

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

**May 5, 2015**

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met in regular session on Tuesday, May 5, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the G.M. Michael Room at the Cramerton Town Hall.

**Board members present:** Mayor Pro Tempore Will Cauthen; Commissioners Sam Carpenter; Demetrios Koutsoupas; Tammy Lawrence (arrived at 7:05); and Sandra R. Ware. Mayor Ronnie Worley was absent.

**Staff present:** Kevin Krouse, Interim Town Manager and Planning Director; Bill Brown, Town Attorney; Chief Greg Ratchford; Joel Lineberger, Finance Director; and Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk.

**Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:** Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen called the meeting to order and determined that a quorum was present. He stated that the Mayworth's Public House would be holding a grand opening next week on Thursday the 14<sup>th</sup> along with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

**Adoption of Agenda for this Meeting:** Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen stated an agenda item needed to be added for discussion of the possible application process for a Tiger grant. He also stated the Board needed to hold a closed session to discuss a personnel matter. Commissioner Carpenter made a motion to adopt the amended agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ware and approved by all.

**Public Comment:** No one signed up to speak.

**Proclamation for National Police Week:** A motion was made by Commissioner Ware to approve the Proclamation for National Police Week. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Koutsoupas and approved by all.

**Presentation from Mark Cramer and Bob Clay representing the Greater Gaston**

**Development Corporation:** Mark Cramer and Joel Long introduced themselves to the Board. The corporation is non-profit and was started in August 2014. Their goal is to change the future of our economy and this is a good opportunity to unite businesses. The tax rate for this area is 0.87 cents per \$100.00 and is one of the highest in the region. The goal is to help create jobs and grow the tax base in Gaston County. The market research firm VOCCII conducted a survey and found that 78% of Mecklenburg County residents knew little or nothing about Gaston County and only 58% of our own residents have a positive image of Gaston County. Negative images are reinforced by unfavorable newspaper headlines. The targets of the Image Campaign would be business, recreational, cultural and other visitors, as well as conventioners; development community from the region and beyond; workforce moving to the region and within the region; small businesses and entrepreneurs, and news media. The Image Campaign would extend over three years with at least \$400,000.00 total funding in the first year and \$250,000.00 in years two and three. Mr. Long stated he would like to have all the municipalities involved and is asking for a commitment of \$5,000.00. Municipalities contributing \$5,000.00 will receive one seat to be shared with the other municipalities on the Steering Committee. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen asked if the \$5,000.00 would be an annual contribution and Mr. Cramer stated yes. The Board thanked them for their presentation.

**Presentation from Mr. Stephan Allan regarding his findings of the Fire Department**

**Location Study:** Mr. Allan introduced himself to the Board. He stated that Michael Peoples asked for a meeting to discuss the fire department and possible relocation sites. Mr. Allan stated the present location of the fire department is the best site in relation to response times. The sites are assessed regarding the size of the station needed such as minimum site requirements, fire apparatus and required bay sizes along with apron size, turning radiuses, and office space. Mr. Allan stated he and Chief Foulk had met and discussed proposed building needs including office space. He presented showing a footprint for 13,000 square feet that included 16'x40' drive through bays. This footprint would include a 40 foot turning radius and the area required would be 1.6 acres.

Mr. Allan presented three areas which included an area on Market Street, Lakewood Road, and Eastwood Drive. The Market Street property is 1.13 acres and has limited access. The Lakewood Road site is 2.25 acres and could accommodate 8 single bays. The Eastwood Road property is 25 acres and the fire department could use 11.5 acres. This acreage could allow for the construction of a training facility. He stated if only two acres were used there would still be adequate ingress and egress along with parking. Mr. Allan stated the main structure and bays could be separate structures.

Discussion was held regarding the response times from each proposed location. Mr. Allan stated the fire department has a six minute objective. The current fire department location covers almost all areas of Town within this objective except for one annexed subdivision. The Market Street property would not allow the six minute coverage to the Timberlake subdivision. The Lakewood Road property would not allow the six minute coverage to Hamrick Road and two other areas. The Eastwood Drive property would not allow the six minute coverage to the Market Street area. Mr. Allan stated the six minute objective is based on the fire apparatus traveling at 35 miles per hour. Discussion was held regarding mutual aid provided by the New Hope Road Fire Department.

Mr. Allan stated a written report will be sent to Mr. Krouse. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen asked if mutual aid was considered regarding the response times. Mr. Allan said that information was not part of the study. Commissioner Carpenter asked what would be the proposed second location for the fire department. Mr. Allan said the Eastwood Road property would be a good location as the buildings would fit the acreage. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen asked about the growth factor and population. Mr. Allan stated he would research this information.

**Discussion of Tiger Grant Application:** Mr. Krouse presented information to the Board regarding the opportunity for a joint effort between the City of Belmont and the Town of Cramerton to apply for a \$10 million urban grant. He stated that Demetri Baches with Metrocology stated he prepared a plan for Beaufort, South Carolina and they received \$17 million. Mr. Krouse stated the grant process is very competitive and would require an expert in grant writing to prepare the application. He explained that the Build A Better Boulevard would be an appropriate project for this grant. The cost to apply is \$20,000.00 and the grant money has to be spent within six years. The grant writer receives either a flat fee or percentage. The City of Belmont voted to move forward and if the Town agrees to participate their share of the application fee would be \$6,600.00. Attorney Brown asked about NCDOT's involvement as Wilkinson Boulevard is a state highway. Mr. Krouse stated a meeting is scheduled with NCDOT representatives and Demetri Baches tomorrow. The grant is due by June 5<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen stated Wilkinson Boulevard is part of the gateway into Town. Commissioner Koutsoupas asked if the Town of McAdenville would be contributing to the grant application fee. Mr. Krouse stated he had not had any response. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen asked about the number of applications being presented. Mr. Krouse stated there are about 3,100 applications received and approximately 100 projects are funded. The City of Belmont plans to proceed with the application process. The Board discussed the monies required for the matching amount of \$3 million. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen asked this item be tabled until the next Board meeting on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Attorney Brown stated additional information was needed from NCDOT. A motion was made by Commissioner Ware to table this item until the next Board meeting to be held on Thursday, May 21, 2015. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Koutsoupas and approved by all.

## **REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF AGENDA ITEMS NOT REQUIRING A PUBLIC HEARING:**

**Discussion and Possible Action to Approve the Proposed March 19, 2015 and April 7, 2015 Meeting Minutes.** A motion was made by Commissioner Ware to approve the proposed March 19, 2015 and April 7, 2015 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Koutsoupas and approved by all.

**Presentation of Proposed Budget Amendments by Mr. Joel Lineberger.** The Finance Director presented budget amendments for \$13,500.00 to provide funds for Centralina Council of Government's Management search, meals, use of Hudson Building plus new manager's moving allowance; \$61,275.00 to provide funds for Pharr Technologies contract for the provision of equipment, software and licensing for information technology upgrade including new servers,

computers, operating system and security software; \$35,500.00 to reverse budget amendment #11 resulting from Board action taken April 6, 2015 to pay Goat Island parking lot paving from the capital project contingency account that will have sufficient funds to cover paving contract; \$204,700.00 to increase capital project for estimated net unfunded costs based on engineering estimate at April 15, 2015 for 29/74 greenway construction costs; and \$50,000.00 to provide for receipt of Caromont exercise pavilion grant funds and expenditure for equipment and signage. A motion was made by Commissioner Ware to approve the proposed budget amendments. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lawrence and approved by all.

**Presentation of Balanced Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016 by Joel Lineberger.** The Finance Director stated there had been a few changes to the preliminary budget that was presented on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The fire department insurance premium had a \$1,000.00 increase. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen asked that the verbiage regarding paving be removed. Mr. Lineberger stated the budget notebooks will be distributed on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Funding for canoe portages that are not built by the end of June will require a budget amendment in FY 2016. Attorney Brown stated the closing for Hamrick Road will occur after June 30<sup>th</sup>. The Finance Director stated the retirement contribution rates have not been announced. Attorney Brown stated a public hearing notice will need to be presented to the newspaper. Mr. Lineberger stated the personnel policy and pay classification plans are scheduled to be reviewed.

