

REGULAR BOARD MEETING of August 15, 2007, with Mayor Don Mullen and Commissioners Alan Marsh, Amy Patterson, Hank Ross, H. N. James, and Dennis DeWolf present.

Also present were Richard Betz, Lamar Nix, Josh Ward, Kim Lewicki, Bill Nellis, MaryAnn Sloan, Robert Smith, David Wilkes, Sandra Baty, Bob Kieltyka, Lee Hodges, Catherine Hunter, 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.

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

III. Approval of Minutes.

Copies of the minutes of the August 1 Regular Board Meeting had been distributed by mail. Comm. Patterson noted an omission.

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

IV. Reports.

1. The Mayor felt that the Public Works Committee needed to meet with District Engineer Wesley Grindstaff to discuss Hickory Hill Road and Chowan Road. He also said that he had received a letter from the D. O. T. not recommending a signal at Main and Third Street; he said that he planned to write a letter protesting the decision.
2. Comm. Ross said that the Organizational Review Committee had been discussing the Town's organization with key employees. Comm. DeWolf reported that the lobby at the Civic Center needed to be finalized; the work was underway. Comm. Patterson reported that she and Comm. DeWolf had been invited to meet informally with County Commissioner Bob Simpson; the County Recreation Plan had been discussed. The County was generally interested in taking over the Town's Recreation employees and programs; the Town would retain ownership of facilities.
3. The Town Administrator reported that the Town Attorney had advised that some of the Bowery Road condemnation cases would be heard the week of October 15. He also said that Hillrie Quin had asked if the \$100,000 budgeted for the Greenways Committee could be used for projects on private property, such as easement acquisition; the Board agreed the funds could be used for this purpose subject to its approval of each expenditure. He also asked if the Town was willing to provide labor for hanging of Christmas lights again this year. Bob Kieltyka was present and confirmed that OEI and the Chamber of Commerce had agreed to decorate the tree in front of the Methodist Church. After considerable discussion, the Board agreed by consensus for the Town to provide labor for this purpose.

V. Old Business.

1. Town Engineer Lamar Nix had prepared a plan for a raised monolithic stamped red brick sidewalk at the corner of

Main and Fourth Street; both the property owner and the tenant had no objection, the cost would be \$23,400, and the timing would be November. The Board discussed the plan in some detail. Comm. Ross asked if he could provide a price on concrete or brick pavers, and the Board also discussed the possible hazard of a raised sidewalk to customers at the Texaco station. The plan was taken under advisement pending additional information.

2. The Board discussed a bench that had been proposed for the new planters on Main Street; Mountain Findings was willing to donate \$8,000 toward the project. Comm. Patterson expressed concern over possible maintenance expense for cleaning the aluminum slats, and it was noted that the bench did not come with a hole to affix it to the sidewalk. A decision was deferred until the bench had been placed next to one of the planters.

3. Comm. Marsh expressed concern that the agreement with McGavran Engineering called for completion of negotiations with Verizon and Northland before the pole inventory had begun; he wondered what the downside would be of proceeding with the inventory now so that billing could occur on a per-attachment basis and safety problems resolved. After some discussion, it was agreed that the Town Administrator would provide copies of the contract with McGavran, letters which had been written to Northland and Verizon, and contracts with the two entities.

VI. New Business.

1. MaryAnn Sloan updated the Board on progress of the Affordable Housing Task Force appointed by the Mayor. She distributed a summary of the Task Force's accomplishments to date, as well as copies of the survey which had been distributed. She said there was much interest from Highlands-Cashiers Hospital and others, and the benefits included a stable work force, less traffic congestion, and involvement in the community by the work force. Funding was available through the federal tax credit program. Lee Hodges said that she had viewed work force housing in Davidson, where developers were required to build a certain amount. Bill Nellis distributed photographs of two apartment complexes in Franklin; he said the Task Force felt that apartment complexes would fill the greatest need the soonest. The Mayor thanked Ms. Sloan and the Committee for its work on this project.

2. Robert Smith updated the Board on progress of the Recycling Task Force. He said that he had met with the County Recycling Coordinator, as well as the Town Engineer and Town Administrator, and was gathering a great deal of data. Most rural counties offered recycling through convenience centers, and he said that Macon County was one of the top in the state with ten recycling centers; education and convenience of location were important factors in their use. He said that his Task Force would recommend feasible alternatives when they had concluded their work.

3. The Board discussed the September 30 expiration of the lease for the ABC building. Comm. DeWolf said he had not been able to attend the last meeting, but he thought that the Town might consider participating in the cost of a lease, as it had participated at the inception of the building in 1977. Comm. James felt that the distributions of approximately \$150,000 per year could be used for the lease and the Town did not need to provide a subsidy. The Board discussed the time frame for construction of a new Town Hall and vacating the existing building.

MOVED BY COMM. JAMES, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO EXTEND THE LEASE FOR THREE YEARS.

4. Town Engineer Lamar Nix reported that a sewer line along Oak Street Alley had collapsed; he had obtained an estimate of \$31,190 from Stillwell Enterprises for repairing it; neither formal bids nor State permits were required.

MOVED BY COMM. PATTERSON, SECONDED BY COMM. ROSS, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE PROJECT.

5. **MOVED BY COMM. DEWOLF, SECONDED BY COMM. MARSH, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO G.S. §143-318.11(A)(6) TO REVIEW APPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT.** Those present left the room except the Town Administrator.

The Town Administrator reviewed applications for the Planning Director with the Board and discussed the position.

THE BOARD AGREED BY CONSENSUS TO GO INTO OPEN SESSION.

VIII. 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 9:00 p.m.

Richard Betz, Town Clerk