

TOWN OF STOKESDALE
Regular Town Council Meeting

8325 Angel Pardue Road
Stokesdale, NC 27357
March 9, 2017

The Regular Town Council Meeting of the Stokesdale Town Council was held on Thursday, March 9, 2017, at the Stokesdale Town Hall on 8325 Angel Pardue Road in Stokesdale, North Carolina.

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Mayor Randy Braswell.

OTHERS PRESENT INCLUDED: Katy Gregg, Town Attorney; Kim Hemric, Town Administrator; Diana Marcus, Deputy Clerk; Philip Pulliam, Budget Officer; Steve Mann, Northwest Observer.

CALL COUNCIL MEETING TO ORDER: Mayor Pro Tem Bill Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

INVOCATION: Given by Pastor Jerry Walker from Oak Level Baptist Church.

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

REVIEW AND ADOPT AGENDA: Pastor Jerry Walker, John Flynt, and James Landreth wanted to be added to the agenda to speak about the ABC Resolution. Bill Jones said they could speak when the ABC Resolution that is already on the agenda is discussed.

Bill Jones made a motion to approve the agenda. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. All Council members present voted aye and the motion carried.

READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE FOLLOWING: February 1, 2017 Town Council Business Meeting; February 9, 2017 Regular Town Council Meeting; February 15, 2017 Town Council Business Meeting; February 22, 2017 Town Council Business Meeting; March 1, 2017 Town Council Business Meeting: Vicki White-Lawrence made a motion to approve the minutes listed on the agenda without reading them. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. Bill Jones, Frank Bruno, and Vicki White-Lawrence voted aye. Tim Jones voted nay. The motion carried with a 3 to 1 vote.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR AND/OR COMMENTS ABOUT THE PROPOSED WATER AUTHORITY: No comments were made from the floor.

NEW BUSINESS:

Report from Guilford County Sheriff's Department: No deputy was present to give the report. The report is available online and in the Northwest Observer.

Finance Report – February, 2017: Philip Pulliam, Budget Officer, provided details about the General Fund, Water Enterprise, and Water-Sewer Financial Reports for February, 2017. (Please see the Financial Reports for details).

Tim Jones wanted to know why there were two adjusting entries for payroll in the General Fund. Philip Pulliam said he makes the adjustments for direct deposit and payroll taxes on a paycheck withdrawal, because a journal entry cannot be made in QuickBooks.

Consideration and Approval of Planning Board/Committee Applications: Bill Jones made a motion to have a week to look over them (the applications) and consider them for approval at the Wednesday Town Council Business Meeting. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. Bill Jones, Frank Bruno, and Vicki White-Lawrence voted aye. Tim Jones voted nay. The motion carried with a 3 to 1 vote.

ABC Resolution: Pastor Jerry Walker, 8308 McCrory Road, Stokesdale, is opposed to a draft Resolution of merger from Stokesdale Town Council to invite the Greensboro ABC Board to partner with Stokesdale to bring an ABC store to the Town for several reasons. He googled studies that were done when a liquor store came into a community. In every case, there was an increase in crime and an increase in consumption and there can also be an increase in gang activity. He doesn't understand why we would want to start a downward spiral of our community, which is the best place to live, for just a few dollars. By your vote tonight, please keep our community a place where we can bring up our children and grandchildren without lowering our standards for our families and hurt the atmosphere of our family oriented community for just a few dollars. He trusts that Town Council will reconsider and vote against that (ABC Resolution) tonight.

John Flynt, 8133 Belews Creek Road, Stokesdale, remembers that the big issue with regards to the vote for Liquor by the Drink was to attract nice restaurants to Stokesdale. However, the real reason Stokesdale doesn't have a lot of restaurants is because there is no public sewer system. He feels that an ABC store doesn't serve a public need nor is an asset to the Town and is of no significant benefit to the citizens of Stokesdale. It only takes between less than 5 minutes to 20 minutes to drive to an ABC store in a neighboring town. The only argument he has heard in favor of the ABC store is that it would bring some additional revenue to the Town of Stokesdale. He thinks Stokesdale is fine without an ABC store. The Town already receives some ABC revenue from all of the ABC stores in Guilford County. The negative impact on children's lives far outweighs the small amount of money the Town would receive from having an ABC store. He hopes Council will consider that when they vote tonight.

Layton Spencer, 8280 Coldwater Road, Stokesdale, just wants to say that he is against an ABC store in Stokesdale. If there is anything he can do to stop it (from coming to Stokesdale), that is what he is going to do. He hopes that Town Council keeps that in mind when they vote.

Jimmy Landreth, 7773 NC Highway 68, Stokesdale, owned a liquor store at one time so he knows how it all works. As far as he is concerned, it is criminal capitalism when a government decides who is going to have a liquor store. He knows that 420 people voted for an ABC store in Stokesdale and 274 people voted against it. He wishes that Town Council would consider voting against it.

Reverend Randy Winn, 8402 Deerpath Court, Stokesdale, wants to know where the ABC store would be located if it is approved. Frank Bruno thinks they are looking at the location next to Dollar General first. However, they can pick any location they think would be feasible. Reverend Winn said that location is

across the street from the church he serves. He doesn't think that the members of the church would like to see an ABC store across the street. He hopes that Town Council thinks about that when they vote tonight.

Frank Bruno wanted to clarify that he had voted for Liquor by the Drink so that restaurants would want to open in Stokesdale. However, he voted against having an ABC store in Stokesdale because he didn't see any value of putting one in at the time. Several months ago, he became more educated about the economics involved. Any town that doesn't have an ABC store only receives a very small portion of the profits from the county. If a town has an ABC store, they would receive 70 percent of the profits, which is a huge jump economically, so it makes sense economically, since Stokesdale doesn't charge a property tax. A lot of things have been brought up about an ABC store causing an increase in crime or vagrancy. He spoke to staff from the towns of Summerfield and Oak Ridge and he spoke to the Sheriff's Department about this. He was told that they have not come up with any measurable increase in any crime that has occurred because an ABC store came to their town. There is also some job creation from hiring people to work in the store. In North Carolina, alcohol and the stores are regulated by the state which creates a safer environment. As far as Stokesdale residents driving to a neighboring town that has an ABC store, that's just giving that town money that could be kept in Stokesdale, if Stokesdale had an ABC store. They are going to buy liquor anyway, so why not keep it local. Beer and wine is already sold in grocery stores in Stokesdale. He likes that it would not cost the Town anything to have an ABC store. Stokesdale only does the Resolution. Greensboro ABC does the feasibility study, pays for the location, stocks the store, and handles the employees, payroll, and audits. The Town would benefit greatly by receiving a larger percent of the profits every year for having an ABC store in Stokesdale. It just makes sense to move forward with this.

At this time, Mayor Braswell conferenced in by telephone to the meeting.

Pastor Jason Riddle, 141 Gordon Drive, Stokesdale, is opposed to an ABC store in Stokesdale. He wants to know if Greensboro is pursuing this or if Town Council is pursuing this. Bill Jones said that a business man wanted to pursue opening an ABC store and contacted Greensboro ABC, not Town Council.

Bill Jones said this is one of the toughest decisions that he has had to make since being on Town Council. An ABC store and Liquor by the Drink are among the few things that the state of North Carolina allows citizens to vote on. 62 percent of the Town's citizens voted in favor of an ABC store coming to Stokesdale. If Town Council votes in favor of the ABC Resolution, it does not determine whether or not an ABC store is coming to Stokesdale. It just means that Town Council is allowing the ABC Board to perform a feasibility study in order to determine whether or not opening an ABC store in Stokesdale is in their best interest. They may decide not to open an ABC store in Stokesdale after performing a feasibility study. Liquor can be purchased in an ABC store, but cannot be consumed in or outside an ABC store. If someone purchased liquor and drank it in the parking lot, ABC store employees would call the police. When he took the oath of office, he promised to represent ALL of the people of Stokesdale, not just 38 percent of the people that voted against an ABC store in Stokesdale.

Tim Jones said that it is no secret how he feels about this. He has expressed his opinion a number of times. He took an opportunity today, just for general information, to look up the distances from Town Hall to the ABC stores in neighboring towns. It is 5.3 miles or an 8-minute drive to the ABC store in Oak Ridge, 8.3 miles or a 13-minute drive to the ABC store in Summerfield, 12.6 miles or a 16-minute drive to the ABC store in Madison, 12.3 miles or an 18-minute drive to the ABC store in Walnut Cove, and 22.9 miles or a

29-minute drive to the ABC store in Reidsville. One of things that troubles him about this is that once an ABC store is opened in Stokesdale, there is no do-over. Frank Bruno said that in the ABC Resolution, it says that either the Town of Stokesdale or the Greensboro ABC Board may withdraw and terminate the merger agreement at the end of five (5) years or, at any other time, the merger agreement may be dissolved with the approval of the North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission. Tim Jones thinks the likelihood of that happening is pretty rare. He has traveled extensively across the country in many states, and in many locations and neighborhoods where there is an abundance of liquor stores and bars, and he didn't feel safe driving down the street. He is not against anyone who drinks. This country tried prohibition and it didn't work, and we all know that. Like Reverend Walker said, he would like to think of Stokesdale as a unique place and if it is not broken, he is very hesitant to try and fix it. He is wondering what is next. If the state would let us, would we put slot machines in Town Hall? What else would we do to raise money versus cutting our spending? We have our history with Stokesdale which long-term residents are well aware of. He certainly respects Bill (Jones) for having to go into some of these places to keep the law (when he worked for the Guilford County Sheriff's Department). He is particularly bothered by the fact that this ABC store may be located in front of one of the Town's churches that has been there for 100 years or longer. That's so sad to him. It's a big chance for them to take and he hopes that whatever decision is made, it is the best decision for Stokesdale. He understands that 62 percent of the voters that voted that day voted for an ABC store. That does not necessarily mean that 62 percent of the registered voters voted for it, or that 62 percent of the population of Stokesdale voted for it. It is an issue that divides friends and families in Stokesdale. He would like to see Council love Stokesdale enough to take a second look at this and vote against it.

Vicki White-Lawrence said that she doesn't really have a lot to say. She would just add to what Bill Jones said. They are there to represent everybody, and the majority of the people who voted that day did vote in favor (of an ABC store in Stokesdale).

Mayor Braswell commented by telephone. He appreciates the opportunity as an elected official to dial in like this. The general statute does allow it. He would like to start by saying how disappointed he is that a Council member can find time to deal with an ABC store issue but not attend critical business meetings during the days and weeks of decisions Council must make for the Town. He feels that this has been pushed from our Council. He knows there was a request out in the community for it. Since the work on this resolution has been done and brought before this Council, he feels it is very important that he goes on the record for those 315 people that voted for him, how important this decision is. Tonight, he is going to pray that his fellow Council members will have a change of heart and consider the drug and alcohol problem that our country has. Tonight, they can take a small stand against this type of addiction and this type of business in our community. There is a liquor store 3 stoplights down NC Highway 68, about the same distance down US Highway 220, and about the same distance north of Stokesdale. How many of this type of business does a small community need? He's proud of Stokesdale and he hopes that tonight they are brave and bold enough to set an example for other towns to follow. He will not sell his soul for any amount of revenue. He cannot support this ABC Resolution and thinks it's bad for our community.

Bill Jones said he appreciates Mayor Braswell's comments and respects his opinion. He strongly believes that the people's voice should count. He doesn't think that he should put his personal opinion ahead of the will of the people. The will of the people has to count for something.

Frank Bruno made a motion that Council adopt the Resolution Authorizing the Merger of the Town's Newly Approved ABC System with the City of Greensboro ABC and authorize the Mayor to sign it. Vicki

White-Lawrence seconded the motion. Bill Jones, Frank Bruno, and Vicki White-Lawrence voted aye. Mayor Braswell and Tim Jones voted nay. The motion carried with a 3 to 2 vote. The Resolution is hereby incorporated and made a part of the minutes of the meeting.

Bill Jones said you may not like my reasoning, but it is what he has to live with. He can't, in good faith without a really good reason, circumvent the will of the people. He has never seen fights or any bodies lying outside of the ABC stores in Summerfield or Oak Ridge.

Frank Bruno said he agrees with Bill (Jones). The deciding factor for him was the will of the people that voted. He thinks they would be setting a very bad precedence to go against the legal vote of the people.

Mayor Braswell thanked everyone for allowing him to participate by telephone and then he disconnected.

Bulk Water Purchase Policy: Bill Jones made a motion that Council continue this agenda item until the next Wednesday Town Council Business Meeting (March 15th) because the Mayor knows 90 percent of what this is about. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members present voted aye and the motion carried.

Tank Cycling Control System Quote: Bill Jones made a motion that Council continue this agenda item until the next Wednesday Town Council Business Meeting (March 15th). Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members present voted aye and the motion carried.

Discussion of an Engineering Firm to Represent Stokesdale During the Negotiations of the Feasibility Study for the Proposed Regional Water Authority: Bill Jones made a motion that Council continue this agenda item until the next Wednesday Town Council Business Meeting (March 15th). Frank Bruno seconded the motion. Bill Jones, Frank Bruno, and Vicki White-Lawrence voted aye. Tim Jones voted nay. The motion carried with a 3 to 1 vote.

Tim Jones said Council keeps moving more and more business to Wednesday meetings and the last one they had, there wasn't a single individual there. Not even Steve Mann from the Northwest Observer was there. Maybe they need to re-orientate and figure out how to solve this. They have seven citizens at the meeting tonight and he doesn't like conducting so much business in front of empty chairs.

Bill Jones said that part of the reason they haven't been able to conduct this business is because the engineering companies were invited to Town Hall twice, but they can't seem to get Council members to come to Town Hall and meet with them. So, it doesn't seem fair to bring an issue like this to a vote when some of the Council members haven't even met the people (engineers). He thinks that maybe the thing to do is to consider putting them (the engineering companies) on the Town Vendor List until schedules can be arranged for Council to meet with them. He doesn't think they should hire a contractor when there are Council members that haven't met them yet.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Stokesdale Water System:

Citizens' Comment Period on the Stokesdale Water System and the Proposed Regional Water Authority: John Flynt, 8133 Belews Creek Road, Stokesdale, said that, obviously, Town Council wants the input from

the citizens of the Town of Stokesdale before they vote on important issues. Nothing is more important since the Town of Stokesdale was incorporated (in 1989) than the Regional Water Authority, which has unlimited taxing authority. Before Council spends the money or obligates future Town Councils to spend a significant amount of money, and have a separate entity determine the tax authority for the Town of Stokesdale, he would certainly hope Council puts this through a referendum for the Town of Stokesdale and let the citizens vote on whether or not they want to go with a Water Authority.

Jimmy Landreth, 7773 NC Highway 68, Stokesdale, said he would just like to remind Council that when the Town incorporated, they did so mainly to prevent Greensboro or any of the other towns from coming in and taking Stokesdale. He doesn't see any sense in joining a Water Authority with people that don't have any water. He would like to see Stokesdale get water from Rockingham County. He wants to know if this is a Water and Sewer Authority.

Bill Jones said that there has been no discussion on sewer. There are several other options for Stokesdale and one would be to purchase water from the Water Authority and still maintain control and destiny over the Town's water system. He thinks that citizens need to trust Council enough to know that they will keep the citizens informed about the water system as time goes on. Stokesdale signed the Memorandum of Understanding in order to hire an engineering firm to perform the feasibility study which may or may not be paid for with the grant money that was allocated.

Other Issues Pertaining to the Water System: There were no other issues pertaining to the water system.

COMMITTEE AND BOARD REPORTS:

Frank Bruno asked Kim Hemric to add an agenda item about a discussion of Park repairs that they want done on May 6th Make-A-Difference Day to Wednesday's Town Council Business Meeting on March 15th.

