

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

November 19, 2020

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met on Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 6:00 p.m., as a virtual meeting via Zoom.

Call to Order and Determination of Quorum. Mayor Cauthen, Commissioner Abernathy, Commissioner Atkinson, Commissioner Neeley, and Commissioner Rice stated their attendance for the record. Mayor Cauthen determined there was a quorum. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas joined the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

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

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Neeley provided the invocation and the pledge of allegiance was given by all.

Adoption of Agenda for this meeting. The Town Manager stated the presentation by Mandrake Partner for Villages at Cramerton Mills could be removed from the agenda and that a closed session needed to be added under NCGS 145.318.11(a)(3) to protect the client-attorney privilege. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to adopt the proposed agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy. Commissioner Atkinson voted yes; Commissioner Rice voted yes; and Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 5 to 0 to approve the proposed agenda.

Consent Agenda (Action Item): Consider approval of the consent agenda.

a. Minutes

i. November 5, 2020 meeting minutes.

ii. Recreation Advisory Board

1. Affirming of the Board Chair (as recommended by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board).

2. Appointment of new Parks and Recreation Advisory Board member Jaimee Mendrino. A motion was made to adopt by Commissioner Atkinson and seconded by Commissioner Rice to appoint Jaimee Mendrino to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes, Commissioner Neeley voted yes, and Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 5 to 0 in favor.

Agenda Items NOT Requiring a Public Hearing

a. Planning and Zoning

i. Pre-Development

i. Presentation by NewStyle Developers regarding updated plan for Courtyards at South New Hope Road. The Planning Director stated this is a follow up of the meeting from October 15th where Brock Fankhauser presented a plan for thirty-seven (37) single-family homes off of South New Hope Road. The revised plan includes thirty (30) homes and two (2) 6,000 square foot commercial buildings fronting on South New Hope Road. The applicant intends to have these properties develop as medical office and to be governed by the B-1 zoning standards and uses. If the Board feels that the applicant is on the right track with the proposed revisions, then staff will schedule a Public Hearing for December 10th to formally review the revised conditional zoning request. Mr. Fankhauser stated a set of renderings should be available for review by the Board in December.

ii. Presentation by Mandrake Partner for Villages at Cramerton Mills (VCM) Phase 1F. This item was removed from the agenda.

BIG BOARD: The public hearing meeting originally scheduled for January for the NewStyle Developers is now tracking for December 10th. Attorney Wolter asked that the Planning Director treat this a new public hearing and to provide notice via mail and posting. A motion was made by

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas to reopen the public hearing for this property on South New Hope Road as a hybrid public hearing meeting on December 10th at 6:00 p.m. to be held at the Community Center and via Zoom. Commissioner Neeley seconded the motion. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Commissioner Atkinson voted yes; and Commissioner Rice voted yes. The vote was 5 to 0 in favor. Commissioner Rice stated that the information presented to the Masonic Lodge representatives about the parking lot went well and was well received. The designed layout of the Central Park trail has been completed and construction should begin in four (4) to six (6) weeks. The bathrooms have been winterized and will reopen in the spring. Some vandalism occurred to the bathrooms over the weekend and is being investigated. A follow-up meeting was held by the ad hoc committee regarding clarification of placement of signage for Riverside Park and Old Town neighborhood. The Town Manager said he would work with Commissioner Atkinson for some feedback once technical specs are received from Buzz Bizzell. The Brownfields Grant application has been submitted and a new suggested step in this process is to bring in our Federal representatives to advocate for the Cramerton grant. Commissioner Neeley asked about any information regarding the Helix/R sculpture survey. The Town Manager stated the survey results would be provided at the December 10th meeting. There are no updates on the sale of the school property. The Town Manager said he would contact Donnie Hicks and follow up on this item.

Manager's Report: Zoning permit applications have increased and the construction season continues to remain strong even with the COVID 19. Gaston County is one of ten (10) counties in the critical red zone regarding COVID 19 cases. The Town Manager reminded everyone to wear their masks, wash their hands, and maintain social distancing.

General Staff Reports (as needed)

- **Update from Two Rivers Utilities, Mr. Mike Bynum.** A copy of the report will be placed in the minutes book.
- **Police Department:** No update.
- **Finance Department:** The Finance Director was absent.
- **Fire Department:** Chief Foulk shared a success story where Cramerton firefighters assisted Community Volunteer Fire Department with the rescue of a stranded kayaker. He stated the rescue boat that was purchased several years ago with grant monies.
- **Parks and Recreation Department:** Eric Smallwood presented information on the recent flood and the effect on the Town's parks and recreation facilities and their current condition. The recent flooding was identified as the 9th and 10th worst floods as the river crested twice and remained above flood level stage for approximately sixty-three (63) hours. The Goat Island Park turf was damaged as it remained underwater for twelve (12) to thirteen (13) hours. There is about three (3) feet of sand across Goat Island in various areas. The Town Manager stated applications have been sent to FEMA for reimbursement for consideration of reimbursement from the February 2020 flood for damages to the Southfork Village river amenities, decking at Goat Island utility bridge, turf replacement for Goat Island playground, and silt removal from Goat Island Park and Riverside Park. Approval was received for Goat Island bridge decking replacement at \$30,500.00. Mr. Smallwood advised that due to COVID 19 that the basketball season has been officially cancelled and some type of alternative programming will be offered.
- **Planning and Zoning Department:** Nothing to report.
- **Town Clerk:** Nothing to report.
- **Town Attorney:** Nothing to report.

Topics of Discussion for Each Commissioners:

Commissioner Abernathy congratulated the fire department and offered her thanks to them.

Commissioner Atkinson stated he recently attended a zoom meeting series being held by the Charlotte Alliance Infrastructure. The topic for this meeting was transportation on disruptive technology. It was about advancement in electrical automobiles, trucks, and delivery vehicles including autonomous vehicles such as delivery trucks and buses.

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas had nothing to report.

Commissioner Neeley offered her congratulations to the fire department. The Community Committee recently met and the Fairy Festival was very successful. Over 1,500 masks have been

made for the schools. The River Sweep event occurred this weekend. She reminded everyone to be mindful of social distancing, using hand sanitizer, and wearing your mask as part of the COVID 19 protocol.

Commissioner Rice thanked Commissioner Atkinson and the Cramerton Historical Society for a great Veterans Day event. He thanked the Community Committee for the successful River Sweep event.

Mayor Cauthen spoke about trash collection on Front Street extension. He stated that the business owners are willing to work with each other and with the Town regarding this matter. The ad hoc committee has been reviewing the eight (8) requests for quotes about the Land Use Plan. The Planning Director will schedule interviews the week after Thanksgiving for interviews with four (4) of the respondents. Commissioner Atkinson and Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas confirmed they would be available on Tuesday December 1st and Thursday December 3rd at 2:00 p.m. The staff luncheon has been cancelled. A committee is being organized due to the concern about the continuing severe flooding of the South Fork and Catawba Rivers. This committee on South Fork River Health and Flood Mitigation will consist of Commissioner Atkinson, Eric Smallwood, Adrian Miller with the City of Belmont, Commissioner Greg Richardson with the Town of McAdenville, the Centralina Council of Governments, John Searby with the Catawba Riverkeepers, Bart Landess with Catawba Land Conservancy, Bill Carstarphen with Pharr, Kyle Sanders as the liaison from Senator Thom Tillis's office, Colonel Bob Meek from U.S. Congresswoman Virginia Foxx's office, County Commissioner Ronnie Worley, and possibly Joseph Alm are planning to from their staff. A meeting may be scheduled in December to look at our options and actionable plan and funding to improve the health of the river and sustainability. An elevated aluminum frame will be placed on the side of the fire department for placement of the Goat in the Boat mural at no cost to the taxpayers.

Public Comment: No public comments were received for tonight's meeting.

Closed session: [N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3)] Consult with the attorney to protect the attorney-client privilege. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to enter into closed session at 7:03 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy. Commissioner Atkinson voted yes; Commissioner Rice voted yes; and Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The motion was 5 to 0 in favor.

Return to Open Session: Commissioner Abernathy, Commissioner Neeley, Commissioner Rice, and Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas confirmed their attendance. Commissioner Atkinson was not available.

A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to return to open session and seconded by Commissioner Rice. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The motion was 4 to 0 in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Rice to approve the resolution of Randy Smith vs. the Town of Cramerton as determined at mediation on November 18th and to authorize the town attorney and town manager to execute final documents for that resolution. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 4 to in favor.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to adjourn at 7:34 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor.

Mayor William Cauthen

ATTEST:

Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk