

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL

October 10, 2023

Whitsett Town Hall Building

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

The regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council was held on Tuesday, October 10, 2023, at the Whitsett Town Hall. The following members of the Town Council were present: Mayor Richard Fennell, Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice and Council Members Craig York, Lee Greeson and Cindy Wheeler. Also present were Town Administrator Elaine Garner and Town Clerk Barbara York as well as 8 citizens of Whitsett.

Mayor Fennell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and noted that a quorum was present. He asked that Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice give the invocation.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Mayor Fennell asked if there were any Speakers from the Floor and there were none.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Adoption of the Minutes

- Mayor Fennell asked if he heard a motion to accept the minutes from the September 12, 2023, Town Council Meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice made a motion to adopt the September 2023 minutes. The motion seconded by Council Member Craig York and the adoption of the September 12, 2023; minutes was carried by unanimous vote.

2. Any Other Old Business

- Mayor Fennell asked if there was any further Old Business and there was none.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Planning Board

- Planning Board Chairperson Karen Horne the Planning Board had reviewed NC Statute Legislation House Bill 409 which is associated with Auxiliary Dwellings on a residential property. She presented the Council with a copy of the proposed ordinance that the Board had amended at their last meeting. She discussed the specifics of this document with the Council.
- Mrs. Horne also let the council know that we had received a quote to purchase three water meters from Core and Main. These will have the ability of being radio read rather than manually read. We want to go ahead and get these installed so we can use those to use for testing and practice once our new billing system, Muni-Link is up and running. Council discussion on the proposed document included changes to the size range of the dwelling, setbacks, etc. Mayor Fennell directed the Planning Board to meet again before the next Council meeting to work more on this proposed ordinance and make it more comprehensive and specific.
- Ms. Horne let the Council know that the Planning Board is also working on two other ordinances regarding food trucks and minimal housing.

2. Enforcement Officer

- Enforcement Officer Elaine Garner reviewed the progress on the topic of Crescent Road, giving the Council an update of the information, she has gained about what can be done about speeding cars on this road. In reviewing the options, she has researched, the road cannot be closed for several reasons, the most important being Emergency Vehicles need that road to respond to calls. The DOT will not allow any speed bumps or humps on state roads. The Highway Patrol has been on Crescent a couple of times monitoring traffic on the street. Ms. Garner has submitted a few potential signs to put on the road about slowing down and the DOT would not put signs on this road. She invited any residents that were in the office to speak if they had any ideas. More discussion included signs on Highway 70 regarding no right turns onto Crescent Dr., the Highway Patrol came out for two days and then have not been back. Could we get in touch with them to

see if they can monitor this on some kind of regular basis or park a patrol car in one of the residential driveways so when drivers see the car, they will slow down. Put up two more speed limit signs in the center park of the road. Ms. Garner will call the DOT.

- Town Administrator Elaine Garner let the Council know that they need to adopt five policies and an ordinance regarding the ARPA Funds that have been distributed to us. We have received \$133,462.50 from this grant. The five policies that need to be approved are Allowable Cost Policy telling what is allowed for the money to be used for, Record Retention Policy stating how we keep documentation of where the funds are being used, Nondiscrimination Policy making sure there is no discriminatory acts occurring with the use of the money, Eligible User Policy which states who or what is eligible for the funds and a Conflict-of-Interest Policy to make sure this does not occur with the funds that we use. Our attorney, Joe Kaylo, has reviewed and approved the Conflict-of-Interest Policy. There is also the Grant Project Ordinance, stating how the money is being used. It states that we have five years to spend this money which would be December 21, 2026, or until all the money has been spent, whichever occurs first.

Council Member Craig York made a motion to adopt the five policies pertaining to the ARPA Funds. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler and was approved unanimously.

Council Member Craig York made a motion to approve the Grant Project Ordinance. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler and was approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion of Septic Tank System

- Council Member Craig York discussed the current situation regarding the Town Hall's septic system. First, Mr. York stated that a correction to the minutes from last month was needed. The septic tank was installed in 1955. He let the Council know that Overbey's Septic Tank Service Inspection came yesterday, and Mr. York was able to discuss the current condition of the tank with the owner. It appears that the bell siphon system has failed possible due to the sewage from the outdoor restrooms going down the drainage field into this bell syphon part of the system. The system is not processing the sewage correctly. It is possible that this has also caused our drainage fields to fail as well. Mr. Overbey suggested that we find out where our actual property lines are, so we need to get a survey done to establish this. The actual tank for the system is in good order and Mr. Overbey said there are systems that can be put in the bell syphon part of the system that function the same way to make the system work correctly. Assessment of the drain fields can be done under a repair permit rather than a new permit which gives you more latitude about the drain field soil composition and other aspects of what's needed to repair the whole system. Regarding the overall function of the septic tank, the fire department next door pumps excess water into our tank when their tank becomes full. Their drain field has failed and the engineer who looks at our system would take that into account when telling us what is needed to repair our system.

Mr. York went on to say that we will need to change the pump system at the outdoor bathrooms to a system that is designed for raw sewage, so it is delivered to the tank to be processed. Until all of this is corrected and fixed, we need to stop the use of the ballfield bathrooms effective immediately. In determining the cost for this, the engineer would have to come and assess what is needed to repair the problem. Mr. York is asking the Council's approval to have a survey done on the property and then to have an engineer come and do an assessment of the situation and tell us what needs to be done to correct all of this. Mayor Fennell stated that to complete the downstairs renovation of the inside bathrooms, we need to have the septic issue corrected so that we will be able to get the appropriate permits. Ms. York will call A&B Portable Toilets to get a port-a-john to put out by the ballfield for the teams to use until their contracts end the first of November.

Mayor Fennell stated that if we are going to continue to work on this building, then we need to get the septic tank issue corrected. He asked for a motion to be made regarding getting this process started. Council Member Lee Greeson made a motion to hire a surveyor to survey the Town Hall Property to find the property lines. Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously. Next, Council Member Lee Greeson made a motion to hire an engineer to assess the septic system and field to make recommendations on repairing it. Council Member Cindy Wheeler seconded, and it was approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT With no further business before the Council, Mayor Richard Fennell invited a motion to adjourn. The motion to adjourn was made by Council Member Craig York and seconded by Council Member Lee Greeson. The motion carried; and the October 10, 2023, Town Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:50 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, at the Whitsett Town Hall.

Elaine Garner, Town Administrator

Richard Fennell, Mayor

APPROVED: