

TOWN OF WILSON'S MILLS
WORK SESSION MEETING
February 24, 2025

PRESENT: Mayor Fleta Byrd, Councilmembers David McGowan, Tim Brown, Randy Jernigan and Carolyn Dobbins.

OTHERS PRESENT: Town Administrator Leighanna Worley, Town Clerk Emily Matthews, Finance Officer Sherry Hudson, Public Works Director Patrick Moore, Planning Director Wendy Oldham, and Police Chief AZ Williams.

ABSENT: Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett

CONVOCATION: Mayor Byrd declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 5:01pm.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA: Town Administrator Worley added the following items to the agenda: Review of Final Version of Utility Plans from TRC and Resolution Supporting the NC Division of Parks and Recreation's Accessible Parks Grant.

Departmental Reports

Events Coordinator Emily Matthews said the flyers for the Food Truck Rodeo have been approved by the Events Committee and they will be going to the elementary school and daycares in early April. Councilmember Brown mentioned having live music at events as well as looking into an ice-skating rink.

Councilmember McGowan asked if the fence has been put up at The Cottages subdivision and Planning Director Wendy Oldham stated the fence has been put up and we are waiting on stormwater flushing to be completed and for the pond to be cleaned out. Councilmember McGowan said that children have been swimming in the pond and Mrs. Oldham said the HOA in The Cottages have planned to put up signs near the pond and they have reached out to residents about the consequences of anyone swimming in the pond.

Councilmember Brown asked for updates on Midtown and Mrs. Oldham said that she reached out to the head developer today because she had not heard back from the contact she was previously speaking to.

Councilmember McGowan said he has gotten calls from residents regarding the poor lighting near the Swift Creek Road exit off Highway 70 east. Town Administrator Worley said at the last Highway 70 commission meeting they talked about the lighting at the two interchanges, but there is another meeting on March 20 and she will mention the issue again. Council also discussed the need for signage stating Wilson's Mills for the exits. Councilman McGowan asked how many violations are in Tralee subdivision and Mrs. Oldham said she is not sure but there are several residents in Tralee that have been unaware that they are in the ETJ of Wilson's Mills.

Councilmember McGowan applauded the Public Works Department for their work on the gator. Councilmember Brown said heat needs to be put in the Public Works building and that needs to be discussed to be included in the budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

Chief reviewed the Police Department Annual Report as well as his monthly report. Councilmember McGowan asked about the high number of traffic violations and asked how we compare to the national average. Chief said there seems to be the same issues in surrounding towns.

Town Administrator Project Updates:

Review of Final Version of Utility Plans from TRC:

Ethan Gartin from TRC presented an update to the utility study that was presented to Council last month at their work session. He said there has not been much change since last month but he looked into the elements that Council asked to be reviewed. He said he also looked at how many customers we would need to have in order to be competitive with Johnston County and we would need around 6,000 customers. He said it would be difficult to have a utility department in Wilson's Mills that would be able to compete with Johnston County. He said it does not seem to be possible within the next decade. Councilmember McGowan asked for clarification on the number of residents listed in the report and Ms. Worley said the numbers were pulled from the census, but the numbers are incorrect. Councilmember Brown said he feels the study is flawed if the number of residents are not correct. Mrs. Oldham said she can send Mr. Gartin the numbers of rooftops that are projected to come into town. Councilmember McGowan asked for a more condensed rundown of the changes in between updates from TRC. Mr. Gartin said he can run the numbers again based on the numbers he gets from Mrs. Oldham. He said he will also work with Ms. Worley and summarize the information presented to Council moving forward.

Arrival of Councilmember:

Councilmember Randy Jernigan arrived at 6:07pm.

Resolution Supporting the NC Division of Parks and Recreation's Accessible Parks Grant:

Town Administrator Worley said this is the grant that was discussed at Council's meeting last week and this resolution is allowing staff to move forward and apply for the grant. It is also saying that if we apply and receive the grant, we will accept it.

A motion was made by Councilmember Tim Brown and seconded by Councilmember David McGowan to adopt the following Resolution Supporting The NC Division of Parks and Recreation Accessible Parks Grant. Motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE NC DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION ACCESSIBLE PARKS GRANT

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation has put a call out for 2025 grant applications; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Wilson's Mills is intending to submit an application to help fund the National Fitness Campaign Fitness Studio at Phillip R. Wright Community Park, with at least \$1 of local funds for every \$5 in grant funds; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council of the Town of Wilson's Mills wishes to go on record supporting the grant application.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wilson's Mills Town Council does hereby endorse the Town's grant application and urges the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation to fund this important initiative.

Budget Discussions for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Ms. Worley said we got some numbers back from the Johnston County Tax Office and our values were at \$274,918,000 in 2024 and as of 2025 our values are at \$531,109,000. She said she would not recommend being revenue neutral in the upcoming fiscal year.

Mayor Byrd said with the growth coming into town residents will expect services to be provided to them. She also said we need equipment in the Public Works Department and more staffing in Town Hall and the Police Department.

Councilmember Brown said we do not have services that other towns do so he feels we need to reinvest our tax dollars to benefit our citizens. Councilmember McGowan suggested speaking with the citizens about what they would like to see in town and

also suggested sending updates out via mail. Ms. Worley said last year we were sending out mailers quarterly but there was little to no feedback on the information that was presented.

Ms. Worley said the League of Municipalities will be closing their Health Benefits Services pool in the upcoming fiscal year and we are now in the process of shopping for new health benefits for our employees.

ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Councilmember David McGowan and seconded by Councilmember Carolyn Dobbin to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35pm.




EMILY MATTHEWS, CMC
Town Clerk


FLETA A. BYRD, Mayor