Chesson reported that this donation needs further consideration to review if the donation benefits both parties and recommends the discussion to be tabled. *It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Knox and unanimously passed to table the discussion of the donation of property parcel #0502257.*

**Approval of Budget Amendment for Commissioner Moore for Annual CityVision Conference by NCLM**

The Town Administrator reported training for Commissioner Moore was not in the 2018/2019 budget as he is completing Commissioner Horton's term. The NCLM conference offers the mandated ethics training required by NC State General Statutes to be completed with a year of appointment. The Board Training budget line only includes the conferences that the Mayor and other Commissioners requested to attend at the 2018 Retreat. *It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Rodgers and unanimously passed to approve budget amendment to add additional funds to the Board Training line item for the new Commissioner.*

**Approval of Budget Amendment for Commissioner Coffield to Attend the Annual Black Summit**

The Town Administrator reported Commissioner William Coffield requested to attend the NC Black Summit hosted by the NC Black Alliance. Commissioner Coffield reported he understood it was already included to his education budget for the year. Commissioner Knox questioned where the funds would be taken as the budget has already been approved. Commissioner Chesson reported that funds would be taken from General Funds. The Finance Director reported that all staff and commissioners will need to complete requests annually to attend conferences. *It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Knox and unanimously passed to approve budget amendment to add additional funds to the Board Training line item for Commissioner Coffield to attend the Annual Black Summit hosted by the NC Black Alliance.*

**Approval of Reappointments to Advisory Board**

The Recreation Director reported Tony Speller and Chowanda Goddard are due for reappointment to the Town of Williamston Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. *It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to approve the reappointment of Tony Speller and Chowanda Goddard to the Town of Williamston Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.*

**Approval of MTW (Martin-Tyrrell-Washington) Health Department Agreement**

Chief Peaks reported the Memorandum of Understanding between MTW Health Department and Town of Williamston is due for annual review. He requested that the Board approve the contract and allow him to sign the

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contract on an annual basis moving forward. The purpose of the agreement is to clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of each party as they relate to the post-care procedure of a Town of Williamston employee with a work related, human, blood-borne pathogen exposure. The agreement does not include any reimbursement of funds between the two parties. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore and unanimously passed allow Chief Peaks to sign the Memorandum of Understanding between the MTW Health Department and the Town of Williamston annually and approval of the contract as presented.*

**DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS****Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- There were a total of 197 responses in February.
- Hazmat refresher monthly training was completed with no RRT calls in February.
- Fire Officer I and II classes were completed.
- He attended the Martin County Firefighter Association meeting.
- The department hosted a table top exercise for the RRT department.
- The new fire engine has arrived and is now in service.
- The remount project should be completed in April.
- There was an incident at the fire station as the 2004 Pierce caught on fire inside the fire station. There was no service disruption. The fire was noticed and extinguished prior to the alarm system activation.

**Public Works**

The Public Works Director reported:

- There were 94 tons of materials collected by the sanitation department.
- There were 4 tons of recycled asphalt used for pothole repairs.
- The street project has been completed on the 21<sup>st</sup> in one day. There is not a paving rotation schedule. Areas of concern are identified and prioritized by staff.
- A large water leak was found on the edge of a NCDOT highway in the NCDOT right-of-way.
- Highway 125 project is to be completed in May.

**Police**

The Police Chief reported:

- A homicide suspect was retrieved from New York City with the assistance of the use of the SBI plane. This has spurred the investigation with three arrests with continued investigations.
- Training continues with a homicide investigation and drug enforcement training.
- The engineers have taken measurements for the Police Relocation project.
- He introduced the newly hired Patrol Officer, Tobias Baker.
- Commissioner Coffield questioned the littering issue in Town. The Chief reported charges can be filed but requires a witness of the exact person and vehicle or even a clear video of the incident.

**Parks & Recreation**

The Parks & Recreation director reported the following:

- He is considering a volleyball league as part of the Summer Program
- The department has worked with George Williams to help with a Teenage Basketball program for at risk children and working on an adult basketball league.
- March 20-23<sup>rd</sup> is softball registration. He is concerned of the lack of fast-pitch girls and may have to utilize a pitching machine.
- The old Williamston Middle School has been sold and is uncertain of the impact on the Town's use of the gymnasium.
- The Town Administrator expressed gratitude to the Director and his staff member, Alfred Colburn, for changing the lights in the Assembly Room.

**Planning**

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The Town Planner and Zoning Administrator reported:

- He received an email update on the CDBG grant just before the meeting. He will review and have the Town Administrator send an update to the Board on the grant status.
- Work on the old Holiday Inn project should begin again in the next two months.
- He has been in contact with FEMA and Rivers and Associates regarding changing the flood insurance map for the Skewarkee Canal area. This change should provide some relief on flood insurance costs.
- He has been working with the Northeast Regional Hazardous Mitigation Plan.
- There was a demolition hearing in February. An ordinance for two demolitions will be presented at the next Board meeting.
- The Audubon Society is due for recertification by the end of April.
- Zach Dickerson has been working with the Main Street program to update the work plan which was finalized in February.
- There is a Clean Up Day scheduled for April 6<sup>th</sup> that will coincide with the Small Business Saturday.
- Zach has been working with the Martin County Arts Council for a NC Arts Grant to complete the mural project.

**CLOSED SESSION**

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and passed to go out of regular session into closed session to address an Attorney Client Privilege N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3).

It was moved by Commissioner Knox to go out of closed session and into regular session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moore and passed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

  
Town Clerk

  
Mayor