

Walter M. Gardner, Jr.
Mayor

John Freeman
Administrator

TOWN OF WARRENTON
"Historically Great - Progressively Strong"
P. O. Box 281
Warrenton, NC 27589-0281
PHONE (252) 257-3315 FAX (252) 257-9219

July 12, 2010 Board of Commissioners Minutes

The July 12, 2010 meeting of the Town of Warrenton Board of Commissioners was held at the Warrenton Town Hall.

Those present were:

Mayor Walter M. Gardner, Jr.	John Freeman, Town Administrator
Commissioner and Mayor Pro Tem Woody King	
Commissioner Jules Banzet	Public Works Director Bill Perkinson
Commissioner John Blalock	Police Chief John Younts
Commissioner Robert Davie	Jennifer Harris, Warren Record
Commissioner Mary Hunter	
Commissioner Audrey Tippet	
Commissioner John Mooring	

Absent: Town Attorney Mitch Styers

Mayor Gardner called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. He then presented the proposed agenda for approval. Commissioner Mooring moved to approve the proposed agenda; Commissioner Tippet seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mayor Gardner then presented the minutes from the regular meeting of June 14, 2010 and special meeting of June 28, 2010 for approval. In the minutes of the regular meeting Commissioner Banzet noted an error in his observation of the size of the lot on which Mr. Alston requested permission to operate a game room. Rather than stating it is 2 acres he questioned Mr. Alston's assertion that it was that size. Commissioner Mooring moved that the minutes be approved with this correction; Commissioner Davie seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Public Comments

Three members of the public signed up to address the Board.

1. Vonnete Robertson, owner of the Beauty Box at 105 North Main Street commented on the 2 hour parking enforcement that had been implemented in recent weeks. She understands the reason for limiting parking, that visitors to downtown be able to find spaces, but 2 hours was not enough time for those of her customers who received "chemical services" such as permanents. On the first day of enforcement three of her customers had received tickets, which made for very expensive trips to her business. Mayor Gardner said he understood that she had spoken with Chief Younts and encouraged her to offer suggestions. She said the problem could be addressed by allowing the shop to issue a permit for those specifically receiving the chemical services. Commissioner Blalock said that sounded similar to the chief's proposal, and he was inclined to support the idea but wanted to hear from the chief. Mayor Gardner thanked Ms. Robertson for her comments.

2. Barbara Kinton spoke in support of the preceding comments and said she was one of the three who had received tickets. She said she thought the ticket cost was high at \$30 (which it became on July 1, up from \$15), and that she had called other cities to find that Louisburg charged \$10, Henderson \$8, Rolesville \$9 and Franklinton \$25, and asked that the Board reconsider the amount. Ms. Robertson asked that the Board consider voiding the three tickets issued that day.

3. Nancy Callahan added that one of the tickets had been given to the caregiver of one of her customers, who walked very slowly and took more time than some of the other customers.

Mayor Gardner thanked all for their comments, and in the absence of further public comment moved to Committee Reports.

Committee Reports

Finance and Administration

Commissioner Hunter began her report with a review of the four checks which she said appeared appropriate:

Citizens Insurance and Bonding	\$16,380	Quarterly liability insurance
MIT	\$11,088.25	Monthly health insurance
Warren county	\$19,305.36	March water purchase
Warren County	\$15,303.95	April water purchase
Granville Farms	\$11,655.00	Sludge hauling
First Citizens	\$25,313.09	Voided—for Police Dept. loan payment, to be reissued in July

She then asked Mr. Freeman for his report. He began by cautioning that specifics in the year-end cash flow report would differ from the audit but the basic result should be the same, with expenditures within budget and the fund balances improved more than expected. The Water Sewer department figures were adjusted by removing the unbudgeted reimbursable grants as all of the reimbursements had not been received and it was expected that the auditors would either move those to a grant fund or apply the reimbursements due in the same year. With this adjustment the water sewer department cash flow is a positive \$6172, less than the previous year but still good when it is considered that more than \$40,000 was added to the reserve. Turning to the Sales & Use Tax revenue report he noted that revenue had declined 9.7% from the previous year but was within the budgeted -20%, and Utility Franchise revenue had increased 4.1%. Mr. Freeman reported that ad valorem property tax revenue had totaled \$432,264 which was \$16,454 above budget, noting it was difficult to project revenue following a reassessment year, but that this would help the general fund balance. He also noted that Warren County's efforts to collect delinquent taxes had been effective as seen in the increase from \$13,960 to \$18,053. Mayor Gardner asked if the report could be revised to show delinquent taxes separately and Mr. Freeman said he would do so on future reports.

Mr. Freeman then presented several 2009-2010 budget adjustments for approval, explaining that he had consulted with the auditor who had suggested that only a few lines needed to be adjusted and that a line by line series of adjustments was not necessary. The requested adjustments are as follows:

General Fund

To reflect unanticipated cost of sales tax paid; this is a reimbursable amount though the reimbursement will not be received until the next budget year:

Expense

37-950-001 Sales & Use Tax Expense--Increase from \$11,000 to \$14,244, a total of \$3,244.

Commissioner Blalock moved to approve this amendment; Commissioner Banzet seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Water Sewer Department

To reflect the unbudgeted cost of reimbursable grants for the sewer evaluation project:

Revenue

38-350-403 CWMTF/Pump Station Increase from \$0 to \$81,660

Expense

38-850-403 CWMTF/Pump Station Increase from \$0 to \$81,660

Commissioner Mooring moved to approve these amendments; Commissioner Blalock seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Waste Water Treatment Plant

To reflect unanticipated repairs to the plant and amount of sludge to be hauled, a total of \$34,904. Because actual expenses are billed to the partners revenue will increase accordingly:

39-860-301 Maint/Repair of Plant Increase from \$45,000 to \$70,946, a total of \$25,946

39-860-305 Sludge Hauling Increase from \$65,000 to \$73,958, a total of \$8,958

Noting the considerable cost of sludge hauling Commissioner Mooring raised the question about the possibilities of reducing cost through processing as compost, serving as fuel for a biomass generator or some other use. Mr. Perkinson explained that the sludge is treated with lime to make it harmless and the hauler applies it to farm land. In a heavy year much of it must be hauled to the hauler's farmland in Vance County because local farms can only use so much, and there is additional cost to take it out of the county. If it was useful to this hauler Mr. Mooring asked if anyone would want it for free, but Mr. Perkinson said that as hazardous waste a state permit is required. Following the discussion Commissioner Mooring moved that the budget amendment be approved; Commissioner Davie seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Human Resources/Information Technology

Mr. Freeman reported on having discussed the preliminary stage of establishing the new Town website with Commissioner Davie, and having looked for a suitable domain name, recommended warrenton.nc.us. This began considerable discussion as Commissioner Mooring asked what domain names were currently in use or had lapsed. The Warrenton Revitalization Committee has warrenton-nc.com, and he questioned the cost and added complexity of maintaining two domains and websites. His stated his preference for a name ending in .com as most web searchers are accustomed to this category. Mr. Davie said that the existing site gets 40-50 visitors a day but the Town site would be geared to residents as a government services rather than tourist site, and his understanding is that there would be no cost as it would be set up as a sub-domain of the state site. In response to Mr. Mooring's concern about the complexity of maintaining two sites Mr. Davie said that one could be redirected to the other to avoid problems.

Public Safety

Commissioner Blalock turned to Chief Younts for comment on the monthly activity report. In response to Commissioner Davie's question about the reported 4 burglaries, Chief Younts said that they were burglaries from motor vehicles (not of vehicles) committed by one youth in a neighborhood. Mayor Gardner noted that 45 tickets had been written for 2 hour parking violation, and Chief Younts pointed out that was after only 2.5 weeks of enforcement. Referring to tickets written for Parking On Left Side of Curb Commissioner Davie said he had heard of several written in residential areas. Younts said 4 of the 9 written had been residential. Mr. Blalock asked if there were other comments on the report before discussing parking issues, and Younts said that several arrests had been made for larcenies and theft of materials.

Commissioner Blalock then brought up the proposal to eliminate parking on the south side of West Franklin Street between Main and Front Streets. Chief Younts said that the street was too narrow to allow safe parking on that block as the parked car fills much of the lane and the driver must exit into the traffic lane. Mr. Mooring asked if there are DOT guidelines to which Younts said there are but municipalities have discretion within their boundaries to set policies regarding parking. Mr. Freeman said that Town Attorney Styers had recommended a public hearing for proposed parking changes that would change the Ordinance (as contrasted with enforcement of 2 hour parking limitations that were already in the Ordinance), and Commissioner Blalock moved that a public

hearing be scheduled at 6:30pm on Monday, August 9, 2010 to consider changes to the parking ordinance. Mr. Mooring wanted to confirm that the limitation on West Franklin was for safety reasons and asked if there were issues with large trucks turning at Main Street. Chief Younts said that DOT had complained, especially this summer with the increased use of the Community Center. Commissioner Hunter asked about East Franklin, to which Chief Younts answered that the street is wider. Mayor Gardner said it would make a big difference for school buses (there is considerable school bus traffic turning at Front Street as they travel to Miriam Boyd Elementary School). Mr. Mooring seconded Mr. Blalock's motion for the public hearing, which passed unanimously.

Continuing with the discussion about parking and the proposal to limit parking on East Market, Chief Younts said the BB&T Bank had requested three 15 minute spaces nearest Main Street, pointing out that there were three such spaces at the First Citizens Bank. The recommendation was to do this and make the remaining spaces 2 hour. There followed considerable discussion about the effect on Town Hall employees (who would park in the BB&T lot) and Warren Family Institute employees (there are several spaces behind the building). Mayor Gardner suggested establishing a handicapped space at the corner of Bragg Street in front of Town Hall and making the remaining six spaces 15 minute parking; Commissioner Mooring expressed his support for the idea. Commissioner Blalock said this would be part of the public hearing.

There followed some discussion about enforcement of the 2 hour limit on vehicles parked in handicapped zones, and Chief Younts referred to state statutes that the time limit is enforced in those spaces because they exist in a district defined as 2 hour parking.

Commissioner Blalock returned to the subject of enforcement of left of curb parking in residential areas. Chief Younts reported having been asked why enforcement should be selectively applied to Main Street and not residential areas. The main problem seems to have been Brehon Steet, especially regarding school buses. He said that the school bus garage has requested enforcement and has had to reroute buses at times to get through the neighborhood. Chief Younts said he would need specific instruction from the Board to begin enforcement in residential areas, saying that parking on the wrong side is a state citation that would need to be enforced everywhere or nowhere. Mr. Blalock said he did not think it should be enforced, and Mr. King agreed, saying that there should be no enforcement in residential areas. Commissioner Tippett pointed out that many of the houses do not have driveways, making parking difficult, and Commissioner Hunter said common sense should prevail. Mr. Blalock said that Town Ordinances specify which streets and which sides offer legal parking spaces, and the way must be kept clear to allow fire trucks to get through. Chief Younts said that parking on Brehon is legal only on the west side. Mr. Mooring asked how problems had been dealt with in the past and said signage would be required if there were to be a change. He suggested tabling the issue until there could be an assessment of signage. He asked if this should be on the agenda of the public hearing and Mr. King advised keeping that to downtown parking issues. Mr. Mooring made a motion to table the question of parking enforcement in residential areas until the next meeting, pending an assessment of signage needs; Commissioner Hunter seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Blalock then brought the discussion to the subject of creating a permit for exception to the 2 hour parking limit. Those making public comments had identified a specific group that needed more than 2 hours to complete their business. Chief Younts spoke, suggesting a permit that the salons could issue to their customers after calling the police department with license number and time. The salon employee would recover the permit when the customer leaves to use for the next customer requiring it. Commissioner Mooring thought the process of calling the police department too labor intensive but Chief Younts expressed his concern about controlling the privilege and potential abuse. He said he had spoken with the three businesses that appeared to be affected, and all had agreed to the idea. Both Commissioners Blalock and Davie agreed with Mr. Mooring that having to call the police department with each use was too time consuming. Mr. Mooring suggested a longer term space for which the business could be charged for the sign but Mayor Gardner thought that every business would want one and Mr. King that there would not be enough spaces on the street. There followed discussion about the possible

abuse of permits and whether start or end time was more important to use, and how long it should be. Mr. Davie suggested just making it a 3 hour permit as one of the operators had said 3 hours would be adequate. Chief Younts said the permit he had worked out after speaking with the operators should be 2.5 hours. Mr. Blalock suggested that the program should start with the chief's permit and then evaluate for any necessary changes. Commissioners Davie and Mooring again said they thought that requiring the operator to call in with each use was excessive and there was an extended discussion about the use and possible abuse of the spaces. Mayor Gardner added that customers do not all arrive at the same time and a permit may roll over several times after being issued. Chief Younts again said that with the many exceptions the only way to control the permits is by being specific and to treat all the same. Mr. King said that the lack of adequate parking had always been a problem when he had operated a business on Main Street. Commissioner Hunter asked if there should be any consideration of court attendees, to which Mayor Gardner answered that it was not necessary because the county provided space in the county manager's lot. Commissioner Tippettt suggested that enforcement stop, or that it be handled on a case by case basis, and that she felt that the process is overkill. Mr. King answered that enforcement had only recently begun and that it should be given a chance; Commissioners Blalock and Mooring agreed. Mr. Mooring made a motion that the Police Department issue permits valid to 3 hours, limited only to beauty shops, with one permit per employee who provides the chemical services at issue. Mr. King seconded the motion which passed 6-1 with Commissioner Tippettt voting nay.

Revitalization/Historical

Commissioner King had no report for the Revitalization Committee; Mr. Freeman had no report for the Historic District Commission.

Beautification/Facilities

Commissioner Tippettt asked Mr. Freeman for a report on the agenda item referring to an engineering study for the renovation of Town Hall. He reported on the two proposals for a feasibility study on Town Hall that would be required for grant applications. Both AECOM and O'Brien & Gere are professional firms that could do the work and produce a good result. With both including structural analysis, public presentation at a Board or general public meeting, and both preparing and presenting the study to the USDA as part of the grant/loan application, O'Brien & Gere proposed a cost of \$12,575 and AECOM \$17,320. Mr. Freeman said that although it would be an unbudgeted expense, the preliminary projection of the general fund balance was \$15,463 more than budgeted, which could be used for this study. Mr. Blalock expressed discomfort about making an unbudgeted expenditure this early in the fiscal year, and Mr. Mooring expressed his concern that the LGC might get involved again if the Town utilized its reserve. Mr. Freeman said it was difficult to define the fund balance until the audit was finished but that the auditors should be able to give a good preliminary estimate before the audit was complete. Mr. Blalock suggested postponing the decision for 60 days. Mr. Mooring moved that the question be tabled for two Board meetings to allow for a better picture of the fund balance; Mr. Banzet seconded the motion, and some discussion followed. Mrs. Tippettt asked if there were any hazards that needed to be addressed immediately, such as mold. Mr. Mooring said that hazards would have to be taken care of now anyway, and that the feasibility study addressed long term needs. Mr. Davie asked if there might be grant funding available now that would not be if the study were postponed, and reported a story in the South Hill newspaper about the town of Lacrosse having received a grant for \$275,000 for renovation of a historic town-owned hotel. Mayor Gardner said that he had been looking constantly but had not found any. Following this discussion the motion was put to a vote and passed unanimously.

Public Works

Commissioner Davie asked Public Works Director Bill Perkinson for his monthly report. He said that the sewer system video project was nearly complete with the final report expected in a couple of weeks. He was also pleased to report that employees Eddie Long and Al Alexander had both received their certification as Grade 1 Collection System Operators, and it was confirmed that this qualified them for a pay increase.

Mr. Perkinson said that the expenses of the Waste Water Treatment Plant had been high in June largely due to the cost of hauling the sludge resulting from an extremely wet winter and spring. He said the contractor has range prices the differ between less and more than 20 miles, and had to haul much of it to his farm in Granville County because the local farms are saturated. In addition to the wet weather it was possible that the new, more powerful pumps installed at the county's Soul City Pump station might have scoured the 20 miles of lines and caused more sludge. It is a challenge to maintain the healthy balance required by the plant, and it will quickly become unhealthy if sludge is not removed. Commissioner Mooring asked if the product be sold by the plant. Mr. Perkinson said that removal of the class B sludge produced by the plant is heavily regulated and not a salable product. There is a more expensive process to convert it to class A compost, but it would mean paying the hauler more to do so. Mr. Mooring said his thoughts was not just that the plant might make money but that the hauler might profit from producing a more useful product.

Zoning

There was no report.

Unfinished Business

The first item of unfinished business was consideration of the proposal to purchase two new vehicles to replace aging vehicles currently in use. There was considerable discussion as Commissioner Mooring questioned whether it was necessary for Public Works to have identical heavy duty F250 extended cab 4wd trucks, or whether regular duty F150 trucks would be satisfactory for most uses. Mr. Perkinson responded that it was important because of the small pool of on-call employees who all may be called out to deal with problems. Mr. Mooring said his concern was that Public Works have adequate vehicles but that anything that could be saved on vehicles could be used to promote the Town. He said that reduced cost could offset the need for new revenue sources, and expressed his concern about the needs of the downtown district. Commissioner Davie said the two trucks would come out of different buckets, the leaf truck out of the general fund and the pickup work truck out of the water sewer fund. He said that the Board would be shocked at the condition of some of the vehicles and how the employees repair and keep them running. Mr. Mooring said he appreciated their efforts at keeping things going but still doubted that all of the work trucks needed to be F250s. Mr. Perkinson pointed out that several loans will be paid off in each of the next two years, freeing the budget to accommodate new loans without necessarily increasing fees. Mr. Mooring expressed concern about the rotation of vehicles when this one would be purchased so soon after the two purchased in January.

Commissioner Blalock said the trucks should be considered separately and introduced the first request, replacement of the 1978 leaf truck with a flatbed that could be converted from leaf collection to general use by the Street Department. The estimated cost of the Ford F550 flatbed with leaf collection box and safety equipment is \$50,000. He said he had no issue with replacement of the leaf truck, and Mr. Mooring agreed, saying that the old truck was unsafe and should not be used. Mr. Freeman had estimated that the cost of the truck would equal \$1.88 to each monthly utility bill and there followed some discussion about whether that fee should be charged now to accumulate the funds for the first loan payment due next year. Mr. Blalock said he favored purchasing the truck this year and working the first payment into next year's budget, and there was general agreement. Following that discussion Commissioner Blalock moved that the truck be purchased with a five year loan and that Mayor Gardner and Town Administrator Freeman be authorized to finalize the financing details. Commissioner Mooring seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mayor Gardner asked if the Board wished to address the Water Sewer Department work truck at this time. A discussion about the need followed. Mr. Blalock asked if repairs would be made to old trucks if the decision were postponed. Mr. Perkinson said the truck to be replaced would need repair. Mr. Banzet observed that there were many idle hours on the engines in addition to the high mileage, and Mr. Perkinson confirmed that they do need to run for hours, often at night with lights on. Mr. King asked if on-call shifts could be divided to reduce the need for new identical trucks, and Mr. Perkinson said that there are 4 employees who rotate 2 shifts, with one new and one old truck. Mr. Mooring asked if the lighting on old trucks could be improved to reduce the need for

replacement. Mr. Banzet asked Mr. Mooring if he was recommending a lesser truck, and he said that he was, an F150 standard cab and bed without 4wd. Mr. Perkinson said that the space of an extended was needed for dry storage of much equipment, some of which needed to be shielded from sunlight. Following this discussion Commissioner Blalock moved that the Town purchase the F250 work truck identical to the ones already purchased, and that Mayor Gardner and Town Administrator John Freeman be authorized to finalize the financing details. Commissioner Davie seconded the motion which passed 6-1 with Commissioner Mooring voting nay.

For the second item of Unfinished Business Mr. Freeman reported that the Ridgeway Street sidewalk project had been revised in accordance with DOT requirements and that it was being bid out with a closing date of August 11. He said that this project had been developed over a number of years and three town administrators, but that DOT enhancement grant money was still available. This sidewalk would start at Spring Street and continue to the county health department. He said that Powell Bill funds were being conserved to provide the local match required.

New Business

Mr. Freeman presented two requests for sewer adjustment:

James West, North Main Street—average usage 5000 gallons; usage on bill dated 5/27/10 25,000 gallons due to a leak. Requested adjustment \$110.25.

E.T.Malone, Jr., 308 Wilcox Street—average usage 2000 gallons; usage on bill dated 4/22/10 14,000 gallons and on 5/27/10 16,000 gallons due to a leak under the house. Requested adjustment \$165.34

Commissioner Blalock moved that both adjustments be approved; Commissioner Mooring seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Chief Younts then presented 3 parking tickets for possible adjustment. The first two were Beauty Box customers referred to in Public Comments, Carolyn Robertson and Betty Harmon. The third had exceeded the limit because he was on grand jury duty in the courthouse. Commissioner Mooring moved that the tickets issued to Robertson and Harmon be forgiven, as well as the ticket issued to Barbara Kinston, because the Board agreed that there was an issue and had approved a permit to deal with it in the future. He included in his motion that the ticket issued to for the person on jury duty not be forgiven because it was a common parking situation solved by utilizing the county lot. Commissioner Banzet seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Resolutions

There were no resolutions.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

There being no further business Commissioner Blalock and Commissioner Mooring simultaneously moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mayor Gardner declared the meeting adjourned at 10.02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

John Freeman
Town Administrator