

MINUTES FOR BOARD OF ALDERMEN CALLED MEETING

July 28, 2015

6:00 PM

The following elected officials were present: Mayor Coleman, Alderman Cearley, Alderman Huggins, Alderwoman Morrow, Alderwoman Malker-Thomas, and Alderman Withers.

The following staff members were present: Jim Palenick, Interim Town Manager; Maria Stroupe, Administrative Services Director; Tom Hunn, Town Attorney; Doug Huffman, Electric Director; Bill Trudnak, Public Works Director.

Mayor Coleman called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Mayor Coleman opened with the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Coleman asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda. Mr. Palenick asked that Items 11A and 11B be removed from the agenda. He offered his apologies to the Board and stated that with a project as complex as the one proposed, there are many components. All of the components have not quite come together yet, so he asked to the remove the items to a time when all of the components were complete. Mr. Cearley made a motion to set the agenda, including the two deletions; seconded by Ms. Malker-Thomas; and carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda:

None

Recognition of Citizens:

Mr. Thomas Cloninger, 182 Double Oaks Road, Gastonia, spoke on behalf of PHC Properties. They own almost an entire block across from the Courthouse and are getting ready to put the properties included up for sale on the open market. They wanted to make their intentions known to the Town and would entertain discussions with the Town, if the Town is interested in the property.

Ms. Charlotte Jenkins, 306 W. Main St., Dallas, stated that over the last few years she has consistently hear two statements from fellow citizens: 1) I wish Dallas would get a good sit-down restaurant and 2) What Dallas needs is a good sit-down restaurant. Currently, Dallas is being given the opportunity to obtain such a restaurant. She stated that once she reviewed the proposal and gained an understanding of it, she believes this is a "no-brainer" for Dallas. She hopes the Town Board really reviews the proposal; as it will not cause taxes or utilities rates to increase. The proposed restaurant offers a Sunday lunch, which Dallas really needs. She strongly supports this. She believes that all of the citizens making the comments she first stated would be proud and happy that the Board of Aldermen listened to them.

Mr. David Hoyle, Jr. spoke in favor of the Town obtaining the property owned by PHC Properties. He believes this is a good opportunity for Dallas to obtain almost an entire block; an opportunity that does not present itself very often.

Ms. Pearl Burris Floyd, 518 E. Main St., Dallas, stated that she was very excited when she read the newspaper article concerning the possibility of Dallas obtaining a new restaurant downtown. She is also the COO of the Gaston Regional Chamber of Commerce and realizes the possibilities the restaurant will bring. Small business brings growth and jobs, and the proposed restaurant will bring these to Dallas. This is a deal the Board of Aldermen should consider and accept. Dallas could be a destination location, instead of just a drive through area. She hopes the Board will consider the proposal and vote favorably.

Mr. John Brooks, 526 Lakeview Dr., McAdenville and co-operator of Brooks Insurance Agency in Dallas, spoke in favor of Homesteads restaurant coming to Dallas. He has witnessed the Board of Aldermen over the last two years move progressively to help business owners. Voting favorably for the restaurant proposal gives the signal that Dallas is open

for business. Conversely, if the proposed is voted down, a negative message will be sent to prospective business owners. He hopes the Board of Aldermen will consider what is good for Dallas and vote favorably.

Ms. Dotty Brooks, 3201 Cloninger Road, Dallas, and co-operator of Brooks Insurance Agency, is proud of Dallas and wants outsiders to see what we are proud of. The Board of Aldermen should be proud of the recent improvements in Town: the Courthouse renovation, new water lines, park improvements, etc. In order to move forward, Dallas must GO forward. To the Board, "If the vote is no it means you do not care. The people care".

Ms. Lisa Boggs, 2610 Ole Home Trail, Dallas spoke as the Chairperson of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce and as a Board Member of the Gaston County Museum located in Dallas. The Dallas Chamber of Commerce and the Museum are both in support of the restaurant proposal. She hopes the Board of Aldermen vote in support of the proposal.

