

TOWN OF WILSON'S MILLS
WORK SESSION MEETING
July 28, 2025

PRESENT: Mayor Fleta Byrd, Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett, Councilmembers David McGowan, and Carolyn Dobbin.

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

ABSENT: Councilmember Randy Jernigan

CONVOCATION: Mayor Byrd declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 5:07pm.

Departmental Reports: Mayor said she likes the graphics promoting upcoming events as well as the recent Facebook posts. Ms. Worley said Events Coordinator Peter Vantine has been interviewing entertainment and vendors for the upcoming Community Day event and posting about it on Facebook.

Councilmember McGowan asked about the unforeseen credit card purchases listed in the finance report. Finance Officer Sherry Hudson said there were more credit card purchases in June than budgeted for and the totals for the credit card payments were applied after the budget amendment was done last month but all line items are correct at this time.

Councilmember McGowan asked about the flood plain development permits mentioned in the Planning Department report and Planning Director Oldham said a couple houses that have been recently built are built on the edge of a floodplain area. She said it will be listed on the deed for the houses that they are on the edge of the area so the homeowner will be aware. She said this will also allow the homeowners to be allowed to get insurance through FEMA. Councilmember McGowan said citizens may want to check where their property is and if it is close to a floodplain area. Mrs. Oldham said the Planning Department will be at Community Day next month and they can hand out information about the floodplain areas in town.

Arrival of Councilmember: Councilmember Tim Brown arrived at 5:17pm.

Departmental Reports Continued: Mayor Byrd asked if Main Street still floods and Public Works Director Patrick Moore said it doesn't flood as badly as it used to.

Councilmember McGowan mentioned the high grass in the Cottages subdivision and expressed concerns. He said he understands that the current process is to send a letter to the homeowner and allow them a certain amount of time to cut the grass and then a second notice is sent. He said by the time both letters are sent there could be close to 2 months of growth. He said if the process is up to us rather than the state we should be able to shorten the process. Mrs. Oldham said our ordinances states we will send the homeowner a letter giving them 15 days from the date of the letter. She said then a second letter is sent if it is not resolved. Councilmember McGowan said we should look into changing the ordinances in order to change the process.

Councilmember McGowan asked who is decorating the fire hydrants for the

new Dog Park and Ms. Worley said we have 4 hydrants and have had 2 people volunteer so far. Councilmember McGowan asked if there have been any updates from Town Engineer Brian Leonard regarding the drainage issues in town and Public Works Director Moore said he is waiting on an email from Mr. Leonard about possible solutions.

Councilmember David McGowan asked for there to be less details in the Police Department monthly report and Chief said he would take note of what to leave out of the report in the future. Councilmember Brown said we now have 12 full time officers and asked how many more officers we would need to be fully staffed. Chief said we have lost 3 fulltime officers recently but we have 4 currently going through BLET. Councilmember McGowan asked about recent promotions within the department and Chief explained we have recently promoted 2 officers, one to Sergeant and one to Corporal. Chief also said a part-time officer recently received an accreditation which will bring us up to standards with policy and procedure. Councilmember McGowan asked if the recent promotion within the department were part of this year's budget. Ms. Worley said no but the promotions will not cause the salaries to change due to the current salary grade we have. She said the top priority of the new Human Resources Director will be to get the salary grade straightened out because we do not have anything that would allow for pay increases based on promotions now, only based on experience.

**Presentation of
Comprehensive Utilities
Study – Ethan Gartin, TRC
Companies:**

Ethan Gartin of TRC said after the last time he met with Council about the Comprehensive Utilities Study, he met with some members of town staff to adjust numbers such as population growth in town. Based on the updated information he said it was determined that if the town were to takeover utility service from the County the monthly bill would be \$195. He said this is one-third higher than surrounding municipalities. He said this is without a purchase fee to the County.

Mr. Gartin said he thinks now that the County has looked more into the possibility of turning utilities over to us they have realized that is not a feasible option. He said he also thinks there was a disconnect between the County and engineering staff. Councilmember Brown asked if Mr. Gartin thinks there has been some backtracking on the County's side of things. Mr. Gartin said he doesn't think so but he was surprised some of this information wasn't brought up in earlier discussions.

