TOWN OF WILSON'S MILLS
REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
May 17, 2021

PRESENT: Mayor Phillip Wright, Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett, Councilmembers David McGowan, Randy Jernigan, Carolyn Dobbin, and Tim Brown.

OTHERS PRESENT: Town Administrator/Clerk Leighanna Worley, Finance Officer Sherry Hudson, and Town Attorney Gabriel Du Sablon.

CONVOCATION: Mayor Wright declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

INVOCATION: Mayor Wright gave the invocation.

PLEDGE TO FLAG Mayor Wright led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mayor Wright asked for the approval of the agenda.

Mayor asked to add agenda item 6a(ii) "Discussion of Triangle J Board Member Delegate and Alternate" as well as agenda item 6g(v) "Call for Public Hearing-Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2021-2022."

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett and seconded by Councilmember Randy Jernigan to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mayor Wright asked for any comments or corrections to the minutes for the Regular Town Council Meeting for April 19, 2021.

Regular Town Council Meeting-April 19, 2021:

A motion was made by Councilmember David McGowan and seconded by Councilmember Carolyn Dobbin to approve the Regular Town Council Meeting Minutes for April 19, 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

Special Town Council Meeting-May 6, 2021: Mayor Wright asked for any comments or corrections to the minutes for the Special Town Council Meeting for May 6, 2021.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett seconded by Councilmember David McGowan to approve the Special Town Council Meeting Minutes for May 6, 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

Closed Session Council Meeting-May 6, 2021: Mayor Wright asked for any comments or corrections to the minutes for the Closed Session Council Meeting for May 6, 2021.

A motion was made by Councilmember David McGowan and seconded by Councilmember Carolyn Dobbin to approve the Closed Session Meeting Minutes for May 6, 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

1st OPEN FORUM Mayor Wright opened the 1st Open Forum at 6:34pm.

Jim Uzzle of 138C Uzzle Industrial Drive stated that he is representing town citizens who have concerns about the upcoming budget. He stated concerns about the salary study for the current employees. He asked that Council keep all these concerns in mind when entering into the new fiscal year.

With no one else wishing to speak Mayor Wright closed the 1st Open Forum at 6:38pm

REGULAR BUSINESS

MAYOR PHILLIP WRIGHT – Mayor and Events Report:

Proclamation in Honor of Memorial Day

Mayor Wright read the following Proclamation:

PROCLAMATION IN
HONOR OF
MEMORIAL DAY

WHEREAS, millions of men and women have answered the call to duty in defending the hard-won freedoms we enjoy today; and

WHEREAS, Memorial Day is the occasion on which we remember, recognize, and honor the unselfish service of those no longer with us; and

WHEREAS, while we feel sorrow over their loss, we thank God that such people lived and gave their full measure so that we might live in liberty and freedom; and

WHEREAS, many of those who faced enemy fire on battlefields the world over were from Johnston County and Wilson's Mills, or are presently residing in this area, and many more our of communities' sons and daughters currently serve overseas to protect our national freedom – Freedom is not Free.

THEREFORE, the Town Council of the Town of Wilson's Mills asks all citizens of Wilson's Mills to recognize the hardships and sacrifices of those we know as veterans and let us remember the words of the song which says so much about this observance, "All gave some… some gave all."

This is the 17th day of May 2021

Mayor Wright said there are not any updates for the Events Committee. He asked Events Coordinator Emily Matthews for any updates he might have. Ms. Matthews said that a meeting was planned for last Monday but due to lack of attendance the meeting could not take place.

Discussion of Triangle J Board Delegate and Alternate

Councilmember David McGowan said that he is the current delegate for the Triangle J Board and former Mayor Jim Uzzle was the alternate for Wilson's Mills. He said that the alternate will need to be replaced now that Mr. Uzzle is no longer on Council, and he also asked that another Councilmember step in as delegate. He stated that the meetings have been virtual for the last year, but they will soon start up in person again and the meetings will take place in Cary. Councilmember McGowan said that he prefers not to travel at night and therefore would like for someone else to step in delegate. He stated that he would be okay with moving into the position of alternate. Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett asked when the meetings are, and Councilmember McGowan said they take place on the last Wednesday of each month at 6:00. Councilmember McGowan also said that if no one is available to be the delegate he would be okay with switching back and forth to attend the meetings with the alternate. Mayor Wright suggested tabling the discussion until next month's meeting in an effort to give everyone a chance to think about how to move forward.

MAYOR PRO-TEM JC TRIPLETT – Sewer Report:

Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett deferred to Town Administrator Leighanna Worley to update Council on the sewer in Crescent Mills Subdivision.

