

TOWN OF STOKESDALE
REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
8325 Angel Pardue Road
STOKESDALE, NC 27357
April 11, 2019 at 7PM

Attendees: Mayor John Flynt, Mayor Pro Tem Thearon Hooks, Councilmen: Frank Bruno, Bill Jones, Tim Jones. Town Clerk/Finance Officer: Alisa Houk, Town Attorney John Bain, News media: Patti Stokes.

I. Call to Order: Mayor Flynt

II. Invocation: Rev. Allen Mears from Bethel United Methodist Church

III. Pledge of Allegiance: Lead by Girl Scout Troop 02469

IV. Review and Adopt Agenda: Thearon Hooks motioned to continue Agenda items 5, 6, and 7 until the May 9, 2019 Town Council meeting. Frank Bruno 2nd the motion.

Vote:

Tim Jones: Nay	Thearon Hooks Yes
Bill Jones: Nay	Mayor Flynt: Yes
Frank Bruno: Yes	

V. Approval of Minutes February 14, 2019: Mayor Flynt motioned to approve without reading. Frank Bruno 2nd the motion:

Vote:

Tim Jones: Nay	Thearon Hooks Yes
Bill Jones: Nay	Mayor Flynt: Yes
Frank Bruno: Yes	

Approval of Minutes March 14, 2019: Mayor Flynt motioned to approve without reading. Frank Bruno 2nd the motion:

Vote:

Tim Jones: Nay	Thearon Hooks Yes
Bill Jones: Nay	Mayor Flynt: Yes
Frank Bruno: Yes	

VI. Public Safety Reports:

Guilford County Sheriff's Report: Lieutenant Fuller of Guilford County Sheriff's Department, reports that we had 61 calls for service in Stokesdale in the month of March. Of those there was 1 aggravated assault case in which an arrest was made. There was another theft at the Dollar General Store and an arrest was made there. There was also an investigation into someone shooting out 5 windows at the Stokesdale United Methodist Church with a BB gun. His advice for the month is to make sure you secure

your homes, automobiles and outbuildings when you are away from home and when working in the yard. When you secure your automobiles be sure to remove all your valuables from inside those autos. **Stokesdale Fire Dept. Report: Chief Gauldin from Stokesdale Fire Dept.**, had 28 fire related calls and 73 medical assistance calls. His message for the month is to be careful when using your lawn equipment because accidents do happen. Also, watch for snakes which will be coming out this time of year.

VII: Citizen's comments from the floor (3 Minute Limit per Speaker): Catherine Buntoff of McCrory Rd. is working with a group of citizens researching the history of Stokesdale. She read us a story that covered some history of Stokesdale from 1929 through early 1960s, her research was provided by Bob Simpson and his wife. There are more stories and histories that can be obtained by call Joe Thacker 336-708-0334 or Catherine at 336-655-9781 and the Friends of Stokesdale.

Jimmy Landreth, NC Hwy 68 N.: came to the podium to say this is the best council he has ever voted for. He thought we had a good council. He said seems like before, in the past years at times councils would get in little groups and not discuss things and things would get split up. There are some concerns going on right now that probably need to be discussed. He's not sure, we don't have the facts, nobody has all the facts. He just believes that the agenda items should have been left. He said it doesn't hurt to discuss things, iron things out and figure out if there are problems that need to be fixed. He just wishes we could go back to doing that and not be so split. We don't need to be split like some of these other places. If there is something going on it needs to be talked about to fix it. He appreciates Council's service.

Keith McLain, US Hwy 158: came to the podium, he said in just briefly looking over the invoices for the trees, \$24,000. to remove 15 downed trees, seems like a lot. He has a Stihl chain saw that is a beast. The majority of the work in tree removal is cutting down the trees. Throwing them over to the side he wouldn't want to be removing them but he has 3 young boys in their 20s that do that work for him. He couldn't imagine taking more than a day to cut 15 trees \$24,000 just seems like a quite a bit of money.

Randy Braswell, Oak Level Church Rd.: Mr. Braswell said he appreciates council's hard work. He said wasn't going to speak but he didn't want the young scouts to leave before he recognized Councilman Bill Jones. Mr. Braswell met Bill on the last day to file to run for a Town Council seat in 2011. He had never laid eyes on Bill Jones before that day. Bill was born and raised in Stokesdale coming from 5 or 6 generations of family here. He joined the Guilford County Sheriff's Dept. for a time and has come back here to serve as a Council member. Bill's service to the Town needs to be known. Braswell said he never knew on the day they met how important as a person Bill would become to him. Bill has true compassion for people and his Town. Bill is one of the hardest working people Braswell has ever worked around. The things Bill has done for the Town is incredible. Braswell looked at Bill Jones and said thank you. Bill acknowledged with a thank you. Braswell went on to say that he and Bill rode all over the place and attended countless meetings. Water meetings, budget meetings, finance meetings, council meetings. Braswell said Bill taught him a lot about himself and government. Braswell address the young people in the audience and said you young folks coming along, you will set this example. He is very concerned when items are removed from an agenda. He didn't know what was on the agenda before he came to the meeting. These things do need to be discussed. Braswell said but anyway, Bill I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the things, the hours you have spent for the town. We have been on the roof; you have been on the roof. You have saved the town thousands of dollars. Braswell said he is sure other towns have wondered why we did the things we did, like Bill buying valves for the park bathroom toilets. Bill saved this Town hundreds of thousands of dollars. Braswell said he could go on for hours. Braswell ended by wishing Bill and his wife Pam Gods Speed in their future plans together. He reiterated that he was very concerned about how much money the Town has in the bank. **Mayor Flynt** spoke up and told Randy Braswell that we have more money in the bank than when he left.

Eileen Thiery, Meadow Springs Drive: came to the podium to say that she isn't here to judge. She knows how tough it is to handle the finances and budget from being a tax assessor in her past. She just

wants to say that from her perspective she feels like some things are being decided by certain members of council and not discussed with the other two members of council before the meetings. That is just her perspective and she hopes council will do better to open its lines of communication. She said if anyone would like to address her to feel free to do so.

Mayor Flynt addressed Eileen Thiery he said we all spend a lot of time in Town Hall. We study the issues; we try to come prepared to the meetings. For example tonight we are discussing a contract for a water model. We have all had time to review all of the information and we've had time to study it. But, when we come and we have an item for a financial person. We haven't seen anything at all on either candidate. We don't know their qualifications, we haven't seen their proposals. We don't how much money they are asking for or how many hours they plan to work. **Mayor Flynt** said he thinks it's inappropriate to make a decision like that when you are turning over all of your financial records to someone and we have no idea how qualified that person is. **Eileen** said she wasn't necessarily addressing that issue. But, now that the Mayor has brought this up she knows Mr. Bruno has a very good business head she met him years ago and she has a lot of respect for him. It seems that sometimes he has made some kinds of decisions because it was allotted to him. However, it still seems like the decisions should be discussed with all of the members so that you know exactly how much resources went into the decision. **Mayor Flynt** said exactly that is why we have postponed this so that we can get a copy of a resume or proposal from these people so we can make an intelligent decision. **Eileen** said she thinks he is missing her point. She knows Mr. Bruno has designated a company to do something, has he given the proposals to everyone on council? **Frank Bruno** spoke up and asked if which proposals she was referring to. She asked if he has given them all of the proposals. **Tim Jones** spoke up and said no. The discussion went back to hiring a financial person and became a bit heated. **Mayor Flynt** asked to move on to the next item.

VIII. New Business:

1. Monthly Financial Review: **General Fund:** Through March 31, 2019 Income spent is \$ 295,188.88; Budget for income is \$427,883.33. Expenses: Capital Outlay actual is \$ 47,741.05 budget 72,333. Parks and Rec Expenses \$46,444, Budget \$83,278. Economic Development, Planning and Zoning Expenses \$ 13, 680 Budget \$ 32,000. General Administrative Expenses \$ 44,946. Budget \$47,600. Payroll Expenses \$ 70,328. Budget \$ 83,272. Water Enterprise Fund: Income: Actual \$ 408,196. Budget \$ 682,768. Capital Outlay Expenses: \$15,403. Budget \$35,000. Administrative Expenses \$31,745. Budget \$ 39,600. Maintenance & Repairs \$ 122,228. Budget \$ 257,700.
2. Presentation by Girl Scout Troop 02469 of the specifications for building the "Little Free Library". Girl Scout Troop 02469 gave their presentation of the "Little Free Library" with the help of Vulcan Materials representative who added that Vulcan will be purchasing the wood and materials to build the library and will help the girl scouts build it. Mayor Flynt asked which designs the girl scouts preferred and they all agreed on the Barn Style. Frank motioned to move forward with this, as long as there is no legal liability we need to address. He asked Mr. Bain and Mr. Bain said he didn't see any problem with it. Thearon 2nd the motion.

Vote:

Tim Jones: Yes	Thearon Hooks Yes
Bill Jones: Yes	Mayor Flynt: Yes
Frank Bruno: Yes	

Bill Jones recognized the Boy Scouts that are also in attendance. Mayor Flynt asked the Boy Scouts to stand and say a little something about their reason for attending. Several scouts spoke

to tell us what merit badges they are working on which included Citizenship and Communication.

3. Review of June 14, 2018 Town Council minutes and vote to correct errors. Town Clerk had included the correction to Tim Jones vote on for the new park shelter. Tim had voted no, but the original minutes stated that he had voted yes for the shelter. The correction has been made. Frank Bruno motioned to agree to the correction of Tim Jones vote and to have the Town Clerk make sure it is corrected on all copies and the copy that goes to the State of NC. Thearon Hooks 2nd the motion.

Vote:

Tim Jones: Yes	Thearon Hooks Yes
Bill Jones: Yes	Mayor Flynt: Yes
Frank Bruno: Yes	

4. Discussion and vote to utilize a standard Text Table to record individual Council member's votes in the Stokesdale Town Council minutes for each motion a vote is taken for. Tim Jones asked for a motion to continue this item until the May meeting he is communicating with the School of Government about certain matters that pertain to this. Mayor Flynt 2nd the motion.

Vote:

Tim Jones: Yes	Thearon Hooks Yes
Bill Jones: Yes	Mayor Flynt: Yes
Frank Bruno: Yes	

6. Closed Session: G.S. 143-318.11 (6) to discuss a Personnel Matter. Mayor Flynt motioned to recess the April 11, 2019 Regular Town Council Meeting at 8:20PM to go into closed session to discuss a personnel matter. Thearon Hooks 2nd the motion.

Vote:

Tim Jones: Nay	Thearon Hooks Yes
Bill Jones: Yes	Mayor Flynt: Yes
Frank Bruno: Yes	

At 8:40 PM Mayor Flynt reopened the April 11, 2019 Regular Town Council Meeting.

Mayor Flynt made a motion to accept the resignation of our Town Attorney John Bain effective June 30, 2019. Frank Bruno 2nd the motion.

Vote:

Tim Jones: Yes	Thearon Hooks Yes
Bill Jones: Yes	Mayor Flynt: Yes
Frank Bruno: Yes	

The Mayor was going to make a second motion to appoint or ask for two councilmen to step up to begin the search for the next Town Attorney. After some discussion it was decide to continue this until a further time.

IX. Old Business:

1. Discuss and vote on Hazen & Sawyer building a Hydraulic Model of our water system. Mayor Flynt motioned to approve the building of the Hydraulic Model. Thearon Hooks 2nd the motion.

Vote:

2. Discuss bids for Town Park water fountain purchase. Thearon Hooks motioned to continue this item until the May meeting.

Vote:

Tim Jones: Yes	Thearon Hooks Yes
Bill Jones: Yes	Mayor Flynt: Yes
Frank Bruno: Yes	

3. Discuss what Council wants to do with the old cleaned out chlorine tank. Bill Jones recommended calling a recycle company to just come and get it. Mayor Flynt motioned to call a recycling company or a company to just dispose of the tank. Frank Bruno 2nd motion to recycle or just dispose of the tank.

Vote:

Tim Jones: Nay	Thearon Hooks Yes
Bill Jones: Yes	Mayor Flynt: Yes
Frank Bruno: Yes	

4. Review and vote on revision to the Meter Tampering Policy. Attorney John Bain presented his revisions to the policy effective today. Frank Bruno motioned to approve the revised meter tampering policy as is with to also include an Ordinance change. Mayor Flynt 2nd the motion.

Vote:

Tim Jones: Yes	Thearon Hooks Yes
Bill Jones: Yes	Mayor Flynt: Yes
Frank Bruno: Yes	

5. Discussion of spending authority and limits. Continued until the May 9, 2019 TC meeting.
6. Discussion of town's vendor's policy. Continued until the May 9, 2019 TC meeting.
7. Review, Discuss and vote for/or against individual proposals from: Dana Luther, CPA and Kerry Crutchfield, CPA, for assistance with financial reports. Continued until the May 9, 2019 TC meeting.

X. Committee and Board Reports:

1. Thearon Hooks gave a FEMA update we are less than 20 days away from receiving out \$75,000. Reimbursement check. The State has declared Hurricane Michael but they haven't sent any information to us at this time as to when it will be open to accepting claims.

XI. Departmental and Administrative Report: Town Clerks report will be attached to the minutes.

XII. Citizen Comments from the Floor (3 Minute Limit per Speaker)

Jimmy Landreth: Town Council has had a good reputation for being concrete with the Town's money. He is still bothered by how much money we spent on the trees. He wonders how in the world we came to that amount. He wants to know how we came about this company and money.

XIII. Closing Comments from Council

Tim Jones: It's been an interesting meeting. Any citizen willing to meet with him and Bill Jones after the meeting. He would welcome them to meet with him. If Council won't let him use the building we can meet in the parking lot or he will find another venue for the meeting.

Bill Jones: Echoes Tim comments. He is looking back on the Internal Controls that were voted on in the August 9, 2019 town council meeting. And if anyone is interested in reading them he will put them on the a thumb drive.

Frank Bruno said he apologizes to everyone for having to step out earlier. He isn't feeling well. He is having a tough time with allergies from a couple of bee stings to the face this week. He said her appreciates everyone being here and thanked them for their support. He said if anyone has questions or concerns he is always open to meeting with them come to town hall or meet somewhere and have lunch or a cup of coffee he will be happy to answer any questions or concerns.

Thearon Hooks Echoes Frank's comments about everyone in attendance tonight. We try to do what we can; we do the best we can. Things like FEMA for instance take a lot of time and effort to put together. When the money comes in it will be announced in the paper. Thank you again to everyone for coming and staying


Mayor John Flynt said first of all he wants to thank Attorney John Bain for all his expertise and advice. He hates to see him go but certainly understands the benefits of retirement he is looking forward to it himself. Then he said we have had conversation tonight about why it has taken so long to hire someone to look over our finances. Mr. Pulliam asked to take a leave of absence for 2 months so we couldn't replace him. When he did decide not to come back and we discussed hiring his replacement. Council wanted to advertise, so we placed an ad on several websites. We got very little response. Most people aren't interested in driving to Stokesdale to work 8-16 hours a week. We did get a call from Kim Thacker from our advertising and we hired her with 20 years of accounting experience. She came in and has worked with Alisa. Our account system was old, manual, and the 2012 version. Kim helped Alisa and we are now on the 2019 version and electronic. Mr. Pulliam was old school; he had his own system of doing things. He categorized items with names he would recognize. You could ask him for something and he could go right to it, when no one else could find it. Much like people used to criticize Carolyn for her filing system. She had her own system and knew right where everything was even though none else would have found it. There has been a big transition and there are things that still need work. We have asked Kim to give us another bid to come back and help us finish up the transition. She and Alisa were able to get most everything moved over before tax season but they weren't able to finish the Budget transfer. It's difficult to move manual information over into an automated system. We are transparent about everything we do. We've had the North Carolina State Treasurers office out here and we certainly would welcome them to come back. As a matter of fact, Mr. Erwin from the NC Dept. of Treasurer had called recently to speak with Tim. He said Tim had sent him numerous emails and he thought it would be better to call and speak with him directly rather than trying to continue to answer emails. We aren't trying to hide anything. We are complying with rules that had not been followed in the past. We found a General Statute from 2013 when the government said we were no longer supposed to be allocating money into regular CDs; we had over 3 million dollars in CDs that were supposed to be converted to CDARS in 2013. This council has corrected this and these CDARS are earning us a significantly larger amount of interest than we were making. We are spending a lot of time on our finances. We are spending a lot of time in the office. So, it's tough sometimes to take the criticism insinuating that we are trying to hide something, or that we are doing something unethical, or trying to pull the wool over somebody's eyes. We are not trying to hide anything from anyone. We have more money in the bank than we did when Mr. Braswell left, it's no one thing, we are just good stewards of the money. Thearon and I spent hours up on Hwy 158 when Hurricane Florence damaged the line there. We have attending a lot of meetings. We are working as hard as we can. Everything is in file all you got to do is come down and take a look at it. If you want to talk to our auditors Rouse, Rouse, Penn and Rouse. If you want to see the financials we have them on file since the beginning of time.

XIV. Announcements: Next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for April 25, 2019 at 7pm.
XV. Adjournment. Mayor Flynt motioned at 9:45 pm. Tim Jones seconded the motion.

Vote:

Tim Jones: Yes	Thearon Hooks Yes
Bill Jones: Yes	Mayor Flynt: Yes
Frank Bruno: Yes	

Approved May 9, 2019

 Mayor

 Town Clerk/Finance Officer