

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

September 11, 2017

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Williamston met in regular session on Monday, August 7, 2017 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, Jerry Knox, William Coffield and Junious J. Horton  
Interim Town Administrator: Brent Kanipe  
Town Clerk: Christina Craft  
Finance Officer: Linda Harrison  
Public Works Director: Kerry Spivey  
Recreation Director: Allen Overby  
Director of Planning and Development: Brent Kanipe  
Town Attorney: Daniel Manning  
Police Chief: Travis Cowan  
Fire Chief: James Peele  
Human Resources Administrator: Martha-Brown Lilley

**ABSENT**

None

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

The Mayor called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Commissioner Horton led the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Chesson offered the invocation.

**WELCOME THE TOURNAMENT TEAMS**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported that the Town of Williamston hosted the 2017 Statewide Athletics Committee (SWAC) Softball Tournament at the Godwin-Coppage Park on July 14 through July 16, 2017. Four softball teams from Williamston won the statewide championship. As space is limited, two softball teams were invited were honored in August and the other softball two all-star teams were invited to this meeting. The proclamation was read in the honor of the Williamston 8U All-Star team and the Williamston 12U All-Star Team. A proclamation was also prepared for the Williamston Youth Baseball 8U All-Star team as they were winners in the Little Tar Heel State Baseball Tournament.

**WELCOME**

The Mayor welcomed Deputy Chief Tim Manning who was in attendance at 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 Rodgers, seconded by Commissioner Chesson and unanimously passed 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 Consent Agenda. *It was moved by Commissioner Coffield, seconded by Commissioner Knox and unanimously passed to approve the consent agenda as presented.*

Items approved in the Consent Agenda are as follows:

- (1) Approval of the Minutes of the August 7, 2017 meeting.
- (2) Budget Amendment - Safe Kids Grant - Crosswalk  
Small Equipment \$ 2,700.00

The purposed of this amendment is to budget funds to be received from the Safe Kids Coalition. The funds will be used to build a crosswalk near E J Hayes School. We have been approved for two curb cuts with ramps, two new school crossing signs, two batteries for the speed enforcement trailer, and

the crosswalk to be painted in high visibility marking paint. If the costs exceed the grant funds the additional funding will come from street department or Powell Bill Funds. Installation will begin within the month of September.

#### **HONORING CHAMPIONSHIP SOFTBALL / BASEBALL TEAMS**

The Parks and Recreation Director reported that the Town of Williamston hosted the 2017 Statewide Athletics Committee (SWAC) Softball Tournament at the Godwin-Coppage Park on July 14 through July 16, 2017. Four softball teams from Williamston won the statewide championship. As space is limited, two softball teams were invited are to be honored tonight and the other softball two all-star teams will be invited to the September 11, 2017 meeting. A proclamation was read in the honor of the Williamston 14U All-Star team and the Williamston 16U All-Star Team. A proclamation was also prepared for the Williamston Youth Baseball 15U All-Star team as they were winners in the Little Tar Heel State Baseball Tournament.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The Mayor asked for public comment. Dean Harrell requested to speak in against the Town adopting the Senate Bill 155, also known as the Brunch Bill. He requested that the time not be expanded on Sunday as that is the Sabbath. He warns that, if passed, this will extend to all sales of alcohol to include retail sales. Mary Ann Crowe requested the board consider the approval of the brunch bill as businesses must remain competitive. She has endorsements from the Roanoke Golf Course and Country Club, Ribeyes Steakhouse, Martin Travel and Tourism, and Big Mill Bed and Breakfast. Ribeyes is not even open at that time but may consider extending their hours to accommodate the Bob Martin Center.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

##### **Waste Industries Requests Rate Increase**

The Town Administrator reported that Waste Industries has requested a rate increase of 2.1% on the service portion of our fee. The current rate of \$1.28 per cubic yard will increase to \$1.30 per cubic yard due to a 3.7% increase in the landfill tipping fees which were effective July 1, 2017. The Town Administrator reported that the consumer price index written in the franchise contract agreement. *It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Horton and unanimously passed to approve the increase in Waste Industries rates as requested.*

