

TOWN OF STOKESDALE
Regular Town Council Meeting

8325 Angel Pardue Road

Stokesdale, NC 27357

May 11, 2017

The Regular Town Council Meeting of the Stokesdale Town Council was held on Thursday, May 11, 2017, 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 (arrived at 7:05pm), Tim Jones.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Vicki White-Lawrence.

OTHERS PRESENT INCLUDED: Katy Gregg, Town Attorney; Kim Hemric, Town Administrator; Diana Marcus, Deputy Clerk; Philip Pulliam, Budget Officer; Oliver Bass, Town Planner; Steve Mann, Northwest Observer; Alisa Houk, Deputy Clerk (seated in the audience).

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

INVOCATION: Given by Mayor Braswell.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Boy Scout Jason Williams will lead the Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Braswell announced that Boy Scout Jason Williams will lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Recited by Council members and citizens in attendance.

REVIEW AND ADOPT AGENDA: Bill Jones made a motion to adopt the agenda as written. Mayor Braswell seconded the motion. All Council members in attendance voted aye and the motion carried.

READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE FOLLOWING: April 13, 2017 Regular Town Council Meeting; April 19, 2017 Town Council Business Meeting: Bill Jones made a motion to approve the April 13th and April 19th Town Council meetings. Mayor Braswell seconded the motion. Mayor Braswell and Bill Jones voted aye. Tim Jones voted nay. The motion carried with a 2 to 1 vote.

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

NEW BUSINESS:

PUBLIC HEARING: Rezoning Case 17-04-STPL-01589: 7819 Athens Road. A request to change zoning from AG-SP to RS-30. Subject property is located at 7819 Athens Road, Guilford County Tax Parcel #164105, 0222422(part), and 0164112(part) in Oak Ridge Township, totaling approximately 16.59 acres. Applicants: Ted and Connie Lawson: Oliver Bass advised that at last Thursday's Planning Board Meeting, the Planning Board reviewed the case for a recommendation to submit to the Town Council to determine whether the request is consistent with the Stokesdale Future Land Use Plan and whether it is reasonable and in the public interest. With regard to consistency, they found that it is inconsistent, because it allows

a higher density than is recommended for the area. The recommended density is a minimum of 40,000 square feet per lot with a maximum density of 1.89 acres. However, the request is for a rezoning of RS-30 which allows a minimum of 30,000 square feet per lot with a maximum density of 1.45 acres, so there is a slight difference of less than a half of a unit per acre. However, the request is consistent with the Future Land Use Plan in terms of the type of uses being proposed. The Land Use Plan recommends the area be developed with single-family residential neighborhoods which is allowed and promoted in the RS-30 zoning district and in that area, it is consistent. The Planning Board found the rezoning request to be reasonable and in the public interest and made the recommendation to approve the request given the fact that the surrounding area has developed to RS-30 and RS-40, so it is consistent with the current development in the area. So, the Planning Board recommended approval.

Mayor Braswell asked the applicant to make a presentation.

Will Shaw from Hugh Creed Associates, Inc., P.A., Consulting Engineers and Land Surveyors, 1306 West Wendover Avenue, Greensboro said he is working on the design and layout for the Lawsons. They hope to build an RS-30 residential development and plan to connect to the Stokesdale Water System. This development of single-family homes would be consistent with the other subdivisions around it, including the one across the road.

Tim Jones wanted to confirm the accuracy on page 2 of the case documents, which states that a 12-inch waterline is available. Will Shaw said it is along Athens Road right in front of the proposed subdivision. Oliver Bass said that information was based on an engineering map he had, so he assumes that the information is accurate. Mayor Braswell thinks that may be an error. He thinks it is a 6-inch waterline. Oliver Bass confirmed that it was taken from Stokesdale's engineering map, and it says a 12-inch waterline on Athens Road. He said it would be verified in the subdivision process.

Frank Bruno arrived during the presentation at 7:05pm. Mayor Braswell asked if he had heard the presentation. Frank Bruno said he had attended the previous Planning Board Meeting where he had heard the presentation (so he fully understood the details about the rezoning request).

No one spoke against the rezoning request.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Bill Jones seconded the motion. All Council members present voted aye and the motion carried.

Frank Bruno made a motion to approve Rezoning Case 17-04-STPL-01589 at 7819 Athens Road based the following: that even though it is inconsistent with the comprehensive Land Use Plan, it is consistent with the vision for the residential area development and it is also consistent with the density of housing in that area. It would be good for the development of the area and in the public interest. Bill Jones seconded the motion. All Council members present voted aye and the motion carried.

