

MINUTES FOR BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING

FEBRUARY 9, 2021

6:00 PM

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

The following staff members were present: Maria Stroupe, Town Manager; Nolan Groce, Development Services Director; Shannon Whittle, Town Clerk; Robert Walls, Police Chief; Jonathan Newton, Finance Director; Earl Withers, III, Fire Chief; Bill Trudnak, Public Works Director; Brandon Whitener, Recreation Director; Doug Huffman, Electric Director; and Tom Hunn, Town Attorney.

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

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

Mayor Coleman requested to add a Closed Session to the agenda, as well as to address Item 8A under New Business as soon as possible to accommodate the speaker's lengthy commute home. Alderman Withers requested to have another discussion concerning the parking lot at Ingles, to be addressed as Item 8E under New Business. Alderman Withers motioned to accept the agenda with the agenda, seconded by Alderman Huggins, and carried unanimously.

As requested, Item 8A under New Business was addressed at this time and was regarding the presentation of the audit report. Auditors from Lowdermilk Church & Co., LLP were in attendance to present the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Independent Auditors' Report. Following the presentation of the findings, Jonathan Newton, Finance Director, confirmed that he was also in agreement with their findings. Alderman Huggins motioned to accept the audit as presented, seconded by Alderwoman Morrow, and carried unanimously.

Recognition of Citizens:

At 6:17 pm, the Mayor opened up the floor for the Recognition of Citizens. Starletta Hairston had originally requested to speak but was, ultimately, unable to attend. Daniel Miller gave an update on the current 7/11 project. He thanked the Town for its responsiveness and helpfulness and let everyone know that the store is scheduled to open on March 4, 2021. Curtis Wilson then welcomed Alderman Milton and proceeded to say a prayer over the meeting.

Consent Agenda:

Item 5A: Proclamation of February as Black History Month. Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by Black Americans and a time for recognizing the central role of African Americans in US history. The event grew out of "Negro History Week", the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. President Gerald R. Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976, calling upon the public to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history." Since 1976, every US president has officially designated

the month of February as Black History Month. Other counties around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating Black history. A proclamation is attached recognizing February as Black History Month (Exhibit 5A).

Item 5B: Approval of Contract for Construction of Sewer Interconnect. Both Dallas and Gastonia held bid openings on the proposed Sewer Interconnect project in July 2020. Based on the bids received, options for revising the Emergency Sewer Interconnect project with Gastonia were explored by both staffs. An amendment to the agreement for the project was approved by both municipalities in October 2020. Fuller & Co. Construction, LLC (Fuller) was the lowest responsible, responsive bidder for the Dallas portion of the project with a bid of \$288,066.91. After the amendment to the agreement with Gastonia, the Dallas portion of the project was unchanged, and Mr. Bobby Fuller agreed to honor the bid previously submitted and accepted at the July bid opening. Attached is the contract with Fuller for formal approval (Exhibit 5B). Work on the project is scheduled to begin as stated in the contract, with a time for construction of 165 calendar days. As part of the agreement with Gastonia, Dallas will reimburse Gastonia \$162,000 toward the cost of the metering interconnect and guarantee to send 150,000 gallons of wastewater per day to Gastonia to be treated at the current municipal rate. The connections will also be available during the emergency situations for Dallas to route more than the guaranteed daily volume of wastewater to Gastonia for treatment. In support of this project, Gaston County has awarded Dallas a Township Grant in the amount of \$300,000 to be paid as a reimbursement upon completion of the project. Upon approval of this contract, a supporting budget amendment will be brought to the Board at the March 9th meeting.

Alderman Cearley motioned to approve the proclamation recognizing February as Black History Month as well as the contract with Fuller & Co. Construction, LLC as presented. Alderman Milton seconded this and the motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearings:

Item 6A: Manufactured Mobile Home Ordinance Update. At 6:25 pm, Alderman Cearley motioned to enter into a Public Hearing, seconded by Alderman Huggins, and carried unanimously. During the October 15, 2020 Planning Board Meeting, the Development Services Director asked input from the Planning Board in regard to their interpretation of § 153.018 Manufactured Mobile Homes of the Town Ordinances. Staff interpreted B (3) of the ordinance as true masonry material, not to include cladding or vinyl product. The Planning Board is in favor of this interpretation, and suggested clarifying the ordinance requirement. During the November 19, 2020 meeting, the Planning Board unanimously recommended the attached ordinance amendment (Exhibit 6A). This item was discussed at the January 26th Board of Aldermen Work Session and requested to be placed on the February 9 Meeting Agenda for consideration to adopt. A public hearing has been advertised in the Gaston Gazette, per North Carolina General Statute. Attached is the proposed ordinance update (Exhibit 6A) and consistency statement for consideration. There were no comments from the public and, at 6:30 pm, Alderman Milton motioned to exit the Public Hearing, seconded by Alderman Cearley, and carried unanimously. At that time, Alderman Cearley motioned to approve the clarification and modification to

§153.018 Manufactured/Mobile Homes Ordinance, as presented. This motioned was seconded by Alderwoman Morrow and was carried unanimously.

Item 6B: No Parking Schedule. At 6:31 pm, Alderman Withers motioned to enter into a Public Hearing, seconded by Alderwoman Morrow, and carried unanimously. In December 2020, a citizen called the Development Services Director to inquire about the Parking Schedule of the Town Ordinance. The citizen requested the Board of Aldermen consider adding E. Robinson St, to the list of Parking Prohibited streets in the Town. Staff visited the site and determined the road to be approximately 16 feet wide. After further investigation, it was discovered that several other streets were the same width. Following discussion at the January 26th Board of Aldermen Work Session, the current recommendation is to add the following streets to the Parking Prohibited Schedule found in Chapter 76 of the Town Ordinance as Parking Prohibited on BOTH sides of the street at all times:

- E. Church St. from S. Spargo St. to S. Davis St.
- E. Carpenter St. from S. Spargo St. to S. Davis St.
- E. Peachtree St. from S. Spargo St. to S. Davis St.
- E. Robinson St. from S. Spargo St. to S. Davis St.
- E. Holly St. from S. Spargo St. to S. Davis St.

Attached is a visual map of these locations and the proposed ordinance update (Exhibit 6B). A public hearing was advertised in the Gaston Gazette, however there was no public content at this meeting. At 6:38 pm, Alderman Cearley motioned to exit the Public Hearing, seconded by Alderman Milton, and carried unanimously. At that time, Alderman Cearley motioned to approve adding the above street sections to the Parking Prohibited Schedule in Chapter 76 of the Town Ordinance, as presented. This motion was seconded by Alderwoman Morrow and carried unanimously.

Old Business:

Item 7a: Conditional Zoning Ordinance. During the December 8, 2020 Board of Aldermen Meeting, the Conditional Zoning request submitted by Shaun Gasparini with TrueHomes was approved after a public hearing was held. The applicant has signed off on the conditions associated with the rezoning plan. For recordation purposes, an ordinance has been drafted, followed by conditions, rezoning plan, and consistency statement. Please see Exhibit 7A. Alderman Cearley motioned to approve the Zoning Map Amendment and Conditional Zoning Ordinance, as presented, seconded by Alderman Withers, and carried unanimously.

New Business:

Item 8A: Audit Presentation. This item was addressed earlier in the meeting, as requested by the Board.

Item 8B: Budget Amendment for Dallas Cherryville Hwy. Project Retainer. The Town has received a retainage bill from the contractor used to move the water line on Dallas Cherryville

Hwy. due to the widening project by NCDOT. The bill, in the amount of \$10,245, was not submitted during the previous fiscal year by the contractor. These charges, while falling under the umbrella of retainage, covers some upgrades made tot the line on the recommendation of the Town Engineer and Public Works Director that bring benefit to Dallas' infrastructure. Attached is a budget amendment to appropriate funds for this ese, as no funds were budgeted in the current fiscal year for the project (Exhibit 8B). NCDOT has reimbursed the Town for the agreed upon amount for the project completed in last fiscal year. Alderman Withers motioned to approve the budget amendment as presented to appropriate funds to cover the retainage bill received for the betterment costs incurred while moving the water line on Dallas Cherryville Hwy. This motion was seconded by Alderwoman Morrow and carried unanimously.

Item 8C: TrueHomes Annexation Petition. As part of the Conditional Zoning project off of Dallas Stanley Highway, the petitioner, Shaun Gasparini – TrueHomes, on behalf of the property owner, submitted an annexation petition for two pieces of unannexed contiguous property. The pieces are located on Gaston County Parcel IDs #21368 and 301158, being .17 acres and .16 acres, respectively. During the December 8, 2020 Board of Aldermen Meeting, staff was directed to investigate the sufficiency of the request. The request has been deemed sufficient and the next step is for the Board of Aldermen to set a public hearing date. Please see Exhibit 8C. Alderman Huggins motioned to set a public hearing for March 9, 2021 for the annexation request as presented. Alderman Cearley seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Item 8D: Baseball Program. It is the time of year when, historically, preparations are being made for the Town's baseball program and registration to participate in the program is opened. Based on the current pandemic situation, the possibility of sponsoring a baseball program should be decided in order to allow the Recreation Department time to plan and prepare for a potential season. After several meetings with surrounding recreation departments, it has been determined that Gastonia will postpone registrations for Spring "Contact" Sports until February 15th. They were originally going to begin registrations on February 1st. All other municipal recreation departments are still evaluating and have not made any decisions yet. The most current information will be brought to the discussion at meeting time, including COVID-19 data and updates from surrounding municipal recreation departments. Mayor Coleman and Mr. Hunn, Town Attorney, both agreed there should be some sort of waiver against COVID liability. Alderman Huggins would like the Town to remain cautious throughout this process and reconsider the situation if the numbers begin to climb. Alderman Cearley motioned to move forward with the baseball program, seconded by Alderman Milton, and carried unanimously.

Item 8E: Stop Sign at Ingles. Alderman Withers has witnessed another close call in the Ingles parking lot this morning. Mr. Hunn has been in contact with the Ingles regional manager, but has not yet been able to establish a meeting. He will reach out again to expedite the process.

Manager's Report:

At this time, Ms. Stroupe informed the Board that Anthony Michaels has been named Vice President of the Nick Ames Safety and Training Team, which is a statewide position and an enormous accomplishment. She also advised the Board that, on February 23rd, there will be an

annual stormwater training available virtually and any Board members who wish to attend are encouraged to do so. She concluded her report by letting the Board know that a grant consultant has been assigned to the Town for an historical resurvey, which will help put the Town on the National Register.

Closed Session:

At 7:18 pm, Alderman Withers motioned to enter into a Closed Session, as provided for by §143-318.11. This motion was seconded by Alderwoman Morrow and carried unanimously. At 8:14 pm, after the discussion had concluded, Alderman Huggins motioned to leave the Closed Session, seconded by Alderwoman Morrow, and carried unanimously. At this time, the mayor stated that no action had been taken and only information had been provided to the Board.

Alderman Milton made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderman Huggins, and carried unanimously. (8:15 pm)

Rick Coleman, Mayor

Shannon Whittle, Town Clerk