

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

**October 5, 2017**

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met in regular session on Thursday, October 5, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the G.M. Michael Room at the Cramerton Town Hall.

**Board members present:** Mayor Will Cauthen, Mayor Pro Tempore Demetrios Koutsoupas, Commissioner Houston Helms, Donald Rice, Dixie Abernathy, and Susan Neeley.

**Staff present:** David Pugh, Town Manager; Greg Ratchford, Police Chief; Joel Lineberger, Finance Director; Anthony Fox, Town Attorney; Dave Pettine, Planning Director; and Belinda Robinson, Recording Secretary.

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

**Invocation:** Given by Anthony Fox.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Given by all.

**Adoption of Agenda for this Meeting:** Mayor Cauthen stated that there are some changes to the agenda. The closed session and the presentation from Gary Fankhauser need to be removed. Mr. Fankhauser's presentation is scheduled to go to the ad hoc committee on October 6<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Cauthen also asked the Town Manager if we are adding back the TIGER Grant discussion. Mr. Pugh stated yes as the resolution and supporting documentation are ready to be discussed. Mr. Pugh stated that he wanted to remove the section under planning and zoning regarding traffic calming. A motion was made by Commissioner Helms to approve the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.

**Public Comment:** Mr. Ted Reece, 306 Lakewood Road, spoke about the Veteran's Memorial location. Mr. Reece stated that he thought that to have the Veteran's Memorial in the location where it is currently proposed is disrespectful to the veterans. He stated there is a petition out to stop the Veteran's Memorial from being put at the proposed Goat Island location. Mr. Reece read the petition and stated that he will provide the petition and the names in another week or two. Mayor Cauthen asked Mr. Reece if he would like to leave a copy of the petition for it to be recorded in the minutes. Mr. Reece stated that he was not ready to leave and will leave it in a few weeks.

**Proclamation to Celebrate the Cramerton Police Department's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Recognize the Department's Significant Contribution and Dedication to Public Safety and more in Cramerton:** Mayor Cauthen read the proclamation to celebrate the Cramerton Police Department's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and recognize the department's significant contribution and dedication to public safety and more in Cramerton.

**TIGER Grant Discussion:** Mr. Pugh went over the resolution endorsing the application for the Wilkinson Boulevard redevelopment district implementation TIGER grant for the City of Belmont, Town of Cramerton, and the Town of McAdenville of the projects. Belmont is the lead submitter on the TIGER grant and this is federal money. A majority of the projects are in the City of Belmont. Cramerton does have a few projects that stem from the Build A Better Boulevard Study that was completed and approved in 2014-2015. The due date for the application is October 17<sup>th</sup>. The Town Manager of Belmont was asked by his Board late last week to do the formal submittal. We have submitted in the past two cycles and was unsuccessful in getting the TIGER grant money.

Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas stated that there was a similar TIGER Grant that came up at the last MPO meeting that Gastonia and the City of Lowell is applying for and that triggered his memory of the TIGER grant between us McAdenville and Belmont. He stated he asked the Town Manager to look into it to see if we could resubmit it. This is something that the Board has discussed and in support of to help kick start the Build A Better Boulevard.

A motion was made by Commissioner Helms to approve. Commissioner Rice seconded the motion to approve. All were in favor.

**Agenda items not requiring a Public Hearing: Consider approval of the August 3, 2017 BOC Minutes:** Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas ask about the minutes from page ten to eleven, it looks like something is missing or out of order. The Town Manager stated that since the clerk was not present he would recommend tabling the minutes until they can be corrected. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas made a motion to table the August 3, 2017 minutes until they can be corrected. Commissioner Neeley seconded the motion. All were in favor.

### **BIG BOARD REVIEW:**

**Piers:** Mr. Pugh asked the Parks and Recreation Director Eric Smallwood to speak about the piers which is the first item up for discussion on the big board review. Mr. Smallwood stated that the piers are going great and that the trees are completely gone and Rowboat Dock and Dredge is about 80 percent complete in repairing the bridge. Mr. Smallwood stated that all of the other piers and docks have passed inspection but the way the permit was drawn we cannot get a certificate of occupancy until all of the piers are complete.

Mayor Cauthen asked if we will we be up and running in several days and Mr. Smallwood stated that as soon as Gaston County comes back out to inspect the piers they will be open. Mayor Cauthen stated there was a discussion about maybe getting an engineer to come out and do inspections on the entire inventory of piers on our behalf and wanted to know where we stand on this.

David Pugh stated that he heard back from a couple different managers from the coast and from lake towns. Mr. Pugh stated that he talked to the Town Manager of Lake Lure and they have a lake manager who does nothing but dock work and suggested that if we can get a government employee that doesn't necessarily cost us anything other than travel time and look at the piers and give us some feedback, that he would rather go that route instead of paying an engineer.

Mayor Cauthen stated that we have had numerous issues with the current contractor and using an engineer would make him feel confident that the work is done properly.

Mr. Pugh stated that he would go ahead and procure an engineering firm that specializes in piers and docks. Attorney Fox stated that he is concerned that if we do continue to have problems with the existing contractor, the ability to bring another individual in who is not properly certified or trained to opine regarding the piers and docks not meeting specifications may not be as weighty we will need if some action is needed in the future.

Commissioner Rice asked if this lake manager who works for Lake Lure is an engineer or an architect and what are his qualifications. Mr. Pugh stated that he did not specifically ask that question. Commissioner Helms asked for clarification on hiring an engineer.

Mayor Cauthen clarified that the engineer would be basically to go through and give an inventory piers we have, give us an update on what condition each pier is in, see where they see shortcoming in the pier itself and then a plan of action of what needs to be done and when or how soon it needs to be done such as a quarterly, annual or five year basis to keep them in safe condition.

Eric Smallwood stated that an onsite inspection from the State Wildlife Commission in the past week for grant reimbursement funds. The Wildlife Commission Project Manager Dean Barbie came out and looked at them and said that the piers are some of the best built piers and kayak launches that he has seen.

Commissioner Helms stated that he would like to know how much it would cost before getting someone to look at the piers.

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas asked if it said in the contract with Rowboat Dock and Dredge that it would have to pass county inspection. He also asked if it would be a problem to add in our contracts that not only would it have to pass county inspection but also the inspection of this private engineer. Attorney Fox stated that the contract is already signed and executed and is operating under it. He didn't want to discuss it too much under an open discussion environment. Mayor

Cauthen stated that it is the consensus of this Board that we at least get a price from an engineering firm as to what this will cost.

**Veterans Memorial:** The Town Manger stated the current status is Viz Designs is working on the final draft concept. An ad hoc committee meeting is scheduled for October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

**Town Hall Rehab:** Talley & Smith completed Phase I of investigation study on September 28<sup>th</sup>. The Finance Director stated that they want to come back out one more time for further inspection on the front and back of the building using the ladder truck from the fire department to access the two facades.

**Attorney Search:** The BOC will interview top firms at the October 18<sup>th</sup> meeting and an action item will be placed on the October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017 agenda to select a Town Attorney.

**Painting Railroad Underpass:** Town Manager David Pugh stated that he contacted Bessemer City about the cost of painting their underpass. The cost of painting their underpass was \$3,000.00 and they had no agreement with the railroad.

### **PLANNING AND ZONING:**

The Planning Director went over the preliminary plat approval for New Style Communities (Active Adult Community beside Timberlake). The preliminary plat is for the Courtyards at Cramerton and consists of 72 single-family homes. All roads are being proposed as public roads to be taken over by the Town by upon satisfactory completion of construction. Mayor Cauthen asked about the connectivity of this neighborhood to the Timberlake neighborhood for bikes and pedestrians. Commissioner Rice asked about the use of golf carts. Mr. Pettine said the entire area is not paved and the Timberlake residents requested that they did not want connectivity. Mr. Pettine stated one half of the right of way will be paved up to the property line. Commissioner Helms that this issue be revisited regarding connectivity. Staff recommended approval of the preliminary plat. On September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017 the Town of Cramerton's Planning Board recommended approval of this site to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Rice made a motion to approve the preliminary plat approval for New Style Communities. Commissioner Neeley seconded the motion and it was approved by all. Mr. Pettine provided an update on the Planning Department's major projects.

### **CRAMERTON BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:**

**Cramerton Veterans Memorial:** The ad hoc committee meeting is scheduled for October 6<sup>th</sup> at lunch time.

**Cramerton Christmas Parade:** The Board needs to consider appointment of a Grand Marshal for the Cramerton Christmas Parade which is December 7<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. Mayor Cauthen stated that the Cramerton Community Committee has already received an application for Citizen of the Year and this may be an opportunity for us to have this person serve as Grand Marshal.

**MANAGER'S REPORT: Update on 2017 Road Project.** The Town Manager gave a verbal update on the 2017 road project and presented before and after pictures. Mr. Pugh stated that the street project completion date by B&N Grading is October 17<sup>th</sup>. The Board discussed encouraging the downtown businesses to utilize dumpsters.

Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked if Rodney Baker could look at a dip that is at the intersection of Mayflower onto Seventeenth to see if this spot needs to be patched. The Town Manager asked if this was possibly a Two Rivers Utilities repair. The Finance Director commented that a citizen from Washington Street called and stated how thrilled he was with the manner of communication and efficiency that the paving project was completed and another citizen from Woodlawn Avenue of how proud he was of Rodney Baker working with him regarding a drain repair that was completed during the paving process.

Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked if there had been any changes with parking on Mayflower Avenue since the paving has been completed. The Town Manager said there have been no reported problems with vehicles being parked on the new sidewalk. Vehicles still continue to have to pull over to yield. Commissioner Abernathy asked did anyone determine what the black drizzle that is

on driveways and she wondered what it was and that is on every driveway on that road. She said it is unattractive.

Mr. Pugh also talked about the Citizens Academy Crash Course scheduled for October 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **GENERAL STAFF REPORTS:**

**Two Rivers Utilities:** Mike Bynum went over the Two Rivers Utilities report. Mr. Bynum stated that the Cramer Mountain sewer easement clearing is completed. They are evaluating the field conditions and will be contacting contractors for quotes on the work.

**Town Attorney:** Nothing to report.

**Town Clerk:** The Town Clerk was absent and the reporting secretary had nothing to report.

**Police Chief:** Nothing to report.

**Fire Chief:** Absent.

**Planning Director:** Dave Pettine gave an update on conditions of approval for VCM project.

**Finance Director:** Joel Lineberger gave an update on the financial department.

**Parks and Recreation Director:** Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas spoke on behalf of Eric Smallwood. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas talked about the Fall Festival scheduled for October 21<sup>st</sup> and the staff is looking for fresh baked goods for the cake walk. Parks and Rec is also looking for businesses that want to sponsor the Fall Carnival and also for volunteers to help with the games at the Fall Carnival. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas stated October is Go Month. Eric Smallwood has been working on a run, hike, paddle, and bike program for the week of October 23<sup>rd</sup> and Go Gaston will be promoting us. In December the Parks and Rec staff is putting together a Christmas Bazaar which is an indoor arts and craft festival which will be held on Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Community Center.

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

Commissioner Helms stated that he represented Cramerton at the Greater Gaston Development Corporation. He discussed the airport study that is going on with Charlotte Douglas Airport and Gaston Airport.

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas stated he attended the ribbon cutting ceremony at the Waffle House. The Waffle House was very excited to be a part of the community and they have offered different things for the schools from meals to sponsorships. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas stated the Board talked about ways that people can pitch in and keep our community clean at the last Board meeting. He stated an article was placed in the newsletter about keeping our community clean, pick up after yourself, and how the Public Works operates with the bag leaves, yard waste and recycling. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas also talked about one of his goals is to have meet and greet in the neighborhoods where the residents can come have refreshments before the meeting and then they can speak during public comment at the meetings.

Commissioner Abernathy asked who organizes the Christmas parade. Mayor Cauthen answered that the Parks and Recreation organizes it but everyone has a hand in it. Commissioner Abernathy also asked Chief Ratchford what his official date of retirement and his last day of work. Chief Ratchford answered November 30<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Abernathy asked the Town Manager if the plan was still to have an Interim Chief in place and do you have an approximate timeline as to when the filling of this position will take place. David Pugh answered that the timeline is ending 2017 going into 2018. Commissioner Abernathy also commended the Parks and Recreation Department on the cleanliness of our parks as they always have empty trash cans for people to use and plenty of dog waste bags. Commissioner Abernathy also stated that it would be good to place something in the newsletter to remind citizens who are walking their dogs in the parks to pick up after their dogs. Commissioner Abernathy said that she ran into some people who don't live in Cramerton at the rock painting event and the fishing tournament and they commented on how great it was that our community had these types of events.

Commissioner Helms stated that one of the topics at the GGDC was the marketability that we have, what makes us special, and what we have to offer and the small town feel. The commented that the small town feel is one you don't get when you are in Charlotte and that is what they are looking for.

Commissioner Donald Rice stated that he attended the rock painting event as well and he thought it was one of the most successful events we have had since we have repainted the structure in Central Park. The Community Committee has a scavenger hunt coming up for painted rocks that will yield prizes and the Christmas parade float that they will be working on. Commissioner Rice also talked about the Rotary club and one of the Rotarians is Don Lineberger and he was born in Cramerton at 192 Front Street and he grew up here. Mr. Lineberger wrote an essay about growing up here is Cramerton and the life here in Cramerton. Commissioner Rice stated that he will get everyone a copy and hopes that everyone takes time to read it.

Commissioner Susan Neeley congratulated Chief Ratchford and Deputy Chief Adams on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Cramerton Police Department and she was excited and proud of the Police Department. Commissioner Neeley also stated that she missed the rock painting event but she did attend the fishing tournament and it was a lot of fun. She stated that there was at least 25 children with their parents and this was quite an increase from last year's fishing tournament.

Mayor Will Cauthen stated that last night he attended the Centralina Council of Government Mayors regional meeting. Mayor Cauthen stated that CCOG represents 73 municipalities. The mayors of all 73 municipalities were invited but only nine were at the meeting. Gaston County was very well represented with four mayors at the meeting and one from Cleveland County. Mayor Jennifer Roberts from Charlotte spoke about how the City of Charlotte is still very committed to the regional efforts. She referenced specifically the Catawba Crossing and how that is something that Charlotte needs desperately as well for future growth. Mayor Cauthen stated that we need to help support CCOG as they go through some challenging times getting membership up. Mayor Cauthen also stated that he will be representing Cramerton at the delegates meeting for CCOG next week. Mayor Cauthen also congratulated the Cramerton Police Department on their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Mayor Cauthen asked if there is anything else that needs to come before the board. The Town Manager stated that he wanted to remind everyone about the special meeting to be held on the 18<sup>th</sup> and a regular meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Commissioner Helms to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.

---

Mayor William Cauthen

**ATTEST:**

---

Belinda Robinson, Recording Secretary