

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL
June 8, 2021
Whitsett Town Hall Building

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

The regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council was held on Tuesday, June 8, 2021 at the Whitsett Town Hall. The following members of the Town Council were present: Mayor Richard Fennell, Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice, Council Members Cindy Wheeler and Lee Greeson. Absent was Council Member Craig York.

Also present were Town Administrator Ken Jacobs, Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia, *The Alamance News* reporter Tomas Murawski, and three Town residents.

Following the public hearing, Mayor Fennell called the regular Council meeting to order at approximately 7:04 p.m., and noted that a quorum was present.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Mayor Fennell asked for any speakers from the floor, and no one asked to be acknowledged.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Adoption of the Minutes

Mayor Fennell asked for any changes to the minutes from the May 11, 2021 regular monthly meeting; and hearing none, asked for a motion to adopt the minutes. A motion to adopt the minutes as written was made by Council Member Lee Greeson; motion seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler. The motion to adopt the May minutes carried by unanimous vote of those present.

2. Adoption of the Budget Ordinance Amendment to Close Out FY 2020-2021

Prior to this meeting, Council Members received, in their delivered packages, a copy of the proposed budget ordinance for preview. This document is the standard end-of-current-fiscal-year amendment that serves to shift funds from one or more account(s) to another in order to cover expenses that exceeded operating allocations adopted last year uniquely in August 2020, following an approved June-July 2020 interim budget—a process allowed by the State as a one-time occurrence due to the COVID crisis.

Mayor Fennell asked for any discussion from Council Members; and with none, asked for a motion to adopt the amendment closing out the budget year that would end June 30, 2021. Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice to adopt the budget ordinance amendment as presented; motion seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler. The motion carried by unanimous vote of those present.

3. Adoption of Town Operating Budget and Budget Ordinance for 2021-2022

Mayor Fennell asked for any Council discussion on the proposed 2021-2022 operating budget; and hearing none, asked for a motion to adopt next year's appropriation. Council Member Lee Greeson made a motion to adopt the budget for 2021-2022 as presented; motion seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice. By unanimous vote of those present, the operating budget and budget ordinance for FY 2021-2022 was adopted.

4. Approval of Contract for Annual Financial Audit Year Ending June 2021

It was explained that the contract had not yet been received from the Town's accounting firm of Cobb, Ezekiel, Loy, and so action would be postponed on the proposal until the next regular Council meeting in July.

5. Any Other Old Business

Mayor Fennell asked if there were any other old business; and there was none.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Planning Board

Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia and Town Administrator Ken Jacobs announced that two new members had joined and been officially appointed to the Board, namely Karen Horne (NC Highway 61) and Melvin Covington (Kivette House Road). In addition, they reported that the only topic addressed at last week's Board meeting was the revised, resubmitted plat by developers Keystone Homes, which proposed more than 50 additional units, in contrast, to the 68 proposed by original developer Paul Milam almost three years ago.

After nearly an hour of scrutinizing and discussing the new plat for Hudson Way, objections became apparent; and a motion was made by Board Vice Chairman Tyler Harris to deny the current proposed plans and recommend to Council to do the like. Motion was seconded by Board member Karen Horne; and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

2. Enforcement Officer

There was no enforcement activity to report this month.

3. Town Administrator

The Town Administrator's report picked up where the Planning Board report left off, and now Council concerns about and discussions on the new plat for the Hudson Way project would prevail. The original plat was compared to the reworked plat.

Jacobs explained to Council that his initial reaction to the redone proposed plans was they would not "fly" with the Town Council; but in conversations with Evans Engineering, on behalf of developers Keystone Homes, learned that the plans depicted a mirror image of the Weybridge subdivision developed a couple miles away on Burlington Road towards the City of Burlington. This spurred Jacobs to cruise through Weybridge for his personal take, who became less unfavorable in considering the revised concepts for Hudson Way.

To the contrary, however, Jacobs met with swift objection by Mayor Fennell; and Mayor Pro Tem Rice agreed with that platform. Mayor Fennell stated that the original 2018 plat is what the Council approved then, and the Town should not sway from that. If Keystone wanted to makes changes when they assumed ownership of the property more than two years ago, a revised plat should have been submitted shortly thereafter; but, Mayor Fennell suspects that Keystone likely knew those plans would not have been accepted then; and as for him, they will not be accepted now. Nods from across the Council were given, including Council Member Craig York who, even though absent this evening, had earlier rendered his opinion to deny the revised plans.

Town Administrator Jacobs will reunite with Keystone's representatives to convey that the latest plat submittals are unacceptable; and Keystone can choose to rework and resubmit plans, or be refused altogether, with the risk of being given marching papers.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Amendment Extending Interlocal Agreement on Tax Collection

Mayor Fennell asked for any discussion on the above document; and hearing none asked for a motion to approve the amendment, which extended county services for another three years. Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice; motion seconded by Council Member Lee Greeson. The motion carried by a unanimous of those present.

2. Resolution to Establish Candidacy Filing Fee for 2021 Municipal Election

Mayor Fennell asked for a motion to adopt the resolution for the candidacy filing fee for the upcoming November 2021 election, which would affect the re-election of two incumbents: Council Members Cindy Wheeler and Lee Greeson. Motion made by Council Member Cindy Wheeler to retain \$5.00 the filing fee, which has never increased. Motion seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice; and the motion passed by unanimous vote of those present. The resolution will be registered with the county Board of Elections for candidate filing timeline of the first two weeks in July.

3. Any Items from Council Members

Mayor Fennell asked for any items from Council members; and there were none.

4. Announcements

Mayor Fennell asked for any announcements; and at this point in the meeting, Council took a recess to bid farewell to Town Clerk Jo on her retirement. The mayor, on behalf of Council members and associates, presented an inscribed plaque with thanks for her 15 years of service and dedication. A brief gathering with refreshments would follow the meeting.

5. Speakers from the Floor

Mayor Fennell asked for any speakers from the floor; and no one asked to be heard.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Council, Mayor Fennell invited a motion to adjourn. Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice made the motion to adjourn; motion seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler. The motion passed by unanimous vote of those present; and the June 8, 2021 Town Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:26 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, July 13, 2021 at the Whitsett Town Hall.

/s/

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

Richard Fennell, Mayor

APPROVED: July 13, 2021