Departmental and Administrative Report – Town Administrator: Kim Hemric reminded the citizens about the Fire Department Meeting that will be held at the Stokesdale Fire Department on Thursday, March 16th at 7:00pm. The keynote speaker will be a representative from the North Carolina Rural Water Association and will address various topics. She hopes to have the Deputy Clerk position filled real soon. She has made a lot of progress with Municode over the last four to five weeks answering their questions for clarification of the Stokesdale Development Ordinance and finalizing details, so she expects to receive the finished product fairly soon. She also wants to remind everyone about the Red Cross blood drive coming up on Friday, May 5th at Town Hall and Make-A-Difference Day on Saturday, May 6th at the Town Park. Everyone is welcome to participate if they are able to do so.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mayor Pro Tem Bill Jones read the announcements listed on the agenda.

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL: Vicki White-Lawrence appreciates everyone coming out to the meeting tonight, even though Council did not vote the way the audience wanted them to vote. They still appreciate them being there and expressing their opinions.

Tim Jones thanked the six people in the audience for staying until the end of the meeting. He still favors small government for Stokesdale and he is not in favor of a property tax. He does appreciate all of the questions about a water authority. He thinks that may wind up being a decision much bigger than any

decision that Stokesdale has undertaken until now. He would like to encourage folks out there to come to their Wednesday meetings at 4:00pm, or tell a neighbor who might be able to come. He'd just like to thank everyone for coming.

Frank Bruno appreciates everyone for coming out to the meeting tonight. He wishes they had a crowd of 15 or 20 people at every meeting. He knows that sometimes those Wednesday meetings are hard for them to get to, but if they can get here (Town Hall), Council would love their input. He does appreciate that and does want their opinion. A lot of other Councils wouldn't let them speak. He understands that they may disagree, but they all live in the same town and they all want the best for Stokesdale's citizens. So, keep coming out to the meetings and keep giving Council their opinions, and they will help the citizens get to where they need to be.

Bill Jones knows that Council didn't do what the audience here wanted tonight, but there are tough decisions to be made and he stands by his comments. He brought a prayer with him tonight and read a portion of it to the audience. What strikes him the most is the form of government they have and part of that form of government is when they have an issue that they are allowed to vote on by the state of North Carolina, and people come out and vote, he feels like it's his responsibility to honor their vote as much as he can. Prohibition didn't work in this country when they tried it. People have choices and people have rights. Just because he doesn't agree with something doesn't give him the right to tell them they can't do something they agree with. If it's legal, then they have the right to pursue whatever they're doing as long as it is not hurting anybody. They are going to buy it (liquor) somewhere if they want it.

Bill Jones said he went down to the road in Stokesdale where they have been having problems with people dumping trash, according to a complaint received at Town Hall. He found several trash bags filled with household garbage and found the names of the people who dumped their trash there illegally and plans to contact them. He hopes that Steve Mann will write something in the Northwest Observer about this illegal trash dumping that is going on. There are two toilets down in the creek and excessive trash littered from one end of the road to the other, which shows total disrespect for our neighborhood. The name he found in the trash is not a resident of Stokesdale, so it's somebody that thinks so little of our community that they dump their trash out when they drive through. If there is some way to stop illegal littering, he'd like to stop it. He is going to try and have some signs and some surveillance cameras put up. He understands that some people don't have the money to pay for trash service. Part of what he has been working on and he plans to pursue would be a small property tax and have universal garbage service in the whole Town of Stokesdale. He has been thinking about this for five or six years and he did mention it to the prior Town Council once. He thinks that it is doable because the tax would be the same as what residents are already paying for garbage service. He would like to get input from the people of Stokesdale on that. He thinks that it would be a win-win.

Tim Jones advised that NCDOT (North Carolina Department of Transportation) runs a Litter Sweep Program. One of the things that he understands they will do, he assumes with the property owner's permission, is clean out areas where trash has been dumped.

ADJOURNMENT: Tim Jones made a motion to adjourn. Bill Jones seconded the motion. All Council members present voted aye. The meeting adjourned at 8:47pm.


Diana Marcus, Deputy Clerk

Approved:


D. Randall Braswell, Mayor

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MERGER OF THE TOWN'S NEWLY
APPROVED ABC SYSTEM WITH THE CITY OF GREENSBORO ABC**

WHEREAS, there presently exists an Alcoholic Beverage Control system which serves the City of Greensboro, North Carolina that is governed by a Board of Alcoholic Control ABC Board as provided for in Chapter 291 of the 1951 North Carolina Session Laws, as amended.

WHEREAS, the Board and the governing bodies of the City of Greensboro and the Town of Stokesdale ("Town") have each determined that it is in the public interest to have a Consolidated System in The City of Greensboro ("Greensboro") as permitted by the merger provisions of Chapter 18B of the General Statutes of North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the powers of the Board shall be those specified in Chapter 18B of the General Statutes of North Carolina as amended; and

WHEREAS, it is contemplated that the Town of Stokesdale as a municipality located within Guilford County does desire to establish ABC store(s) within the municipal limits of the Town of Stokesdale and become part of the Greensboro ABC System; and

WHEREAS, the Greensboro ABC Board and the Town of Stokesdale will jointly examine the location and placement of the initial proposed ABC Store within the Town on property located at 8302 Belews Creek Road with appropriate vehicular access for the general site location to Highway NC 65 (Belews Creek Road), however, the final decision as to placement location of such ABC Store within the Town will be made by the Greensboro ABC Board. Any additional store locations will be reviewed and examined on a case by case basis by both parties.

WHEREAS, the Consolidated System of Greensboro and Stokesdale will generate greater revenues for each participating municipality (as well as Guilford County), which will share in the net proceeds of Greensboro and Stokesdale than would separate systems inasmuch as considerable savings are achieved through combined managerial, administrative, financial, warehousing, and law enforcement functions; and

WHEREAS, the Greensboro ABC system maintains separate records for each ABC store in the end that the gross revenues, expenses and net revenues for each store and the combined store(s) within the Town of Stokesdale may be readily determined. The Greensboro ABC Board will retain 30% of the profits and the remaining amount will be distributed to the town of Stokesdale. All net profits derived from Stokesdale ABC store(s), after distributions required by state and federal law, are to be distributed on a quarterly basis to the governing body of Stokesdale in which the store(s) generating such profit is located.

The Stokesdale ABC store(s) will become a part of the Greensboro ABC system. The governing body of the town of Stokesdale shall appoint one (1) ex officio member to the Greensboro ABC Board to serve a three (3) year term as a non-voting member of such board. The appointee must be a resident of Stokesdale, and must be known for his or her good character, ability, and business acumen, and may serve a maximum of two three-year terms commencing on July 1 of the first year and ending on June 30 of the third year, except and provided the first Stokesdale appointee shall serve an interim term from date of appointment until June 30, 2017 and upon re-appointment or new appointment every three (3) years thereafter.

NOW, THEREFOR, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF STOKESDALE:

1. That the merger of the Town's newly approved ABC System with the Greensboro ABC System as set out herein is hereby approved.
2. That upon like approval by the City Council of the City of Greensboro, the North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission is hereby requested to approve said merger under the terms and conditions set out above.
3. That either the Town of Stokesdale or the Greensboro ABC Board may withdraw and terminate the merger agreement at the end of five (5) years or both parties may agree to extend the merger agreement upon mutual consent. At any other time, the merger agreement may be dissolved with the approval of the North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission.
4. That in the event of termination and withdrawal from the merger by either party, the Greensboro ABC Board shall appoint an independent Certified Public Accountant (CPA) or a CPA firm to conduct an audit of the financial records of the Consolidated System and make a determination as to those assets and/or liabilities which are attributed to the Greensboro Consolidated ABC Board and the Town of Stokesdale, respectively.

Adopted this 9th day of March, 2017.

TOWN OF STOKESDALE

By: *Randy Brumwell*
Mayor

ATTEST AND SEAL

By: *K. E. Hearn*
Town Clerk