

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF GASTON
TOWN OF CRAMERTON**

June 7, 2005

The Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Tuesday, June 7, 2005 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Cathy Young; Mayor Pro Tempore Jeff Ramsey; Commissioners Ronald Murphy, Jacque Sumner, Willie Carter and Joel Lineberger.

OTHERS PRESENT: Michael Peoples, Town Manager; LuAnn Ellis, Town Clerk; Steve Baucom, Town Planner; Greg Ratchford, Police Chief; Charles Hastings, Water Department; Jamie Shytle, Wastewater Department; Cam Carpenter, Recreation Director; Rodney Robinson, Deputy Police Chief; and Chris Baxter, Police Captain.

Mayor Young called the meeting to order. Mayor Pro Tempore Ramsey gave the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance was offered by all.

CONSENT AGENDA: Upon a motion by Commissioner Sumner, seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Ramsey, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

Approval of the Minutes of the April 26, 2005 and May 3, 2005 Meetings.

PUBLIC HEARING – 2005-2006 ANNUAL BUDGET: Upon a motion by Mayor Pro Tempore, seconded by Commissioner Carter, the Board voted unanimously to open the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Sumner asked if the proposed benefit package included the Christmas bonuses for employees. She was advised that the amount was included in the budgeted figures.

Commissioner Sumner stated that she was amazed at how much the medical insurance had increased.

Commissioner Sumner stated that some of the local merchants could be approached about contributions for the annual festival. She stated that First National, the new bank in town was very generous with the other towns where they had branches with contributions.

Mayor Young asked about the amount included for the festival and if it included a performer. She was advised that the amount in this year's budget was actually less than what had been spent the last couple of years.

Commissioner Sumner asked if the amount in general government travel included the contract amount for the manager. She was advised that it did.

Commissioner Carter stated that she felt that there were some items in the budget that could be reduced. She stated that the amounts for vehicles and fuel could be reduced. She stated that she had talked with the Manager earlier that day, but could not remember specific items she thought could be reduced.

The Manager was asked if it would be less expensive to pay mileage rather than to allow take home vehicles. He advised that some people were on call and it doesn't take as much time to allow them to drive a vehicle home rather than have to come to town for equipment and a vehicle.

Commissioner Sumner asked about the figure for the water department truck. She was advised that the cost was an estimate and most likely would be lower. She was further advised that it was to replace a 1991 model and a gator-type vehicle was also proposed to be funded which would cut down on the constant stopping and starting of the water vehicle.

Commissioner Murphy stated that the water department should be commended for their last year's budget. He stated that some departments were over spent but this department had kept their numbers in line. He stated that he had a problem with some of the line items being overspent.

Mayor Pro Tempore Ramsey stated that he had talked with Commissioner Lineberger about the rates for taps. Commissioner Lineberger stated that the present fees were not enough for the town to break even.

Commissioner Lineberger asked if the number of minimum water bill customers had been determined. He was advised that two-hundred-forty people paid a minimum bill.

A discussion continued concerning the tap fee charges.

Commissioner Lineberger stated again that he did not think that the fees were adequate. He stated that if Cramerton was to be a bedroom community, it should be the master bedroom community.

Commissioner Sumner stated that she agreed with Commissioner Lineberger, that we had a benefit with our location to Charlotte and I-85.

Mayor Young asked if we increased the rates too much would builders not be deterred. The Town Manager stated that the costs were justifiable.

Commissioner Murphy asked about the recycling. He asked if that service could be dropped or was it in the contract. He was advised that it was in the contract.

Commissioner Murphy asked about the number of non-profit organizations that had the roll-out type containers and should they not be charged for that service.

The discussion concerning the tap fees continued. Commissioner Lineberger stated that the option number four for utility rates was enough to get to the level needed, but not a great margin for the future.

Mayor Pro Tempore Ramsey asked about the level of water that was lost during the month. He was advised that by billing in the thousands rather than the hundreds, a lot of water was lost that way.

