

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

January 19, 2017

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met in workshop session on Thursday, January 19, 2017 at 6:00 p.m., in the G.M. Michael Room at the Cramerton Town Hall.

Board Members present: Mayor Will Cauthen, Mayor Pro Tempore Demetrios Koutsoupas, Commissioners Houston Helms, Donald Rice, and Susan Neeley.

Staff Present: David Pugh, Town Manager; Bill Brown, Town Attorney; Chief Greg Ratchford; Eunice McSwain, recording secretary.

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

6:00 Workshop Meeting - Review of projects by staff and project engineer from US Infrastructure, Bonnie Fisher. The Town Manager advised the Board that tonight's presentation would provide the bidding information for the upcoming street paving project. A request for proposals for financing will be processed later as part of this process. Woodlawn Avenue was determined to be in greatest need of paving. There is a base of 5.25 inches of asphalt. The curbs will be milled and feathered. The traffic circle was added to the proposed paving project to increase unit quantity and to possibly lower the unit price by including crack sealing and patching.

Mayflower Avenue was previously paved by NCDOT and the asphalt was made level with the sidewalks which may lead to damage to the sidewalks in the future due to lack of stormwater drainage. Extensive milling on the west side (housing side) of the road will need to be done to reclaim the curb and gutter and avoid degradation of the sidewalks. Mayor Cauthen asked about the risks regarding the buildup of asphalt from the previous paving regarding the storm drains and now we are removing the asphalt and would this create an area that would be unsafe. Rodney Baker, Public Works Director, stated that the pre-existing curbing would be reclaimed and provide recovering of the stormwater drains and gutters. Rodney Baker said water is standing on the sidewalks which is damaging them and storm drains will be raised if necessary. The Town Manager stated the Public Works Department makes the storm drain repairs. Commissioner Helms asked about traffic flow. Mr. Baker stated he would be working with the residents and school staff regarding the timeline for this project. Woodlawn Avenue can be used as an alternate route. The Town Manager stated due to parking on some of these areas these residents will be asked to move their vehicle during the milling and paving process. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas stated Sixteenth Street had been added for unit price quantity savings and he wanted to know about the condition of the adjoining streets. Mr. Baker said Seventeenth Street has received a good bit of patching and sidewalk repairs and feels this street can be looked at next year. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas said he was curious as to the paving process since not all streets in the proposed areas are being considered for this project. Mr. Baker said the streets being considered for paving were based on the study that was completed. Commissioner Helms asked Ms. Fisher what the price points were and if there are any discounts for various prices. Ms. Fisher said this size of project should receive some competitive bids. The Town Manager said a document for the requests for proposals was created by the Finance Director a year ago and annual payments would be for ten years using the Powell Bill fund. The Town Manager stressed the importance of crack sealing which would keep precipitation from breaking down the streets.

Mayor Cauthen asked what other projects the Town may be looking at that would use the Powell Bill fund. The Town Manager said paving projects would be using the Powell Bill fund with some additional funds possibly being received through the stormwater fund. Commissioner Rice spoke about the packaging of the project and the number of years that the paving of streets would be placed on. Mayor Cauthen said he thought the proposed financing for paving was discussed at five, seven, or ten years. The Town Manager said with the addition or possibly modifications to

the stormwater fund, then this number could be reduced. The Town Manager said the major thoroughfares in multiple neighborhoods are part of the proposed paving project along with some streets that are in poor shape. Mayor Cauthen said \$1.04 million dollars and the Town Manager said this was a conservative figure. The Powell Bill fund balance will be applied to this project and the Town Manager said there is also available stormwater funds. The Town Manager said \$126,000.00 is received yearly for the Powell Bill fund. Commissioner Helms asked about how much money is used each year for upkeep of the streets. The Town Manager said the town spends thousands of dollars each year for crack sealing and other repairs to the streets. Attorney Brown asked how much money Public Works spends for repairs annually. Mr. Baker said he spent approximately \$50,000.00 for street and sidewalk repairs. Commissioner Helms asked about the formula for the Powell Bill fund. The Town Manager said the mileage for paved streets and the town's population is used to determine the amount received.

Mayor Cauthen said he would like to use half of the \$412,000.00 Powell Bill Fund monies against the loan and allow Public Works to continue to have funds they can use for annual maintenance repairs. Commissioner Helms said he would recommend getting a larger loan. The Town Manager said the Powell Bill fund monies need to be used within five years of receipt. Commissioner Rice asked about the cul-de-sacs in the Timberlake neighborhood and the timeline regarding completion of buildout. Mr. Baker said the area off of Armstrong will be affected by construction traffic during the continued buildout in this neighborhood and the cul-de-sacs will need to be completely torn out. He said some of the streets in that neighborhood are close to thirty years old. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas said that most of the lots have been sold and buildout could be in about three years.

Attorney Brown said the requests for proposals regarding funding needs to be determined and the amount not to exceed. The Town Manager said no action needs to be taken by the Board at this meeting. Due to the amount of funding being requested the Local Government Commission is involved due to the amount and they will need to review and approve. Commissioner Helms asked who financed the City of Belmont's paving project. Attorney Brown stated Regions Bank did. Discussion was held by the Board regarding Belmont's paving project. The Town Manager stated Blythe was the contractor. Commissioner Helms asked if the amount of the town's project would create enough interest to receive competitive bidding. Ms. Fisher said there should be a fair amount of interest. Some large contractors may subcontract the part of the project that requires more detailed work. Mayor Cauthen asked about the Front Street alley regarding drainage and garbage containment pads. The Town Manager said clean up regarding the garbage containment is still being considered but there was some concern about the drainage type and what would be the best resolution for this area. Mr. Baker said there is a heavy duty drain in this area due to the heavy trucks that travel through the alley. Mayor Cauthen said the best solution would include placement of the heavier style drain.

Attorney Brown said the thought there had been some changes in how the Powell Bill funds can be used such as only for paving and milling. He said he would look into what this fund and what it can be used for.

Mayor Cauthen called a ten minute recess prior to the start of the 7:00 workshop meeting.

7:00 Workshop Meeting:

Board Members present: Mayor Will Cauthen, Mayor Pro Tempore Demetrios Koutsoupas, Commissioners Houston Helms, Donald Rice, and Susan Neeley.

Staff Present: David Pugh, Town Manager; Bill Brown, Town Attorney; Chief Greg Ratchford; Dave Pettine, Planning Director; Joel Lineberger, Finance Director; and Eunice McSwain, recording secretary.

Call to Order and Determination of Quorum: Mayor Cauthen called the 7:00 p.m. meeting to order and determined a quorum was present.

Adoption of Agenda for this meeting: Mayor Cauthen said the proclamation for the garden bench needs to be removed from tonight's agenda. A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas to adopt the amended agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and passed by unanimous vote.

Public Comment: No one signed up to speak.

BOC Meeting Schedule: consider rescheduling the Thursday, February 2, 2017 meeting to Tuesday, February 7th due to Mayor/Manager absence and also being the night of the Montcross Chamber Annual Meeting. Mayor Cauthen stated that he and the Town Manager would be out of town on Thursday February 2nd. The Town Manager stated this is also the same night of the annual Montcross Chamber dinner. Commissioner Rice asked where the Montcross dinner would be held. The Town Manager stated it will be held in Mount Holly and he would provide this information via email. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas stated he would not be able to attend the Board meeting on February 7th. A motion was made by Commissioner Rice to approve the rescheduling of the Thursday, February 2nd, meeting to Tuesday, February 7th. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Helms and approved by all.

Agenda Items Not Requiring a Public Hearing:

Consider Approval to set a public hearing for the first February 2017 BOC meeting for the purpose of a Conditional Rezoning of Gaston County parcel number 208728 consisting of approximately 23.84 acres on Armstrong Ford Road. The Planning Director stated this is a conditional rezoning that was brought in front of the planning and zoning board last month. The proposed conditional zoning request would allow development of 83 single family age restricted (55+) homes. A motion was made by Commissioner Helms to set a public hearing on Tuesday, February 7th. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas and approved by all.

Consider Approval to set a public hearing for the first February 2017 BOC meeting for the purpose of a staff proposed text amendment to modify the side and rear setback requirements of the Central Business District (CBD) Zone. The Planning Director stated this text amendment would affect only the areas in this district as there are currently several homes that are being used for businesses. This amendment would allow for the Central Business District to be expanded over time for the natural transition of homes to offices without significant hindrance in their ability to grow within reason on their lot. The staff is proposing to amend the setback requirements so the fifty foot requirement would only apply to lots adjacent to a residential district that are over 25,000 square foot in size. Lots adjacent to a residential district that are smaller than that would have to meet a ten foot setback requirement. This would allow a reasonable opportunity for growth or redevelopment of the property and its use. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to set a public hearing for Tuesday, February 7th, for the purpose of a staff proposed text amendment to modify the side and rear setback requirements of the Central Business District. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas and passed by unanimous vote.