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **Red Heron Restaurant Owner Requests Consideration of Brunch Bill**

Callie Northern-Herring reported that Governor Cooper signed a Brunch Bill which paved the way to allow alcohol to be sold earlier on Sundays. Other local cities to include Greenville, New Bern, Chocowinity, Kinston, Rocky Mount and Washington have passed the Brunch Bill. The passing of this bill will allow members of the hospitality industry to better meet the customer needs, generate additional revenue and create more jobs. This will increase tax revenues. As cities and counties around the state continue to adopt the brunch bill, consider adopting the Brunch Bill to keep Williamston competitive. Currently, the alcohol sales do not begin until noon on Sunday. There are customers from the Bob Martin Center request sales before noon. Commissioner Rodgers reported that he doesn't want to impede the rights of others but what happens if the sale of marijuana becomes legal and it might cause damage or hurts others. Commissioner Knox reported that the Board should only approve items that will improve that quality of life and doesn't feel that this bill will accomplish this. The Mayor directed the Town Clerk prepare an ordinance for consideration at the October meeting.

##### **Ordinance Declaring a Road Closure for the Williamston Homecoming Parade**

The Town Clerk presented an ordinance for the Board's consideration to allow for the closure of Main Street on the September 16, 2017 for the upcoming Williamston Homecoming 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 Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Coffield and unanimously passed to approve the Ordinance 2017-108 Declaring a Road Closure for the Williamston Homecoming Parade as presented. Ordinance 2017-108 is hereby attached with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

##### **Ordinance Declaring a Road Closure for the Williamston Christmas Parade**

The Town Clerk presented an ordinance for the Board's consideration to allow for the closure of Main Street on the December 7, 2017 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 Horton, seconded by Commissioner Knox and unanimously passed to approve the Ordinance 2017-109 Declaring a Road Closure for the Williamston Christmas Parade as presented. Ordinance 2017-109 is hereby attached with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

**Ordinance Pertaining to Unmanned Aircraft Systems During the Festival Known as Carolina Country Stampede**

Director of Planning and Development presented an ordinance for the Board's consideration to restrict the use of unmanned aircraft systems within a quarter of mile of the festival to anyone not authorized by the festival committee. There will be one authorized unmanned aircraft that will be behind the stage, away from the crowd for safety, to get pictures of the crowds. *It was moved by Commissioner Knox, seconded by Commissioner Rodgers and unanimously passed to approve the Ordinance 2017-110 Pertaining to Unmanned Aircraft Systems During the Festival Known as Carolina Country Stampede as presented. Ordinance 2017-110 is hereby attached with the minutes of this meeting and incorporated in the Town's Ordinance Book for future reference.*

**Martin County Comprehensive Transportation Plan**

Director of Planning and Development presented the Martin county Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). It is a joint effort between Martin County, Town of Williamston, the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Mid-East Rural Planning Organization. The Martin County Comprehensive Transportation plan, which identifies transportation deficiencies, provides recommendations, and develops long-term solutions for the next 25 to 30 years. The officials and the public in an effort to determine the area's future transportation needs based on the best information available. This information includes population, economic conditions, traffic trends, and patterns of land development in and around the area. The study will also include alternative modes of transportation, such as transit, walking, and cycling. The plan will identify recommendations for solutions that provides for the safe, efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally sensitive use of the transportation system, while addressing current and future travel needs. Williamston has the only bicycle route in Martin County. Highway 64 from Williamston to Jamesville is listed as needing improvements as it is designated as the future I-87 to make it interstate expressway in nature, to include guide rails, bridges with proper clearance, no traffic lights, and no direct access into the interstate except by off and on ramps. There will need to be a service road to access Williamston which will be located behind the water treatment plant. It is very important to have an interchange close to the end of Main Street by the river. Highway 125 is currently under construction and is approximately 18 months from completion. Prison Camp Road will need widening by 18 inches on both sides to bring it to route standards. Highway 17 is also included as it is also part of the future I-87 corridor. Some others from Martin County proposed an alternate route that would bypass Williamston that would potentially hurt Williamston economically. While this alternative was not economically feasible, it is the staff's recommendation that the Board sends a letter of support for Alternative 1A with some modifications as it provides a good opportunity and does not disrupt current businesses. The Director of Planning and Development reported that he will bring the plan back to the Board. The Mayor and Dean McCall has been involved in the planning process. He requested that the Board review the maps as presented and suggestions were requested as he will forward this information to the NCDOT.