Oliver Bass left the meeting at approximately 7:17pm.

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.

Mayor Braswell said to lock your car doors or risk losing its contents. He also advised citizens to call 911, if they see something suspicious.

Finance Report – April, 2017: Philip Pulliam, Budget Officer, provided details about the General Fund, Water Enterprise, and Water-Sewer Financial Reports for April, 2017. (Please see the Financial Reports, which are available in the Town Hall lobby, for details).

Presentation of the FY2017-18 Budget & Budget Message: Kim Hemric presented the proposed budget for the Fiscal Year 2017-18. She went over some of the highlights, mentioning that the Town was notified by the City of Winston-Salem that they anticipate an increase of their residential water rate by four (4) percent this year, so an increase of \$0.25 per 1,000 gallons of water consumed is recommended. The rate increase will be effective in November, 2017. The proposed budget will provide a sound financial position for the Town with revenues being utilized in beneficial ways for all of the citizens of the Town of Stokesdale. Philip Pulliam went over the proposed budget worksheet and draft budget, actual and estimated.

Tim Jones stated that, once again, the Town is without their sales and use tax distribution money from Guilford County that was taken away in 2004. It is costing the Town a great deal of money. The Guilford County Commissioners have refused to vote to reverse that decision, which they have an opportunity to do every year in March. Any help from the Town's citizens would be greatly appreciated.

Bill Jones said that the Town's loss of the sales and use tax distribution money is in excess of a million dollars a year, which means a lot to a community the size of Stokesdale. Town Hall and the Town Park were built with that money. That is why the Town has never had a property tax. He strongly stresses to the Town's citizens to get in touch with the Guilford County Commissioners and request what he thinks is the right thing, which is for them to give the money back to Stokesdale.

Mayor Braswell and Bill Jones gave a brief history lesson for the benefit of the Boy Scouts in the audience about the sales and use tax distribution money and the impact to Stokesdale that was created when the County Commissioners voted in 2003 to change the distribution method, which caused that money to stop being distributed to Stokesdale.

Mayor Braswell said that the Town Council is in the process of hiring an engineer to help them with the Stokesdale Water System, and they failed to budget any expenses for that. He would like to use the \$37,627.00 budgeted for the Depreciation Water Enterprise Fund Reserve for the engineering fees, and make that a line item. Discussion took place about the changes and what to label it.

Date to be Set for Public Notice of Time and Place of Budget Hearing, the Right to Present Oral and Written Comments, and a Statement of Where the Proposed Budget May be Examined. NCGS 159-13(a): Mayor Braswell made a motion to set a Public Hearing Notice of the time for June 8th at 7:00pm at Town Hall for the purpose of a Budget Hearing. Bill Jones seconded the motion.

The Budget Message, Proposed Budget Worksheet, and Budget Draft will be on the table in the lobby for ten days, so the public can review it and make comments at the Public Hearing on June 8th. The public is also invited to make comments at the Wednesday Town Council Business Meetings that take place prior to the June 8th Public Hearing.

All Council members present voted aye and the motion carried.

Annual Audit Vendor Selection for this Fiscal Year: There were six auditing firms and the total cost to the Town for their services listed for review.

Mayor Braswell said that his choice would be Rouse, Rouse, Penn, and Rouse, LLP.

Bill Jones said he agreed. They weren't the lowest priced, other than the previous firm the Town used (Cannon & Company), but there is a distance factor involved.

Tim Jones asked if anyone knew if Rouse, Rouse, Penn, and Rouse, LLP has performed work for the Town in the past. Kim Hemric said that this firm was not in the Town's QuickBooks records. Tim Jones wanted to know if anyone knew who performed the Town's audit before Cannon & Company, LLP. Kim Hemric said she did not know and offered to research that.

Mayor Braswell said they didn't have to vote tonight if more time was needed for Council to review the companies. However, he certainly thinks that Council needs to vote by Wednesday next week, so that Katy Gregg can have time to review the firm's contract.

Mayor Braswell said to continue this agenda item to the Wednesday, May 17th Town Council Business Meeting.

Minimum Fee Schedule for Group Rentals: Chambers, Kitchen, Executive Room: Kim Hemric said that feedback was received from some citizens about setting fees for Homeowners Associations and non-profit organizations that have not had to pay fees in the past. Discussion took place about setting a policy, asking for proof from a non-profit organization such as 501c3 certificate, setting a minimum fee, developing a non-discriminatory and universal policy, what the current fees are on the Town's Facility Use Agreement, and providing a discount for senior citizens.

Katy Gregg thinks it would be wise to table this item and get some suggestions from other towns and see what their policies are and how they handle their fees.

Consider Stokesdale Community Choir's Facility Use Agreement: Mayor Braswell advised that Town Council has waived the fees for this organization in the past. Therefore, they will continue this request until a solid policy has been put in place for Facility Use Agreements.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to continue this (agenda item) until next Wednesday at 4:00pm. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members present voted aye and the motion carried.

Engineering Firm Rates: Kim Hemric advised Council that she has not yet received the engineering firm rates.

Mayor Braswell said he feels partially responsible for this not being completed. Town Council exempted themselves from the Mini-Brooks Act for the purposes of being exempt to proceed by qualifications. The Mini-Brooks Act basically says you are not going to select an engineering firm by price, but by qualifications first. That means the firms are ranked by qualifications first, and then the rate is negotiated. Town Council had agreed that they had two excellent engineering firms (Green Engineering and McGill Associates) and

voted to use McGill Associates a couple of weeks ago for their engineering services. In retrospect, he thinks that he should have asked both firms for their rates, so that Town Council had a rate comparison from both firms. If Katy Gregg doesn't object, he thinks they should ask Green Engineering to submit their engineering rates.

Katy Gregg advised that because they have exempted themselves, they do not have to follow the normal RFQ (Request for Qualifications) procedure, so she doesn't see a problem. She does agree that it would be more efficient to have both firms' engineering rates. She doesn't see that there is any issue by asking for them now.

Tim Jones made a motion to ask McGill (Associates) and Green (Engineering) both for their rates. Mayor Braswell seconded the motion. All Council members present voted aye and the motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Stokesdale Water System:

Citizens' Comment Period on the Stokesdale Water System: Mary Maness, 8405 Tree Court, Stokesdale, wanted to know if the Town will be expanding the waterlines. Mayor Braswell advised that the subdivisions currently being built in Stokesdale will be connected to the water system. Mary Maness wanted to know if the waterlines will be extended to individual Town residents that do not reside in a subdivision. Mayor Braswell said that Mary Maness could choose to pay to have the waterlines extended, if she wanted to. Mary Maness said that no other individual resident had to pay to extend the waterlines and felt that could be discrimination. Katy Gregg advised that the Town does not require an individual to connect to the waterlines, so there would not be discrimination against an individual if they decided to connect. If the waterlines are not currently accessible to an individual, but they are close and the Town is not going to pay to have the waterlines extended, that individual would have to pay to have the waterlines extended. Mary Maness wanted to know if that means she would have to pay to extend the waterline all the way from the beginning of her road where it is currently located, all the way down the road to her house. Katy Gregg confirmed that if she **chose** to extend the waterline down the road to her house, she would have to pay the cost to get that done. Mayor Braswell said that after the initial and only phase of the water system was installed with grant money the Town received for that purpose, the Town has not paid to extend the waterlines to any other locations since then. However, since Ms. Maness has already paid \$200.00 to connect to the water system if the waterlines are ever expanded down her road to her property, she will be able to connect to the water system at no additional charge. (She will have to pay a certified plumber to run a pipe from her house to the water tap and meter that the Town would install for the \$200.00 she previously paid, if that happens). Tim Jones said that the Town is not purposely withholding water from Mary Maness, and shouldn't be perceived as such.

Other Issues Pertaining to the Water System: None.

Continued – Emergency Access Water Usage Policy: Mayor Braswell said that Alisa Houk, Deputy Clerk, has been doing research on emergency access water use in other towns and how their policies address that issue. (This agenda item will be continued).

COMMITTEE AND BOARD REPORTS:

Water and Public Safety Committee: Mayor Braswell and Thearon Hooks are working on things (no details were given).

Library Committee: Frank Bruno didn't have anything about the Library, but said he picked up a check that was donated by Woodman Life's Greensboro Chapter. He will have another check next week. Woodman Life, the company he works for, is a non-profit and they do community service projects. Woodman Life wanted to donate money to the Town Park to help buy things that are needed, like benches and other things. Woodman Life has two Chapters in the area that are going to donate. The Greensboro Chapter donated \$300.00 to the Park and the High Point Chapter is going to donate \$200.00 to the Park.

Property Committee: Mayor Braswell said the grass has been mowed at Town Hall and volley ball nets have been ordered.

Departmental and Administrative Report – Town Administrator: Kim Hemric said the water meters are scheduled to be read this weekend. It is the second month that the Mueller System has been used to do the E-reads and they are still troubleshooting some issues. Online credit/debit card water payments going through GovtPortal are going well and positive comments have been received from the citizens using this service. Hopefully, next month an icon for Planning and Zoning fees will be added. A link has been added to the Town website for public access to the Stokesdale Development Ordinance. She has scheduled a tentative Citizens Academy in August on a Saturday, which is an opportunity for citizens to learn about the functions of Town Hall, Town Council, and staff. The date and time will be confirmed at a future Town Hall meeting.

Tim Jones asked if Kim Hemric could make a guesstimate as to how many water customers use GovtPortal to make online payments. Kim Hemric thinks it could be about ten (10) percent right now. Diana Marcus said that the water customers are still learning about the availability of this online credit/debit card payment service and she always makes a point to educate them when they call in to make a payment. Tim Jones suggested that maybe the Northwest Observer could mention that it is now available. Alisa Houk said that the information had been printed on the water bill too.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR AND/OR COMMENTS ABOUT THE PROPOSED REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY: Mayor Braswell advised the public, for the sake of educating the Boy Scouts that were in the audience, that the governing bodies of Stokesdale, Oak Ridge, Summerfield, and the unincorporated northwest areas of Guilford County entered into an agreement called the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to investigate the possibility of developing a Regional Water System. There are also other options available, so it has been on the Town Hall meeting agendas for the past several months in order to get the public's feedback regarding this proposed Regional Water Authority in the northwest area of Guilford County. Many meetings have been held with the different town's representatives for the purpose of discussing details related the process of choosing a firm to perform the feasibility study, which is the first step. This process will be very extensive and will take a long time to complete. He advised the Boy Scouts to read the Northwest Observer where updates on the process will be available to the northwest area towns as it continues to move forward.

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

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL: Tim Jones thanked the four (4) Boy Scouts for attending the meeting. He also thanked the other citizens for attending the meeting. He thanked Bill Jones for his efforts to get back the Town's sales and use tax money from Guilford County. Bill Jones needs everybody's help to pursue this project. He would certainly be willing to help support Bill Jones' project financially with his own personal money and he would challenge the rest of Town Council to do the same. He does not favor a property tax for Stokesdale. He hears from many citizens that they are tired of paying so many taxes to the federal, state, and county governments. He also favors small government in Stokesdale.

Frank Bruno thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Volunteers are needed for committees and he would like everyone to spread the word to others, because the Town could use the help. He also wants to thank the Boy Scouts for attending the meeting, and as he mentioned before, as a part of the company he works for, they do community service. They have a program set up to help fund the Boy Scouts' Eagle Scout projects, so please contact him when they get to that point, because he would love to help them out. He would like to thank Town Council for all the work they have done on the budget. For the past several years, the Town has been able to keep their costs pretty low. The Town has some undesignated funds, which is money that goes into the Town's bank account and is a good thing for the Town. The reason that they have been able to do that is because they have been very frugal with the money making sure to spend it wisely, which helps prevent the Town from having the need for a property tax.

Bill Jones said the Boy Scouts is a great organization. His father passed away when he was 13 years old and he was a Boy Scout and able to get through the loss with help from the Boy Scouts. He admires the Boy Scout Leaders, because it is tough when they work a regular job along with organizing meetings, events, and taking the boys on Camporees. He experienced the fun side of being a Boy Scout, but he can't imagine what the Scoutmasters go through. He thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. He also wanted to thank the staff, because Town Council puts them through a lot. They are overworked and underpaid. He appreciates everything they do.

Mayor Braswell invited the Boy Scouts to come up front to have their picture taken, because they probably get a badge for attending the meeting. He suggested they stand in front of the Town Seal for the picture and tell everyone what the badges they wear are for and how they've earned them, because he sees lots of badges. The picture was taken and discussion took place between the Boy Scouts and Town Council members about the badges and about themselves.

ADJOURNMENT: Frank Bruno made a motion to adjourn. Bill Jones seconded the motion. All Council members present voted aye. The meeting adjourned at 8:51pm.


Diana Marcus, Deputy Clerk

Approved:


D. Randall Braswell, Mayor