Town Administrator Leighanna Worley stated that she has met with Johnston County and the developers for Crescent Mills Subdivision about an agreement for the upsize of the sewer. She said as of last week the county came up with an alternative option that would not involve the county and would save everyone money. Ms. Worley said that the line is still going to be upsized, but the county wouldn't be involved. Town Attorney Gabriel Du Sablon is meeting with county attorneys soon and will be able to provide an update afterwards.

COUNCILMEMBER CAROLYN DOBBIN – Planning Report:

Councilmember Carolyn Dobbin stated that there was not a Planning Board meeting in April because there was no new business to discuss. She also said that Development Compliance Officer Wendy Oldham has been working with Chad Sary on the updated Unified Development Ordinance.

Councilmember Dobbin asked if there were any questions. Councilmember David McGowan had questions in regard to the number of violations in the report. He asked about the 9 reported Code Enforcement violations and 8 reported zoning violations. He said of the total 17 there were only 14 listed as abated or resulting in fines being issued. Development Compliance Officer Wendy Oldham said that Code Enforcement violations give the citizen a chance to abate and avoid a fine whereas zoning violations result in an automatic fine. The remaining 3 violations are receiving a 2nd letter in the mail.

Call for Public Hearing-Ordinance to Amend the Unified Development Ordinance (160D)

Development Compliance Officer Wendy Oldham explained the reason for the public hearing is so that Council can review the changes for the UDO.

A motion was made by Councilmember David McGowan and seconded by Councilmember Randy Jernigan to call for a public hearing to amend the Unified Development Ordinance on June 21st, 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

COUNCILMEMBER DAVID McGOWAN – Police Department Report:

Councilmember David McGowan deferred to Chief Willaims.

Chief Williams reported that all is going well in the department, and he is proud of the low crime rate. He stated that we currently have a good group of officers, and they are doing their best to stay ahead of the curve of crime.

Councilmember David McGowan asked about the number of accidents reported and Chief stated the number of accidents has increased over the last month. He said that these are usually happening in big intersections and some result in injuries whereas some do not.

COUNCILMEMBER RANDY JERNIGAN – Public Works Department Report:

Councilmember Randy Jernigan said that bids have been awarded for the paving of Poplar Creek and work should start on the 25th of this month. He also said there are plans to check on Country Valley and make sure everything is still good in that area.

Councilmember David McGowan asked about pesticide license listed in the report. Councilmember Randy Jernigan said that employees using pesticides must have a license to use pesticides in a state right of way.

Councilmember David McGowan asked if there is any update in the status of the maintenance building and Councilmember Randy Jernigan stated there is no update.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT – Sherry Hudson:

Mayor Wright referenced the report on the financials for the month ending April 2021 in Council's packets.

Review of Financial Statements – April 2021:

Mayor Wright asked Council if there were any questions.

Councilmember David McGowan asked about software support and wanted to know if files are backed up. Finance Officer Sherry Hudson said they are backed up offsite and the server is offsite as well. Councilmember McGowan asked about the frequency of the backups and Town Administrator Leighanna Worley said they are backed up daily.

Approve Contract for Auditing Services for Fiscal Year 2020-2021

Mayor Wright referenced the auditing contract in Council's packets. He stated that Finance Officer Sherry Hudson and Town Administrator Leighanna Worley have both looked over the contract.

Councilmember David McGowan asked about various fees listed in the contract and Finance Officer Sherry Hudson explained the fees in question. Councilmember McGowan requested for Ms. Hudson to sit down with him at a later time so they can further discuss some of the fees.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett and seconded by Councilmember Carolyn Dobbin to approve the Contract for Auditing Services for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. Motion carried unanimously.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – Leighanna Worley:

Resolution Accepting American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Funds:

Town Administrator Leighanna Worley said that this act was signed into law in March of this year, and it includes funds from the federal government. She said the funds will be distributed to local municipalities in August. She said this is similar to the CARES Act funds from last year however this will be straight from the federal government to the town rather than being distributed by the county. He said that she does not have an amount for the funds yet but should know the amount in the next couple of weeks. Ms. Worley said that Council must vote on whether or not to accept the money and if accepted the funds can only be used for specific things. She also said that the town would have to return the funds that aren't used. She said this could be used on COVID related expenses and possibly could be used on salaries.

Councilmember David McGowan expressed concerns about receiving the funds. He asked if the town is currently on firm financial footing and Town Administrator Leighanna Worley said yes. Councilmember McGowan went on to say that he is not interested in accepting the funds because he is worried about how it will affect the national debt.

Councilmember Randy Jernigan said that he agrees with Councilmember McGowan but also thinks that overall, it will greatly benefit the town and its citizens.

Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett said that he believes if the town is offered these funds, we should take them.

Councilmember Tim Brown asked if there is any idea how these funds can be used. Town Administrator Leighanna Worley said this would be similar to the CARES Act funding and more than likely the funds will go to salaries for public safety employees. She also said that these funds would be more than the CARES Act Funds.

Councilmember Carolyn Dobbin asked if we receive the funds, and they can't be used is there a way to return the funds. Town Administrator Leighanna Worley said it is required that any funds not used be returned. Ms. Worley also said these funds would come in over a period of 2 fiscal years and will have to go into a separate fund. Ms. Worley stated that the allocation amount will be known in the next couple weeks and that Council can table the discussion until next month's meeting.

A motion was made by Councilmember Randy Jernigan and seconded by Councilmember David McGowan to table the discussion of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Funds until the June council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Approve Contract for Planning Consultant Services-Stewart Inc.:

Town Administrator Leighanna Worley said that the town has been using Stewart Inc for the last couple years and the contract with them has to be renewed annually. She said the pricing per hour has not changed and that the only change is the date of the contract. She said the planning department is still using them but not nearly as much as they have in previous years. Development Compliance Officer Wendy Oldham has gotten both certifications required for her position and therefore has been able to do a lot of the work usually provided by Stewart however we are still using their services for bigger developments.

Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett asked if there is a minimum for how much we have to spend for their services. Town Administrator Leighanna Worley said no, we are just charged on an hourly basis.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett and seconded by Councilmember Randy Jernigan to approve the Contract for Planning Consultant Services with Stewart Inc. Motion carried unanimously.

Ratify Resolution in Opposition of Proposed Zoning Reform-Senate Bill 349 and House Bill 401:

Town Administrator Leighanna Worley said that this bill is presented on the premise of housing opportunities. She stated that this bill will take the zoning authority away from local municipalities and would allow for state-wide zoning. Ms. Worley also said that this bill did not pass the Senate and is currently in the House of Representatives.

A motion was made by Councilmember David McGowan and seconded by Councilmember Randy Jernigan to ratify the resolution in opposition of the proposed zoning reform Senate Bill 349 and House Bill 401. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion of Budget Sessions May 20th and June 14th:

Town Administrator Leighanna Worley said that Council's last budget meeting took place on April 15th and at that time they decided to recess the meeting until May 20th. They also have scheduled an additional session on June 14th to gather info on the salary study before the public hearing. Ms. Worley said that there have been no new updates since the last meeting on the 15th of April. She said that if Council has nothing new to discuss they can wait until June 14th to meet again regarding the budget.

Mayor Wright stated that he would like to see the members of the Planning Board receive payment for their attendance at Planning Board meetings. Councilmember David McGowan said that he is in favor of that if it will provide incentive for members to attend the meetings.

Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett said he would like to receive information on what other towns do in regard to paying their Planning Board members. Councilmember David McGowan suggested to not have a budget meeting on the 20th and instead giving time to do research and report the findings at the June meeting.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett and seconded by Councilmember Carolyn Dobbin to move the recessed budget meeting from May 20th until June 14th. Motion carried unanimously.

Town Administrator Leighanna Worley said that the budget meeting is set for 6:30 on the 14th but due to scheduling conflicts with Piedmont Triangle who is presenting the salary study, we will need alternate dates. Upon discussion Council decided that the 15th and 16th of June would be good alternate dates for the meeting.

Call for Public Hearing-Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Town Administrator Leighanna Worley informed Council they need to call for the public hearing in June on the budget so it can be advertised.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett and seconded by Councilmember David McGowan to call for a public hearing for the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 budget on June 21st, 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

2nd OPEN FORUM:

Mayor Wright opened the 2nd Public Forum at 7:32pm.

Faye Wright of 725 Powhatan Road expressed concerns about funds the town may receive being used on salaries. She also expressed concerns about paying the Planning Board members and said that she feels we need to do what is best for us and not what other towns are doing. Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett said that Council

will do what is best for the town but would like to know what the parameters are before moving forward. Councilmember Tim Brown agreed with Mayor Pro-tem Triplett. Mrs. Wright said that funds could be used at the Community Park.

With no one else wishing to speak, Mayor Wright closed the 2nd Open Forum at 7:37pm.

MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION:

A motion was made by Councilmember David McGowan and seconded by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett to go into Closed Session at 7:37pm pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4) "…to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of business…" Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION TO COME OUT OF CLOSED SESSION:

A motion was made by Councilmember David McGowan and seconded by Councilmember Randy Jernigan to come out of Closed Session at 8:02pm. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN:

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:02pm.

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PHILLIP WRIGHT, Mayor

ATTEST:

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EMILY MATTHEWS for LEIGHANNA WORLEY, MMC, NCCMC
Town Administrator / Clerk