

TOWN OF STOKESDALE
Regular Town Council Meeting

8325 Angel Pardue Road
Stokesdale, NC 27357
January 14, 2016

The Regular Council Meeting of the Stokesdale Town Council was held on Thursday, January 14, 2016, at the Stokesdale Town Hall on 8325 Angel Pardue Road in Stokesdale, North Carolina.

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Mayor Randy Braswell, Mayor Pro Tem William N. (Bill) Jones, Frank Bruno, Vicki White-Lawrence, Tim Jones.

OTHERS PRESENT INCLUDED: William B. Trevorrow, Town Attorney; Carolyn L. Joyner, Town Clerk/Finance Officer; Deputy Scott Casey, Guilford County Sheriff's Department.

OTHERS ABSENT: Diana Marcus, Deputy Clerk.

CALL COUNCIL MEETING TO ORDER: Mayor Braswell called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

INVOCATION: Given by Mayor Braswell.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Recited by Council members and citizens in attendance.

REVIEW AND ADOPT AGENDA: Mayor Braswell said that he would like to add an item to the agenda under Unfinished Business. The last item under Unfinished Business will be Purchase Computer, Backup and File Sharing, Set up Network, and Purchase Outlook.

Frank Bruno made a motion to adopt the agenda with the one added item. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES for the Special Council Meeting of July 2, 2015; Special Meeting of December 4, 2015; Regular Council Meeting of December 10, 2015; Special Council Meeting of December 17, 2015; Council Workshops of December 22, 2015 and January 6, 2016:

Tim Jones requested delay of approval of the Regular Council Meeting minutes of December 10, 2015 until the next Town Council meeting.

Mayor Braswell requested delay of approval of the Special Council Meeting minutes of July 2, 2015 until the next Town Council meeting.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of December 4, 2015, Special Council Meeting of December 17, 2015, and Council Workshops of December 22, 2015 and January 6, 2016. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR: Pam Lemmons of 8306 Newberry Street in Stokesdale said she is the Chairman of ROADS (Revitalizing Our Ancestors Dreams in Stokesdale), a grassroots revitalization non-profit group that was established in 2008, which looks at ways to bring some special things to Stokesdale. One of the things on their agenda is the Mountains-to-Sea Trail (MST). It is her understanding that last month the Town Council did away with the Trails/Paths/Right-of-Ways Committee. She was also given a copy of the redress of grievances petition that was circulated in the community around municipal election time. Seven of the ten items on the petition are not true. Summerfield is building an elaborate trail, but she never envisioned an elaborate trail for Stokesdale. She envisioned a very simple trail for Stokesdale and a volunteer group to work on this trail at no expense to taxpayers, no additional tax burden, and certainly not eminent domain of any kind. She would never take anybody's property and try to use it without their permission. There are trail studies about the impacts of trails and trail uses on the American Trails website which refute most of the ten statements that were made on the petition and appear to be arbitrary statements, as well. She thinks that Town Council should find out what residents want in the community and not tell them what they want. Town Council should educate residents about things in their community and not misinform them. She also feels that Town Council should sooth any fears that residents have about changes in their community. Ms. Lemmons told a story about a time back in the 1980s when federal grants were being looked at for building a cell tower. Cell phones were big and bulky at the time and someone mentioned that they could not imagine carrying them around but thought maybe the cell tower should be built. If Town Council could broaden their perspective and think outside of the box, the trail could be a great opportunity for Stokesdale. Town Council should think carefully about how to move forward with this opportunity. ROADS would be glad to facilitate this issue and is ready to move forward. She hopes that Town Council takes this into consideration.

