

Town of Stantonsburg
Regular Board Meeting
May 13, 2024

Mayor Coley Rhodes called the monthly Town Council meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The following council members were present: Donnie Bass, Jackie Grice, Eartha Butler, and Steve Mooring. Also present was Town Manager Brian Hawley, Town Clerk Alexis Whitley, and Town Attorney Slade Rand. Councilman Ben Harper was absent.

Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer: Mayor Rhodes led the Pledge of Allegiance and opened the meeting with prayer.

Approval of Agenda: Councilwoman Butler made a motion to approve the agenda. Passed unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes: Councilman Mooring voiced his concerns regarding a few statements in the April 8th minutes. Councilman Mooring requested to amend the statement on page 1, under approval of minutes, *“Councilman Mooring requested to see minutes once they are amended, if needed, even if they have already been approved”*. Councilman Mooring requested to amend page 1, paragraph 3, which stated, *“Katherine Horton, who resides on Tyson Drive was present to further discuss her concerns for her safety that was discussed in the last meeting.”* This statement amended to *“Katherine Horton, who resides on Tyson Drive was present to further discuss her concerns about being stalked and harassed in her neighborhood and at her home.”* Councilman Mooring also requested to accurately convey his concern on page 2, new business section, 2nd sentence, *“Councilman Mooring has concerns regarding liability in case a rock is thrown, etc.”* This statement amended to *“Councilman Mooring had a liability concern and requested the need to add an indemnification provision in the case of a rock being thrown, etc.”*

Councilman Mooring made a motion to approve the regular board meeting minutes from April 8, 2024, as amended. Passed unanimously.

Councilwoman Grice made a motion to approve the special called meeting minutes from April 22, 2024. Passed unanimously.

Public Hearing

Mayor Rhodes opened the public hearing for the annexation of the industrial site on the corner of Sand Pit Road and Peacock Bridge Road.

Town Manager Hawley discussed the annexation and all of the criteria that was met.

Town Manager Hawley presented an ordinance to extend the corporate limits of the Town of Stantonsburg for the property located on the corner of Sand Pit Road and Peacock Bridge Road.

Mayor Rhodes asked if there were any questions or concerns. There were no public comments.

Councilman Bass requested clarification on the two dates on the ordinance. Town Manager Hawley stated that there were two different dates. One date being effective immediately and the other date to take effect on June 30th with an option of another ordinance.

Councilwoman Butler made a motion to approve the annexation and to adopt the ordinance to extend the corporate limits of the town. Passed unanimously.

Mayor Rhodes declared the public hearing closed.

Public Comment:

Katherine Horton, who resides on Tyson Drive, presented a petition for JoAnn Lucas (who was not able to attend for health reasons) signed by people who were removed from committees and wished to be reinstated. Town Manager Hawley was provided with a signed copy. The copy was signed by Delois Drummond, Bill Edmundson, Jackie Grice, Joanne Lucas, and Helen Mackey. She was also present to further discuss her concerns about her and her husband being harassed and stalked in her neighborhood and at her home by people not associated with the town. A video was shown to Town Manager Hawley and Town Clerk, Alexis Whitley, by Ms. Horton prior to the meeting.

Carla Davis, who resides on West Thompson Avenue, was present to discuss the trash policy that was proposed on social media. She also voiced her concerns again regarding the yard at 304 W. Thompson Avenue.

Town Manager Hawley stated that the town is working on a new trash policy that is not yet in place and that he is investigating different options.

Councilman Bass suggested that the council look at the committee/commission members again.

Councilman Mooring stated that back in July of 2023 the town council voted to approve the members of the commissions and committees. They were presented to the board and the board approved them.

Councilman Mooring made a motion to uphold the appointments that were voted on and approved in July of 2023.

Councilwoman Grice suggested that we update our policy for committee and commission members.

Town Manager Hawley recommended posting the application on social media and the website for future members and that the new board get appointed in December to follow along with the election cycle. For members who have not been replaced on the lists, their term should end at the end of this year and the open positions should be advertised.

Mayor Rhodes stated that we have a motion on the floor to uphold the appointments that were voted on and approved in July of 2023.

Vote 2 to 2. Councilman Mooring and Councilwoman Butler voted to uphold the appointments. Councilman Bass and Councilwoman Grice voted against. Mayor Rhodes voted to uphold the appointments, breaking the tie. 3 to 2. Motion Carried.

Councilman Bass announced that they were given a list of information in July 2023 and the list was brought back up in January for the current board to amend the minutes that the previous board approved.

Per Town Manager Hawley the July minutes were amended in January being that there was an omission and it needed to be corrected.

Presentations:

Shannon Austin with KS Bank presented a proposal about investment opportunities to the Town Council.

Tirence Horne with Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments presented the Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan and the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Plan, both documents which are required for the Community Block Grant. He also gave an update on the grant. Funds have been released and the town attorney is working on title opinions. Titles must be clear. They are attempting to get land surveying services to make sure they are following the town's zoning. A request for qualifications will be posted for housing rehabilitation services. The RFQ must be posted in the Electronic Vendor Portal, in the newspaper and on the website. Per Town Attorney, Slade Rand, there should be a few titles that have been cleared. There may be instances that some titles can't be certified. Since this grant is under a timeline, Tirence recommends that the housing selection committee identify additional beneficiaries. Extensions can be applied for, but he does not recommend jeopardizing the grant money.

Councilman Mooring made a motion to adopt the Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan and the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Plan. Passed unanimously.

Financial Reports:

April: Monthly Receipts: \$674,835.57 Disbursements: \$994,552.31 Difference: \$319,716.14. Report referred to our auditors.

Councilman Bass wanted to note that we have another CD coming up for renewal in November and that would be an opportunity to look into KS Trust for those monies.

Town Manager Hawley stated that the town will be receiving reimbursement for the work done to replace the pole on NC Hwy 222 following a vehicle accident.

Invoices for Payment:

Councilman Mooring asked Finance Officer, Victoria Lucas, about the invoice from the Hasty Mart which seems to be ice. His concern is that we are still buying ice after we bought an ice machine.

Town Manager Hawley requested the date for the invoice of concern. We did not receive the ice machine until April and the invoices are for ice purchased prior to the ice machine.

Councilman Bass requested clarification on the invoice for UTEC. Per Town Manager Hawley, it is their quarterly payment which includes all of their services.

Councilman Mooring positively discussed the reduction in overtime hours.

Councilwoman Grice made a motion to approve invoices for the month of April. Passed unanimously.

Old Business: Town Manager Hawley spoke on vehicle tax to let the council know it has been added into the fee schedule and the budget. There is no action to be taken at this time regarding this item.

Councilman Mooring questioned how much we collected this current year and how it will be used. Town Manager Hawley stated that the money collected for the current year was credited back to Wilson County.

Town Manager Hawley presented the Saratoga utility pole estimate of \$19,313.10. One of Town of Saratoga's council members reached out to see what we could do to help them update some of their streetlights and poles. The town provided an estimate for Saratoga's Town Council. Saratoga's Town Council approved the estimate to move forward with updating 64 streetlights.

Councilman Mooring had an additional item to discuss for old business. There will be a new fire district tax for residents within the town limits. It was his understanding that there was a proposed rate of 10 cents per \$100 during valuation. Councilman Mooring questioned if that rate was approved by the county and if so, what is the amount? Will it be the same for in town and out of town residents? Currently, Stantonsburg/Moyton fire district has the highest rate of any fire tax district in the county.

Per Town Manager Hawley we will need to reach out to the County and Crawford Bolton to see if it was approved. The tax rate will be the same for in-town and out-of-town residents.

New Business: Town Manager Hawley presented the Town Hall Capital Project Ordinance to amend the project fees and costs of all the monies that were awarded to the Town for the Town Hall project totaling \$650,000.00.

Councilman Mooring made a motion to approve the Town Hall Capital Project Ordinance. Vote 3 to 1. Councilman Bass opposed. Motion carried. Town Manager Hawley presented the fuel bids. Finance Officer, Victoria Lucas, obtained 3 bids. Summerlin Oil Company, Deans Oil Company, and Rand Wade Oil all provided information.

1. Summerlin Oil- fuel is the price of what they get it at. This does change depending on what the cost is at the time. They will deliver in emergencies and have delivered to us on several occasions where we need fuel for the generators and to the Electric Trucks during times of need at no extra cost.
2. Dean's Oil Company- fuel is \$.10 more than the cost it is at the pump at that time. They will not deliver to equipment, only to tanks.
3. Rand Wade Oil- fuel is priced at what they get it at. They will not deliver to equipment, only to tanks.

Councilwoman Butler questioned how often we have needed emergency deliveries. Town Manager Hawley could not give an accurate answer for that but did state that talking with the head of the Water/Sewer Department, Roger Sullivan, depending on hurricane season it is possible we would need that.

Councilman Mooring asked for clarification on "the price of what they get it at". Town Manager Hawley stated that we can get clarification from the companies.

Town Manager Hawley presented Budget Amendments 13/24 and 14/24.

Councilman Bass had concerns about the line-item account number for police salaries being wrong and needing to be amended.

Councilman Mooring addressed the ARPA funds. He reiterated the fact that the board previously voted not to use ARP money for salaries.

Town Manager Hawley discussed the salaries and the funds that were planned for.

Councilman Mooring stated the board reached a consensus on June 13, 2022, on the use of the ARP funds not being used for employee salaries and that ARP funds could be better utilized for projects in the town.

It was the consensus of the board to table budget amendments 13/24 and 14/24 until the June meeting.

Town Manager Hawley opened the submissions for the Request for Qualifications. The only RFQ the town received was from Turpentine Design which is the architect that did our test fit as well and also owned by a woman which falls under the minority side. A few other architects were interested but never submitted. The deadline for submission was May 10th, 2024. If the town council gives Town Manager Hawley approval to move forward with contract negotiation, the town would then enter negotiation fees for the architect to draft blueprints, and once blueprints are received, the next step will be to advertise for Request for Qualifications for formal bids for general licensed contractors to submit bids.

Town Manager Hawley recommended having two council members to sit in with him during contract negotiations.

Town Manager Hawley can check with the owner of Turpentine to get certain dates to choose from and send out an email.

Councilman Mooring made a motion to go forward with Turpentine Design. Passed unanimously. Councilwoman Grice and Councilman Mooring are tentatively interested in being the two members to sit in with Town Manager Hawley.

Town Manager Hawley discussed the Lead Service Line Inventory. The paperwork was submitted, and the town was awarded the loan agreement with the state. They are giving the town 85% principal forgiveness. The town would be responsible for paying back \$74,250.00. The process can begin after NCDEQ signs paperwork.

Councilman Mooring questioned if we got our Debt Service Report from the State. The town did make a debt service payment this month. The town put in a request for them to consider principal forgiveness since the town is on the Distressed Unit List.

Town Manager Hawley presented two offers for surplus equipment: the old tractor and the old disc harrow for the council to consider. The council requested the names for both offers. If the council wants to move forward, we will need to draft a resolution. The town must publish a notice of sale in the newspaper for 10 days minimum for public advertisement.

Councilwoman Grice asked if the amount offered for the tractor is reasonable and Town Manager Hawley stated that he thought it was a fair offer as the tractor is in poor shape and the town does not use it anymore.

Councilman Mooring requested we post the notice on the website as well.

Town Manager Hawley requested the council work on a policy for surplus. The town started working on the procurement policy, but it has not been finalized yet.

Councilman Mooring made a motion to move forward with adopting a resolution to go forward with the sale of the surplus equipment being the old tractor and disc harrow. Passed unanimously.

Town Manager Hawley requested the council table the fee and rate schedule as well. Councilman Mooring requested that Town Manager Hawley put the increases and decreases side by side so council can see where changes are taking place.

It was a consensus of the board to table the fee and rate schedule.

Town Manager Hawley presented the reclassification of pay for employees in the water and sewer department. Lonnie Smith received certification for the ORC back up for the wastewater treatment plant and Edwin Gurkins received certifications for the ORC back up for the wastewater treatment plant and C-Well.

Councilwoman Grice requested further discussion of the personnel matters in closed session.

Department Reports:

The Water/Sewer Department: 36 replacement ERT's for water meter auto read function were received and installed. Issues with Briar Farm Phase II (Meter Box Placement) have been resolved. The only issue remaining is 2 sewer laterals that will have to be replaced. Hodges Construction will be repairing these in the next few weeks at their cost. The annual Consumer Confidence Report for Water was submitted on time and met requirements. All required sampling and reports were performed on time and met requirements. NCRWA came out on April 9th and assisted with smoke testing. Numerous clean out caps had been found damaged and one manhole cover had been hit and moved off the top of the manhole. All these issues have been fixed. We are hoping to have them come back out in the next few months to perform more testing. The goal is to have the entire system tested by next year. The alternator on the backup generator had to be replaced at the Main Lift station. Approximately 2,000 feet of sewer line have been cleaned in the month of April. Approximately 7,100 feet have been cleaned so far this year. This puts us over the required cleaning that must be done per year. A simplex pump that serves a couple of houses on E. Commercial Ave. was replaced. All other maintenance has been performed at the WWTP and pump stations. All required reports and sampling were performed on time and met requirements.

For Park/Rec: No new updates

Public Works: Working on sanitation policy to present to council in June.

