

REGULAR BOARD MEETING of June 20, 2007, with Mayor Don Mullen and Comms. Amy Patterson, Alan Marsh, Hank Ross, and Dennis DeWolf present; Comm. H. N. James was out of Town.

Also present were Richard Betz, Lamar Nix, Josh Ward, Linsey Wisdom, Kim Lewicki, Jim Lewicki, Jim Hickman, Breta Stroud, Katy Calloway, Robert E. Smith, Robin Armstrong, Nadia Teague, Lee Hodges, David Bates, Steve Foster, and others.

I. Call to Order.

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

II. Approve Agenda.

Copies of the agenda had been distributed by mail.

MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS DISTRIBUTED.

III. Approval of Minutes.

Copies of the minutes of the June 6 Regular Board Meeting had been distributed by mail.

MOVED BY COMM. MARSH, SECONDED BY COMM. PATTERSON, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS DISTRIBUTED.

Copies of the minutes of the June 14 Special Board Meeting had been distributed by mail.

MOVED BY COMM. DEWOLF, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS DISTRIBUTED.

IV. Reports.

1. The Mayor asked if the Organizational Review Committee had met; Comm. Ross said they were waiting until a Planning Director had been employed before meeting again. The Mayor also reminded the Board that South Slope Subdivision would be on the July 11 agenda, and he urged each Commissioner to inspect the site. The Board also discussed paving of Hickory Hill Road and Chestnut Street. The Town Administrator said that he understood District Engineer Wesley Grindstaff was preparing a letter outline a process where the D.O.T. could pave Hickory Hill Road to the existing maintenance right-of-way, then turn it over to the Town for maintenance; the letter explaining this other option had not yet been written.

2. Comm. Ross said that the Pine Street Park Committee had been approached about two events at the Park - an outdoor Shakespeare performance on June 30 from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m., and the Fourth of July fireworks display on July 4 from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The request included closing Pine Street from Oak Street Alley to Fifth Street.

MOVED BY COMM. ROSS, SECONDED BY COMM. DEWOLF, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE REQUEST.

3. The Town Administrator reported that Joel Crook had addressed the run-off problem along his property on Chestnut Street; civil penalties had been suspended on January 3, 2007, pending completion of the work. Each Board

member had also received a letter from Martin Starnes. The Recreation Committee agreed to schedule a meeting in the near future. He also reported that Mountain Findings had agreed to fund several benches for installation on the new planters on Main Street; the Board authorized ordering one of the proposed models.

V. New Business.

1. Jim Hickman, Local Government Assistant Team Leader with the North Carolina DPPEA was present to give a report to the Board on recycling. He said that almost half of the 542 municipalities in North Carolina had a curbside recycling program, usually contracted out, and that the benefits included avoided landfill costs, reduction of carbon emissions in the atmosphere, and jobs that relied on recycling. He estimated that the Town could divert from 75 to 215 tons of waste each year, and also said that there were 90/10 grant funds available for recycling equipment. Many members of the Recycling Task Force were also present for the presentation.

2. Katy Calloway was present and reported that Carolina Environmental Program students had completed an inventory of streams in the Big Creek area last fall in cooperation with Larry Gantenbein and Matt Shuler; the data had been corroborated, at the expense of the Upper Cullasaja Watershed Association, by Steve Foster of Watershed Science Inc.

Steve Foster then presented the report, which included maps prepared by the students and by Town staff showing ten perennial streams in the basin. He said that all of them had stable, well-defined channels, and even during recent drought conditions most of them had discharge; he felt that they met the definition of perennial stream. He said that some some point-source issues and buffer problems has been observed along Big Creek Road; Code Enforcement Official Josh Ward was asked to investigate.

The Board discussed the study at length. Other streams in the watershed could also qualify as perennial, and the Board agreed to compile a list of these streams so that they could be corroborated by Mr. Foster. The Town Administrator said that in order to add the streams a text amendment of the definition of perennial stream in the Zoning Ordinance would be required in addition to amendment of the Zoning Map which showed all of the streams; Planning Board review and a public hearing would be required.

MOVED BY COMM. ROSS, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO SEND THE REPORT, AS WELL AS ANY ADDITIONAL STREAMS IN THE WATERSHED, TO THE PLANNING BOARD FOR REVIEW AT ITS JULY 23 MEETING, AND TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING FOR AUGUST 1 ON THE ZONING TEXT AND MAP AMENDMENTS.

3. The Town Administrator reported and offered recommendations on several informal bids that had been solicited and opened on June 18 for stone and sand, fuel, tires, cleaning of Town Hall, cleaning of Public Restrooms, and preventive maintenance at the Highlands Civic Center.

MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. ROSS, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATION.

4. **MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. ROSS, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO G.S. §143-318.11(A)(6) TO REVIEW INDIVIDUAL SALARY RECOMMENDATIONS PRESENTED AT THE PREVIOUS MEETING.** All left the room except the Town Administrator and the Public Services Administrator.

The Board reviewed the salary recommendations prepared by the Town Administrator. He and the Public Services Administrator then left the room.

MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. DEWOLF, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO GO INTO OPEN SESSION.

5. The Board agreed by consensus to approve all of the individual salary recommendations presented by the Town

Administrator, except that the Town Administrator should be increased one salary grade and the Public Services Administrator should be increased one salary grade. The Board also agreed by consensus to a 3% Cost of Living Allowance increase for all employees.

VI. The Board agreed by consensus to adjourn.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was declared by the Mayor to be adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Richard Betz, Town Clerk