

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

**May 19, 2016**

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met in a budget workshop session on Thursday, May 19, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the G.M. Michael Room at the Cramerton Town Hall.

**Board members present:** Mayor Ronnie Worley; Mayor Pro Tempore Will Cauthen; Commissioners Houston Helms, Demetrios Koutsoupias, Donald Rice, and Susan Neeley.

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

**Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:** Mayor Worley called the meeting to order and determined a quorum was present.

**Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Cramerton Budget:** The Finance Director presented the proposed budget to the Board.

- **Presentation of Budget Message.** The Town Manager stated the budget message is a summary of the prior fiscal year's budget and this year's proposed budget which includes Exhibit A Fiscal Year 2017 Revenue and Expense Analysis before Fund Balance Appropriation. The tax rate of 0.475 per \$100.00 of assessed valuation will remain the same. The proposed budget increased approximately twelve percent from last year's budget. The Town has a self-imposed unassigned minimum fund balance of forty percent of general fund expenditures. This restriction serves to maintain an adequate level of funding reserve that may be necessary for any unforeseen conditions such as natural disasters. The Town must also maintain the ability to fund capital projects in advance of grant project reimbursements from state and federal governments and other funding sources. The \$338,000.00 appropriation of fund balance in the proposed 2016-2017 budget will reduce the unassigned balance at 2016-2017 fiscal year end. Approximately \$325,000.00 of the fund balance appropriation is via expenditure from Powell Bill for the road maintenance and repaving projects. The remaining \$13,000.00 is due to several "one-time" expenditures in Capital Outlay. It should be noted that an additional amount of \$235,000.00 is proposed for short term financing for both the Town Hall Building and C.B. Huss Gym roof repairs. The notice for the public hearing scheduled for Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, will be published in the local newspaper and posted on the Town's website.
- **Presentation of draft Capital Project Improvements and five year budget projections.** The Town Manager presented information to the Board regarding capital project improvements. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen asked about the 95/5 fire department grant regarding possible future purchase of a ladder truck. Chief Foulk stated the current ladder truck remains in good shape. The Board asked about Powell Bill funding. The Finance Director stated the Town will receive \$126,000.00 this year. The Town Manager stated a portion of this funding will need to be kept in reserve. Commissioner Helms stated the cost annually for road maintenance will be greater than \$100,000.00. Commissioner Koutsoupias stated a study previously completed provided a cost estimate. The Town Manager stated alternatives for road repairs will be considered. Crack sealing along with other maintenance such as upkeep of storm drains will be provided by the Public Works Department. Commissioner Helms stated the list of projects was helpful and this provided the capital outlay baseline for each fiscal year. The Finance Director stated there had been an increase in property value data due to the South Fork Village project. Discussion will need to be held in the future regarding the reimbursement agreement for the buildout at the Villages at Cramerton Mills once the residential phase is completed. The police department has received the new interceptor vehicles. A radar system along with a handheld radar unit has been purchased.

The public hearing for adoption of the proposed fiscal year 2016-2017 budget can be held on Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup>. The Board thanked the Town Manager and staff for their hard work in preparing the budget information.

Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen asked the Board members to please let him know if they had any changes to the door hangers that he presented at a prior meeting. He said he would like to place the phone number of each Board member on the hangers along with an e-mail address.

Mayor Worley called for a fifteen minute recess.

### **7:00 Regular Session Meeting:**

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met in a workshop session on Thursday, May 19, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the G.M. Michael Room at the Cramerton Town Hall.

**Board members present:** Mayor Ronnie Worley; Mayor Pro Tempore Will Cauthen; Commissioners Houston Helms, Demetrios Koutsoupas, Donald Rice, and Susan Neeley.

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

**Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:** Mayor Worley called the meeting to order and determined a quorum was present for the 7:00 workshop meeting.

**Adoption of Agenda for this Meeting:** The Town Manager requested that the closed session regarding expansion of business in the area be removed and the closed session be held under attorney-client privilege. A motion was made by Commissioner Helms to approve the amended agenda. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen and approved by all.

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

**Proclamation to Recognize Memorial Day.** Mayor Worley read the proclamation recognizing Memorial Day in the Town of Cramerton to honor those who have given their lives in service of their country. Mayor Worley thanked everyone who has served in the military and asked that we please remember and recognize our veterans.

### **Agenda Items requiring a Public Hearing:**

**Consider setting the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Cramerton Budget Public Hearing for June 7, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.** A motion was made by Commissioner Koutsoupas to set the fiscal year 2016-2017 Cramerton budget public hearing for Tuesday, June 7, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all.

### **Public hearing regarding a conditional rezoning for the property located at Wilkinson Boulevard and Peach Orchard Road, Parcel ID #220353:**

- **Open public hearing:** A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen to open the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Helms and approved by all.
- **Staff Comments/Board of Commissioners Questions and Answers:** The Planning Director stated this parcel contains fifteen acres and requires legislative action be taken tonight by the Board. The site plan is to be reviewed by the Board and attach conditions to the zoning district which will be binding and run with the land regardless of ownership. The existing zoning is tied into the prior zoning permit which preserves the corner of the lot for commercial usage. The Lakewood LLC has marketed this property as commercial for almost a decade. They are requesting a rezoning for a use that a proposed developer, Southwood Realty, has presented to them that differs from the original approved site plan known as the Villages at South Fork. This portion of the proposed site plan has topography challenges with an 82 foot elevation change. In order to construct the original commercial site plan would require 120,000 cubic yards of soil to be hauled in along with placement of a 48 foot tall retaining wall to accommodate the buildings.

Staff has worked with the developer to improve the proposed project including connectivity to the South Fork Village Apartments; incorporated some commercial area on the southeast corner of the parcel; four ingress and egress points; far west access on Wilkinson Boulevard aligns with dedicated right of way on south side of Wilkinson Boulevard to achieve the Build A Better Boulevard suggested switch back; move proposed building in front of traffic circle to screen long parking area; add right turn lanes on both Peach Orchard and Wilkinson Boulevard for better traffic flow especially during Christmas light season; and added ten foot concrete multi-use paths as per the Build A Better Boulevard plan. Mr. Krouse stated school aged children will attend either McAdenville Elementary, Holbrook Middle School, or Stuart W. Cramer High School. The Planning and Zoning Board voted at their last meeting four to one in favor of the proposed conditional rezoning for this parcel.

The Planning Director stated the anticipated initial revenue from this proposed development excluding vehicle tag and tax revenues would be \$201,985.00. A memo from the police department stated due to the increase of development another officer is being requested for fiscal year 2017-2018. Commissioner Helms asked the cost of adding another police officer. The cost would be approximately \$40,000.00 to hire another officer. Commissioner Koutsoupas asked how many apartments the Town currently has. There are 72 apartments at Hampton Meadows. Chief Ratchford stated there had been 84 calls to the South Fork Village Apartments and 47 calls to Hampton Meadows Apartments for the time period of May 2015 to May 2016. These calls were dispatched and do not include any calls for Wilkinson Boulevard or connecting streets or calls initiated by the fire department or police department.

**Applicant's Comments:** William Ratchford, Southwood Realty, stated he represents both Triangle Real Estate and Southwood Realty. He stated there are 352 units at South Fork Village and 96.6 percent are currently leased.

Billy Packer, 6505 Kilberry Lane, Charlotte, stated he bought the parcel being discussed tonight in 2004. He stated originally there were 500 homes planned to be built on the Lakewood Golf Course parcel. He said later this was reduced to 252 homes. Tom Graham, land planner, offered a plan for 675 homes to be built. The plan was discussed with the past Town Manager and Planning Director and accepted. The economy failed and this project did not occur. Later the land was sold and Stuart W. Cramer High School was constructed. The land across the street from the school property was placed on the market. Mr. Packer stated they have contacted multiple grocery stores trying to market this parcel. Due to a lack of roof tops, no interest was shown in purchasing the property for commercial development. Difficult terrain along with limited access to the property were also issues. Mr. Packer stated construction of the apartments would create a tax base along with connectivity from the apartments to the down town area.

Mr. Ratchford stated this project would contain 218 units and would have accessibility to the river trail and the South Fork Village area. This project will have larger units and contain eighteen units per building and will allow balconies on the sides. Six employees will manage this property along with corporate staff. Landscaping and other services will also be required. The proposed assessed value of this project will be \$25 million. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen asked if this is appraised or assessed value. Mr. Ratchford stated it was the appraised value. Mr. Ratchford stated if this project was approved tonight construction would begin this fall. He stated the demographics for the apartments would include all age groups. Each applicant must be over eighteen years of age and both a criminal and credit background check will be completed. All pets must be registered and there will be breed restrictions. Any apartment owner with a pet will be identified with a sticker placed on the door. Garbage collection and streets will be private.

