

MINUTES FOR BOARD OF ALDERMEN WORK SESSION

APRIL 27, 2021

5:00 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; Earl Withers, III, Fire Chief; Robert Walls, Police Chief; Jonathan Newton, Finance Director; Brandon Whitener, Recreation Director; Dustin Haney, Assistant Fire Chief; Doug Huffman, Electric Director.

Mayor Coleman called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Mayor Coleman opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, followed by the Invocation.

At this time, the Mayor asked if there were any changes to be made to the agenda. Alderman Huggins and Alderman Withers both had additions, which were added under New Business as Item 3D and Item 3E, respectively. Alderman Huggins then motioned to set the agenda with the two additions, seconded by Alderman Withers, and carried unanimously.

New Business:

Item 3A Gaston Vision 2040 Update

David Williams and Gina Shell representing Gaston Together will make a presentation concerning a community visioning process for Gaston County. Attached (see Exhibit 3A) is the information received concerning the process, as well as a participation request to the Town. This will be included in the upcoming budget proposal.

Item 3B Bike/Ped Plan Update

In late 2019, Dallas contracted with Gresham Smith to develop and produce a proposed Bike and Pedestrian Plan. This plan was to be developed using input from a Steering Committee, NCDOT, public engagement, and other factors. The final recommended plan is close to completion. This recommended plan will be presented to the Steering Committee and the Planning Board before being brought to the Board of Aldermen for consideration. The purpose of this discussion is to provide an update on the project in preparation for the final plan presentation. A final presentation is likely by this summer.

Item 3C Facilities Maintenance/Cleaning

Since May of 2015, the Town has contracted out cleaning of building including Town Hall, Police Department, Civic Building, and Courthouse with varying degrees of success. Prior to this time, several Town employees were paid an extra fee to clean buildings after regular work hours. With the renovation of the Courthouse and the rental activity, the decision was made to contract out building cleaning. As of the beginning of April, the current cleaning contractor ceased cleaning of our buildings due to internal personnel issues. In this interim, and while the Civic

Building and Courthouse are not being rented out, Town employees are stepping up to keep the facilities cleaned. With the previous challenges encountered with the contracted companies, hiring a part-time janitorial/maintenance person to clean these facilities would be more beneficial to the Town. This position would be employed to clean during business hours and could be directed to facilities as needed, particularly those facilities that will be rented out again soon on a regular basis. It is anticipated that the facilities would be cleaner with the added control of directly employing a maintenance position. The position would be structured to work 10-20 hours per week as needed, and to perform all necessary and routine cleaning at Town Hall, Police Department, Civic Building, and Courthouse as directed. The position would pay \$11.00 per hour. When compared with the previous cleaning contracts, the Town will save money and should realize better results by transitioning to in-house cleaning. It is estimated that the Town would save \$1200-\$1400 per year by switching to in-house cleaning. This position will be posted.

Item 3D Lights Around Poles and Flags

Alderman Withers would like to add decorative lights to wrap around the decorative light poles in Town. He also would like to keep the American flags around the Court Square up year-round. Town employees will begin looking into this process.

Item 3E Benches

Alderman Huggins would like to replace the benches on Trade Street with new ones. There would potentially be three benches needed and this will be worked into the upcoming budget proposal.

Manager's Report:

Maria Stroupe provided the Board with information on the upcoming House Bill affecting housing zoning and more discussion on this topic will take place at the May 11th Regular Board Meeting. The trip to purchase the new fire truck was successful and there will be more details to come on that subject as well. The Town will resume its quarterly newsletters after a brief hiatus during COVID-19 and the first one will be sent out on July 1st. She concluded by reminding everyone that the first Town event this year is scheduled to take place on May 8th and will consist of a concert and cruise-in.

At 6:00pm, Alderman Huggins motioned to adjourn, seconded by Alderwoman Morrow, and carried unanimously.

Rick Coleman, Mayor

Shannon Whittle, Town Clerk