

Walter M. Gardner, Jr.
Mayor

Robert F. Davie
Town Administrator

TOWN OF WARRENTON

"Historically Great - Progressively Strong"

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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2015

Attending were: Mayor Walter Gardner
Commissioner Palmer "Woody" King
Commissioner George "Al" Fleming
Commissioner Mary Hunter
Commissioner Kimberly Harding
Commissioner John Mooring
Commissioner Margaret Britt
Commissioner William "Tom" Hardy

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

There were 5 citizens present.

Call to Order/Minutes/Agenda

Mayor Gardner called the regular monthly meeting of the Town of Warrenton to order at 7:00PM. Those attending were asked to observe a moment of silence remembering Commissioner Mooring who lost an aunt since last meeting. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Harding. The Proposed Agenda was presented. Mayor added item "6 G" NC Commerce Building Rehab Grant Application Resolution. The motion to accept was made by Commissioner Fleming and second by Commissioner King. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The Mayor read the Conflict of Interest statement. There were no conflicts voiced. The Consent Agenda was presented.

Public Comments

Public Comments were heard by Rich Moretz of Cypress Creek Renewals Farms, John Boyd Davis, Debbie Speer and Ken Speer. Mr. Moretz spoke on renewal ordinances and tax credits in regard to solar farms. North Carolina is second to California in solar farm development due to state tax credits. The sunset of state credits is the end of 2015. Mr. Moretz wants to help the Town to get a new solar farm ordinance passed. The moratorium on new solar farms puts him in a holding pattern. Mr. Davis spoke to the proposed addition of solar panels to the existing solar farm on his property located on Norlina Road. Since the property does not do well for growing pines, solar is a profitable alternative. Mr. Davis proposes an equitable ordinance putting the land to its best use while being fair to neighboring properties. Mrs. Speer spoke against the possible addition of a solar farm on Dowtin Street, and she thought it was within the Town limits. Commissioner Mooring reminded those present that Dowtin Street is not in the city limits but in the Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). Mr. Speer spoke, also, to Dowtin Street solar farm and "solar dust". He asked if the only reason Warrenton was approving solar farms was for tax credits. Commissioner Hardy reiterated that an application has not been submitted for Dowtin Street.

Consent Agenda

- a) Minutes of Board meeting March 9, 2015, Public Hearing
- b) Year-to-Date Revenue and Expenditure Reports (Budget vs. Actual)
- c) Monthly Checks Report
- d) Public Works Monthly Report
- e) WWTP Monthly Report
- f) Police Activity Report

The motion to accept the agenda was made by Commissioner Mooring and seconded by Commissioner Harding. The Consent Agenda was approved by a unanimous vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE and ADMINISTRATION

Commissioner Hunter stated in addition to written report, Mr. Davie will have information on finances later in meeting. The meeting with Warren County Commissioners resulted with no funds being reimbursed to Town from ABC revenue.

PUBLIC WORKS

Commissioner Harding reported in addition to written reports the water break on Brehon Street was handled swiftly and all who assisted in the repair are to be commended highly.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Commissioner Hardy stated in addition to written report, Chief Lane has purchased two body cameras for officers. Chief Lane and Attorney Styers are comprising a written policy for the camera use. The cameras aid as checks and balances as well as GPS location for officers and citizens. The devices serve as objective witnesses. The purchase was made because of available funds in the current fiscal year and because of anticipation of financial shortfalls in the coming fiscal year. Commissioner Hardy complimented Chief Lane on being proactive. The town blazer detailing has been completed. Mayor had no report from fire department.

HUMAN RESOURCES/INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Commissioner Fleming had no report from either department.

REVITALIZATION/HISTORICAL

Commissioner King had no report from Historical Committee. He did remind all present of Spring Fest Saturday, April 25, 2015. All sponsors have responded with contributions of \$1975. The Committee is currently under budget with funds coming in for booths daily. The Revitalization Committee will meet Tuesday, April 21, 2015 at 6:00PM at fire station. Commissioner King asked Board members to volunteer in receiving e-mail addresses at a computer station on courthouse square Spring Fest day. The Board responded.

BEAUTIFICATION/FACILITIES

Commissioner Britt asked "Why would you want to live anywhere other than Warrenton?" Warrenton has new stop signs, new banners, more birds and leaves on fence, as well as being a clean town. The Town looks great and thanks go to Bill and his staff. Commissioner Fleming also commented on the appearance of Ridgeway Street.

PLANNING/ZONING/ANNEXATION

Commissioner Mooring had no report.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Mooring, as chair of Planning, Zoning & Annexation Committee stated his opinion that the Town does not need an ordinance to allow solar farms in R8 and R12 only in C2. The expansion in C2 for J B Davis would need a public hearing and surrounding property owners should be informed. It was suggested Mr. Davie write adjacent property owners concerning the expansion of the solar farm. It was asked if the Town of Warrenton receives any monies from

existing solar farm locations and the Town does not. The property owner only receives monetary payment from the solar farm company. Commissioner Mooring, also, suggested allowing property zoned C2, not adjacent to R8-R12-R20, to be used for solar farms. Commissioner Hunter suggested a committee meeting for clarity to all members on Commissioner Mooring's proposal. Attorney Styers stated if there are any changes to zoning regulations a Public Hearing is required. The Board agreed to schedule a Public Hearing for Monday, May 11 at 6:30PM prior to regular meeting. The Zoning Committee will meet April 23, 2015 at 6:00PM at Town Hall.

The Grant Project Ordinance for Main Street Solutions Fund Grant was presented. The purpose of said ordinance is to receive \$75,000 in funds and distribute said funds for the Main Street Solutions Fund Grant awarded the Town on behalf of Serious Business, Inc., dba Quilt Lizzy and the associated renovation of the building located at 115 E. Market Street. The motion to accept Grant Project Ordinance was made by Commissioner King with second by Commissioner Hardy. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote. The Capital Project Ordinance (USDA Rural Development Loan/Grant) was presented for the purpose of receiving and distributing funds for replacing and adding additional water/sewer lines, installing a radio frequency water meter system generating a water map and renovating old Town Hall. The total project cost is \$3,690,750. The motion to accept the Capital Project Ordinance was made by Commissioner Harding with second by Commissioner King. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote. The Grant Project Ordinance for USDA Search Grant for the purpose of receiving and distributing \$30,000 in funds to produce a Preliminary Engineering Report and Preliminary Architectural Report. A motion to accept the Capital Project Ordinance was made Commissioner King and seconded by Commissioner Hunter. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote. Mr. Davie outlined steps required by the USDA to receive the grant, one of which is public notice of intent to apply for the grant. The motion to advertise public notice of intent was made by Commissioner Mooring with second by Commissioner Harding. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

The Historic District signage will be reviewed by Commissioner Harding during her walks through Town to determine the number of sign toppers needed for possible purchase. Matching dollars will be sought for their purchase. The Town cemetery located on N. Main Street has been surveyed. There appears to be a portion of a store that sits on Town property as well as a grave on land that was intended to be deeded to the Town but never deeded. Mr. Davie would like permission from Board to negotiate with one property owner to trade property to allow egress to cemetery and to seek donation of land from the second property owner. The Board agreed. Attorney Styers agreed this was the best alternative to the solution. A Resolution seeking grant funding for the Rehab of Eastern Motor Line Project was proposed. A motion was made by Commissioner Mooring to accept the resolution with second by Commissioner King. The Motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

NEW BUSINESS

A post mortem of the recent water main break of April 1 was presented in the form of a slide show. The Town was notified at approximately 9:45AM by a citizen, the break occurred near the July 2014 break. Breakage in this area is due to old water lines and spiral cracking of asbestos concrete as well as pipe sitting on top of limestone. The key success factors listed were rapid response time of staff and contractors; sufficient town and contractor personnel; coordination among staff and contractor personnel and utilization of emergency call software. The entire Town was without water because isolating valves proved ineffective. An outside contractor was consulted because of the severity of the repair. The key takeaways from the repair;

- localized valves do not hold back water flow to main due to age (60yrs) and other factors;
- future breaks are likely until water main is replaced (estimated start 4th quarter of 2015);
- the repair and repair efforts met with State requirements and guidelines;
- continuous updating of emergency call phone numbers is needed. Communication to water customers will be added to water bills in the future.

Commissioner King stated he believed the Town learned from the mistake which is beneficial. The rest of the Board agreed.

The Planning Board met but had no quorum, therefore, no recommendation was made concerning Main Street apartments. The Tiger Grant is a Grant Davie would like to pursue. The purpose of the Grant is to place telephone lines and cable lines all underground, as well as sidewalks, trees, light posts and aesthetic improvements. There is no match required for this Grant of a minimum of \$1 million per community. The final application date is June 5, 2015. A motion was made by Commissioner Mooring with second by Commissioner King. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote. Commissioner Britt complimented Davie on constant search for Grants to improve Town.

A motion was made by Commissioner Fleming with second by Commissioner Harding to approve Resolution of Support for Kerr Lake Regional Water System Proposed Interbasin Transfer Petition. There is no cost involved with the resolution only support. Mayor explained this effort is looking toward the future. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote. A Resolution rejecting the wireless agreement addendum with Verizon dated November 1, 2014 was presented. The agreement was signed by Warrenton but never executed by Verizon Wireless; therefore, Warrenton considers the agreement null and void. Commissioner Fleming stated if payments have not been made contract is null and void. Davie stated the regular monthly payments have been made but not the payments associated with the addendum. Commissioner Britt suggested writing Verizon to inform them of the Board rescinding agreement. The addendum prevents the Town from renting space to additional carriers. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Fleming and a second made by Commissioner Hunter. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

Davie presented the 2015-2016 budget to Board which needs \$40,000 to make balance. The loss of privilege licenses and ABC distributions make up the shortfall. Davie presented options to close the budget gap. Option 1 utilize fund balance. Option 2 utilize part of expected water/sewer loan repayment (\$96,500). Option 3 reduce health insurance coverage (\$6000) reduce staff and reduce some staff hours (\$15000) eliminate part-time position in streets (\$14,000) (NOTE: if staff positions are eliminated altogether there will be unemployment benefit costs). Option 4 Some combination of the above. It was consensus of Board to implement Option 2.

To fund water/sewer improvements USDA recommends water/sewer rates be increased by approximately 8.7% with 4.5% at the beginning of the 2015-16 fiscal year and the balance at the beginning of the 2016-17 fiscal year.

With further business, Board went into Closed Session to consult with attorney concerning handling GS 143-318.11(a) (4).

After adjourning from closed session the Board took no action. The open meeting was adjourned.