Councilmember Brown asked if having a copy of this study would be an asset to us as a town and Ms. Worley said yes. Mayor Byrd also said if the county and other municipalities want to go with regionalization we will have the study to show as our assets. Ms. Worley also said the County is looking into creating agreements with each town and this study will help us when those conversations begin with the County.

A motion was made by Councilmember David McGowan and seconded by Councilmember Tim Brown to approve the Comprehensive Utilities Study as presented by TRC. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Worley asked if Mr. Gartin would send her a copy of the final study and she would distribute it as needed.

RECESS:

Mayor Byrd called for a recess at 6:14pm.

Mayor Byrd called the meeting back to order at 6:20pm.

**Discussion of Town Hall
Campus Master Plan:**

Ms. Worley referenced plans for the Town Hall Campus Master Plan from 310 in Council's packets. She said the current cost for the design of the Police Department is \$589,000 and the estimated cost for the building based on the square footage and staff projections \$20-25 million. She suggested instead of building a larger Police Department, using the current building and add in substations in town. Councilmember Brown asked for the estimated square footage of building and Chief Williams said between 15,000 and 16,000 square feet. Councilmember Brown said he doesn't think it will cost that much for a 15,000 square foot building. Mayor asked if we were to put the Police Department on the current Town Hall campus, where would they like it to go. Council discussed demolishing a current building on the campus in order to build a Police Department. Councilmember McGowan mentioned having it in front of the development close to town hall. Mayor Byrd asked Chief if we were to move all admin staff to the new building on the Town Hall Campus and leave the current department for patrol officer to check in, would that be a good solution and Chief said yes. Councilmember Brown said we could build a building the size of Wilson's Mills Fire Department Station 3 for less than 4 million. He asked if we were to do that, how much would we have to budget for in order to not raise taxes in the upcoming fiscal year. Ms. Worley explained even if we were to receive money from state legislature it would have a time limit in when it needed to be used and this building isn't even designed yet. Councilmember McGowan asked if Chief knows of any other departments and any grants they may have used. Councilmember Brown said we should do design-build in order to save money. Mayor said at this time we are just needing to decide if we want the company to move forward with designing the building for us. Mayor suggested scaling the size back to 10,000 square foot. Councilmember McGowan asked if the size of the Public Works building would be big enough. Mayor Pro-tem Triplett said the space needs to be able to be built onto in the future.

After further discussion it was the consensus of Council to move forward with having Mosely Architects complete the design for a 10,000 square foot Police Department.

Strategic Plan Updates:

Ms. Worley said at their September work session Council discussed working with the Chamber of Commerce and having them update our Strategic Plan for us. She said the North Carolian League of Municipalities (NCLM) is holding a 2-day workshop in October and they have invited elected officials and managers to attend and they would work on our strategic plan with us. She said this would take place in Winston Salem and in order to qualify at least 3 elected officials would have to commit to go but she would prefer the entire board to go, if possible. She said that Mrs. Doris Riley would also go as a member of the Planning Board and since she is running for Town Council this fall. She said the cost would be \$800 for up to 5 people to go and there would be an additional charge for each additional person. She said the total for 5 members of Council, herself, and Mrs. Riley to go it would be \$1,200. She said our Strategic Plan needs updating and we would like to add in economic development and this workshop would help with that. Mayor Byrd said the workshop is October 8th and 9th and we need to go ahead and sign up if we plan to attend so we don't lose our chance. Councilmember Brown asked if it would be cheaper to do the workshop rather than hiring someone to come in and help. Ms. Worley said the Department of Commerce, as well as NC State, would help and while they are cheaper, the parameters of the plan would be limited. She said this workshop would

allow Council to update the current plan and then hold public hearings to get public input. Councilmember McGowan asked what the personal cost would be for each Councilmember. Ms. Worley said everything would be paid for by the town. Councilmember Brown said his opinion is that this workshop is the best way to get the most done rather than stretching it out.

After further discussion it was the consensus of Council to move forward with registering for the workshop in Winston Salem on October 8th and 9th.

ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett and seconded by Councilmember Carolyn Dobbin to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:43pm.




FLETA A. BYRD, Mayor


EMILY MATTHEWS, QMC
Town Clerk