Winter Brummitt, owner and operator of Sunshine Scapes, Inc. on 2884 Gideon Grove Church Road in Stokesdale said she has been working with Mayor Braswell and Bill Jones on mowing the Town Hall and Park and performing landscape maintenance on an as needed basis. Currently, she has to wait for approval for each individual time she needs to mow each section. 2015 was the first full year of maintenance allowing her the opportunity to learn what type of maintenance the property really needs. She is here before Town Council in order to make a proposal. She would like to request that a time in the very near future be set aside for a workshop so she can present Town Council with a property maintenance schedule for 2016. The schedule will be strictly followed unless inclement weather causes her to alter the schedule. She will have a close projected budget outside extra projects above and beyond regular maintenance. There is an urgency to meet as soon as possible, because pre-emergent fertilizer needs to be spread on the property by February 1st and February 15th, which is right around the corner. She is also hoping that at the workshop a grounds-person would be designated that she could contact when the possibility of inclement weather might necessitate a change in the schedule. A regular schedule would also allow her time for some extra projects like tending to plants. The regular maintenance she performs for the Town is important beyond work and money. She is also a resident of Stokesdale and believes that the Town Park should be enjoyed by everyone and anyone who wants to use it. She has watched the little daycare children who come by the bus loads during the summer months not be able to walk in the grass because the grass is so high everywhere. She remembers that the local family that reserved the picnic shelter for their pre-school aged child's birthday party could not play ball in the Town Park fields because the grass had grown so high that the little children complained about the grass itching their legs. The high grass caused disappointment for the family and their friends and made the Town look bad. She understands that Sunshine Scapes, Inc. saves the Town a lot of money and will do whatever the Town wants. However, a set schedule would be the best way to appropriately

handle regular maintenance for the Town Park fields and the Town Hall property, and she is more than willing to work out a schedule that would still save the Town money. She is willing to help in any way she can.

NEW BUSINESS

Report from Guilford County Sheriff's Department: Deputy Scott Casey said that from the last meeting until this meeting there were 28 reports from the calls that were received, and four were Part One crimes. At 8701 Highway 65 there was a tag taken off of a vehicle. At 8100 Belews Creek Road a four-wheeler was taken. At 8826 Colgate Road there was a theft of property. At 7605 NC Highway 68 there was a theft at Food Lion. The police car is in the shop right now. Other than that, it has been pretty quiet. Please call 911 immediately if anyone suspects anything suspicious. Right now there are a couple of gentlemen selling cleaning products door-to-door that have been verified to be legitimate. Please lock your vehicles and remove anything of value in order to prevent theft.

Stokesdale Parks and Recreation: Scott Hoffman, 7795 Haw Meadows Drive, Stokesdale came along with Stokesdale Parks and Recreation Board Members to speak. He said that Stokesdale Parks and Recreation has been working with the Town of Stokesdale for a little over a year to try and figure out a way to work together so that their kids can play on the Town Park fields during the soccer season. There are approximately 300 kids registered with Stokesdale Parks and Recreation and they would like to be back at the Town Park permanently for their fall and spring soccer season each year. The Town Park is part of our community and part of what makes this Town great. In order to get there, Stokesdale Parks and Recreation needs the Town to invest in the grass at the Town Park. The condition of the playing fields was not up to Stokesdale Parks and Recreation's standards last fall. There were parents that were very concerned because there was not grass on the fields. In the past, there were some disagreements between the Town and Stokesdale Parks and Recreation, however, the past is the past and Stokesdale Parks and Recreation would like to move forward and come to some type of compromise. Vicki White-Lawrence has been very helpful and Stokesdale Parks and Recreation would like to get the Town's commitment to get the fields in playing condition.

Mayor Braswell said that Mr. Hoffman said last month that the playing fields were unsafe and nothing has been done to the playing fields since last spring, so the fields are still unsafe. There had been a significant investment made by both the Town and Stokesdale Parks and Recreation, and he thought that they were making progress by the spring of 2015, but then things fell apart. The Town has kept the fields mowed but the sedge grass is still there and he does not know what it is going to take to remove it. It is January now and nothing can be done to get the fields safe by the spring soccer season. The Town's goal this year is to work on growing Bermuda grass, because last year the Bermuda grass died due to some mysterious disease that also affected golf courses and other parks. That was unfortunate and set the whole process back. The Bermuda grass is growing and Sunshine Scapes, Inc. recently fertilized it and the Town spent funds irrigating it. In the spring of 2016, when the weather warms up and the Bermuda grass begins to grow, his proposal to Council would be that the Town does what it can to control the sedge grass. In the spring of 2014, the Town put down 80 tons of sand on the fields with the goal to build up the crown in order to prevent flooding. The ground is now level so he would like to put down 80 more tons of sand on the fields this year which should build up the crown and the Bermuda grass will continue to grow. He remembers asking Stokesdale Parks and Recreation if they were going to play at the Town Park in the spring and he was told no and that is why nothing was done. The Town would like to work with Stokesdale Parks and Recreation because of the kids, but there has to be a plan.

The fields will not be ready this year for soccer, but he feels that the athletic turf should be decent by the 2017 spring and fall soccer season. Mr. Hoffman said that he is not a turf expert but he agrees that there has to be a plan. He was told by two different companies that the kids could still play and have grass growing on the fields for the spring soccer season if premium rye grass was put down on the fields now. He handed Mayor Braswell the proposal he received from Hunter Enterprises for his review. Stokesdale Parks and Recreation is not going to wait a couple of years for the permanent use of the Town Park fields. Funding has not been discussed and he knows that the Town has a budget for maintaining the Town Park. Stokesdale Parks and Recreation is willing to help pay for certain things by renting the fields out themselves as well as renting the fields out to different organizations. Greensboro United Soccer Association said they would rent the Town Park fields if the fields can get to a suitable playing condition. For example, Crossfit Oak Ridge has soccer fields located behind their building and once the irrigation system is installed this year, Greensboro United Soccer Association has committed to installing lights on the field as their investment. He is requesting that Council ask the experts what would need to be done in order to get the fields in shape for the spring soccer season, and then work out a plan with Stokesdale Parks and Recreation. A wait and see plan is unacceptable and will not work with Stokesdale Parks and Recreation, because they need a permanent location for the 2016 spring and fall soccer season. If the Town is not going to help, Stokesdale Parks and Recreation will take that into consideration before they move forward.

Bill Jones said that the previous agreement the Town had with Stokesdale Parks and Recreation was that instead of charging them rent, Stokesdale Parks and Recreation would be willing to accept ownership and they advised the Town what they were going to do. This was done for a while and last spring the Town assumed that Stokesdale Parks and Recreation would continue to follow through with their commitment to the Town. He does not feel that Town residents should subsidize the soccer fields so Stokesdale Parks and Recreation's kids can play for free. It got to be late fall before the Town realized that Stokesdale Parks and Recreation was not doing what they were supposed to do. Mr. Hoffman said that is very inaccurate.

Sal Cagno, 8612 Yvonne Court, Oak Ridge said that Stokesdale Parks and Recreation has had many meetings with Mayor Braswell, Bill Jones, and Vicki White-Lawrence. Stokesdale Parks and Recreation has had plans and commitments from Town Council. The Northwest Observer also threw Stokesdale Parks and Recreation under the bus by saying they ruined the Town Park fields. Stokesdale Parks and Recreation invested more money than anybody else in those fields. To hear that the fields might be ready or they might not be ready is unacceptable and unfair. These are kids from Stokesdale. What does Town Council have against the Stokesdale Parks and Recreation Board? Stokesdale is the reason that Stokesdale Parks and Recreation is great because they have the Town Park fields to play on. He does not understand what Stokesdale Parks and Recreation has done wrong except try to give the kids a safe place to play and request the Town's support. Stokesdale Parks and Recreation is growing and they need to give the kids a permanent place to play.

Bill Jones said that the problem with the fields started in the winter of 2014. The fields started to deteriorate in the winter of 2014 and the spring of 2015. Mr. Cagno said that two board meetings ago, the Town closed the fields and put yellow tape up. The kids were not allowed to play on the fields because the Town was going to get the fields in order, but it sounds like nothing was done. Mayor Braswell said that Stokesdale Parks and Recreation chose not to play on the fields in the fall of 2015 and also chose not to play on the fields in the spring of 2016. Mayor Braswell said that in the fall of 2013, 26 bags of perennial rye grass seed was spread on the fields so Stokesdale Parks and Recreation would

have a beautiful field to play on in the spring of 2014. He is not going to make a motion for perennial rye to be planted on the fields right now because, according to his experience, there is still going to be mud on the fields in April. In his opinion, grass cannot be planted on the fields in January. Town Council is going to do what needs to be done in order to get a playable athletic turf on the fields by planting Bermuda grass. He does not want any playing on the fields in the spring of 2016, because it would negatively affect the progress that was made last year. The fields are still unsafe for the kids to play on and will be unsafe to play on in the spring of 2016. Mr. Hoffman said that if a field expert says that the fields will not be safe to play on in the spring of 2016, Stokesdale Parks and Recreation will accept that.

Mayor Braswell said that the plan is to spread 80 tons of sand on the fields to build up the crown. When the Bermuda grass begins to come out of dormancy, the fields will be fertilized and watered. In the spring of 2016, the fields will be reevaluated again. He suggests setting up a workshop with Stokesdale Parks and Recreation in a couple of weeks to discuss the fields. It is winter right now and grass cannot be planted in the winter. When it starts warming up in the spring, the fields will be at the top of the Town's priority list. He hopes that Stokesdale Parks and Recreation can come back in the fall of 2016 to reevaluate the fields. He does not want the kids playing on the fields in the spring of 2016 in order to prevent tearing them up. The fields may also be closed in the fall of 2016 if it is necessary to wait another season for the fields to mature. He is willing to work with Stokesdale Parks and Recreation. He and his wife, Cindy, have been a part of Stokesdale Parks and Recreation for 35 years. It is going to take time for the fields to mature and he is working very hard to obtain an athletic turf and crown on the fields.

Christy Pearson, 7951 Lester Road, Stokesdale said that it saddens her because Stokesdale Parks and Recreation feels like they have no support from the Town. She has been on the Stokesdale Parks and Recreation Board for about a year now. She remembers when Mayor Braswell came to her at the ball park when he was running for Mayor and told her that he was going to rally around this group right here to help build our community of kids because they are our future. But what she is seeing here is an attitude from Mayor Braswell as well as from the Stokesdale Parks and Recreation Board members. It saddens her because her kids and these parents are the Town's future, and without the Mayor's support, they cannot go anywhere. It is really sad that he does not support Stokesdale Parks and Recreation. That is how she feels about it.

Jason Baynes, 128 Brookfield Drive, Stokesdale said he was on the Stokesdale Parks and Recreation Board. The professional that was hired by Stokesdale Parks and Recreation to fertilize the fields was GrowinGreen which is a very reputable company. He has not seen any proof that GrowinGreen killed any rye or Bermuda grass on the fields. At no cost to the Town, Stokesdale Parks and Recreation hired Ecoscape Solutions Group to find out if GrowinGreen caused the grass to die on the fields. February 2015 was the last time that GrowinGreen fertilized the fields and they expected the fields to be in top condition after that, but the Bermuda grass was dead in the spring of 2015, which was a shock to everyone. That is when the contract with GrowinGreen stopped, possibly because Stokesdale Parks and Recreation felt at the time that the fields were being damaged by the football program that was using the fields to practice.

Bill Jones said that nobody told Town Council at that time that the fertilizing had stopped and that nothing was being done. The perennial rye that the Mayor planted and the Town spent \$2,500.00 on was for nothing. Mayor Braswell said that he worked hard on the fields and irrigation system and he does support Stokesdale Parks and Recreation. The Town does not have a tax and is the reason that he

encourages volunteer sweat equity opportunities which Town Council supports. He is willing to support 80 tons of deep tine sand, fertilizer, and irrigation which is a huge commitment from a little Town with a \$300,000.00 a year budget with no property tax. That is a big investment when you look at all of the other things that the Town has to keep up. He and Mr. Baynes even spoke to someone about bringing in sod and re-sodding the fields, but it is very expensive to do that and then take care of it.

Jason Baynes said that he understands that the Town does not have the budget to have premium fields and Stokesdale Parks and Recreation does not either. What Stokesdale Parks and Recreation does want is a local place for the kids to play and a partnership with the Town. Stokesdale Parks and Recreation wants to find out if it is possible to grow grass on the fields by spring 2016, and if it is possible, work together with the Town on a plan to accomplish that. Mayor Braswell said that the kids can play on the fields the way they are now, but the Town needs more time to get the fields to where they should be. If Stokesdale Parks and Recreation pays to put perennial rye on the fields now, it will be a waste of money because it will be torn up in a few weeks and would shorten the time for Bermuda grass to take hold. Stokesdale Parks and Recreation spent a lot of money on annual rye grass which died, and he thinks it was caused by the fertilizer. The Town will keep working on the fields and Stokesdale Parks and Recreation can pay to rent the soccer fields, if that is what they want to do. He hopes that the fields will be nice by 2017.