*It was moved by Commissioner Chesson, seconded by Commissioner Knox and unanimously approved for the Director of Planning and Development to draft a letter in support of Alternative 1A with the modifications to include two interchanges recommended by staff.*

**DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

**Planning**

The Planning and Development reported:

- The Williamston Homecoming is this weekend.
- The Carolina Country Stampede is to be held the following weekend, September 29-30, 2017.
- The department has been overwhelmed with code enforcement issues with an excessive amount of vegetative issues and dilapidated properties. While the majority of the foreclosure cost will be recouped when the properties are sold, more funding over the budgeted amount may be requested later in the year.

- There are approximately 24 months remaining to complete the building reuse grant from the NC Commerce.
- There have been many business requests in the last couple of months.

#### **Fire/Rescue**

The Fire Chief provided the following report:

- There were 203 emergency responses in the month of August.
- The department is preparing Williamston Homecoming and the Stampede.
- Prevention did 6 alarm installations, 5 probation programs that reached approximately 200 people, 15 building inspections, and 4 plan reviews.
- There were a couple of hazmat calls to include a refrigerant leak at a grocery store and a chlorine incident that sent one person to the hospital.
- The department held a memorial this morning in memory of the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001

#### **Police**

The Police Chief reported:

- The department participated in the Back to School event with the Parks and Recreation and Fire Departments.
- The department was ready and available for the Movie in the Park event which was rained out.
- The new crime prevention officer is Sergeant OPaul Moore.
- Sheriff Gibbs recently retired and the department has noticed a seamless transition with the newly appointment sheriff, Tim Manning.
- The next three weeks will be very busy with a huge influx of people in the town due to the Williamston Homecoming and Carolina Country Stampede events.
- There are two new officers that have been sworn into office, Torie Young and Clay Janisse.

#### **Public Works**

The Public Works Director reported:

- 25 tons of new asphalt was purchased for repairs.
- The street sweeper has been out of commission which increase the amount of storm basin cleanup.
- The Board approved \$100,000 in street repairs. One bid was received. The project will be advertised again.
- WNCT did a news segment on improper disposal of household oil and grease and the impact on the sewage system.
- Discussions continue concerning upgrading the library grounds.
- The prequalifications for bids for the Skewarkee project have been received.
- One of the Public Works employees, Darryl Corey, died suddenly last weekend.

#### **Parks & Recreation**

The Parks & Recreation director reported the following:

- The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Back to School event was held at the Gaylord Perry Park in conjunction with the Fire and Police Departments.
- The Board was invited to join the staff Friday evening and Saturday morning as the department cooks for the Stampede staff
- The summer programs are underway to include basketball camps, tackle football camp, yoga class, volleyball camp and many more continued through the end of August.
- Movie in the Park was postponed due to rain.
- The Gaylord Perry Park renovations are close to completion.

It was moved by Commissioner Horton, seconded by Commissioner Chesson and unanimously passed to go out of regular session into closed session for attorney/client privilege in accordance with N.C.G.S. 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 unanimously passed.

**Contract Approval**

Commissioner Chesson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rodgers and unanimously passed to approve the McGill contract with Martin County for third party water quality testing, with equal costs for the Town of Williamston and Martin County, pending the attorney's review of the Suez Contract for stipulations that may hinder any third party testing on the Martin Country Regional Water and Sewer Authority surface treatment plant.


**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved By:

  
Town Clerk

  
Mayor