

## MINUTES FOR BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING

APRIL 13, 2021

6:00 PM

The following elected officials were present: Mayor Coleman, Alderman Cearley, Alderwoman Morrow, Alderman Huggins, and Alderman Milton. Alderman Withers was not present at this meeting.

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

### **Approval of Agenda:**

Mayor Coleman then asked if there were any changes to be made to the agenda, to which Maria Stroupe had two and requested that one be addressed under the Consent Agenda as Item A and the other be included under New Business as Item C. Alderman Huggins motioned to approve and set the agenda with the two additions, seconded by Alderman Cearley, and carried unanimously.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

At this time, Alderman Morrow motioned to approve the minutes from the March 9<sup>th</sup> Regular Board Meeting, as well as the minutes from the Works Sessions held on March 1<sup>st</sup>, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, and March 30<sup>th</sup>. Alderman Milton seconded this motion and it was carried unanimously.

### **Recognition of Citizens:**

At 6:03pm, the Mayor opened the floor for the Recognition of Citizens. Jack Wallace thanked the Electric Department for all of their help and hard work at his home. Mike Fields congratulated Chief Walls on being awarded the North Carolina Police Executive of the Year and congratulated the Police Department on the addition of the two new K9 units. He also expressed his gratitude for the addition of new local businesses. At this time, Curtis Wilson requested to pray over the meeting.

### **Consent Agenda:**

#### *Item 5A: Lineworker Appreciation*

In honor of Lineworker Appreciation days on April 12<sup>th</sup> and April 18<sup>th</sup>, the Town has resolved to join the NC Public Power communities and public power systems in honoring our lineworkers.

Alderman Cearley motioned to approve this resolution, seconded by Alderman Huggins, and carried unanimously.

### **Public Hearings:**

#### *Item 6A: Routszong Annexation*

At 6:09, Alderwoman Morrow motioned to enter into a Public Hearing, seconded by Alderman Milton, and carried unanimously. An annexation petition was submitted by Rosemary Routszong, Trustee of Marilyn S. Finger Irrevocable Trust, on January 31, 2020 to annex Gaston County Parcels #169122 and #170287. This petition was updated October 8, 2020 following a subdivision to include Parcel #303651. During their February 13, 2020 meeting, the Planning Board unanimously recommended R-5 zoning be applied to the first two parcels upon annexation into Town limits with the consistency statement provided. During their October 15, 2020 meeting the Planning Board unanimously recommended R-5 zoning to the remaining parcel upon annexation into the Town limits with the consistency statement provided. Annexation maps have been provided for the parcel (Please see Exhibit 6A) and the application has been deemed sufficient. This public hearing has been advertised in the Gaston Gazette, on site, and via first class mail to adjacent property owners, as required by statute. James Kidd expressed concerns of overdevelopment causing increased flooding and the absence of drainage ditches. Nancy Essary expressed concerns over decreased property values and increased traffic. Becky Messick expressed concerns over the future and type of growth coming to Dallas and was also concerned with the type of people moving to Dallas. Jack Wallace expressed concerns over the capacity of the water, sewer, and school systems, as well as with his own safety and trespassing on his land. Brian Revels expressed concern with the amount of existing traffic and the effect of the development on the local water ways. Renee Beasley expressed concern over current traffic patterns and congestion and is afraid these will be exacerbated by the development. Nolan Groce assured everyone that there are no current plans to overlap the two developments or connect them. Traffic mitigation strategies will be a legal requirement prior to planning and development. A public information meeting will be held by the developer to address any lingering concerns. At 7:16 pm, Alderman Cearley motioned to exit the Public Hearing, seconded by Alderman Huggins and carried unanimously. At this time, Alderwoman Morrow motioned to bring this topic back for further discussion, seconded by Alderman Huggins, and carried unanimously.

#### *Item 6B: Rhyne Annexation*

At 7:22pm Alderman Cearley motioned to enter into a Public Hearing, seconded by Alderman Milton, and carried unanimously. An annexation petition was submitted by Helen Rhyne on October 2, 2020 to annex Gaston County Parcel #169184. This is considered a satellite (non-contiguous) annexation. During their October 15, 2020 meeting the Planning Board unanimously recommended R05 zoning be applied to the parcel upon annexation into Town limits with consistency statement provided. Annexation maps and other information (please see Exhibit 6B) have been provided for the parcel and the application has been deemed sufficient. This public hearing has been advertised in the Gaston Gazette, on site, and via first class mail to adjacent property owners, as required by statute. Tiffany Faro clarified that she changed her mind on the

zoning because she wants more information regarding the infrastructure process and would like to see the resolution documented in the agreement. Elizabeth Wilson asked about the development agreement mentioned by Tiffany Faro. Shan Shulz submitted a letter but also wanted to reiterate her concerns over the traffic congestion. At 7:49 pm, Alderman Cearley motioned to exit the Public Hearing, seconded by Alderwoman Morrow, and carried unanimously. Alderman Huggins motioned to table this issue for further discussion, seconded by Alderwoman Morrow, and carried unanimously.