Commissioner Lineberger asked if the water rate for the elderly could be distinguished. He was advised that by statute, that could not be done.

Commissioner Sumner asked about the replacement of a computer with the fire department. She stated that she thought a new computer had been purchased last year. She was advised that this was to replace the computer that they used for the accounting system.

Mayor Young asked about the progress of the audit. She stated that the audit had not been done and felt that the amount requested this year should be there from last year and the Board had no intent that this would be an annual cost.

Commissioner Lineberger stated that he had talked with the Town auditor and he was willing to look at what had been done so far at the fire department.

Commissioner Murphy asked about the funds that had been requested as capital funds for the purchase of a fire truck. He was advised that these funds had been cut prior to coming to the board.

Mayor Young asked about the cost for the lawnmower and suggested that this amount be taken from the budget and the property added to the town's lawn service contract since the town did own the property.

There were no public comments.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sumner, seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Ramsey, the Board voted unanimously to close the hearing.

DISCUSSION OF CRAMERTON (MAYWORTH) SCHOOL: Mayor Young stated that the developer would be at the June 28 meeting.

CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE WASTEWATER LOAN: Upon a motion by Commissioner Murphy, seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Ramsey, the Board voted unanimously to adopt the following ordinance:

INSERT ORDINANCE

CAPITAL PROJECT – PARTI GRANT: Upon a motion by Mayor Pro Tempore Ramsey, seconded by Commissioner Sumner, the Board voted unanimously to adopt the following ordinance.

INSERT ORDINANCE

PERSONNEL POLICY, PAY PLAN AND CLASSIFICATION: The Town Manager stated that the change that required the Town Manager to reside in the Town Limits had been added to the policy.

The Town Manager stated that the personnel committee had worked hard on the policy and the town attorney had reviewed the document and had no comments.

The Town Manager stated that the policy had been done in part by the Committee, taking from other policies and from COG.

Commissioner Murphy stated that the mileage to and from home for take home cars with a limit of thirty miles seemed quite excessive to him. The Town Manager stated that a long discussion on this matter was held by the Committee and they felt that some positions were difficult to fill and that the Town should try to attract and retain key personnel.

The Police Chief provided a list of miles to work from home for each officer to the Board. He stated that there were two officers that had a longer distance to drive. He stated that one officer was moving to an apartment less than a mile from work and the other officer was in the process of looking for a home closer to town and had his home for sale.

Commissioner Murphy asked if the wear and tear on the vehicles was not worse. The Police Chief stated that he felt the benefits far outweighed the option of not taking the car home. He stated that when an officer got in his car, he was on duty. He stated that the response time was much quicker than having to come to the department to trade a vehicle.

Commissioner Sumner stated that she felt the time issue could make a difference in some cases in argument for take-home vehicles.

Commissioner Murphy stated that the wastewater superintendent drives about thirty miles one way. He asked would it not be more economical to pay mileage. He was advised that operators were hard to find.

Commissioner Sumner stated that she felt that safety dictated the need to take the vehicles home.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sumner, seconded by Commissioner Lineberger, the Board voted unanimously to approve the policy with the change made to require the Town Manager to reside in the town limits. A copy of the policy will be filed in the office of the Town Clerk.

FINISTAR INVESTMENT: Mayor Young stated that a representative of the company had been present at the last meeting and asked if the Board would like to participate.

Commissioner Lineberger stated that he felt it was a neat tool, but could not argue with the interest rate.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Lineberger, seconded by Commissioner Murphy, the Board voted unanimously to adopt the following Resolution:

INSERT RESOLUTION

SET FILING FEES FOR NEXT ELECTION: Mayor Young stated that the filing fees for the next election needed to be set by the Board.

Commissioner Lineberger asked if the two year seat held by Commissioner Carter would be designated on the ballot as such. He was advised that the persons filing should be advised that they were filing for a two year or a four year seat.

Commissioner Carter stated that she had been told that the town should increase the rates.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Murphy, seconded by Commissioner Sumner, the Board voted unanimously to have the fees remain the same as the last election, which were \$5.00 for Commissioner and \$10.00 for Mayor.

FEE SCHEDULE: Commissioner Murphy made a motion to adopt the fee schedule as submitted with the changes to the tap fees as follows:

Residential: \$2,000.00 in town; \$2,300 out of town for water; and

Residential: \$2,500 in town and \$2,800 out of town for sewer.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sumner. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Commissioners Murphy, Sumner and Carter and Mayor Pro Tempore Ramsey. Noes: Commissioner Lineberger. The motion carries.

2005-2006 ANNUAL BUDGET: Mayor Young stated that the changes to the budget had been to remove \$3,000.00 from the fire department for lawn equipment and to add the property to the town contract and to remove the \$5,000.00 for the audit and to add the cost to the Town's contract for auditing.

Mayor Young stated that she wanted to make sure that the audit for the fire department was addressed that the residents would hold them accountable for where the money goes.

Mr. Bo Coy stated that they had started the process and had given the papers to Commissioner Lineberger, but he had wanted a double column balance sheet. He stated that their software was not capable of producing that at this time. He stated that they had a balance sheet but it was not a double column.

Mayor Young stated that she just wanted to make sure the fire department could justify what had been spent.

Mayor Pro Tempore Ramsey stated that he would like to commend the Town Manager for his work on the budget and thank the department heads for working with him.

Commissioner Murphy stated that he would like to see a higher collection rate for the taxes, that was money the town lost if it was not collected.

Mayor Pro Tempore Ramsey made a motion to adopt the budget with the changes to the fire department, removing from the fire department and adding \$3,000.00 to the town's budget for the contract to mow the grass and removing \$5,000.00 from the fire department budget and adding it to the town's budget to allow for auditing services. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lineberger. The vote was as follows: Ayes: Mayor Pro Tempore Ramsey; Commissioners Lineberger and Sumner. Noes: Commissioners Murphy and Carter. The motion carries.

POLICE CHIEF REPORT: The Police Chief stated that there had been several arrests in the Riverside Community in the area where the Board had been concerned and they were waiting on signs to be placed in the park area.

TOWN PLANNER – REPORT ON PARK: The Town Planner stated that the engineering services had been priced and he was working to scale the price down some. He stated that when he was done, that could be sent to the State for approval and the engineering work could begin.

COMMISSIONER MURPHY – COMMENTS: Commissioner Murphy asked about the parking situation on Tenth, Eighth and Mayflower Streets. He stated that there was a trailer parked in the street that was causing problems. He stated that he thought there had been no parking on the streets a certain distance from the intersections.

The Police Chief stated that he was in the process of going over the street parking in town and would report his findings back to the board.

COMMISSIONER SUMNER: Commissioner Sumner stated that she would like to thank the Board for their support during her recent surgery and recovery. She stated that she would also like to thank the Police Chief for his help during the All Stars Game.

MR. BOB COY – FIRE DEPARTMENT: Mr. Bob Coy stated that he would like to report a grant to the Board through Homeland Security that could possibly help the Fire Department become a paid department. He stated that funding was available and the grant would reimburse the recipient on a sliding scale the next five years. He stated that the fire department was not eligible now because the budget had been cut more than eighty percent from the previous year and that disqualified them. He stated that the grant would reimburse for insurance, salary, and training, but not overtime.

Commissioner Murphy stated that the Town had looked into grants from Homeland Security before but had been advised that the funding goes to the County first then the largest town in the County also had to approve the distribution of the funds before another town could receive the funding.

There being no further business, Mayor Young adjourned the meeting.

Mayor Cathy Young

ATTEST:

LuAnn A. Ellis, CMC, Town Clerk