Ms. Anna Pasour, 508 McSwain St., Dallas, stated she was so proud of the vision that the Board of Aldermen has shown over the past two years with the projects they have supported and accomplished. She urged them not to let the momentum stop now. She believes the restaurant will be a catalyst to help build the rest of downtown and asked that the Board of Aldermen continue the momentum they have begun.

Mr. James Hovis, 2470 Stratford Dr., Gastonia, and owner of Hovis, CPA, agreed with Ms. Pasour...don't let the momentum stop. He praised the façade grant and would even like to see that increased if possible. If investors see the Board of Aldermen supporting and investing the Town, they will too. The opposite is even more true. If the Board of Aldermen vote against the restaurant proposal, that sends and even stronger message to potential investors. If the Board of Aldermen will not invest in Dallas, then will not either.

Mr. Curtis Wilson, 438 S. Gaston St., Dallas, prayed over the Board of Aldermen, citizens, Dallas employees, and the decisions considered by the Board; for the good of Dallas. He stated that he made a trip to the current Homesteads restaurant and spoke at length with the owner and some wait staff. They were all excited about the prospect of opening a restaurant location in Dallas. He also spoke with one of Gastonia's council members; as Gastonia has had a similar arrangement with a restaurant in Gastonia. The Council member stated that the deal had been a good one for Gastonia, with no reservations. Mr. Wilson equated Dallas to a living entity, as he is horticulturalist, and stated that anything not growing, is dying. He encouraged the Board of Aldermen to vote favorably.

Employee Recognition:

None

Special Events & Requests for In-Kind Services:

None

Public Hearings:

None

Old Business:

Item 10A was a discussion to consider possible alternative terms to the recent declaration of Surplus and offer for public sale of the Gazebo on the grounds of the Courthouse. At the July 14, 2015 meeting, the Board of Aldermen approved a Declaration of Surplus and Authorization to Sell to the Public for the Highest Bid, the Gazebo currently located on the grounds of the Courthouse Square. As Staff have looked more closely at the size, shape, and weight of the structure, as well as having assessed how difficult it will be to remove the structure and physically move it any distance; there is the real possibility that there will be very few interested bidding parties, even if the structure is offered at nominal cost or free. The difficulty will be in having an appropriate permanent site for its relocation; and then, being prepared to deal with the difficult and costly logistics of moving the structure (fully assembled) to its new location. Also, with the

Gazebo's lengthy and somewhat historic ties to the Courthouse Square, it is not desirable that it would wind up just anywhere and for any use. Lucy Penegar, Gaston County Historic Commission, has shown interest in moving the Gazebo to Dallas Park (formerly Biggerstaff Park), which is owned by Gaston County and is located in Dallas. It would be used as an addition to the village that is already at the park. Dallas could donate the Gazebo, with the understanding that moving costs would not be included. Mr. Cearley made a motion to donate the Gazebo to the Gaston County Historic Commission for placement at Dallas Park, not to include moving costs; seconded by Ms. Morrow, and carried unanimously.

New Business:

Item 11A was the removed item; a request to authorize and approve a grant agreement with Byron & Christy Sackett, Principal Owners of Homesteads, Dallas LLC for the design and development of a destination restaurant in the Town-owned building at 130 W. Trade St., Dallas.

Item 11B was the removed item; a request to accept an offer to lease, with option to purchase, the Town-owned building at 130 W. Trade St., Dallas; and to authorize Staff to initiate the Upset Bid process; Byron & Christy Sackett, Principal Owners of Homesteads, Dallas LLC as offerors.

Mr. Palenick gave a Manager's report. He informed the Board of Aldermen that Dallas has received an award from Preservation North Carolina for the renovation of the Courthouse. This is a very prestigious award. There will be an award ceremony in Salisbury on Friday, September 18th. All of the Aldermen are invited. If anyone is interested in attending, they should notify Mr. Palenick so he can inform the award presenters of the number of attendees from Dallas.

Mr. Cearley made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Walker-Thomas, and carried unanimously. (6:40)

Rick Coleman, Mayor

Maria Stroupe, Town Clerk