#### *Item 6C Summey Rezoning*

At 7:50 pm, Alderman Cearley motioned to enter into a Public Hearing, seconded by Alderman Milton, and carried unanimously. A rezoning application was received on October 2, 2020 from William and Carole Summey for their property, further known as Gaston County Parcel #170286. The request is to rezone the property from R-10, Single Family Residential, to R-5, Single Family Residential. Abutting property to the West is requesting rezoning from R-10 to R-5, and to the East, annexation to R-5. The Planning Board unanimously recommended approval of the rezoning petition during their October 15, 2020 meeting with the attached (see Exhibit 6C) consistency statement. This public hearing has been advertised in the Gaston Gazette, on site, and via first class mail to adjacent property owners, as required by statute. There were no public comments. At 8:25pm, Alderman Huggins motioned to exit the Public Hearing, seconded by Alderman Cearley, and carried unanimously. Alderman Huggins then motioned to table this issue for later discussion, seconded by Alderwoman Morrow, and carried unanimously.

#### *Item 6D Wilson Rezoning*

At 8:26pm, Alderman Huggins motioned to enter into a Public Hearing, seconded by Alderwoman Morrow, and carried unanimously. A rezoning application was received October 2, 2020 from Elizabeth Wilson, Trustee of Ralph E. Summey Land Holdings LLC, for property further known as Gaston County Parcel #301017. The request is to rezone the property from R-10, Single Family Residential, to R-5, Single Family Residential. The Planning Board unanimously recommended approval of the rezoning petition during their October 15, 2020 meeting with the attached (see Exhibit 6D) consistency statement. The public hearing has been advertised in the Gaston Gazette, on site, and via first class mail to adjacent property owners, as required by statute. There were no public comments. At 8:29pm, Alderman Milton motioned to exit the Public Hearing, seconded by Alderwoman Morrow, and carried unanimously. Alderman Milton then motioned to table this issue for further discussion, seconded by Alderman Huggins, and carried unanimously.

#### **Old Business:**

There was no Old Business to address.

#### **New Business:**

#### *Item 8A Law Enforcement Compensation*

At the March 9, 2021 Board of Aldermen regular meeting, the Board discussed changes to law enforcement salary minimums in surrounding jurisdictions. From this discussion, it was requested that salaries at the Dallas Police Department be reviewed based on a minimum salary of \$43,000 per year and this information was brought back to the March 23<sup>rd</sup> Work Session. Attached (see Exhibit 8A) is a graph indicating current versus projected salaries beginning with a \$43,000 minimum salary for new officers with no experience. This change would result in a budgetary increase of approximately \$59,000 annually in salaries, with a total impact of approximately \$90,000 annually including overtime and fringe benefits. This item was discussed at the March 23<sup>rd</sup> Work Session and the Board asked that the proposal be brought to the April meeting for approval. Alderman Cearley motioned to approve the proposed Law Enforcement Compensation changes to be retroactive to April 1, 2021 and to set the current minimum Law Enforcement Officer salary at \$43,000 for new officers with no experience. Alderwoman Morrow seconded this motion and it carried unanimously.

*Item 8B Sewer Interconnect Project Budget Amendment*

Bids have been awarded, materials ordered, and plans made to complete part of the Sewer Interconnect Project with Gastonia within the current fiscal year. Although the project will not be completed until the 2021/22 Fiscal Year budget, there have been and will be expenses incurred in the current budget year. When the FY 2020/21 budget was developed, the status of the project was not decided and, therefore, was not included in the current budget. In order to account for project funds expended during the fiscal year, the attached budget amendment should be adopted. The remaining project costs and the Township Grant reimbursement funds from Gaston County will be budget in the upcoming FY2021/22 budget. Alderman Huggins motioned to approve the budget amendment to account for expenses incurred on the Sewer Interconnect project during the fiscal year, seconded by Alderman Milton, and carried unanimously.

*Item 8C Special Event Request*

The Rusty Rabbit has submitted a request to hold a special event on May 29<sup>th</sup>, which is Memorial Day Weekend. The event will consist of a car show and live music. They are requesting to close the block from 8am to 10pm. They have also requested ten additional trash cans and the help of the Electric Department, if necessary. They also plan to employ off duty police officers at their own expense.

**Manager's Report:**

At this time, Ms. Stroupe informed everyone that the Fire Department has been awarded an equipment grant from Firehouse Subs. She also mentioned that bids have begun on the parking lot at 102 E. Trade St and concluded with the news that Chiefs Withers and Lambert will be flying to Louisiana to inspect a pre-owned fire truck for possible purchase.

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Rick Coleman, Mayor

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Shannon Whittle, Town Clerk