### **Staff Reports:**

**Two Rivers Utilities:** Mike Bynum with Two Rivers Utilities stated TRU completed 47 weekly checks for lift stations, responded to fifteen water meter related service requests, and repaired two water leaks. TRU completed one video inspection on a sewer line segment, responded to two sewer related calls, and completed two utility locates. TRU installed one new water service, one new sewer service, and one new irrigation service. One fire hydrant was repaired and two water/sewer cuts were patched. TRU collected water quality samples at eight locations and they met or exceeded the minimum state drinking water standards.

**Town Attorney:** Nothing to report.

**Police Chief:** Chief Ratchford stated the Municipal Citizens Academy meets tomorrow night to learn about the police department. The next session will include a canine demonstration. He stated there had been an incident at the Riverside basketball court where a gun had been pulled on three teenagers. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen asked if the accused party had a prior criminal history and Chief Ratchford said no. Chief Ratchford stated Chief Foulk with the fire department asked if the parking spaces at the fire department could be marked for their use. Chief Foulk informed Chief Ratchford that his department needs at least three spaces. Commissioner Ware stated parking needs to be available for the kayak and canoe portage area.

**Fire Chief:** Chief Foulk left meeting earlier.

**Planning and Zoning Director:** Mr. Krouse stated the results of the grant application for the Carolina Thread Trail will be known on Thursday.

**Finance Director:** The monthly financial report was distributed to the Board. The PARTF application for \$50,000.00 will be completed tomorrow. Discussion with Mike Bynum regarding closing out the Clean Water Management Trust Fund indicates the project will be extended.

**Town Clerk:** Nothing to report.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Parks and Recreation Advisory Board:** Commissioner Koutsoupas stated signage is being placed around Goat Island. Duke Energy will have power restored to the island by next week. A disc golf tournament is scheduled for June 27<sup>th</sup>. Signage regarding usage of the fitness pavilion is to be installed. Swimming pool is being prepared to open. Commissioner Ware said there were a lot of people asking about port-a-potties on the island. Commissioner Koutsoupas said summer camps and swimming lesson classes are filling up quickly. He stated the Goat Island was great and felt there were over 600 people in attendance.

**Centennial Celebration Committee:** Commissioner Koutsoupas stated beginning in May the committee would only meet the first Wednesday of each month for collection of artifacts.

**BUSINESS ITEMS/TOPICS OF DISCUSSION FOR EACH COMMISSIONER:**

Commissioner Ware stated the fire department could use the parking at the Masonic Lodge as more area is needed now for the kayak/canoe portage. She recommended the parking area in the greenway area be completed.

Commissioner Koutsoupas stated Susan Neeley informed him that she had been awarded the Order of the Longleaf Pine. He asked if Ms. Neeley could be formally recognized at the June 2<sup>nd</sup> Board meeting. He stated two Eagle Scouts that assisted with the Goat Island project could also be recognized at that Board meeting. The Municipal Citizens Academy for 2015 will be honored with a reception on June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Commissioner Carpenter stated a check for \$13,000.00 had been given to the Town from the ABC Store.

Commissioner Ware asked about the status of the yard of the month program. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen stated the Beautification Committee would become active again once the Planning Director was available to continue as their liaison.

Commissioner Lawrence thanked everyone for the great grand opening for Goat Island and all of the hours of dedication.

Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen stated he received a lot of favorable comments regarding the grand opening. He thanked everyone for their hard work.

A five minute recess was called prior to entering into closed session.

**CLOSED SESSION:** A motion was made by Commissioner Carpenter to enter into closed session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lawrence and approved by all.

A motion was made by Commissioner Koutsoupas and seconded by Commissioner Carpenter to return to open session. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Upon returning to open session, and there being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Carpenter to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Koutsoupas and approved by all.

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Mayor Pro Tem Will Cauthen

**ATTEST:**

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Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk