

# MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL

May 14, 2024

Whitsett Town Hall Building

## REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

The regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council was held on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at the Whitsett Town Hall. The following members of the Town Council were present: Mayor Chip Bell, Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice and Council Members Lee Greeson and Cindy Wheeler. Also present were Planning Board Chairperson Karen Horne and Town Clerk Barbara York as well as three citizens of Whitsett.

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

## **SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR**

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

### ● **Closed Session**

Mayor Bell made a motion for the Council to go into a closed pursuant to North Carolina General Statute Chapter 143 Section 318.11(a)(3) to consider matters related to Guilford County v. Robert Burlow and to give instructions to our attorney. Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously. Once the closed session was complete, Mayor Bell explained that Guilford County was suing a resident of Whitsett and the meeting was to give our attorney, Kevin Hornik permission to speak on the town's behalf in this suit. Mayor Bell called the Regular Meeting back to order.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. Adoption of the Minutes**

- Mayor Bell asked if he heard a motion to accept the minutes from the April 9, 2024, Town Council Meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice made the motion to adopt the April 2024 minutes. The motion seconded by Council Member Lee Greeson and the adoption of the April 9, 2024, minutes was carried by unanimous vote.

### **2. Update on lights for the front of Town Hall**

- Council Member Lee Greeson reported that Prevatte Electrical Company spent several days at the Town Hall working on our lighting situation. We now have LED lights on both side porches and on the front entrance. The light on the side porch nearest the ball field lights that side of the parking lot as well. There are also LED lights on the flagpole, one that shines on the flag and the other onto the front parking lot.

### **3. Update on Wastewater Agreement**

- The Wastewater Agreement has finally been completed, approved, and signed by both Gibsonville and Whitsett's Town Councils.

### **4. Any Other Old Business**

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

## **BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Planning Board**

#### **1. Update on Development Ordinance Article 5 Changes**

- Planning Board Chairperson Karen Horne explained to the Council what this Development Ordinance does. It is designed to be a simple ordinance for citizens who want to subdivide their property in up to five plats. To do this, they present the plan to the Whitsett Planning Board for its review and if accepted, it moves on to the Town Council for their approval. Once they approve the ordinance, it goes to the Public Hearing. A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice to

approve the Development Ordinance Article 5 and to put it on the agenda for the Public Hearing next month. Council Member Lee Greeson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **2. Nuisance Ordinances**

- Planning Board Chairperson Karen Horne reported that the Planning Board agreed to table this topic until the Town can hire an enforcement officer. The felt that there was no need to have an ordinance that we cannot enforce.

### **Town Administrator**

#### **1. Update on Picnic Area**

- Town Administrator Karen Horne gave an update on the new picnic area. Thus far, the 16' x 20' spot for the picnic tables was dug out and filled with small rock. There are now four metal picnic tables placed there, one of which is ADA compliant. The basketball hoops and net and benches have just arrived and will be assembled and put in place soon.

#### **2. DCCs Issued**

- Town Administrator Horne reported that she had completed two DCC's this past month. One was for a new house construction on Kivette House Road. The other was for a game room addition to a home on Kelsey Court.

#### **3. Insurance Quote on Workman's Comp and Property/Liability**

- Administrator Horne made the Council aware of her progress in getting the rates for the next fiscal year insurance. The Workman's Comp will be \$750 and she is still waiting on a quote for the Property/Liability portion.

#### **4. Mandatory NC Rural Water Association Lead Pipes Survey**

- Finally, Administrator Horne made the Council aware of a survey that is required of all municipalities and is due on October 6 of this year. The survey will be asking the residents of the 36 water customers that Whitsett has about their water lines, leading from the meter to their house. Mrs. Horne will send letters to these customers with survey questions for them to complete and return.

### **Budget Committee**

#### **1. Proposed General Budget and Water Budget**

- Town Clerk Barbara York provided each Council member with both the proposed budgets for them to review over the next month. These budgets will be discussed at the next Town Council meeting and then the Public Hearing.

#### **2. Proposal for Water Utility Rate Increase (2 Options) and Policy**

- Town Administrator Horne explained two options for the Water Utility rates. Whitsett must start saving money into a savings account to use should we have any kind of water/sewer disaster. There has not been a water bill increase since 2018. After some discussion and questions about the two options, Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice made a motion to go with Option 2 which will increase the current charge of \$43.50 by \$2 and limit the grace to 2000 gallons instead of the 3000 gallons we have been allowing. There will be a charge of .02% per gallon for readings above 2000 gallons. Council Member Cindy Wheeler seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. This topic will be put on the Public Hearing agenda for next month.
- Mrs. Horne explained the proposed changes to the current water policy. Rather giving the water customer 30 days to pay their water bill, it has been proposed to give them 20 days to pay. This allows time for all payments to be made before Town Clerk York begins next month's billing process. The current late fee is \$7.00, and we are proposing to increase that charge to \$20. The late fee will be added to the water bill when the customer has missed the payment due date by up to 10 days. After this 30 day period, the customer will get a letter letting them know that they have 11 days to pay the bill in full, or their water will be shut off. Disconnect and Reconnect fees will stay the same, \$30. Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice made a motion to accept the proposed policy changes and put this topic on the agenda for the Public Hearing. Council Member Lee Greeson seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

#### **3. Trash/Recycling Contract for 2024-2025**

- Town Clerk Barbara York provided each Council member a copy of the 2024-2025 quote from Republic Services for trash and recycling pick up for the town. Their cost will increase by 5.3%.

**4. Update on Extending Interlocal Agreement on Tax Collection**

- Ms. York also gave each Council member a copy “Extending Interlocal Agreement on Tax Collection” email. Guilford County tax collection rate for Whitsett has increased from .62% to .75%. This contract was signed, agreeing to the new rate and this rate will be locked in for five years. The increase was \$138. This is just another example of the increases in expenses that the town has which is making it more and more difficult to balance our budget.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **Cobb Ezekiel Loy Audit Contract and Engagement Letter for 2024-2025**
  - Town Clerk Barbara York reviewed the increases in the cost of our yearly audit with our accountants at Cobb Ezekiel Loy. Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice made a motion that we accept the Audit Contract and the Engagement letter from Cobb Ezekiel Loy. The motion was seconded by Council Member Lee Greeson and was passed unanimously.
- **Financial Report**
  - Town Clerk York presented the Council with the most current Profit and Loss Report for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. She asked the Council to review this report and to ask any questions that they may have.

**Announcement of Public Hearing and Topics on June 11, 2024**

- Mayor Chip Bell announced that the Town will have a Public Hearing at the next scheduled Town Council meeting. This meeting will be held on June 11, 2024 at 6:00.
- **Any Items from Council Members**
  - Mayor Bell asked if there were any items from Council Members and there were none.

• **Announcements**

Mayor Bell asked if there were any announcements and there were none

• **Speakers from the Floor**

Mayor Bell asked if there were any speakers from the floor and there were none.

**ADJOURNMENT** With no further business before the Council, Mayor Bell asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion to adjourn was made by Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice and seconded by Council Member Lee Greeson. The motion carried; and the May 14, 2024, Town Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00p.m. The next regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 11, 2024, at the Whitsett Town Hall.

\_\_\_\_\_/S/\_\_\_\_\_

Chip Bell, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_/S/\_\_\_\_\_

Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Rice

**APPROVED: 6/11/2024**