BOC Meeting Minutes: Consider Approval of the proposed January 5, 2017 BOC meeting minutes. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked that under topics of discussion for each commissioner section that the sentence stating "Mayor Cauthen called a ten minute process" that the verbiage be changed to a ten minute "recess". He also asked that a correction be made under the same section to state that "Commissioners Helms and Neeley will do interviews in the morning of January 16th". A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas to approve the amended January 5, 2017 BOC meeting meetings. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Helms and passed by unanimous vote.

Cramerton Board of Commissioners:

- **Discuss a possible procedure for filling Cramerton Mayoral Vacancy and/or consider appointment to fill Mayoral Vacancy per N.C.G.S. 160A-63: "A vacancy that occurs in an elective office of a city shall be filled by appointment of the City Council."** Mayor Cauthen stated that due to former Mayor Worley filling a county commissioner's seat this

opened a vacancy on the Town's Board. Eight qualified applications were received and five applicants were chosen to be interviewed. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to appoint Dixie Abernathy to fill the open Board of Commissioners seat for the remainder of its term. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas and approved by all. Mayor Cauthen and the Board congratulated Commissioner Abernathy.

- **Oath of Office:** Mayor Cauthen administered the oath of office for the appointment of Dixie Abernathy to serve on the Board of Commissioners.

Parks and Recreation: Eric Smallwood updated the Board regarding the status regarding revitalization of Central Park and what will be happening in the next few months. Information was presented regarding the mapping of the .85 mile trail. Two gullies will require construction of pedestrian bridges which will be built in the future. The trail will be eight feet wide and will have a natural trail surface of crushed stone material along with a geo-mesh material. Eradication of the kudzu and other undergrowth will be done by goats. The goats will be brought in around the month of April and will remain in the park for several weeks. They will return again in September and stay for several weeks. Wells Farms Goats will put up the required fencing and will be taking care of feeding the goats.

Mr. Smallwood stated the Central Park shelter will be painted brown to match other shelters along with installation of new siding along the bottom of the shelter. There has been an issue with retention of water as there are no gutters and there was some damage. The framing and sills will need to be completed by a contractor. Additional siding can be installed by staff. The bathroom doors and storage doors will be replaced with metal doors. The concrete will be pressure washed and a liner and rocks will be placed along the base of the wood to improve drainage. Currently there are twelve picnic tables in storage that will need to be put together later. Commissioner Helms asked Mr. Smallwood to contact him when these needed to be put together as employees from Bank of America would be willing to volunteer. Mayor Cauthen stated this would be a good project for the Community Committee to assist with. Mr. Smallwood said there are currently two benches at the site and he is researching benches that can be anchored. Two small pedestrian bridges will need to be constructed and this project can be started after the first removal of kudzu and undergrowth eradication process has begun. Shelter lighting on timers, electronic door locks on the bathrooms, and onsite parking on High Street and Washington Street are being considered. A gate may need to be considered for High Street to keep vehicular traffic from having access to the park. Mayor Cauthen said parking on Washington Street was originally considered as the parking area as it is level with the picnic shelter. Commissioner Neeley asked about a future dog park in this area. Mr. Smallwood said an area could be fenced in for a dog park. She said she liked the idea of lighting being put in this area. Mr. Smallwood stated there is a Duke Energy light pole already in the park that may be considered for additional lighting. Commissioner Neeley stated that the neighbors in this area said the youth sit at the picnic shelter after dark and there have been some fires in the trash receptacles due to smoking. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas recommended installment of trash receptacles and dog waste bag stations.

Commissioner Helms asked when the project was scheduled to begin. Mr. Smallwood stated this project should begin next week weather permitting and the geo-mesh ordered. The Board stated they wanted the residents in this area to be notified. Mayor Cauthen asked if some of the project segments would be completed concurrently. Mr. Smallwood said most of the projects would be done in house and the goats will be in the park while work is being done. Commissioner Rice asked if the park would be available for use by April. Mr. Smallwood said he hoped that the trails would be ready for use but it was important the geo-mesh has time to dry and crushed gravel will need to be delivered and stored on site. Commissioner Helms stated he wants the residents, especially the adjacent residents, to be notified of the project and possibly putting this information on the Town's website. Attorney Brown commented on the dog park and the activity use should be active recreational to meet required state special funding standards.

Town Manager's Report: A meeting is scheduled for Saturday, January 28th, regarding discussion of goals and objectives. Darren Rhodes with the North Carolina Department of Commerce will be the facilitator. The Town Manager stated he would have materials prepared

regarding accomplished goals and objectives and these will be distributed to the Board to be discussed at the upcoming meeting.

Two Rivers Utilities: Mike Bynum stated TRU responded to seventeen water meter related service requests, repaired two water leaks, and responded to four sewer related calls. Four locations were sampled and two fire hydrants were flushed and sampled. All samples were in compliance with state drinking water quality standards. TRU responded to two water quality calls, one for chlorine smell and one for cloudy water which was air in the line. There were no issues with the water quality. Thirty-seven preventive maintenance service requests were completed at the pump stations. Attorney Brown asked about the slug issue that was reported at the last meeting. Mr. Bynum stated he sent information to the Cramerton Police Department if they see any suspicious activity. A Belmont resident did report a red truck with a pipe going into a manhole.

Town Attorney: Nothing to report.

Town Clerk: Absent.

Police Department: Deputy Chief Adams stated he had nothing to report.

Fire Department: Chief Foulk said a grant was received and this would be used to replace equipment that was at the end of their fifteen year life span. He stated his department was the only one to receive this grant in that arena.

Planning: Mr. Pettine stated there are a few items that will be presented on the next agenda for a public hearing. He said he would keep the Board updated regarding upcoming projects.

Finance Director: Mr. Lineberger stated there was an \$8 million increase in the assessed residential value this year. There was an increase of \$1,038,000.00 increase in business and commercial assessed value. W-2 forms have been issued.

Parks and Recreation: Mr. Smallwood said completion of the kayak and fishing piers along the river will be completed in the next few weeks. Signage will be installed at the launches and piers indicating where they are located for public safety. The signs will be purple and will be either 2'x3' or 2-1/2'x4' in size. The areas that cannot be seen from roadways will receive signage at intersections and will be similar to the signage being used in McAdenville regarding their river access. Mayor Cauthen said this signage may be reconsidered when wayfinding signs are being designed.

Committee Reports:

- **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board:** Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas said a recommendation was made to appoint the two current alternate members to full time positions. The alternate members are Sandra Ware and George Adcock. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas made a motion to appoint Sandra Ware and George Adcock as full time voting advisory board members and to continue to advertise for applications for the two alternate positions. Commissioner Neeley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The next advisory board meeting will be held on Monday, February 6th, here at Town Hall.
- **Community Committee:** Commissioner Rice said a meeting was held on January 10th and Jean Valliere and Sunny Severance were welcomed as new members at that meeting. Several applications are being reviewed for committee appointments. Logo ideas are being considered for t-shirts for the volunteers.
- **Cramerton Merchants Association:** Mayor Cauthen stated the committee met this week at Carillon Assisted Living Center. Bryan Andrea is the new secretary for this association.

Topics of Discussion for Each Commissioner:

Commissioner Neeley congratulated Dr. Abernathy regarding her appointment to the Board and thanked everyone who applied.

Commissioner Rice stated there was a lot of quality and talent represented in applications received for the Board vacancy. He stated he was proud of the fire department for the grant they received. He said he will not be in attendance at the March 2nd Board meeting.

Commissioner Abernathy thanked the Board for their time spent reviewing the application and feels honored to be here and is looking forward to serve. She recognized her husband, family, friends, and neighbors who were in attendance tonight.

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas stated he looked forward to working with Commissioner Abernathy. He said there were multiple applicants and it was a long process but it showed that residents want to serve on various boards. He thanked Eric Smallwood for the calendar that was provided for the recent newsletter.

Commissioner Helms congratulated Commissioner Abernathy. He thanked Jeff Boyle for being in the audience and thanked him for being one of the applicants. He said that during the process that comments were made regarding the cleanliness of the town by the Public Works department along with other essential services that are provided. Commissioner Helms said he wanted one of the key topics regarding goals and objectives that he wanted to discuss was the financial position and capital expenditures long term regarding the general fund along with debt management. He asked that the Board think about what goals and objectives they might want to discuss at the January 28th meeting.

Mayor Cauthen thanked everybody that came out to support Commissioner Abernathy and asked that everyone continue to support her. He thanked all of the applicants. He thanked the Board members for their thoughtfulness and respect for each other and their hard work during this process.

Mayor Cauthen asked for a ten minute recess prior to entering into closed session.

Closed Session N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(A)(3) Consult with the attorney to protect the attorney-client privilege; and N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(A)(4) To discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of business in the area served by this body. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to enter into closed session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Helms and approved by all.

Adjournment: Upon return to open session, with no further action being taken and no further business to be discussed, a motion was made by Commissioner Abernathy to adjourn at 8:59 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Helms and passed by unanimous vote.

Mayor Will Cauthen

ATTEST:

Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk