

REGULAR BOARD MEETING of August 21, 2002, with Mayor Buck Trott and Commissioners H. N. James, Ron Sanders, Mike Cavender, Hank Ross, and Amy Patterson present.

Also present were Richard Betz, Lamar Nix, Larry Gantenbein, Alan Marsh, Bob Wright, James Manley, John Shearl, James Tate, Kim Lewicki, and others.

I. Call to Order.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Approval of Agenda.

Copies of the agenda had been distributed by mail. The Clerk reported that Arthur Paoletti had asked to speak to the Board about two benches on the public sidewalk in front of his business. He also asked for permission to discuss a proposed Ordinance levying a tax on gross receipts from the rental of vehicles, and an interlocal agreement for collecting the tax. Comm. James said he would like to discuss several sidewalks.

MOVED BY COMM. JAMES, SECONDED BY COMM. CAVENDER, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

III. Approval of Minutes.

Copies of the minutes of the August 7 Regular Board Meeting had been distributed by mail.

MOVED BY COMM. SANDERS, SECONDED BY COMM. ROSS, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS DISTRIBUTED.

IV. Reports.

1. The Mayor thanked Selwyn Chalker and other Town employees who had been involved in the Relay for Life for the American Cancer Society on August 16-17 in Cashiers; he said that the goal had been \$110,000, and thus far over \$151,000 had been raised.

2. Comm. Sanders reported that he had recently become aware of a problem with steep driveways and dangerous speeding on Hicks Road, and he wondered if anything could be done. The Mayor said that he was aware that the 25 MPH speed limit sign had been removed; he agreed to ask the State D. O. T. to re-erect the sign, and also to ask the Police Department to monitor the speeding situation.

3. Comm. James reported that he and Comm. Ross had met with Town Engineer Lamar Nix to discuss the S. B. Association sewer system; they understood that the Association was electing new officers on August 28, and they had agreed to wait until after the election to meet with them. The Town Administrator reported that DENR official Kevin Barnett had responded to the letter he had written, as reported at the July 17 meeting, and indicated that the Association's NPDES permit would not be renewed nor extended beyond the deadline of November 30.

4. Each Board member had received a copy of a letter from the Town Administrator dated August 8 to Harold Saylor regarding Robbie Reid's dock, as requested at the previous meeting; no reply had been received to date. The Town Administrator also reported that the Fire Department was still reviewing the bid received on the emergency vehicle, and hoped to make a decision this week. He also reported that he had received a satisfactory Certificate of Liability Insurance from Rotary International for the proposed turkey shoot, which was now scheduled for September 21; the Certificate had been reviewed by the Town's Insurance Representative from NCLM Risk Management, but on his advice he had asked the Town Attorney to also

prepare a Hold Harmless Indemnification agreement for the event. He also reported that the Town had received a Special Premium Credit for Property/ General Liability Insurance with Risk Management, amounting to \$5,486.

He also reported that Jim Graham had contacted the Mayor and indicated that he would not be able to serve on the Land Use Planning Committee.

The Board agreed by consensus to submit nominations at the next meeting for the vacancy.

He also reported that he, the Mayor, and the Town Engineer had been reviewing the Water Conservation Ordinance, which was in place in the event of a water shortage. At this time water supplies in Big Creek were adequate, and the Town Engineer reported that the Plant had operated both pumps in Big Creek and there had been adequate water. Comm. Cavender asked what would happen if Mr. Nass decided to repair his dam at Randall Lake, filling the lake and cutting off water supply in Big Creek. The Board agreed by consensus for the Clerk to draft a letter to Mr. Nass asking him to notify the Town if he decided to close off the dam for repairs over the next few months, and also for the Clerk to check with Town Attorney Bill Coward on what could legally be done should Mr. Nass proceed with such repairs.

V. Old Business.

1. The Board had agreed at the previous meeting to take under advisement a Fire Department proposal regarding health insurance and reimbursement payments of \$100 to firemen who were not receiving health insurance, copies of which had been distributed at the August 7 meeting. The Town Administrator said he wanted to make clear that the proposal would not markedly increase the budget amount of \$50,000 already approved for insurance for the Department, and also that other departments in the County were being reimbursed on a per-call basis.

Fire Chief James Manley was present and confirmed that every other fire department in the County was reimbursing volunteer firemen on a per-call basis. The reimbursement would be used for expenses such as vehicle and fuel, as well as insurance, and would not cost taxpayers any more since it was part of the approved budget. He said he was proud of what the Department did for the Town, and hoped the Commissions were proud, too. John Shearl added that the Department would develop a more permanent proposal at budget time next year, and was considering either a \$10.00/call reimbursement of \$150 per month. He also pointed out that employers of volunteer firemen should be congratulated for permitting them to leave their jobs to respond to fire calls.

Comm. James said that he had had no problem with the proposal; the Board had only asked for more information. Comm. Patterson agreed; she wanted to make it clear that she did not oppose the proposal, and in fact she and Comm. James had discussed the pros and cons of offering either insurance or reimbursement many times at Finance Committee meetings. Her only concern was that the proposal would be fair to everybody.

MOVED BY COMM. SANDERS, SECONDED BY COMM. JAMES, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2002, WHEREBY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN WHO ARE NOT SIGNED UP FOR HEALTH INSURANCE WILL BE REIMBURSED \$100/MONTH.

The Mayor commended the Fire Department for everything it did, and also employers in Town for letting firemen get off work to respond to calls, as had been pointed out. Comm. Sanders agreed, noting that much more time was involved in training and attending meetings than in the past.

VI. New Business.

1. The Town Administrator reported that Arthur Paoletti had asked to speak to the Board about two benches on the public sidewalk in front of his business. He briefly outlined the requirements of the Town's sidewalk regulations adopted on January 4, 1995, noting that, while there was a provision for approval by the Board of permanent encroachments pursuant to a revocable license agreement, several requests for temporary encroachments had been denied since then. Comm. James commented that the revocable license agreement procedure had not been intended for encroachments like benches. Comm. Cavender said that he felt there was a place for benches on the sidewalks, and suggested that the Land Use Planning Committee might discuss the need for more user-friendly benches in the downtown areas. Comm. Patterson disagreed; she felt that the sidewalks were not wide enough in many places for more benches.

2. The Town Administrator distributed copies of a proposed Ordinance levying a tax on gross receipts from the rental of vehicles, and an interlocal agreement with Macon County for collection of the tax. He noted that Franklin already had such an Ordinance and agreement in place, and that the Town's annual share of these revenues would amount to about \$1000. The Board agreed by consensus to place the Ordinance on the agenda of the September 4 Board meeting.

3. Comm. James felt that several sections of Town sidewalk needed to be repaired, and that Town Engineer Lamar Nix should be asked to inventory them. He also said that he was interested in obtaining an estimate on a sidewalk along the south side of Chestnut Street to the Performing Arts Center from North Fourth Street, as the Board had discussed in the past. The Town Administrator reported that blind resident Sylvia Sammons had commented to him earlier in the week that she was unable to access this facility due to lack of a sidewalk. Comm. James said he was also interested in obtaining an estimate on a monolithic concrete sidewalk along the east side of South Fourth Street between Spring and South, in front of the old Kings Inn Property; the sidewalk was gravel at present and did not meet ADA requirements.

MOVED BY COMM. JAMES, SECONDED BY COMM. SANDERS, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED FOR THE TOWN ENGINEER TO OBTAIN ESTIMATES ON THE FOREGOING SIDEWALKS.

Comm. Patterson suggested that the Land Use Planning Committee could update the Master Sidewalk Plan as part of its work.

The Mayor reported that the guardrails had already been installed on Little Bearpen Road.

VII. MOVED BY COMM. CAVENDER, SECONDED BY COMM. JAMES, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ADJOURN.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was declared adjourned by the Mayor at 7:45 p.m.

Richard Betz, Town Clerk