

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

November 5, 2018

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular session on Monday, November 5, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the Assembly Room at Town Hall.

PRESENT Mayor: Joyce Whichard-Brown
Commissioners: Mayor Pro Tem Al Chesson, Ronell Rodgers, Alton Moore, William Coffield and Jerry Knox
Town Administrator: John O’Daniel
Town Clerk: Christina Craft
Finance Officer: Linda Harrison
Police Chief: Travis Cowan
Recreation Director: Allen Overby
Town Planner and Zoning Administrator: Cameron Braddy
Town Attorney: Daniel Manning
Fire Chief: Michael Peaks
Human Resources Administrator: Martha-Brown Lilley

ABSENT Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

The Mayor called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Commissioner Chesson led the pledge of allegiance. The Mayor called for a moment of silence for the family of late David Whitley, Martin County Chamber of Commerce Chairman who died last week. Commissioner Moore offered the invocation.

WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed County Commissioners Dempsy Bonds 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. Commissioner Chesson requested the addition of Closed Session to address an Attorney Client Privilege N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3) and Acquisition of Real Property 143-318.11 (a) (3). *It was moved by Commissioner Rodgers, seconded by Commissioner Coffield to approve the regular agenda as amended.*

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. *It was moved by Commissioner Chesson seconded by Commissioner Moore to approve the consent agenda.*

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Mayor asked for public comment. No public comments were received.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance Declaring a Road Closure for the Williamston Christmas Parade

The Town Administrator presented an ordinance for the Board’s consideration to allow for the closure of Main Street on the December 6, 2018 for the upcoming Williamston Christmas Parade. Main Street is an NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) road and the ordinance is a requirement of the NCDOT. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to approve the Ordinance 2018-111 Declaring a Road Closure for the Williamston Christmas Parade as presented. Ordinance 2018-111 is hereby attached with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town’s Ordinance Book for future reference.*

CONSIDERATION OF PURCHASING POLICY CHANGES (NON-FEDERAL FUNDS)

The Town Administrator requested the Board's consideration in changing the purchasing policy to separate the use of non-federal funding and a separate purchasing policy to address the use of federal funding. The policy has been reviewed by the Town Attorney. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Chesson and unanimously passed to approve the Purchasing Policy (Non-Federal Funds).*

CONSIDERATION OF PURCHASING POLICY CHANGES (FEDERAL FUNDS)

The Town Administrator requested the Board's consideration the use of a separate purchasing policy to address the use of federal funding. The Town has a more restrictive policy than is required by the State of North Carolina. The requirements are different when federal funds are used. *It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Knox and unanimously passed to approve the Purchasing Policy (Federal Funds).*

GAYLORD PERRY PARK GIS MAPPING SERVICES CONTRACT

The Recreation Director requested the Board's consideration on the Gaylord Perry Park GIS Mapping Services Contract with the Mid-East Commission. Services provided by this contract will update the ArcGIS map of the Master Plan for the Gaylord Perry Park and create an ArcGIS Map for the PARTF Grant Application. The Town will receive a digital copy of the map and original ArcGIS shapefiles and/or feature classes for each map. Funding for this contract will be made through the operational budget. *It was moved by Commissioner Rodgers, seconded by Commissioner Moore and unanimously passed to approve the contract with the Williamston Gaylord Perry Park GIS Mapping Services Contract.*

CONSIDERATION OF DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT – RRT SERVICES

Fire Chief Peaks reported that the Town has the opportunity to receive grant funds from the Department of Homeland Security through the Department of Public Safety. The Town will be a sub-recipient of \$400,000 on behalf of the Response Team Program. The Town Attorney has reviewed the grant. He requests authorization to sign and accept this grant. There is not a match for the grant and it is a pass-through grant. *It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Knox and unanimously passed to authorize Chief Peaks to sign and accept the RRT Grant.*

PERSONNEL POLICY UPDATE

The Town Administrator presented an update the adverse weather section in the personnel policy. The update was to clarify guidelines on how employees were to be paid in the adverse weather. *It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Knox and unanimously passed to update the personnel policy adverse weather section with the table provided.*

PROPERTY CODE ENFORCEMENT

The Town Planner and Zoning Administrator reported on nuisance properties and dilapidated buildings. The total 2018/2019 budget for code enforcement issues is \$16,000. To date, \$5,271 has been used to lot mowing, cleaning and general nuisances. When the town receives a complaint or discovers a code violation for lot mowing and basic nuisance, a notice is sent to the owner. If the owner does not abate the property within 10 days, a second notice is sent. If the owner does not abate the property within 10 days, the Town abates the property and an invoice is sent to the property owner. If no payment is received within 30 days, a tax lien is applied to the property. Once the problem is recognized, it will take at least 20 days before the Town can physically take action.

For complaints or discovery of a dilapidated structure, the process is more costly and time-consuming. Once the property is identified, a record search is performed and a notice is sent to the property owner. If the property owner does not comply to the notice, potential demolition of the property is advertised in the local newspaper. A public hearing must be held before the Board can pass an ordinance to demolish the structure. This process may approximately 3 to 6 months, depending on the severity. The demolition cost is approximately \$2,000 to \$5,000 per structure depending on the size and condition. Once the structure is demolished, an invoice is sent to the property owner. If no payment is received, a tax lien is placed on the property. The Town Attorney reported that the budgetary restraints are more significant than what the Town can legally do. Code Enforcement is based on the Town fronting the expense of the demolition and attempted to recoup through a tax lien. The first thing the Town uses is to expense the project. The entire annual budget is \$16,000. The Town does not have the liability if

there is property or personal damage related to dilapidated buildings as the liability falls on the property owner. Commissioner Chesson reported that the Code Enforcement needs the proper tools to move forward at a faster pace and this item should be addressed in the upcoming budget discussions.

The Town Planner and Zoning Administrator reported the difference between deteriorated and dilapidated. Deteriorated structures are unfit for human habitation and capable of being repaired, altered or improved to comply with all of the minimum standards established by this subchapter, at a cost not in excess of 50% of its value. Dilapidated structures are unfit for human habitation and incapable of being repaired, altered or improved to comply with all of the minimum standards establish. He and the Code Enforcement Officer are in the process of creating a grading system to quantify dilapidated structures in order to determine which structures need the most attention. Creating the grading system will allow the department to have a tangible list of properties and their condition in order to focus on demolishing the worst of the structures while keeping an eye on the deteriorated ones. The proposed initiative is to demolish 2 to 3 houses annually and fix or use enforcement measures on 2 to 3 properties a year. This can help diminish the number of dilapidated structure while keeping deteriorated structures from becoming dilapidated.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Planning

The Town Planner and Zoning Administrator reported:

- Quality Shoes has reopened after their renovation which was done without the use of any grants.
- There have been two vibrancy grants completed and there are 5 still outstanding.
- The Magnuson Hotel contractors will return by the end of the year as they have a previous contractual agreement.
- The timeline for the CDBG Redevelopment Grant is to complete a Phase II Environmental Study. The grant funds will pay for the Phase II of the study. If remediation is required, the remaining grant funds can be used to address those issues. If all of the funds are used, then the complete financial burden will be on the property owners to bring the buildings to code. There were no issues from Phase I. Phase II looks for toxic vapors from chemicals. If no contaminants are found, the Phase II will take 2 weeks and the release of funds is the next step.
- Commissioner Coffield questioned when Slade Street would reopen. The Police Chief reported that Slade Street was closed as per a requirement of the NCDOT with the Highway 125 bypass project and was not a decision of the Town.
- Commissioner Coffield questioned if the Town still has a bus station. The Town Planner and Zoning Administrator reported the bus stop was no longer in town and would approach the NCDOT to remove the bus stop sign.

Public Works

The Public Works Director was unavailable. On his behalf, the Town Administrator reported:

- The department is currently accepting street paving contract bids.
- 65 tons of asphalt was purchased for street repair.
- Christmas preparation has begun.
- Waste Water Treatment personnel did a presentation at the Riverside High School.
- Works continues with the NCDOT on the Highway 125 project. Water and sewer lines may have to be relocated on state road 903 before the project can be completed.

Parks & Recreation

The Parks & Recreation director reported the following:

- Volleyball and youth soccer season will finish this week.
- The All-star Soccer team will play Currituck later this month.
- The 3rd Movie in the Park was scheduled this year and the 3rd time it rained. The movie was moved inside the Venue on Main building and was very successful.
- The Christmas Parade will be held December 6th at 4 pm.
- He reviewed items that will be considered for the Capital Improvement Plan for the Gaylord Perry Park next year. If the Board wants him to pursue a PartF grant which requires a 50% matching fund by the

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Town, the grant application must be submitted in May. A Master Plan is a grant application requirement. The current master plan will be considered out of date as of 2021. The grant and project process will take a couple of years.

Police

The Police Chief reported:

- Annual firearm training and all of the State mandated in-service training as been completed.
- The department has had a very busy month with participation in the Fall Yall Festival, Safety Rodeo, Bubble Release, and Operation Medicine Drop. 135 pounds of unused medicine were collected and submitted to the State.
- He and others met with the architects twice to discuss the building to be renovated.
- Lee Haislip was promoted to Sergeant. Torie Young and Kevin were promoted to Corporal.

Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- October was a busy month with a total of 239 responses.
- The Fire Prevention Officer has begun painting fire hydrants as he inspects each one.
- October was Fire Prevention Month
- Jafon Allah, Williamston Junior Fireman, was honored for exceeding the standard call of duty.

CLOSED SESSION

It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Moore 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) and Acquisition of Real Property 143-318.11 (a) (3).

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

ACCEPTANCE OF TENNIS COURT FENCE BID

It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Moore and unanimously passed to approve and accept the Elite Fence bid. The Town Attorney has send the contract to Elite Fence Company to sign and will then route to the Mayor to sign the contract on behalf of the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

Town Clerk

Mayor