Electric Department: Met with Louis Davis from UTEC to conduct an asset replacement cost analysis. Met with Lucama and Black Creek to discuss the specifics of the Tri-Town agreement. Working on written Tri-Town agreement. Jeff Barnes is leaving the Town to follow his calling as an ordained minister.

Police Report: Police report for the month of April reviewed.

Councilman Bass questioned if we have received any applications for the full-time police officer position.

Town Manager Hawley states the town does have someone interested and they want a sponsor for them to attend the BLET course.

Manager's Report: CDBG land surveys are being planned. For the Seal Building, the town met with Lisa Rhue and Bruce Naegelen from NC Commerce to discuss Seal building and other projects. Submitted names to Gordon Deno from Wilson County EMS for the Stantonsburg Emergency Management Plan committee. Chief Rosario, Roger Sullivan, Ed Bynum, Walt Bynum, and I will represent the town when this process starts. Gary Pittman has been contacted on the accountant change. I have requested all materials and documents that Mr. Pittman should provide the town with on his work prior to paying his last invoice. Town Manager Hawley did have an update on one item. We did get some information back from Green Heron Planning. We are having a site workshop scheduled for the town on May 28th. He will email the workshop schedule out. He planned to get with Mark Whitley and Tommy Stanton regarding this as well.

Town Manager Hawley wanted the council to know that while working with Louis at UTEC, he discovered that the town has been paying for the insurance on the T-D and D-D stations solely. Town Manager Hawley will be in contact with the town's associates nearby and be in contact with the council to give an update.

Town Manager Hawley will be in contact with NCDOT tomorrow. NCDOT does not think they should pay for the damage they caused to the 6" Water Main when they were working on South Main Street. They did not follow state law so it will be addressed.

Comments from Mayor and Council:

Councilwoman Grice said her concerns will be discussed in closed session.

Councilwoman Butler discussed a pothole on W. Thompson Ave that needs to be filled.

Councilman Bass did not have anything.

Councilman Mooring spoke of a discussion in the April meeting concerning the \$43,574.00 dollars spent in fuel usage this year. He wanted to bring it to the council's attention that this needs to be addressed. The usage is so much that the amount of fuel used per month by our town is equivalent to driving all the way to California and back in 1 month.

It was indicated in the April minutes that Town Manager Hawley was going to review the GPS reports. Councilman Mooring questioned if he received GPS reports, and Town Manager Hawley is currently working with the company on these reports.

Councilman Bass was concerned that we ask employees to abide by a GPS policy with no one to enforce the policy. He questioned who has access to pull up Fleet Complete, the GPS system. Town Manager Hawley stated that he and Mayor Rhodes have access.

Councilwoman Grice questioned if it has been checked. Town Manager Hawley stated that he checks it periodically.

Councilman Mooring stated that the GPS system is available for review when an issue arises. In this case, it can be used for comparison of fuel purchased to actual vehicle mileage to assure we are not missing fuel.

Councilwoman Grice questioned if this is something that Finance Officer, Victoria Lucas, can be added to as well.

Councilman Mooring asked if the missing GPS has been replaced. Town Manager Hawley stated that it was ordered but has not been received. A 12-month range for fuel costs has been pulled to get an average annual amount for all vehicles.

Councilwoman Grice agreed with Councilman Mooring that the meeting minutes are condensed and vague.

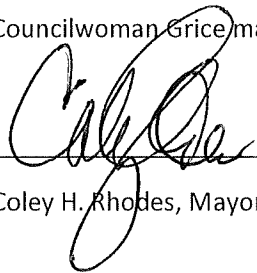
Town Attorney, Slade Rand, stated that it is not required but it is up to the council to decide on how they want the minutes to be done.

Councilwoman Grice made motion to go into closed session. Passed unanimously.

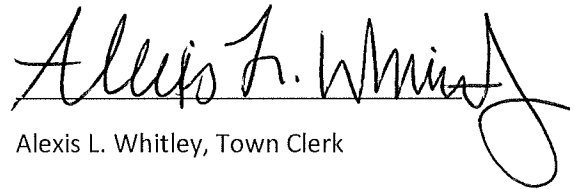
Councilwoman Grice made motion to go back into open session. Passed unanimously.

Councilman Mooring made a motion to move forward with increases for Lonnie Smith and Edwin Gurkins.

Councilwoman Grice made motion to adjourn. Passed unanimously.



Coley H. Rhodes, Mayor



Alexis L. Whitley, Town Clerk