

**Walter M. Gardner, Jr.**  
Mayor

**Robert F. Davie, Jr.**  
Administrator

## **TOWN OF WARRENTON**

*Historically Great - Progressively Strong"*

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### **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING APRIL 10, 2017**

Those attending were: Mayor Walter Gardner  
Commissioner Mary Hunter  
Commissioner Michael Coffman  
Commissioner Frank Holt  
Commissioner Kimberly Harding  
Commissioner John Blalock  
Commissioner William "Tom" Hardy

Commissioner Margaret Britt was absent. There were 6 citizens present.

Town Administrator Robert Davie  
Attorney Mitch Styers  
Police Chief Goble Lane  
Jennifer Harris - Warren Record  
William "Bill" Perkins, Public Works  
Annette Silver, Minute Taker

#### **Call to Order/Agenda**

Mayor Gardner called meeting to order at 7:00pm. Those attending were asked to observe a moment of silence for Commissioner Britt (recovering from surgery) as well as others less fortunate. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Blalock. The Proposed Agenda was presented. A motion was made by Commissioner Coffman with second by Commissioner Blalock to approve the Proposed Agenda. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

#### **Conflict of Interest**

Mayor read the Conflict of Interest Statement. Town Administrator read rules for citizen comment.

#### **Public Comments**

Public Comments were voiced by Oscar Davis and Brooke Holt. Mr. Davis spoke regarding "History Worth Repeating" project. He stated he was offended by the words as others should be including the women on the Board. He asked us to revisit this as he thinks the result would not be good. Mrs. Holt, speaking as a member of Preservation Warrenton, was before the Board requesting Town to replace the Christmas decorations on Main Street. Preservation Warrenton is hosting a tour of homes in December and she thinks the decorations are not a good first impression for visitors. The Mayor stated the cost is approximately \$30,000 (30 poles at \$1,000) for decorations for Main Street; however, being early in the budget consideration will be made.

#### **Minutes of Public Hearing and Regular Meeting of March 13, 2017**

Minutes of Public Hearing and Regular Meeting of March 13, 2017 were presented. A motion was made by Commissioner Coffman with second by Commissioner Blalock to approve both set of Minutes. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

#### **Consent Agenda**

The Consent Agenda was presented.

(a) Year-to-Date Revenue and Expenditure reports (Budget vs. Actual)

- (b) Monthly Checks Report
- (c) Public Works Monthly Report
- (d) WWTP Monthly Report
- (e) Police Activity Report

A motion was made by Commissioner Blalock with second by Commissioner Hardy to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Finance and Administration**

In addition to written report, Commissioner Hunter and Administrator Davie presented the 2017-2018 Budget with material changes over prior year in the following areas:

- Current part-time employee to be made permanent employee and salary spread between Streets department and W/S and WWTP funds
- Election year funding added
- NC ESC line reduced since Town has balance to cover state unemployment minimums
- Craft Beer event revenue and expenses reduced by half
- Health insurance estimated to increase by 10%
- Seven-year loan for two police vehicles added
- W/S gas expense lowered
- External contracts in W/S fund lowered
- W/S contingency line increased to show LGC funds are available to pay projected USDA loan (USDA grant/loan package)
- Grant fee for Asset Management Plan added
- Sludge removal revenue and expenses up due to septic tank processing
- Lab analysis costs reduced
- Grant fee for WWPT rehab added

Also, 401K was suggested as a possible option for Town employees. Administrator noted that Nirlina and the Warren County School system offer 401k to their employees, while Warren County does not. Davie also noted that an inequity exists among Town employees, as the police officers receive a 401k as mandated by the state but all other employees do not.

Administrator was asked to do a survey of employees to see if they are receptive to idea. Commissioner Hardy asked if Mr. Davie could crunch figures using 2% for employees receiving raise only; raise with contribution and raise without contribution, to be presented at May meeting. Commissioner Holt suggested a representative meet with Finance Committee. The full Board agreed to schedule a Finance Committee meeting. The Mayor encouraged Board to continue to look at the proposed budget and ask questions.

### **Public Works**

In addition to written report, Commissioner Harding and Public Director Perkinson stated leaf pick-up will be extended on a month to month basis, due to use of dump trailer and new work approach in Streets department.

### **Public Safety**

Commissioner Hardy and Chief Lane, in addition to written report, emphasized importance of locking cars at all times as a laptop was recently reported as stolen. Mayor reported fire calls have been very heavy. Quilter's Lane committee will meet again on April 19, 2017.

### **Human Resources/Information Technology**

Commissioner Blalock had no report.

### **Revitalization/Historical**

Commissioner Coffman reported that the Historic District Commission was presented with a COA, by Gordon Poindexter, for demolishing house located at 307 Halifax Street, known as the Seaman house. After lengthy discussion the Commission decided to put the COA on hold and encouraged Poindexter to market property for sale through Preservation North Carolina.

Coffman reported that the Revitalization Committee has Spring Fest almost completely booked. Revitalization Committee and Chamber of Commerce and local merchants will collaborate in an attempt to establish a merchants association.

### **Beautification/Facilities**

In absence of Commissioner Britt, it was announced replacement banners had been hung. The Mayor noted that the Citizens Advisory Board, established and appointed by the Board will begin meeting on an as-needed basis instead of monthly. Mayor thanked Citizens Advisory Board for its service.

### **Planning/Zoning/Annexation**

Commissioner Holt presented amendment to ordinances regarding Air BnBs (Chapter 151 of the Code of Ordinances of Town of Warrenton). Air BnB is now referred to as short term residential rental. A motion to approve the Short Term Rental additions to the zoning ordinances was made by Commissioner Blalock with second by Commissioner Hardy. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

### **Old Business**

The NC Department of Transportation is working towards upgrading existing curb ramps that do not meet ADA requirements in Warrenton. The locations that were submitted by Town contained both intersections with state maintained roads and intersections that serve municipal streets only. For the intersections that include state maintained roads NCDOT is able to provide the 20% match. For the intersections that are municipal streets only the municipality will need to provide the 20% local match. For Warrenton's match, Powell Bill funds will be available in the 2017-18 budget.

Mr. Davie along with the Board addressed "History Worth Repeating" language brought up by Mr. Davis in public comments. The Umbrella Branding Project preliminary kick-off was held in Edenton and considered successful by stakeholders in Edenton. The branding was not meant to be hurtful to anyone and there were no complaints in the three years of collaboration with towns of Edenton and Halifax. Oscar Davis stated he was unaware of project and its wording and would have voiced his opinion if he knew about it. "History worth repeating" sounds dated, according to Commissioner Holt. Davie was asked if "repeating" could be changed to "knowing" or "understanding". Commissioner Blalock stated that prior Board agreed to wording. Would it be a good idea for the current Board to reject it since the preliminary kick-off has already been done, a website set up and money spent? Board thanked Mr. Davis for bringing to their attention the possible misunderstanding projected by slogan. Commissioner Coffman made a motion with second by Commissioner Holt to delay the project until slogan is thought through. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote. The town logo design and branding was mentioned and information provided for Board consideration.

The white Ford 1996 350XL dump truck used in public works was requested to be listed as surplus and auctioned at annual E B Harris auction May 6, 2017. The truck has been replaced by a Ford F550 dump truck. A motion was made by Commissioner Hardy with second by Commissioner Coffman to approve the listing with E B Harris auction. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

A budget amendment to add two line items in the budget, related to USDA grant for police cameras, was requested. The amendments will allow closing out grant and providing a final report on Fund 54 to the Board, auditor and USDA. Commissioner Blalock made a motion with second by Commissioner Hunter to approve the budget amendment. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

A budget request for fund balance appropriation for an outdoor projection system was presented in the amount not to exceed \$4000. The projector will be owned by the Town but may be rented. The goal is to stimulate pride among Warrenton citizens and activity in the downtown, for the benefit of citizens and merchants. It was discussed that projector may be used privately as well. Commissioner Hardy made the motion with second by Commissioner Hunter to adopt budget amendment for outdoor projection system while investigating particulars regarding rear projection. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

**Announcement**

Clerk of Court Richard Hunter is retiring with celebration to be held April 28, 2017.

Mayor Gardner noted that he has been Mayor of the Town of Warrenton for 20 years to the month.

Board went into Closed Session. Upon returning from Closed Session no action was taken and the meeting was adjourned.