

TOWN of STOKESDALE

Town Council Meeting

8325 Angel Pardue Road

Stokesdale, NC

November 19, 2013

The Stokesdale Town Council held its regular monthly meeting on Nov. 19, 2013 at the Stokesdale Town Hall.

Council members present were Mayor Randle Jones, Mayor Pro Tem Mr. Randy Braswell, and council members Mr. William N. (Bill) Jones, Mr. Frank Bruno and Mrs. Mickie Halbrook.

Others present were Town Attorney William B. Trevorror, Guilford County Deputy Sheriff Scott Casey, Town Planner Michael Albert, Deputy Clerk Donna McCall, and Town Finance Officer/Town Clerk Carolyn Joyner.

Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked Rev. Jerry Walker of Oak Level Baptist Church to open the meeting with a prayer. Mayor Jones then led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

The agenda was unanimously approved with minor changes. Jones noted there were no minutes of prior meetings to review/approve.

There were no comments from the floor.

Guilford County Sheriff's Department report: Deputy Casey reported that there were a few reports but nothing major since the last meeting. He then congratulated everyone following the election and said he looks forward to working with the new council.

Public Hearing: Text Amendment Case #13-10-STPL-04680: A proposed text amendment to section 9-4 of the Stokesdale Development Ordinance revising Board of Adjustment procedures. Town Planner Albert noted that this amendment to Article 9 of the town's development ordinance would bring it into compliance with NC General Statutes. It addresses the process, procedures and language used, and should make it easier for citizens coming forward. He said it will simplify the process while keeping with the spirit of what was intended, and that the two principal changes are in granting of variances and finding of fact. He also noted that with variances a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote is required instead of a simple majority. Mr. Trevorror noted that this is the first major rewrite of NC General Statutes since 1923 and that it is a good move to incorporate changes in case law as they apply to the statutes. Mayor Jones made a motion to adopt the text amendment changes; second by Braswell; passed unanimously.

Mayor Jones then congratulated Mr. Albert and wished him luck as he and his family move to Louisiana.

Council then unanimously approved the proposed 2014 Meeting Schedule and set Dec. 17, which is the date of the next meeting of Town Council, as the date to swear in new Council members.

Mayor Jones then went to the podium for public speakers, saying in all of his years on Council this was his first time making a speech. He recognized several guests in the audience: Mrs. Peggy Joyce, whose late husband Jesse was the first Mayor of Stokesdale, and former members of Town Council Powell Shelton, John Flynt, Mary Hardin, Bobby Richardson, Anthony Vaughn and Fred Berry. He thanked all of them for their presence at the meeting and for their years of service to the town.

The Mayor then went on to say that he was thankful for the opportunity to serve on the Stokesdale Town Council for 22 years. He said it was an honor and a privilege to serve and that he never thought he'd still be there all these years later.

He noted that on Nov. 9, 2014 the Town would celebrate its 25th anniversary of incorporation as a town. He then read a Proclamation proclaiming the Year of 2014 to be a time of celebration of the 25th anniversary in recognition of its incorporation and achievements. He added that there is lots to celebrate, especially when you consider that there wasn't a lot of recognition for the town prior to that time, and that some folks even within Guilford County thought Stokesdale was in Stokes County. He said that first group, (Jesse Joyce, Powell Shelton, Clifton Hill, Larry Williams and A.B. Fulp, and then Garlin Warren and Fred Berry) appointed by the state legislature after the vote to incorporate, set a pace and standard for the future, and that the town was able to accomplish all that it has because of the planning they began then.

Noting that Stokesdale was one of the first towns to incorporate, Jones said it was often referred to as a "paper town" (meaning it won on paper but wasn't a real town). He said there were predictions that the town would never succeed, but that first group had the foresight and vision to make it a reality. He cited accomplishments because of their plans as the Town Hall, water system, law enforcement and services provided to citizens of the town.

Jones thanked Mrs. Hardin and Mr. Flynt for serving on the committee to develop the Land Use Plan, which was begun during his first term on Council. He said the purpose of the plan was to keep the rural integrity of the town during its inevitable growth, adding that the plan has worked and has been emulated by other towns.

Recognizing the first elected council (Jesse Joyce, Powell Shelton, Mary Hardin, A.B. Fulp and himself) he said that everyone he has served with has done so with distinction and honor.

Noting that it is not by accident that Stokesdale does not have a property tax, Jones recognized Clifton Matthews as the first Town Clerk and Finance Officer. He then presented him with a Mayor's Award of Appreciation and thanked him for his years of service to the town.

Jones also recognized Mrs. Hardin and the late Council member James Attaway (also a former Mayor Pro Tem) for their work with the American Red Cross in establishing a Disaster Relief shelter in Stokesdale. Jones also expressed his admiration of and appreciation for Mr. Attaway, who passed away just before his last term ended. He noted that Mr. Attaway came to meetings even when he was not feeling well because he felt such a sense of duty to the town. He also had a Mayor's Appreciation Award for Attaway, noting that he loved being a Council member and that no one was more dedicated to the town.

Jones then recognized Mr. Flynt and Anthony Vaughn for their work in securing land for a Town Hall. Although prior Councils had sought property, Jones said that Flynt and Vaughn renewed that effort,

and that the current Town Hall is a direct result of it. He said that Mrs. Martin had contacted Town Hall because she knew there had been an effort to find property, and that he (Jones) and Powell Shelton had met with her in her home and sealed the deal with a handshake. He also recognized Bobby Richardson for all his help during construction of Town Hall for keeping everything on schedule and making sure plans were followed.

A Mayor's Award of Appreciation was also presented to Mr. Trevorrow for his years of good legal advice and service to the Town.

Steve Spalding was also given a Mayor's Award of Appreciation as the first groundsman and park supervisor. Jones noted that the property was still in rough condition when the park was developed, but that Spalding cared so much that he did some work on no charge and was able to get some products and services for the town at no charge. Jones also thanked him for keeping a watchful eye on the park as he opened and closed the gate each day.

Citing her work most of the time as the only staff member for the Town during the past 18 years, Jones recognized Mrs. Joyner with a plaque for a job well done.

Jones also thanked people who have served on boards and committees through the years. He noted that prior Council members (Flynt and Vaughn) have served on committees, as has newly-elected Council member Vicki White-Lawrence. He also congratulated Mayor Pro Tem Braswell, who is now Mayor-Elect. Jones also recognized Scott Lawrence for serving on various committees and for "filing a timely appeal for us one time that made this building possible."

He then asked Mrs. Halbrook to come forward and thanked her for her years of service, including 1998 to 2001 on the planning board, and 2001 to 2013 on Town Council, including her service as Mayor Pro Tem from 2008 to 2011. He offered her special thanks in recognition for her service to the town, community and its citizens.

He then asked everyone to turn their attention to the town seal on the wall of Council chambers. He noted that an anonymous contest was held to develop a seal and that then Town Clerk Matthews' design was chosen. Jones asked Mrs. Halbrook to present a certificate of appreciation to her daughter Shay for painting the seal and giving it to the Town.

Jones then recognized his wife Susan and thanked her and their daughter Katelyn for allowing him to serve all those years, and for their support during all that time.

He again recognized newly elected members to Council (White-Lawrence, and Braswell in his new role), noting the rich heritage of former councils and how they have contributed so much to the town.

Jones then presented a lapel pin that has the town seal on it to Braswell, telling him he hoped that Braswell will have all the luck, support and confidence of the citizens of Stokesdale that he enjoyed during his tenure. Jones then said his time on council had been the best 22 years of his life.

Mrs. Halbrook thanked everyone for believing in her and allowing her to serve, adding she was happy she was able to do it.

Bill Jones thanked Mayor Jones and Mrs. Halbrook for their years of service, as well as prior councils.

He said he had learned a lot in the two years he had served and that he believes that anybody who serves has best interest of the town at heart, and that everyone knows what a special place Stokesdale is.

Braswell said that he thinks all of the years of service is incredible, and that the day after the election the first call he received to congratulate him was from the Mayor and that meant a lot to him.

Bruno thanked Mrs. Halbrook and Mayor Jones, along with Susan Jones for allowing the mayor to serve all that time. He also thanked former council members for all of their years of service.

Mayor Jones said that he never intended to serve that long, but always looked at it one term at a time, and if the citizens chose to re-elect him that was fine. He added that when he ran for re-election the last time he had decided that would be his final term.

Mary Hardin addressed the new council, saying she and prior councils were lucky because they could argue about anything and everything, but when they left Town Hall they left their arguments there. "When we left the table, that was it. When we left we were still friends even though we felt differently about things; we all knew that each of us had best the interest of Stokesdale at heart. We could argue, but still be friends. If you do that, you will be a really good council and the people of Stokesdale will appreciate it if you take your personal feelings and put them in the background. Your job is to look after the town of Stokesdale."

Powell Shelton congratulated Braswell as new mayor and White-Lawrence as new council member. He said he also appreciated all of the things prior council members had done and also noted that hiring Joyner was one of the smartest things Council had ever done. He said that four of the five original members of that appointed Council are now deceased (and asked that everyone pray for the fifth to be around for many years to come). He recalled that the first meeting was held in the choir room at Stokesdale United Methodist Church and that Jackie Manzi, a member of the County Commissioners at the time, installed them as Council members. He said after she left they were quiet and thoughtful as they considered that they didn't have much "except ourselves." He said there was no money, and they didn't even have a place to meet, but look at how far the town has come. "I've been pleased to be part of Town Council for many years. I learned a lot and made a lot of friends. I hope that our present council will follow in the same directions as the former, but if you've got a better direction, follow it."

John Flynt then made a presentation of a plaque to Mrs. Halbrook for her years of service to the town, adding that she had served in so many capacities and that it was a privilege to serve with her. He said that everyone knows what she has done on Town Council, but she also has been a wonderful loving and caring citizen of the town, and that carried over in her job.

Flynt also presented a dozen roses to Susan Jones and a single rose to Katelyn Jones as recognition of their support to Mayor Jones through all of the years.

Flynt encouraged current Council members to always remain friends, saying they should "leave friendship at door on way in and pick it up on the way out." He then presented a plaque to Mayor Jones, saying he always appreciated the way he ran meetings. "You controlled the meetings, talking about issues and not personalities. You have given extraordinary service to the people, and always conducted yourself with professionalism and respect for all." Noting the years of service, (1991 to 1993 as Council member; 1994 to 2003 as Mayor; 2004 to 2005 as Council member, and as the first citizen-elected Mayor in 2005 and serving in that capacity through 2013) Flynt presented Jones a plaque and

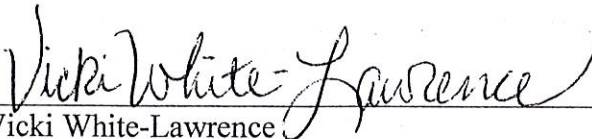
key to the Town, plus a gift, in recognition of his "fine service, character, and leadership." Flynt added that rewards for Jones and Halbrook are that they can see what they've been able to help the town accomplish.

Fred Berry expressed his appreciation for Mayor Jones' "ability to be a class act from top of head to tip of toes." He said this is demonstrated in the discipline he exudes in everything he does, and that he appreciated that he managed the podium to let people talk, express their views, and make their motions. "The hallmark of a great leader is to show respect and deference to people you disagree with."

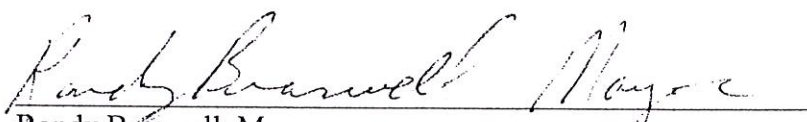
"I want to thank everyone from the bottom of my heart," Jones said. "I've truly enjoyed working with everyone, and I've been very blessed to have folks who have served and I'm blessed to have been able to serve. We have accomplished a lot and are poised to go forward."

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Vicki White-Lawrence

Approved:


Randy Braswell, Mayor