Sal Cagno said that Stokesdale Parks and Recreation is an NCYSA (North Carolina Youth Soccer Association) sanctioned organization and pays a fee every year to cover the liability for all of the kids. The NCYSA feels that the current condition of the soccer fields are unsafe and are a liability and will not allow the kids to play on them. If Stokesdale Parks and Recreation goes ahead and allows the kids to play on the Town Park fields the way they are now, the NCYSA will not cover their liability insurance. Mayor Braswell said that if a professional said the fields are unsafe, then the best thing would be to close the fields and work to make the fields safe for the kids to play on.

Bill Jones said he resents the statement that Town Council has not done anything to try and make the Town Park better. He and the Mayor have spent a lot of time and effort to make the fields safe for the kids to play on. They do it for the kids and that is why they are all here and the kids are the reason that the Town Park was built. For Stokesdale Parks and Recreation to imply that Town Council does not care and that they do not try to work on a plan to make the fields safe for the kids is very unreasonable, and he resents that accusation very much.

Tim Jones said that he would like to say that Town Council worked on a \$950,000.00 Town Park project which was the cost to purchase the land and build the Town Park. As a resident, he goes to the Town Park sometimes and he is not proud of its condition himself. He hopes the Town gets a better buy for the next \$950,000.00. He agrees that the Park needs to be fixed, but it is hard to fix it while you are playing on it, so Stokesdale Parks and Recreation is just going to have to give Town Council some time to fix it.

Christy Pearson said that Stokesdale Parks and Recreation came to Town Council in order to start over. She understands that there were some issues in the past and the tension between Town Council and Stokesdale Parks and Recreation makes her sad. Without Town Council's help with this program, Stokesdale Parks and Recreation cannot grow and they will have to take the kids somewhere else. Stokesdale Parks and Recreation is asking for a relationship with Town Council so they can work

together. All Stokesdale Parks and Recreation is asking for is Town Council's help and support and to work together as a team.

Mayor Braswell said that he wants to schedule a workshop with Stokesdale Parks and Recreation at the Town Park, however until the staffing issues at Town Hall are resolved, he cannot deal with the Town Park grass issues right now. He asked Vicki White-Lawrence to schedule the workshop.

Liz Cagno, 8612 Yvonne Court, Oak Ridge said that Mayor Braswell has made it very clear that there are other things right now that take priority over this issue, however, by 2017 Stokesdale Parks and Recreation will have no more kids in the program. If Stokesdale Parks and Recreation does not have a place for the kids to play, the kids will go to surrounding communities to play and Stokesdale Parks and Recreation will lose the kids and their families by 2017, and it will be too late. Stokesdale Parks and Recreation wants to get an expert to look at the Town Park soccer fields and propose a plan to get the fields ready for the spring 2016 soccer season. Then Stokesdale Parks and Recreation wants to work together as a partnership with Town Council on the proposed plan to figure out how to make it work so the kids have a place to play in the spring.

Mayor Braswell said for Stokesdale Parks and Recreation to ask their expert if the nut-sedge grass on the fields can be killed between now and April 1, 2016. Frank Bruno said that he would like to talk to Stokesdale Parks and Recreation more about this issue. He will set up a time to meet with Stokesdale Parks and Recreation within the next couple of weeks. Stokesdale Parks and Recreation thanked Frank Bruno.

Consider A Resolution Supporting The Five Cent (5c) Per \$100 Valuation Increase In The Stokesdale Fire District Tax Cap To Be Determined By Special Election On March 15, 2016: Carolyn Joyner read the Resolution to Town Council and residents at the meeting.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to adopt the Resolution to support the five cent per \$100.00 valuation increase in the Stokesdale Fire District Tax Cap that will be determined by a special election on March 15, 2016. Tim Jones seconded the motion.

Mayor Braswell explained what the Resolution meant and its importance to the residents attending the meeting. He asked them to stop in at the Stokesdale Fire Department and tell them that they support them.

All Council members voted aye and the motion carried. The Resolution was hereby incorporated and made a part of the minutes of the meeting.

Community Day Proposal for May 7, 2016: Frank Bruno made a motion to make May 7, 2016 Community Day. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Codification of Development Ordinance and Other Town Ordinances: Mayor Braswell made a motion to proceed with development of an agreement between Municode and the Town of Stokesdale to codify all ordinances. Frank Bruno seconded the motion.

Frank Bruno suggested starting with the Development Ordinance and working towards the other ordinances. Carolyn Joyner suggested making a budget amendment for the codification when Council considers a contract.

All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Consider Essentials of Municipal Government Courses for Council Members: Carolyn Joyner said that the courses are for newly elected officials and re-elected officials. Discussion took place about the courses, ethics training, the time frame to complete the courses, whether the courses could be taken online instead of in the classroom, and what the cost would be for the courses. Mayor Braswell asked Tim Jones to find out the time frame for compliance and if online classes are available. He would also like to know if going to Greensboro for the classes or sharing the cost of ethics training with another municipality would be an option.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Stokesdale Water System:

Citizens' Comment Period on the Stokesdale Water System: No citizens made comments on the Stokesdale Water System.

Any Other Issues Pertaining to the Water System:

Set Fees for Construction Inspections – Continued: Mayor Braswell made a motion to continue this item until the next regularly scheduled Town Council meeting on February 11, 2016. Tim Jones seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Public Records Request Policy – Continued: Mayor Braswell made a motion to continue this item until the next regularly scheduled Town Council meeting on February 11, 2016. (No second or vote was on the audio tape)

Staffing of Town Hall:

Consider Proposal for Payroll Services: Mayor Braswell made a motion to proceed, pending Mr. Trevorrow's review of the Paychex agreement, to enter into a relationship with Paychex to outsource staff payroll and Council member stipends. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Purchase Computer, Backup Hardware, File Sharing, Set Up a Network, and Purchase Outlook: Mayor Braswell made a motion to proceed with whichever vendor Council wants and allot \$2,500.00 for equipment and labor for setting up the network, purchasing Outlook, cleaning up the files, backing up the files, and transferring necessary software to the file server which would be on the new computer that is purchased as soon as possible.

Tim Jones asked what the approximate cost to purchase Outlook would be. Mayor Braswell said \$50.00. Carolyn Joyner said that it may be more than \$50.00. Discussion took place about what was in the budget for computer software and the approximate cost to purchase Outlook.

(I did not hear a second) All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Request for Proposals (RFP): Mayor Braswell made a motion to approve this draft with the change of February 9th being the cutoff date and authorize the Clerk to mail them. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye.

Mayor Braswell said a motion was previously made to add a new vendor, By the Book Accounting and Tax Preparation Service, which Anne Garner is the proprietor of, to the Town Vendor List. Council voted unanimously to add By the Book Accounting and Tax Preparation Service to the Vendor List. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to hire By the Book Accounting and Tax Preparation Service at a discounted rate of \$25.00 per hour for ten hours in January and \$25.00 per hour for ten hours in February for training on the Water Enterprise Data Entry. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Vendors List: Mayor Braswell said he wants to consider adding Shiloh Utilities Inc. located at 521 Patrick Street, Eden, NC 27288 to the Town Vendor List. They have provided a rate sheet for emergency water repairs and their Certificate of Liability Insurance. In the event that the Town's primary vendor is unable to provide service in an emergency, Shiloh Utilities, Inc. would be used as a backup.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to add Shiloh Utilities, Inc. as a supplemental vendor for emergency repairs on the Town water system to the Town Vendor List. Bill Jones seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

COMMITTEE AND BOARD REPORTS

Discussion took place about some things the Property Committee handles. Vicki White-Lawrence mentioned a tree was down by the front entrance to the Town Park. Discussion took place about the tree.

Thearon Hooks said that the Safety Committee and the Water Committee have been integrated into one Committee. He said that Bill Merritt of Meritech, Inc., the proprietor and license holder of the Stokesdale Water System, attended the Water Committee meeting to talk about how his company's services pertain to the Emergency Response Plan that is being worked on. Mr. Merritt was supposed to contact the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) with some questions about how to draft and develop the Stokesdale Emergency Response Plan, because Mr. Merritt is the person that NCDEQ will come to as the license holder under the Town of Stokesdale. At the next Safety/Water Committee meeting, the draft for the Emergency Response Plan should be finalized and then brought to Town Council for approval. The after-hour water emergency telephone numbers that are currently referenced on the Town website and Town Hall telephone voice message need to be removed since Mr. Merritt and Gene Robertson of Yates Construction Company determined that 911 would be the after-hour emergency telephone number. If 911 was called in an after-hour water emergency such as a broken water pipe or fire hydrant, the Stokesdale Fire Department would be contacted to investigate the matter and/or call Yates Construction Company to make repairs. Mr. Merritt would be called in for water testing after the water repairs were made and for any issues pertaining to the chlorinator. That is

all he has for now. Mayor Braswell said that he and Carolyn Joyner are working on removing the incorrect after-hours water emergency telephone numbers from the Town website and Town Hall telephone voice message, which should be changed sometime next week.

Mayor Braswell said that the Parade Committee did an incredible job with the Stokesdale Holiday Parade. Vicki White-Lawrence said that the Holiday Parade banners would be taken down and put away when it stops raining and they are dry.

Frank Bruno said that he plans to put more books out for sale in the lobby and the books in the back room have been cleared out.

Review of Current Committees: Frank Bruno said that the committee list needs to be reviewed and updated. There are a lot of committees that have not met in a very long time and need to be removed from the committee list. He will update the committee list and bring it back at the Town Council meeting in February.

Frank Bruno said that he and Vicki White-Lawrence attended the last meeting regarding the 2015 Guilford County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and they asked Stokesdale to send copies of the Stokesdale Emergency Response Plan (ERP) to the Emergency Management Coordinator for Guilford County Emergency Services, as well as anything else the Town develops regarding public safety. Thearon Hooks said that when the ERP is complete, he will send them a copy.

Thearon Hooks said that regarding the Public Safety/Water Committee, he wants to contact Stokesdale Parks and Recreation and obtain the information and qualifications of the person they said determined the Town Park fields to be unsafe for the kids to play soccer on. Since this is a public meeting and certain statements were made about the safety conditions of the soccer fields, he feels this is important and should be addressed in the Public Safety/Water Committee meeting. Mayor Braswell suggested that Mr. Hooks meet with Vicki White-Lawrence and Frank Bruno about this since they are meeting with Stokesdale Parks and Recreation concerning this matter. Tim Jones asked if there was any documentation presented officially to the Town regarding any inspection that was done by anyone to determine the fields to be unsafe. Mayor Braswell said not to his knowledge.

Carolyn Joyner said that there were some committee applications that were submitted. Two are for the Trails Committee that has been dissolved and one is for the Land Use Plan Committee. Frank Bruno said that he will call the two people that submitted the committee applications for the Trails Committee. Discussion took place about the administrative procedures used in the past to form the committees and about some committees listed that are no longer active or members that have moved away but are still listed as members.

Tim Jones made a motion to remove the Long Term Financial Committee. Mayor Braswell seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Frank Bruno made a motion to remove the Memorial Committee and the Historic Preservation Committee. Tim Jones seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Frank Bruno made a motion to remove the Library Committee. Tim Jones seconded the motion.

After some discussion, Council decided to leave the Library Committee on the committee list, so Frank Bruno withdrew his motion and Tim Jones removed his second.

Frank Bruno made a motion to withdraw Helen Marshall from the Library Committee. Tim Jones seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Tim Jones made a motion to remove the Watershed Committee. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Tim Jones made a motion to remove the Education Committee. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Frank Bruno made a motion to add Joe Thacker to the Land Use Plan Committee. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. Frank Bruno, Bill Jones, and Vicki-White Lawrence voted aye. Mayor Braswell and Tim Jones voted nay and the motion carried by a 3 to 2 vote.

Discussion took place about the contract with the Guilford County Board of Elections contract, which is Carolyn Joyner.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to remove Carolyn Joyner's name as the contact person from the Voting Facilities Contract Verification Form and add Vicki White-Lawrence. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Departmental and Administrative Report: Carolyn Joyner said that budget amendments will need to be made for NC811 charges and locates, because they are receiving more than she thought they would and there is only \$1,000.00 allocated in the budget. Tap Service Installation was budgeted for \$12,000.00, but over \$30,000.00 has been spent. On the income side those funds will come in, but the expense side needs to be corrected. Discussion took place about the budget amounts needed for water meters, locates, and NC811 call tickets.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to do a budget amendment for \$36,000.00 for tap services, \$4,000.00 for water meters, \$3,000.00 for locates, and \$200.00 for NC811 call ticket charges. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Carolyn Joyner said that the Town is paying \$10.00 per month for credit card services but is not using the service and wants to know if she should cancel it. Discussion took place about taking credit cards and setting the surcharge fee.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to pass along the fee for accepting credit cards based on whatever fee the bank charges the Town. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Finance Report - December, 2015: The December, 2015 financials were not available.

Administrative Report – Town Clerk:

EXECUTIVE SESSION: To Consider a Personnel Matter per GS 143-318.11 (6) : The Executive Session was removed from the agenda.


ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mayor Braswell read the announcements listed on the agenda.

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL: Bill Jones urged citizens to vote "Yes" for raising the Stokesdale Fire District's tax cap to 15 cents per \$100.00 property valuation. When the Stokesdale Fire Department was incorporated, they had a tax cap of 10 cents, so it only makes sense from a safety standpoint to support a 5-cent increase in the tax cap.

Vicki White-Lawrence said she would like to thank everyone who takes the time to attend the Town Hall meetings, because it really makes a difference. Sometimes it is difficult and it is not always pleasant or easy, but it is part of the process and she really appreciates when people attend.

Mayor Braswell said he is still upset about the accusations made by Stokesdale Parks and Recreation. Stokesdale Parks and Recreation thinks that Town Council is misinformed and he thinks that Stokesdale Parks and Recreation is misinformed. This Council works very very hard and he does not know anything else that he can do to support them other than buy Stokesdale Parks and Recreation ten acres of land and put some turf on it for them. He appreciates every hour that Bill Jones has spent out on the Town Park fields. Hopefully this spring when the Bermuda starts growing there will not be a winter kill like last year and Stokesdale Parks and Recreation will be more satisfied.

ADJOURNMENT: Tim Jones made a motion to adjourn. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the meeting adjourned at 9:51PM.


Diana Marcus, Deputy Clerk

Approved:


D. Randall Braswell, Mayor

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE FIVE CENT (5c) PER \$100 VALUATION INCREASE IN THE STOKESDALE
FIRE DISTRICT TAX CAP TO BE DETERMINED BY SPECIAL ELECTION ON MARCH 15, 2016**

WHEREAS, the Stokesdale Rural Fire Protection District was formed on November 9, 1954, as a result of passage of a referendum by the voters of said district to provide fire protection for the citizens in that part of Stokesdale which lies in Guilford County, and later a similar referendum by voters in Rockingham County; and

WHEREAS, the authorized levy allowed under NC General Statute 69-25.1 was not to exceed ten cents (10c) per one hundred dollars (\$100) valuation of property, and that cap was just reached in 2014; and

WHEREAS, those fire districts incorporated in North Carolina after 1959 had an initial authorized levy not to exceed fifteen cents (15c) per one hundred dollars (\$100) valuation of property; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to NC Session Law 2015-128, House Bill 347, the Guilford County Board of Commissioners, and the Rockingham County Board of Commissioners have ordered a special election be held in their respective counties to consider the increase of the maximum allowable levy from ten cents (10c) per one hundred dollars (\$100) valuation of property, to fifteen cents (15c) per \$100 valuation of property; and


WHEREAS, it is understood that this increase would match the authorized levy of those districts incorporated after 1959 and the actual fire tax rate cannot increase without approval by the Guilford County Board of Commissioners and Rockingham County Board of Commissioners during annual budget hearings; and

WHEREAS, the Stokesdale Town Council supports the efforts of Stokesdale Fire District Inc. to continue to provide the same excellent service our community has enjoyed since 1954, and understands the necessity to ensure future funding needs be met.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the Stokesdale Town Council does support the passage of the increase of the maximum allowable levy from ten cents (10c) per one hundred (\$100) valuation to fifteen cents (15c) per one hundred dollars (\$100) valuation of property to be determined by Special Election on March 15, 2016;
2. That the Mayor of Stokesdale be authorized to sign this resolution and present it to all interested parties.

Adopted this the 14th day of January, 2016.


Randy Braswell, Mayor

Attest:


Carolyn L. Joyner, Town Clerk