

TOWN OF WILSON'S MILLS
REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
September 18, 2023

PRESENT: Mayor Fleta Byrd, Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett, Councilmembers Randy Jernigan, David McGowan, and Tim Brown.

OTHERS PRESENT: Town Administrator Leighanna Worley, Town Clerk Emily Matthews, and Town Attorney Gabriel Du Sablon.

ABSENT: Councilmember Carolyn Dobbins

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

PLEDGE Mayor Byrd led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

INVOCATION: Mayor Byrd gave the invocation.

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

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett and seconded by Councilmember Tim Brown to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mayor Byrd asked for any comments or corrections to the minutes for the Regular Town Council Meeting for August 21, 2023.

**Regular Town
Council Meeting-
August 21, 2023:**

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett and seconded by Councilmember Tim Brown to approve the Regular Town Council Meeting Minutes for August 21, 2023, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

1st OPEN FORUM Mayor Byrd opened the 1st Public Forum at 6:32pm.

Pastor Robinson of Union Hill Church said the county waterline came through the church property with easement and messed up the parking lot. Mr. Robinson said the church took out a loan 3 years ago to pave the parking lot and now the work from the County has damaged the work that was done. The church is seeking guidance and direction on how the parking lot can be restored. Town Administrator Leighanna Worley asked Mr. Robinson to call her and she will be able to discuss with him how the issue can be resolved.

With no one else wishing to speak, Mayor Byrd closed the 1st Open Forum at 6:36pm.

REGULAR BUSINESS

MAYOR FLETA BYRD:

Mayor Byrd said she has attended several meetings in the last month including a USDA meeting in Wilson where she gained more information about how to obtain grant money for the town. She was also a part of the meeting that the Johnston County Mayors had with Wiley Nickel regarding the issues he hopes to tackle during his term. Mayor Byrd was also part of the staff retreat that took place on September 7th and she said she is very proud of the staff and all they are doing to work on community engagement.

**TOWN
ADMINISTRATOR'S
REPORT – Leighanna
Worley:**

Town Administrator Worley also said she is proud of the Department Heads and staff and how they are working together to grow the town. Ms. Worley said her PELA project is on community engagement and that was the sole focus of the retreat. She said there will be information on the project at the October meeting. She said increasing community engagement is part of the town's strategic plan as well.

Ms. Worley said the keyless entry at the town hall building is almost complete. She also said the Requests for Qualifications for the council chambers will be going out next week. The Chamber of Commerce is working to start a publication called Livability and there will be information in the next couple weeks about the cost of putting information about Wilson’s Mills in the publication.

Councilmember David McGowan asked what the timeline for the billboard is outside of town hall to be removed. Town Administrator Worley said the previous owner has until next May to make sure it is removed.

TRC Contract Approval

Ms. Worley said at their July meeting Council awarded the bid for the Comprehensive Utilities Plan to TRC Engineering. Ms. Worley referenced the contract in Council’s packets and stated the Total for the project is listed as \$60,000 and a grant was received for \$49,999. The town budgeted for an additional \$10,000 and will be removing the difference of \$1 to pay for the project.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett and seconded by Councilmember Tim Brown to approve the contract from TRC Engineering for the Comprehensive Utilities Plan. Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCE OFFICER’S REPORT – Sherry Hudson:

Finance Officer Sherry Hudson referenced the financial report for the month of August 2023 and there were no questions.

Review of Financial Statements – August 2023:

Councilmember McGowan commended Ms. Hudson on her excellent work and always being prepared to answer any questions.

Amend Wilson’s Mills Finance Policy

Finance Officer Hudson presented the amendment to the Finance Policy which would change the requirement for a purchase order from \$250 to \$1000.

A motion was made by Councilmember David McGowan and seconded by Councilmember Tim Brown to amend the Finance Policy for the Town of Wilson’s Mills. Motion carried unanimously.

PLANNING AND ZONING REPORT – Wendy Oldham

Planning Director Wendy Oldham referenced the planning Department report in Council’s packets and there were no questions.

EVENTS REPORT – Emily Matthews

Events Coordinator Emily Matthews said there are 2 more Farmers Markets this season and the Community Yard Sale is this Saturday September 23rd. There will also be a Touch-a-Truck event on October 7th during the Farmers Market.

Appointment to Events Committee: Karon Chanski

Ms. Matthews referenced the Committee Appointment form in Council’s packets for the appointment of Karon Chanski to the Events Committee. Mayor Byrd said Ms. Chanski is a vendor at the Farmers Market and she would be a great addition to the committee.

A motion was made by Councilmember Tim Brown and seconded by Councilmember David McGowan to appoint Karon Chanski to the Wilson’s Mills Events Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT – Chief Williams

Chief Williams referenced the Police report in Council’s packets and asked if there were any questions.

Councilmember McGowan said he has spoken with Chief about the issue of squatters in Wilson’s Mills and chief said that is not an issue for us at this time but he will talk to other Chiefs in the county to get ideas on how to handle the issue should it ever come up.

Councilmember McGowan noted the rise in the number of arrests for the month of August and Sergeant Barton said the number has gone up for a variety of reasons and the call volume has also increased. Sergeant Barton also said that due to the high call volume it has become evident that the department needs more officers and if the department does not grow soon the safety of the town will decline. Councilmember McGowan asked if we have any on call officers and Chief Williams said there is not enough coverage in the department to have an on-call officer.

Town Administrator Worley said there is a desperate need for more officers as well as positions in Public Works. Mayor Byrd and Council all stated that they will make sure to accommodate the staffing needs in the future and hope to have the budgetary requirements at the beginning of the next calendar year.

**PUBLIC WORKS
REPORT – Patrick Moore**

Public Works Director Patrick Moore referenced the Public Works report in Council’s packets.

Mayor Byrd said the repairs at the Community Park look great. Councilmember McGowan asked how much it cost to repair the damage at the park and Mr. Moore said it cost \$5,000 but our insurance deductible was \$500.00.

**COUNCILMEMBER
COMMENTS:**

Councilmember Brown stated the stoplights on Swift Creek Road are still out of sync and need to be reconfigured to help with traffic flow.

2nd OPEN FORUM

Mayor Byrd opened the 2nd Public Forum at 7:12pm.

With no one wishing to speak, Mayor Byrd closed the 2nd Open Forum at 7:13pm.

ADJOURN:

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:13pm.



Fleta A. Byrd
FLETA A. BYRD, Mayor

Emily A. Matthews
EMILY A. MATTHEWS, CMC
Deputy Town Clerk