Mr. Ratchford stated discussion has been held with Mr. Rudisill, the Rauch family, Montcross Chamber of Commerce, and the Gaston County EDC. There are forty applicants on the current waiting list for the South Fork Apartments.

Commissioner Helms asked about the assessed value and the revenue impact. Commissioner Koutsoupas asked about the topography. Mr. Ratchford stated a realistic site plan for a grocery store has been prepared. Mr. Packer stated there were two buildings prepared for the site and now it has been revised to one structure. Mr. Ratchford stated he thought a pharmacy, sports bar complex, or office space could utilize this space.

Commissioner Koutsoupas asked about the differences in these buildings compared to the South Fork Village Apartments. Mr. Ratchford stated the buildings would be smaller and contain only eighteen units. The condo style would provide a side entrance. The buildings would be approximately two-thirds brick and the rest Hardie board plank siding. Commissioner Rice asked about rental pricing. Mr. Ratchford stated the units would rent for \$20.00 more monthly than the South Fork Village Apartments. Commissioner Rice asked about current turnover. Mr. Ratchford stated the retention rate for the South Fork Village Apartments is a little less than seventy percent. Leases are for a year and residents are required to move out on Mondays and new residents move in on Fridays.

Tom Jones spoke regarding the large amount of soil that will need to be removed due to the steepness of the topography. Mr. Ratchford stated 500 apartments had been originally planned for this parcel in 2008 but it was determined that only 352 would have been feasible.

**Public Comment:** Gordon Quarles, Alliance Bank and Trust, stated Rick Houser could not be at tonight's meeting. Mr. Quarles stated he had known the Ratchford family his entire life and they are community oriented. He stated his daughter was a millennial and an apartment dweller. The millennial generation is marrying later in life and they want green space, walking trails, and accessibility to local restaurants and quaint places. Mr. Quarles stated Alliance Bank and Trust supports this project.

Bob Clay, 339 East Catawba Avenue, Belmont, stated he has worked with the Town's staff for years looking at the four quadrants at Wilkinson Boulevard. He stated there is a nine acre parcel that has the pipeline located on it along with a creek. This parcel has a 225 foot property drop along with a twenty-two percent grade making approximately several acres unsuitable for development. Mr. Clay stated that Mr. Ratchford has offered to place the excess soil from his project onto this parcel which will be an improvement. He stated the town and Gaston County are showing growth and he asked the Board to support this project.

Donny Hicks, 620 North Main Street, Belmont, stated he is the executive director for the Gaston County Economic Development Commission. He stated a market study has been completed for this area and this project fits with the market research that has been done in the past.

William Ratchford commented that the small parcel is under contract and will be used for placement of excessive soil from his property.

**Board Comments or Questions:** No comments or questions.

**Close the Public Hearing:** A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all.

**Action Item: Discussion and possible action to approve the conditional rezoning for the property located at Wilkinson Boulevard and Peach Orchard Road (Parcel ID #220353).** Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen stated the applicant met the demands using private funds. Commissioner Helms commented he appreciated all of the commentary but had concerns about the apartment industry currently. He stated he understood the difficulties with the topography but this was one of the last parcels the Town has for development and he wants to make sure this is the right use for this property. Commissioner Koutsoupas stated this area is the focal point as it is one of the prominent corners at Wilkinson Boulevard and Peach Orchard. The commercial should face the streets and restaurants should have two story facades in the listed conditions.

Recommended set of conditions for Conditional Zoning for Parcel ID #220353:

- 224 maximum units permitted.
- Road connection to existing South Fork Village Apartments as indicated on site plan.
- Minimum of two ten foot travel lanes on all streets between on street parking spaces.

- Ten foot concrete sidewalk required along Wilkinson Boulevard with connection to existing asphalt path in South Fork Village.
- Approximately 550 feet dedicated right turn lane to Wilkinson Boulevard on the west side of Peach Orchard Road (exact distance to be determined by NCDOT and Town Planning Director).
- Approximately 700 feet dedicated right turn lane on Wilkinson Boulevard going west from the intersection of Peach Orchard to access two proposed ingress/egress points for development (exact distance to be determined by NCDOT and Town Planning Director).
- Minimum of 12,500 square foot of commercial or office space provided in buildings and orientation towards streets according to site plan. Any minor site plan changes are to be reviewed and approved by the Planning Director. (Major changes must be in an amended site plan approved by the Town's Board of Commissioners).
- Non-residential component must be graded and made pad ready and the property owner shall put forth best efforts to actively market the property. Aesthetic and design features of commercial structures are to be reviewed and approved by the Planning Director.
- The uses permitted the office/commercial areas as designated on the site plan shall be restricted to those uses found in the B-2 Zoning District excluding those uses which are shown in Exhibit A that shall not be permitted.
- Commercial structures must be two or three stories to create visual appearance desired and in addition meet all requirements of the Town of Cramerton Commercial Building Standards Ordinance as adopted in February 2016. Restaurants as approved by the Planning Director may be constructed as one-story buildings with two story facades.
- Access must be maintained between the residential and non-residential components as per the site plan.
- Clubhouse must be oriented and designed so as to create a visually appealing focal point at the traffic circle.
- Developer will pay the Town of Cramerton \$500 development fee per unit as per the Two Rivers Utilities agreement.
- Tree survey requirements of the Town shall be waived due to the mass grading required on the site. All tree planting requirements specified by the Land Development Code shall be complied with, and in addition, areas of enhanced or supplemental plantings appropriate to the site shall be evaluated and mutually agreed to by the Town and Developer where practical.
- Should some or all of the commercial portion of the site plan be sold to a new builder or developer, the site plan and above site specific conditions shall run with the land and apply to any successor in interest.
- The apartment buildings component of the site plan shall be consistent with the final evaluations made part of the approved site specific plan and such additional or other requirements determined by the Planning Director in his/her sound discretion to be necessary and appropriate for apartment development on the site. In making this determination, the Planning Director may consider the aesthetics of the streetscape and topography of the construction area, and any other factors affecting design and construction of such apartment buildings.
- The property will be served with public water and sewer.
- Water and sewer construction will be in accordance with Two Rivers Utilities/City of Gastonia Standard Specifications and Details.

- Secure water and sewer approvals from Two River Utilities and/or appropriate review agencies and dedicate the necessary drainage and utility easements for water and sewer lines.
- The developer is responsible for location of existing underground utilities prior to construction.

A motion was made Commissioner Neeley to approve the conditional zoning ordinance for the property located at Wilkinson Boulevard and Peach Orchard Road, Parcel ID #220353 with findings of its reasonableness, plan consistency, and being in the public interest. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen. The vote was 4 to 1 with Commissioner Helms voting nay.

**Consider approval of the March 22, 2016 BOC meeting minutes.** The motion to approve the March 22, 2016 meeting minutes as proposed was made by Commissioner Rice. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen and approved by all.

#### **Finance:**

- **Town Hall Building and Gym Repairs:** The Finance Director stated James Holder with Custom Building Systems visited the Town Hall and Police Department regarding window replacements, water repellent for the building, and other repairs. The roof repair will be addressed by a different entity. Twenty-nine windows will need to be addressed along with repairs to flashing that will need to be repaired prior to window replacements. Due to aging of the building, the concrete has deteriorated. Water is wicking in to the building and the repair will require patching of the concrete mortar joints. A water repellent will then need to be applied. The water repellent should have a lifetime of five to six years and would be a reoccurring cost. The flat roof at Town Hall creates ponding of water and the gymnasium roof will need an update of the membrane as there is a wall that separates the complex to the gym. The gum roof gutters can be repaired instead of being replaced. Commissioner Koutsoupas asked about the financing and the length of a possible loan. The Finance Director stated the repair project could be taken out of fund balance or the Town could finance the project for three to five years. A USDA loan would require an interim installment loan which would include a \$1,250.00 loan fee. The Board discussed this project and agreed the project cost should be taken out of fund balance.
- **Cramerton Auditor Request for Proposal:** The Finance Director stated he considered ten audit firms. Six were doing work in local municipalities and five of the firms had performed audits in Gaston County. Two firms were removed from the possible list due to current work load and one for professional comments were made one for the size of the clients and one for the quantity of audits. One firm stated they would not provide a proposal due to their current work load. One firm declined providing a proposal. The Finance Director stated he checked references and one firm was late in providing reports. Commissioner Helms stated he felt it would be healthy to change auditors once in a while for a different view and recommended hiring Eddie Carrick to allow a different group to see if they stress other areas that Collis and Associates may not. Mr. Lineberger stated he liked working with our current auditor, Collis and Associates, and would like to continue using their service. The purpose of an audit is to review information for a reasonable presentation of the financial statement and not for internal control. Auditors with too many clients cannot spend a reasonable amount of time providing this service. Mr. Lineberger stated he has spoken with Rob Collis about the importance of on time reporting. The Board recommended continuing the use of Collis and Associates per staff.

#### **Town Manager's Report:**

**Town Hall Day:** The Town Manager stated this year's Town Hall Day in Raleigh will be held on Wednesday, June 8<sup>th</sup>. At present Mayor Worley, Commissioner Neeley, the Town Clerk, and he are registered to attend.

**Gaston Image Campaign:** The presentation of the image branding for the Greater Gaston Campaign will be held this week on June 1<sup>st</sup> at the Gastonia Conference Center.

**Road Resurfacing Bids:** A pre-construction meeting was scheduled but no contractors were in attendance. US Infrastructure has informed the Town that several firms have requested packets and more information regarding bids should be available at the June 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Railroad Application:** An application was sent to the railroad along with the required fee of \$1,250.00. A representative from the railroad contacted the Town Hall asking for additional information. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen asked that continued contact be maintained with the railroad representative.

**Parks and Recreation Director:** Applications are due by May 27<sup>th</sup>. The position should be filled by the start of July.

**Two Rivers Utilities:** Mike Bynum stated TRU responded to twenty-five water meter related requests, repaired three water leaks, and responded to three sewer related calls. TRU installed two new irrigation taps and two new sewer taps. Operations are normal at the Eagle Road Wastewater Treatment Plant. Land application of bio-solids from the wastewater treatment plant will begin in July.

**Town Attorney:** Nothing to report.

**Town Clerk:** Nothing to report.

**Police Department:** Chief Ratchford had nothing to report.

**Fire Department:** Chief Foulk stated the reflective rings on the fire hydrants are part of the ISO rating process. Mr. Bynum stated the fire hydrant in Timberlake with the bag over it is out of service.

**Planning and Zoning Department:** Nothing to report.

**Finance Department:** Nothing to report.

**Parks and Recreation Department:** The Town Manager stated work continues on the dredging for the canoe dock structure off of Cramer Mountain Road.

#### **Committee Reports:**

**Parks and Recreation Advisory Board:** Commissioner Koutsoupas stated the movie in the park at the Town Center will be held on Friday, May 27<sup>th</sup>. The next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting will be held on June 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Historical Society Interest Meeting:** The next meeting will be held on June 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall.

**Cramerton Merchants Association:** Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen stated the membership drive continues.

**Branding and Marketing Committee:** The Branding and Marketing Committee meets tomorrow.

#### **Topics of Discussion for Each Commissioner:**

Commissioner Helms asked about the status of the Patterson Street gate. The Town Manager stated this should be installed soon and this gate will allow access to Two Rivers Utilities. He also asked about the status of the mural. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen stated the wall will require additional prepping. Commissioner Helms thanked Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen for the door hangers be created.

Commissioner Koutsoupas had nothing to report.

Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen had nothing to report.

Mayor Worley stated the MPO will meet next week. He advised the Board and staff that Bill Moss who lived on Eighth Avenue passed away and had been involved with the textiles in this area for about 45 years.

Commissioner Rice asked about the code enforcement repair as he could not open the document on his phone. Chief Ratchford stated the form can be opened and read on a computer but cannot be viewed on a phone. He has spoken with IT in regards to this issue. Commissioner Rice stated Sergeant Jones was complimented at the district attorney's office for a specific investigative case. Mayor Worley stated the condemned property located next to the Amberjack's Restaurant has been reported for high grass. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen stated the brown house on Main Street has been vacated. Chief Ratchford stated the owner plans to make improvements to this property. Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen stated the town might want to consider purchasing this property.

Commissioner Neeley stated she attended the CCOG meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup>. She stated Gaston County won two awards for Growing the County and for the teen wellness center.

**Closed Session:** A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Cauthen to enter into closed session regarding NCGS 143-381.11(a)(3) under attorney-client privilege with the Town Attorney. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.

A motion was made by Commissioner Koutsoupas to enter into open session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Helms and approved by all.

**ADJOURNMENT:** On return to open session, there being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Rice to adjourn the meeting at 9:46 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all.

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Mayor Ronnie E. Worley

**ATTEST:**

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Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk