

TOWN OF STOKESDALE

Regular Council Meeting

8325 Angel Pardue Road

Stokesdale, NC 27357

December 11, 2014

The regular meeting of the Stokesdale Town Council was held on Thursday, December 11, 2014, at the Stokesdale Town Hall at 8325 Angel Pardue Road.

Council members in attendance: Mayor Randy Braswell, Frank Bruno, William N. (Bill) Jones, Vicki White-Lawrence, Joe Thacker.

Others present included: William B. Trevorow, Town Attorney; Carolyn L. Joyner, Town Clerk/Finance Officer; Diana Marcus, Deputy Clerk; Deputy Scott Casey, Guilford County Sheriff's Department

Call Council Meeting to Order: Mayor Braswell called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Invocation: Given by Pastor David Baily of Crossroads Community Church.

Pledge of Allegiance: Recited by Council members and citizens in attendance.

Mayor Braswell introduced Brittany, a Freshman student from Northwest High School who was attending the Town Hall meeting as research for her Civics class.

Review and Adopt Agenda: Vicki White-Lawrence made a motion to adopt the Agenda as presented. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the agenda was adopted.

Reading and Approval of the Minutes for the Following Meetings: Regular Council Meeting of December 17, 2013; Special Meeting of January 6, 2014; Regular Council Meeting of January 21, 2014; Workshops of January 23, 2014, January 24, 2014, January 31, 2014, February 4, 2014, and February 7, 2014: Bill Jones made a motion to approve the minutes. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion was approved.

Comments from the Floor: There were no comments from the floor.

New Business:

Report from Guilford County Sheriff's Department: Deputy Scott Casey said that from the last meeting until tonight, there were a total of seven reports taken with zero Part One crimes.

Mayor Braswell said that Vicki White-Lawrence was putting together some procedures for the Parade and wanted to know if Deputy Casey had anything to add. Discussion took place among Council and Deputy Casey about the road closures, crowd control, the placement of the vehicles in the Parade, traffic at Shilling Road, Newberry Road, and Ellisboro Road, the five officers that are assigned different spots on the Parade route, the possibility that some of the guys from Fire Department could help direct

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traffic, and that Deputy Casey will be on a motorcycle.

Review of Rate Increase Effective October 1, 2014 from Winston for Water Purchased: Mayor Braswell made a motion that the Stokesdale Water Enterprise will increase the volumetric rate for water sold to all customers matching the volumetric rate Winston-Salem is currently billing the Town of Stokesdale. The notice for the volumetric water rate increase will be printed in red ink on the front of all the next water bills starting with the December, 2014 water bill. First on the notice will be the total dollar amount per 1,000 gallons of water and second on the notice will be the effective date of the increase. The effective date to increase Stokesdale's volumetric rate per 1,000 gallons of water matching Winston-Salem's rate per 1,000 gallons of water will be the February 2015 water bill.

Mr. Trevorrow said that Mayor Braswell needs to indicate the amount of the increase in his motion. Mayor Braswell said that in the second part of his motion is the total dollar amount per 1,000 gallons to be on the notice. That is not the increase, but is the total cost per 1,000 gallons of water. Mr. Trevorrow said that maybe you need to indicate what the amount is now and what the amount will be after the rate increase. Mayor Braswell said that we are at \$3.00 per 1,000 gallons of water consumed and are increasing the rate to \$5.30 per 1,000 gallons of water consumed, which is an increase of \$2.30 per 1,000 gallons of water consumed.

Bill Jones seconded the motion.

Vicki White-Lawrence said that she agrees that the Town needs to be charging their water customers what the Town is paying Winston-Salem for the water. However, she is not sure that the Town is giving their water customers enough notice. It seems like a very large increase all at once, so she would like to make the increase in a more gradual way.

Discussion took place among Council about how to figure out the estimated average amount of water consumption for a family of four and the estimated dollar amount the increase would be on their water bill, the shock that the customers may feel at seeing such a large increase without preparing them first, all the revenue that was lost by not passing on the rate increase when the Town first received the rate increase, the need to raise the rate now in order to get the Water Enterprise Account out of the red in the next two to five years, and some different ways to notify the water customers about the rate increase.

Mayor Braswell said that he will make himself available to answer questions. He wants to encourage people to call and give their input. He would also like to speak and answer questions at public hearings.

Bill Jones said that water is a commodity that people cannot do without. The Town should not be selling water for less than what the Town is paying for it. He does not know how the Town can get away with running the water system in the red which is a violation of State law. He thinks it is necessary that the increase takes place now in order to catch up and get out of the red.

Mayor Braswell said the Town needs to stop flushing the water lines which wastes so much water. The Town will have to purchase a chlorinator. The Fire Department is also using water from the hydrants and he recommends getting hydrant meters in order to see how much water the Fire Department is using.

Joe Thacker said that in order to raise the revenue for the water more residents need to be encouraged to hook up to the Stokesdale water system. He also agrees that a chlorinator needs to be purchased in order to stop the need for flushing which causes water waste.

Vicki White-Lawrence said that the Town should consider commercial water rates versus residential water rates. Mayor Braswell said that he has thought about that as well. After this rate increase, Council needs to get the water chlorinator, encourage new water customers to onto the water system, decide whether to raise the availability fee for commercial businesses, and find a way to balance the rate increases.

Mayor Braswell said that he had a question for Mr. Trevorrow. He wants to know how to make it so that that the Finance Officer is made responsible to increase the water rate billed to the customer as soon as Winston-Salem increases the water rate to Stokesdale. How do we make this a policy? Carolyn Joyner said that Stokesdale does not receive notices from Winston-Salem about water rate increases. Mr. Trevorrow said that Stokesdale needs to get together with Winston-Salem about this.

Vicki White-Lawrence made a friendly amendment to Mayor Braswell's motion which would change the effective water rate increase from the February 2015 water bill to the March 2015 water bill.

Mayor Braswell said that at least eight water workshops need to be scheduled through the year and notices should be sent out to alert the residents.

Carolyn Joyner said that she and Diana will have to deal with the water customers, so she is requesting a list of all of the things that need to be done to the water system and the estimated cost for each item.

Mr. Trevorrow suggested putting the water system on the Town Hall meeting Agenda every month instead of doing so many water workshops. Mayor Braswell said that the water will now be a permanent agenda item every month.

Mayor Braswell, Frank Bruno, Vicki White-Lawrence, and Bill Jones voted aye and Joe Thacker voted nay. The motion was approved with a 4-1 vote from Council.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to keep a phone message log on water calls only and kept separate from the regular phone message log. The caller's name, address, phone number, email address, a brief description of their water issue, and whether or not they would like a phone call from the Mayor should be listed on the water phone message log. He wants to be sure to address every single question so residents feel valued. Bill Jones seconded the motion.

Mr. Trevorrow said that the date of the next Town Hall meeting should be communicated to these callers when they call.

Mayor Braswell said he wanted to add to his motion that the Stokesdale Water Enterprise Volumetric Rates and Accessibility Fees will be a permanent Agenda item every month at the Town Hall meeting.

All Council members voted aye and the motion was approved.

Vicki White-Lawrence asked Mayor Braswell if he had any information he could give to Carolyn Joyner per her request for information about the water system. Carolyn Joyner said she would like some talking points and suggested also putting something in the Northwest Observer to educate the public.

Mayor Braswell asked Mr. Trevorrow for help with his policy so this situation will never happen to Council again. Mr. Trevorrow said that first Stokesdale needs a dialogue with Winston-Salem. Stokesdale needs to know when a rate increase will be needed and proposed by Winston-Salem. He suggested coordinating that information with Winston-Salem so that the Town can include it as a budgetary item. It would become an automatic budget increase.

Unfinished Business:

Consider the Proposed 2015 Meeting Schedule: Discussion took place among Council about the July 4th holiday and vacation plans made, that the Planning Board already voted to change their meeting from July 2nd to July 9th, that Town Council cannot override this vote for a couple of reasons, and the Town Hall meeting will need to be changed from July 9th to another day.

Frank Bruno made a motion to have the Town Council meeting on July 9th, the Planning Board meeting on July 2nd, and the Board of Adjustment meeting on July 9th. Mayor Braswell seconded the motion.

Discussion took place about whether the cut-off date will need to be changed and who changes it and whether it is a good idea to move the Planning Board meeting since they have already voted on it.

Mayor Braswell voted nay, Frank Bruno voted aye, Bill Jones voted nay, Vicki White-Lawrence voted nay, and Joe Thacker voted nay. The motion was denied with a 4-1 vote from Council.

Joe Thacker made a motion to adopt the 2015 schedule as presented. Bill Jones seconded the motion.

Carolyn Joyner said that Town Council needed to pick either July 16th or July 23rd to have the meeting on.

Joe Thacker amended his motion to include July 16th for the Town Council meeting. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion.

Vicki White-Lawrence wanted to confirm that the Board of Adjustment meeting would also be held on April 16th. Carolyn Joyner said yes.

All Council members voted aye and the 2015 schedule was adopted.

Committee and Board Reports: Frank Bruno said that he cleaned all the boxes of books out of the small room in the back of Town Hall. He has a volunteer and his daughter that want to help with the library this month, so he will put them to work. He also has some old monitors and things that are being picked up by a recycling company next week.

Bill Jones said that the Property Committee had some good comments about how the soccer fields look. He came by the Town Park a couple times over the weekend when they had the soccer tournament. There was a big turnout despite the cold weather. Mayor Braswell had hoped someone from the soccer

tournament would have come to the meeting tonight and given an accurate event report in order to know whether or not everything was satisfactory. Vicki White-Lawrence said that someone from the soccer tournament could be contacted for that information.

Mayor Braswell read the following from Joe Dixon who recently stepped down as President of Stokesdale Parks and Recreation: "I just wanted to take this time to thank you for all your support that you have given me and Stokesdale Parks and Recreation over the years. I also want to thank the members of the Stokesdale Town Council for their support. I especially want to thank Carolyn Joyner for her support and help that she has given me over the years. Friday, October 31st was my last day as President of Stokesdale Parks and Recreation. Chris Summer is the interim President for Stokesdale Parks and Recreation. Please continue to give Chris of Stokesdale Parks and Recreation the support that you have given me over the years. I feel very confident that Stokesdale Parks and Recreation will continue grow with the kids of Stokesdale. Thank you and Town Council for all that you have done for Stokesdale Parks and Recreation. Please let me know if you ever need my help. Sincerely, Joe Dixon."

Mayor Braswell said that Joe Dixon stepped down as President of Stokesdale Parks and Recreation right before the soccer tournament, so he got to spend a lot of time with Chris Summer. He plans to contact Mr. Summer and do a follow-up with him and find out what their goals will be for next year. Stokesdale Parks and Recreation has invested a lot of money in the Town Park's soccer fields. The Town of Stokesdale had sand and deep tine aeration done to the fields which was a huge improvement. Parks and Recreation also paid for mowing the soccer fields for an entire year. He also called Glen Cashion about the sand volleyball courts. He and Bill Jones need to figure out what to do about the border around the sand volleyball courts which has become a safety issue. He and Bill Jones have winterized both irrigation systems and the water fountain in the Park for the winter.

Vicki White-Lawrence said she has 65 entries for the Holiday Parade on Saturday. Great weather has been predicted for the day. Council members that are riding in the tour wagon are the third entry in the lineup and should go directly to the tour wagon before 2:00pm.

Departmental and Administrative Report:

Finance Report: November, 2014: Carolyn Joyner said that assets in the General Fund decreased by about \$21,000.00 over the previous month. Checking Account Transactions show the Town received \$3,397.09 for 3rd Quarter Greensboro ABC Profits. Checks were ordered for the checking account at a cost of \$198.04, Law Enforcement for 3rd Quarter was \$16,448.03, the dumpster for the event at the Park was \$140.00, and the Town paid \$410.00 to have banners installed. In Accounts Payable, an invoice was received for \$10.14 for poster paper and batteries for the Parade. In the General Fund Savings Account money was transferred out to the checking account and the Money Market Savings CD Interest was \$294.71 for the month.

Carolyn Joyner said that assets increased by about \$185.00 on the Water Enterprise Account and by about \$76.00 on the Water-Sewer Fund. On the Checking Account, Attorney Brian Walker was reimbursed \$195.00 for Clerk of Court Fees for past due collection accounts. Accounts Payable was routine with invoices from Meritech, Inc. and Yates Construction Company, Inc.

Mayor Braswell asked if there was a fee for a returned check due to insufficient funds. Carolyn Joyner

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said it was \$20.00 for the customer. The bank does not charge the Town for a returned check. She does not receive a lot of returned checks. If a check is returned due to insufficient funds, she will run the check through again a second time and it will usually go through.

Administrative Report – Town Clerk: Carolyn Joyner said she did not have anything at this time.

Mayor Braswell said that he would like to see an updated Accounts Receivable at some point in time next year so he can share it at a workshop to show how much progress has been made in the collections process. Carolyn Joyner said she received a check today in the amount of \$4,000.00 from Attorney Brian Walker for a settlement.

Announcements: Mayor Braswell started reading the announcements listed on the Agenda. He asked Carolyn Joyner if she has received any applications for the Planning Board. Carolyn Joyner said that she received an application from Eric Lowe for both the Ordinance Review Committee and the Planning Board.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to appoint Eric Lowe to the Ordinance Review Committee and to serve as an Alternate on the Planning Board. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion was approved.

Mayor Braswell continued reading the announcements listed on the Agenda. He asked if anyone had anything for him to promote on the Rockingham County Radio show he is on. He needs things to talk about.

Mayor Braswell completed reading the announcements listed on the Agenda.

Comments from Council: Mayor Braswell thanked Vicki White-Lawrence for all the hard work she has done on the Parade.

Frank Bruno thanked Vicki White-Lawrence for doing such a great job on the Tree Lighting Ceremony. He also thanked Diana Marcus for typing the minutes.

Joe Thacker thanked Vicki White-Lawrence for doing such a great job on the Parade.

Adjournment: Mayor Braswell made a motion to adjourn. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the meeting was adjourned at 9:16pm.



Diana Marcus, Deputy Clerk

Approved:



D. Randall Braswell, Mayor