

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

**November 15, 2018**

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met in a workshop session on Thursday, November 15, 2018 at 6:00 p.m., in the G.M. Michael Commission Chamber at the Cramerton Town Hall.

**Board Members present:** Mayor Will Cauthen; Mayor Pro Tem Demetrios Koutsoupas, Commissioners Dixie Abernathy; Houston Helms; Susan Neeley; and Donald Rice were present.

**Staff Present:** David Pugh, Town Manager; Attorney Karen Wolter; Josh Watkins, Planning Director; and Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk.

**Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:** Mayor Cauthen called the 6:00 p.m. meeting to order and determined there was a quorum.

**6:00 p.m. Work Session: Wayfinding Plan and Design Firm presentations.** The Town Manager stated that the wayfinding ad hoc committee reviewed and scored the three requests for proposals that were received. Two firms were selected and will be in attendance at tonight's meeting.

Buzz Bizzell presented information regarding his proposal. He advised of how he works with the municipalities regarding the importance of local connection with items such as color, tie ins with civic buildings, sculptures, monuments, murals and other elements. He commented on the gateway entrances at Lakewood and Market Street intersections and the importance of wayfinding signs not only for direction, but to also tell a story. The goal is to create a benchmark that shop owners, property owners, developers, and others who want to be involved in a small-town life so they can identify with the town's vision.

Commissioner Helms asked about the future evolving and integration of technology. Mr. Bizzell stated a signal can be transmitted to a mobile phone to indicate which direction you need to travel. Municipalities are also installing touchscreen kiosks connecting to maps. A transponder unit is being designed that will be attached to the back of directional signs that will send information to your mobile phone and this technology should be available in about five years. The Board thanked him for his presentation.

JM Teague Engineering from Waynesville, North Carolina presented their information including projects they have helped to design such as greenway signage. The first task they recommended was a walkthrough of the town and to meet stakeholders and create a steering committee to begin gathering information. Importance was stated regarding the placement of signage and being aware of any possible easements or encroachments. The next task would be to create at least three distinctive designs. Discussion was held regarding the importance of health and transportation and encourage people to walk and ride bikes and include the whole community. The Board thanked them for their presentation.

**7:00 p.m. Bi-monthly Meeting:**

**Board Members present:** Mayor Will Cauthen; Mayor Pro Tem Demetrios Koutsoupas, Commissioners Dixie Abernathy; Houston Helms; Susan Neeley; and Donald Rice were present.

**Staff Present:** David Pugh, Town Manager; Attorney Karen Wolter; Josh Watkins, Planning Director; Brad Adams, Police Chief; and Joel Lineberger, Finance Director; and Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk.

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

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance:** The invocation was offered by Commissioner Neeley and the pledge of allegiance was given by all.

**Adoption of Agenda for this meeting:** The Town Manager asked that an addition be added under Planning and Zoning to adopt resolutions to set public hearings for two voluntary annexations for December 13<sup>th</sup> and to add under Board of Commissioners a discussion regarding possible action regarding wayfinding signage firms. The date of December 13<sup>th</sup> is a Thursday not a Tuesday. A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupias to adopt the amended agenda. Commissioner Neeley seconded the motion and it was approved by all.

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

**Proclamations:**

- **A proclamation recognizing Cramerton Middle School Athletics for seasons of excellence in Boy's Golf.** A copy of the proclamation will be placed in the minutes book.
- **A proclamation recognizing Stuart W. Cramer High School Athletics for seasons of excellence in Women's Golf.** A copy of the proclamation will be placed in the minutes book.
- **A Proclamation recognizing Pastor Dr. David Julen as Cramerton's 2018 Citizen of the Year.** A copy of the proclamation will be placed in the minutes book. Commissioner Abernathy thanked the Community Committee and Board of Commissioners for approving this honor for Dr. Julen. She spoke of the daily actions Pastor Julen does for his parishioners and citizens and congratulated him. Dr. Julen is a true servant leader who does things behind the scenes without any glory or recognition. He is someone who makes a daily difference in people's lives because it's good and the right thing to do. Pastor Julen thanked everyone his wife, church family, and friends for their support. The Community Committee presented a trophy to Pastor Julen in recognition of this award.
- **A Proclamation recognizing Ted Reece as Cramerton's 2018 recipient of the Cramerton Lifetime Achievement Award.** A copy of the proclamation will be placed in the minutes book. Joel Lineberger stated he had known Ted Reece all his life and there have been many great men to look up to from this community. Mr. Reece greatly impacted his life. Mr. Lineberger stated he worked for Mr. Reece for two winters in the finishing plant here in town and this helped him with getting started on a path to the career he has now. He stated not only did Mr. Reece help with the Centennial Celebration and the Veterans Memorial, but he and his family have had a great impact on the town and have done a lot for many others. The Community Committee presented a trophy to Ted Reece in recognition of this award. Mr. Reece thanked everyone for this award and felt honored to be chosen.

**AGENDA ITEMS NOT REQUIRING A PUBLIC HEARING:**

**Finance:**

- **Presentation of the Cramerton FY 2017-2018 Audit by Rob Collis of Collis and Associates.** A draft copy of financial information was provided to the Board. Mr. Collis stated his firm is waiting on some information regarding calculations for employee retiree's insurance benefits liability. He stated this item is new for this year and applies to all municipalities. He stated an unmodified opinion will most likely be presented as there are no significant deficiencies to be cited and also possibly no management letter of comment. He advised the Board they could thank Mr. Lineberger for the great job he does. Mr. Collis stated next month new governmental accounting standards will be sent out from the Governmental Auditing Standards. In 2020 the auditor will not be permitted to write the financial statements and also do the audit. He stated his firm would prefer writing the financial statements and set up the auditing paperwork to allow another firm to perform the audit.

Mr. Collis provided information to the Board regarding the increase of cash due to the sale of surplus property. The unassigned fund balance increased and is equal to about 79 percent of the general fund expenditures for the past year and about 74 percent of what is

anticipated to be spent for fiscal year 2018-19. He complimented the town on keeping, and maintaining, a healthy financial balance. Ad valorem collection rate dropped this year and may be due to late property tax payment collections through the county and stands at 99.2 and the state average for a town our size is 98 percent.

### **Planning:**

- **Traffic Impact Analysis: Consider approval of Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a transportation engineer firm retainer contract to administer and advise Cramerton in TIA matters.** The Planning Director stated staff is requesting that the Board review the draft RFQ for Transportation On-Call Services and provide feedback. At this time the town does not have a requirement for traffic impact analyses for any new development. Currently during conditional zoning hearings there is language in the ordinances that references a traffic impact analysis but there are no additional requirements outside of the general requirements by NCDOT. The outside engineering firm would be looking out for the town's best interests. Developers would be responsible for the expense of the traffic impact analysis. The developer could hire an outside secondary firm if they disagree with the vendor that is chosen by the town's transportation engineering firm. The developer would be responsible for all costs. Mr. Watkins said by having an ordinance in place this would assist in increasing the scope of what the town can request. Mr. Watkins said when any new developments are being considered then information would be sent to the transportation engineer firm. The developers pay for this service at the time the application process begins and the traffic impact analysis fee will be determined and will be included as part of the zoning permit fees. Mr. Watkins stated he is requesting that a consultant be in place prior to amending ordinances as there are multiple phases of analysis that can be done. Attorney Wolter recommended the town use the RFQ process for this process. The Board consented to have staff to proceed.
- **Resolution to consider setting public hearings for the adoption of two parcels regarding the purpose of voluntarily annexing into the Town of Cramerton:** The Planning Director stated the two properties are Caromont and the rest of Villages at Cramerton Mills as part of Phase 1E. A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas to set a public hearing for Thursday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, regarding the purpose of voluntarily annexing the Caromont parcel. A motion was made to set a public hearing for Thursday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, regarding the purpose of voluntarily annexing the VCM property. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.

### **Parks and Recreation:**

- **Goat Island – review, discuss and consider direction of new safety fencing quotes for Goat Island Greenway locations.** Mr. Smallwood addressed information regarding the safety fencing at the Lakewood side of Goat Island Park. The fencing would be similar to the split rail fence already at the entrance. Commissioner Helms voiced his concerns about the safety fencing not being adequate to stop a golf cart or scooter. Mr. Smallwood stated the current split rail fencing already in place is holding up well. Staff recommended Parker D Fencing to install the fencing. Commissioner Helms stated he was not in favor of installation of placement of fencing. Commissioner Abernathy made a motion to approve the Parker D Fencing quote for safety fencing on Goat Island. Commissioner Neeley seconded. The vote was 4 to 1 with Commissioner Helms voting nay.

**BIG BOARD REVIEW:** The Veterans Memorial has been completed. Mayor Cauthen asked that it be kept on the list for about a year as a follow up reminder as there are a few follow up items. The Helix R artwork will be discussed at the December 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. An interested developer met with the Planning and Zoning Director and Town Manager regarding the overlay ordinance regarding the sale of the school property. The developer was encouraged to hold a pre-development meeting with the Board either at the December 13<sup>th</sup> meeting or sometime in January 2019. The Centennial Center mural, wayfinding signs, and greenways will be discussed at a later meeting. The Board previously discussed the Goat Island safety fencing. The Town of Belmont's manager has asked about a copy of the resolution regarding the MT Land project. A joint meeting by Gaston County Commissioners and their Planning Board is being considered for December 11<sup>th</sup> and will be held at the courthouse. Commissioner Helms asked if a listing of the Gaston County Planning Board members is available. The Board asked that a written copy of the resolution along

with a cover letter be sent to the Gaston County Commissioners and their Planning Board. Commissioner Abernathy asked about the next step in the decision-making process regarding wayfinding signs. The Town Manager stated this item has been will be discussed at tonight's meeting regarding the RFP and a contract.

### **Board of Commissioners Business**

- **Cramerton Veterans Memorial – Post Ceremony Review:** Commissioner Helms asked for any information to discuss feedback and what needed to be done next such as future lighting, kiosks, and use of QR codes. One of the first questions he heard was people asking if they would be able to add a paver in the future. Commissioner Rice stated there was feedback regarding encouraging people to use the sidewalk and not walk on the pavers. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas thought the directional symbol under the statute was going to be a darker color for emphasis. The Town Manager stated the indented area may darken over time. Mayor Cauthen stated there are between forty to fifty pavers possibly available for future growth. Commissioner Abernathy stated she was about seven hundred miles away on the day of the event but she was impressed with the photos and the stories that were being told and it was a focus of pride for the town. She said it would be good to have a statement prepared regarding what the plan is for the addition of future pavers. The next step would be to include how to showcase this monument. Commissioner Rice said QR codes would be helpful to assist in finding individual bricks and encourage people to write a story. Mayor Cauthen said plaques may be added to include additional information. Discussion was held by the Board regarding increasing the area for growth of the memorial for the future and having further discussion with Gary Fankhauser.
- **Downtown “Centennial Center” Mural: Consideration and approval of final amount of funding for the mural.** Mayor Cauthen provided two images of the mural from the artist. A donation was received from private funding of \$3,000. The Town would need to allocate \$12,000. Commissioner Abernathy asked if the mural image being presented tonight is historically credible. Mayor Cauthen stated this is a diorama and the women would have flown the planes as civilians and this proposed presentation could have occurred on one of our local air bases. Commissioner Helms asked about a dash in the word “Khaki-Town”. Mayor Cauthen said the dash could be removed. Information from “Our State” magazine article will be available as an inset and the full story will be accessible as a reference. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked if the number on the plane’s tail could be used as part of the story possibly even using the dedication date of 111218. The Board did not recommend a dash in “Khaki Town” and asked that this detail be investigated to ensure it is correct. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas voiced a concern about possible vehicular damage to the mural. A motion was made by Commissioner Abernathy to approve and allocate \$12,000 for funding of the downtown “Centennial Center” mural project. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all. Commissioner Abernathy thanked the Mayor for all of his hard work behind the scenes to make this project happen.
- **Public Parking by Masonic Lodge:** A meeting was held with the delegation from the Masonic Lodge. There is a Great Lodge located in Raleigh and they would have to be involved in the decision making. Attorney Wolter is following up on this item.
- **Cramerton Participation in the Gaston County Historical Preservation Society:** Mayor Cauthen stated discussion started with the Baltimore School regarding a local preservation statue. Gaston County already has a historical society but Cramerton did not join this group years ago. Attorney Wolter stated this Board would need to elect to join the Gaston County Historical Preservation Society and prepare a resolution to join giving them authority to serve in our favor and to assist in having certain areas of town or specific landmarks being identified and presented to the state for consideration. Attorney Wolter stated she will begin preparing documents and give an update at the next meeting.
- **Committee Appointments: Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.**
  - A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to appoint Brittany Carey from an alternate member to a full-time voting member with her term ending December 31, 2021. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.

- A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to appoint Mike Hehir from an alternate member to a full-time voting member with his term ending December 31, 2021. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.
- A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to appoint Claudia Escobar as an alternate member with her term ending December 31, 2021. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.
- **Discussion regarding wayfinding plan and design firm presentations.** Commissioner Helms and Rice stated they liked the information that Mr. Bizzell provided and his past experience with the work he has done for the town. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas voiced some of the items that the ad hoc committee discussed such as a unique wayfinding design and experience connecting greenways, parks, neighborhoods, and civic buildings. Mr. Bizzell mentioned original ideas and how does everything tie in together by telling a story through the wayfinding signs and kiosks. He mentioned the importance of the signage looking good but it also needs to make you feel good. Commissioner Abernathy stated she liked the JM Teague Engineering and their presentation. Commissioner Rice asked if any comments have been received regarding implementation by either firm. The Town Manager read an e-mail from Annette Prevette-Keller, Director of Communication with the City of Kannapolis, stating Mr. Bizzell was very creative and had great contacts with vendors and he was willing to work with their budget constraints, but timelines and follow-ups were not his forte, but they were willing to allot extra time as a trade-off due to his creativity. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas made the motion to start wayfinding negotiations with Mr. Bizzell. Commissioner Helms seconded the motion. The vote was 4 to 1 with Commissioner Abernathy voting nay.

**Manager's Report:** The Town Manager stated he would be attending the upcoming NCLM conference regarding membership goals on November 29<sup>th</sup>. A list was presented to the Board with what the staff and attorney thought would be considered the top three goals. Commissioner Rice asked about the minimum housing topic. Attorney Wolter advised that this is a global issue for small towns as they have a very limited budget for this item along with minimal enforceability. The Town Manager stated he would be able to address some of the topics with an NCLM representative. Commissioner Rice asked about broadband and if we should be looking at this item for improving future technology. Attorney Wolter said there has been recent state legislature allowing placement of small cell towers.

#### **GENERAL STAFF REPORTS:**

**Update from Two Rivers Utilities:** Mike Bynum presented his report to the Board. TRU will be moving in a mobile press to dewater the biosolids for removal from the Eagle Mountain Road Wastewater Plan. The preliminary plans for the sidewalk improvements along Market Street have been received and comments regarding water and sewer have been returned to Labella Engineering. Surveying of the Cramer Mountain sewer easements has been completed and notification has been sent to the property owners and the HOA to notify of clearing. TRU has selected Hulsey McCormick and Wallace to provide engineering services for the preparation of a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Application to relocate the Big Lakewood Pump Station out of the off the 100-year flood plan. Construction continues on the South Fork Phase II Regional Sewer Project. Phase I and II of the Southeast Sewer Project are in final design. Utility construction continues at the Courtyards at Cramerton. The water and sewer lines are complete at the Village at South Fork Village Single-Family section. The contractor is waiting on Duke Energy to install the electric service for the pump station to allow the construction to be completed. A revised report has been received regarding the Village at Cramerton Mills for the Baltimore Pump Station and the report is under review. The latest water and sewer submittals for the Grove at Peach Orchard and the Haven have been reviewed and approved. Comments on the third revision to the preliminary plat for the Overlook at Riverside have been returned to Cramerton's Planning Director.

**Town Attorney:** Nothing to report.

**Town Clerk:** Nothing to report.

**Police Department:** Chief Adams presented his monthly report. The McAdenville parade will be held this Saturday and the annual holiday 5K will be run next Saturday. The holiday lights will be turned on November 30<sup>th</sup>. He stated there has been a number of breaking and entering cases filed from the South Fork Village Apartments.

**Fire Department:** Chief Foulk presented his monthly report. Commissioner Rice asked about the flood level of the river. Chief Foulk stated the flood level is currently fine.

**Planning:** Mr. Watkins stated several public information meetings organized by the MT Land developer have been scheduled. The CMAQ funding for the Cramer Mountain Road sidewalk to be transferred to the greenway project was unanimously approved at the MPO meeting. Mr. Watkins stated he has reached out to the local municipalities about this decision. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked the Planning Director to provide the Board with information that they can use in conversation regarding the impact this project has on other local municipalities.

**Finance:** Mr. Lineberger was absent.

**Parks and Recreation:** Mr. Smallwood stated Riverside Park is closed due to flooding. There has been some minimal damage to the South Fork fishing pier.

### **Committee Updates:**

- **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board:** The next meeting will be held in January 2019.
- **Community Committee:** The next meeting will be held in January 2019.
- **Cramerton Merchants Association:** The Town Manager stated a meeting was held earlier this week. The golf tournament was successful. Discussion was held regarding increasing the activities and involvement of the town.

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

Commissioner Neeley thanked Mike Bynum and the Gaston Symphonic Band for their participation at the Veterans Memorial Event dedication ceremony. She thanked Commissioner Helms, Wendy Cauthen, and staff for the event and how well it went. She attended the Veterans 5K Run and assisted Mayor Cauthen in distributing pins to the Vietnam Veterans. Flu shots will be available tomorrow from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Rader Center. She stated the downtown bike fix-it station is being used.

Commissioner Rice congratulated Mr. Reece and Dr. Julen for their awards tonight. Stated he enjoyed attending a recent meeting with the Masonic Lodge members. He stated he spoke with Mr. Smallwood about a future Tesla charging station for the downtown area.

Commissioner Abernathy stated how proud she was of the Board and all of the hard work that went on behind the scenes regarding the Veterans Memorial. She thanked Mayor Cauthen and Commissioner Helms for their leadership.

Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas acknowledged all of the hard work and planning that went into achieving the completion of the Veterans Memorial. He stated his thanks and appreciation to everyone who was recognized at tonight's meeting.

Commissioner Helms spoke about how the Board worked well together and how this project came together. He recognized Wendy Cauthen for all of her hard work and how she worked on her own time even though she is not an elected official or an employee. He publicly thanked Mrs. Cauthen for all the work she put into the Veterans Memorial project.

Commissioner Helms said he wanted to have conversations with the Gaston County Planning Board members and County Commissioners prior to the meeting on December 11<sup>th</sup> regarding the MT Land Project. He encouraged the other Board members to do the same. The Town Manager recommended holding a special meeting and invite the town's Planning and Zoning Board members. The Board agreed to meet on Monday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30 p.m. The Board members agreed they would reach out to Gaston County after the December 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

Commissioner Helms thanked the Community Committee for all of their work and the time they volunteer. He stated his appreciation for the citizen of the year award and the lifetime citizen award that were presented tonight by the Community Committee.

Mayor Cauthen thanked everyone for all of their hard work and stated how well the Veterans Memorial event went.

**Adjournment:** A motion was made by Commissioner Helms to adjourn at 9:51 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy and passed by unanimous vote.

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Mayor Will Cauthen

**ATTEST:**

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Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk