

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

March 5, 2020

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met on Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 6:00 p.m., in the G.M. Michael Commission Chamber at the Cramerton Town Hall.

Board Members present: Mayor Cauthen, Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas, Commissioners Susan Neeley, Donald Rice, and Richard Atkinson were present. Commissioner Dixie Abernathy was absent.

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

Call to Order and Determination of Quorum: Mayor Cauthen called the 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: A motion was made by Commissioner Atkinson to adopt the proposed agenda. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas and approved by all.

Public Comment: Ron Laffaye, 148 North Main Street, stated there is a drainage issue from North Main Street onto his property. He stated NCDOT looked at this area and advised him the area in question belongs to the town. He asked for help with this erosion problem by the town.

Proclamation:

- a. **A proclamation recognizing March 2020 as Women's History Month.** A copy of the signed proclamation will be placed in the minutes book.

Work Session:

- a. **Buzz Bizzell of Bizzell Designs – Sign Project Bid Update.** The Town Manager stated only one bid had been received for the wayfinding signage. Mr. Bizzell stated it had been difficult to get multiple bids on this project as the signage is highly specialized and customized. Commissioner Atkinson asked who the bidder was. Mr. Bizzell stated it was Signs Etc. out of Charlotte. Commissioner Atkinson stated he spoke with three sign companies and they are interested in bidding. Discussion was held about the differences in monument signage and wayfinding signage on poles and bidding these items out as separate projects. The Board discussed the possibility of the project being completed by several different vendors with Mr. Bizzell monitoring the process. Commissioner Atkinson asked if lighting was included and Mr. Bizzell said no. Discussion was held about the importance of the logo on the back of the wayfinding signs. Mayor Pro Tempore stated the wayfinding committee had recommended some type of graphic be placed on the back of the signs. Commissioner Atkinson asked about the use of cast acrylic polycarbonate lettering. Mr. Bizzell stated the letters would have a lifetime guarantee and the material is a super dense polycarbonate plastic with color embedded in it. The monument signs in the Riverside neighborhood and the Community Center signs would be double-sided. The monument sign at Lakewood would be single-sided. Mr. Bizzell advised the Board that any underground power lines could cause a delay in placement of signage. The Town Manager recommended that the canoe/kayak landing signs be included as part of the bid package. Staff will determine if the Riverside neighborhood would rather be identified as Old Town for wayfinding signage. Mr. Bizzell said there are two options for the pole signs. One is a standard base and the other design is slightly larger at the base for aesthetics and is more costly. Commissioner Atkinson asked if the NCDOT signage and the non-NCDOT signage could be put in separate packets as these would be smaller signs. Mr. Bizzell said possibly such as the parking and trail signs could be done by local sign companies. A motion was made by Commissioner Atkinson to request separate bids for poles and posts with a break out for the poles and post for the larger NCDOT signs and posts and smaller trail signs in

order to allow two separate bidders with alternate one for the back graphic on signs, alternate two for the standard poles vs. optional base poles, and alternate three would be the aesthetic bottom of the pole. Commissioner Rice seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Consent Agenda:

- a. **Minutes**
 - i. **January 25, 2020 Goals and Objectives meeting minutes.**
 - ii. **February 4, 2020 meeting minutes.**
- b. **Set a public hearing for the Thursday, March 19, 2020 meeting for the purpose to consider an annexation request from Palmetto Bluff Company, LLC to annex approximately 479 acres off of S. New Hope Road, Parcel ID's 222767, 222768, 216850. A portion of Parcel ID 222767 is within the Town of Cramerton's Extra-territorial Jurisdiction; the remainder of the land is currently under Gaston County's Zoning Jurisdiction, but within the Town's future annexation area.**
- c. **Set a Public hearing for the Thursday, March 19, 2020 meeting for the purposes to consider an application for a rezoning of Gaston County Parcel #s 222767, 216850, and 222768. The request is to rezone the property from R-1, Gaston County Residential District, to CZ, Cramerton Conditional Zoning District. The purpose of this request is to allow for a 479-acre mixed-use development consisting of 1,070 single family homes, 80,000 square feet of retail/commercial space, 100,000 square feet of office space, and 70 acres of future business/light industrial use.**
- d. **Budget Amendments for fiscal year (FY) 2019-2020**
 - i. **Budget Amendments #2020-06; #2020-07; and #2020-08 to amend the FY 2019-2020 budget.** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.

Agenda Items Requiring a Public Hearing

- a. **Public hearing to consider the rezoning application of Gaston County parcels 188559 and 188560 consisting of approximately 3.6 acres located north of 4017 South New Hope Road. The request is to rezone the property from R-2 to CZ, Conditional Zoning District.**
 - i. **Action Item: Continue Public Hearing (from 2/20/2020 BOC meeting).** A motion was made by Commissioner Rice to continue the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all.
 - ii. **Staff Comments/ BOC Q & A:** The Planning Director, stated the applicant was proposing to install a chain link fence in the 100-foot buffer, not a brick wall. No permit will be needed for installation of a fence. Discussion was held regarding placement of a decorative fence at the rear of the property. The applicant declined this condition. Mr. Price stated a fence is needed to protect his property from trespassers and people riding four-wheelers. Commissioner Atkinson stated the Cramer Mountain Homeowners Association has guidelines regarding the type of fencing that can be installed.
 - iii. **Public Comments:** Jennifer Grant, 1006 Middleton Court, stated her property backs up to the applicant's property. She confirmed there are people riding four-wheelers on the applicant's property. She was asked to contact the police department if she saw anyone riding four-wheelers on the applicant's property. She stated they had offered to purchase some of the applicant's property since it backs up to their property.
 - iv. **Action Item: Close Public Hearing.** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.
 - v. **Action Item: Consider the rezoning application of Gaston County parcels 188559 and 188560 consisting of approximately 3.6 acres located north of 4017 South New Hope Road. The request is to rezone the property from R-2 to CZ, Conditional Zoning District.** The Board discussed revision of condition #3 which states "applicant agrees to utilize decorative fencing, with a minimum height of six feet and a maximum height of eight feet". Commissioner Rice stated chain link fencing was not mentioned. Mayor Cauthen asked if the installation of chain link fencing would violate the condition of an undisturbed conservation buffer. The applicant stated the decorative fencing is currently planned to be placed at silt pond. Mr. Price stated the addition of decorative fencing in both places on this parcel would be cost prohibitive. Discussion was held for placement of decorative fencing at the rear of the parcel in the conservation buffer as a revision to the site plan. The Planning Director stated condition #2 that reads "applicant

agrees that the rear setback as shown on the plan will be revised to read that it is a 100-foot undisturbed conservation buffer; the existing vegetation will be left in place to provide a screening buffer against the residentially developed property to the north” will be amended to add the addition of decorative fencing in the conservation buffer with a revision to the site plan. The Planning Director stated a decorative style wooden fence borders the property next to the RV/boat storage facility. Discussion of the widening of South New Hope Road was held by the Board. The proposed widening does not have a timeline. Attorney Bringewatt advised that the Board needs to make a yes or no vote on the conditional zoning request as presented by the applicant. Commissioner Atkinson made a motion to table this conditional zoning request until the next scheduled Board meeting. The motion died for lack of a second. The applicant asked that the Board advise him about condition #6 which states “all outdoor storage must be screened from view from any public right-of-way or adjacent property”. Condition #3 states “applicant agrees to utilize decorative fencing, with a minimum height of six feet and a maximum height of eight feet”. Commissioner Rice asked the applicant if he would be willing to consider placement of a decorative wrought iron fence along the rear property line and wooden fence on the sides of the property. The applicant agreed to this condition. The Board consented to this condition regarding fencing. Mayor Cauthen said the applicant has advised that he would be developing the property in phases and during that time some areas would be used for open storage. Commissioner Atkinson asked if the outdoor storage would encroach into the 100-foot conservation buffer and the applicant stated no. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas stated he was not in favor of outdoor storage. Commissioner Rice stated he was okay with the applicant having outdoor storage as long as it was shielded from view and does not encroach into the 100-foot conservation buffer. Commissioner Neeley agreed with the applicant being allowed outdoor storage as described by Commissioner Rice. A motion was made by Commissioner Rice to approve the rezoning request with the inclusion of the revised condition #2 applicant agrees that the rear setback as shown on the plan will be revised to read that it is a 100-foot undisturbed conservation buffer with the placement of a decorative fence as described matching the HOA requirements such as the black aluminum; existing vegetation will be left in place to provide a screening buffer against the residentially developed property to the north; condition #3 applicant agrees to utilize wooden privacy fencing consistent with the neighbor along the sides of the property; and condition #6 for outdoor storage is permitted provided the buffer and fencing requirements are compiled with and occurs within the developed area. The applicant agreed to the revised conditions. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley. Commissioner Atkinson stated he did not think the rezoning of this parcel followed the town’s Land Use Plan for mixed use. The vote was 2 to 2 with Commissioner Rice and Commissioner Neeley voting yes and Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas and Commissioner Atkinson voting nay. Mayor Cauthen voted in approval of the rezoning request for a vote of 3 to 2.

- vi. **Action Item:** Consider adopting a Statement of Consistency that this rezoning is consistent and reasonable with Cramerton’s Land Use Plan. A motion was made by Commissioner Rice to approve and adopt the Statement of Consistency that this rezoning is consistent and reasonable with Cramerton’s Land Use Plan. The vote was 2 to 2 with Commissioner Rice and Commissioner Neeley voting yes. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas and Commissioner Atkinson voting nay. Mayor Cauthen voted in approval of adoption of the Statement of Consistency for a vote of 3 to 2 in favor.

e. Agenda Items NOT Requiring a Public Hearing

a. Cramerton Board of Commissioners

- i. **Cramerton Historical Society (CHS).** A walk through is scheduled with several of the CHS members and staff. The final lease agreement along with a map of the areas the CHS will have available for their use has been sent over to Chris Leazer. The area marked in red will be available for the CHS to use. The Board consented to the designated areas as marked on the map. Some of the storage area for the senior’s group will be moved to another area per the recommendation of the Fire Marshal. Mayor Cauthen stated the foyer area will remain a common area. Commissioner Atkinson asked about the keying of the museum area. Mr. Smallwood stated he is looking into a keypad system and the keyed area will be under one key.
- ii. **BOC 2020 DRAFT Goals & Objectives Document.** The Board consented to the Goals and Objectives document that was presented by the Town Manager.

b. Parks & Recreation

i. Central Park

1. Bathroom Maintenance Bids

a. Action Item: Consider approval of contractor for Central Park bathroom maintenance. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to approve the bid for \$15,500.00 from MJC Renovations for repairs to the Central Park bathroom. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.

2. Goat Island

a. Flooding Update. Goat Island Park continues to be closed. An aquatic structural engineer is scheduled for next week to inspect piers and observation decks. A volunteer cleanup day from 9:30 a.m. to noon is scheduled for Saturday to help clean up the sand on Goat Island. Mr. Smallwood stated that he and the Finance Director met with the insurance adjuster regarding flood damage. A meeting is scheduled with the manufacturer of the playground turf.

c. Finance

i. Audit RFP. Three quotes were received for the audit request for proposal. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to accept the request for proposal for a three-year contract with Martin Starnes Associates to perform both the Audit and Financial Statement documents. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.

BIG BOARD: The Town Manager stated a public hearing is scheduled for March 19th regarding the MT Land Development. No updates have been received regarding the Masonic Lodge parking lot. Staff is working with Riley Lewis for photos for the new website. Staff is working on scheduling a final walk through with the Cramerton Historical Society as the tenant. The Gaston County Commissioners approved their resolution for the Baltimore Historical School on February 25th. The Town Manager thanked Commissioner Atkinson for his expertise regarding the wayfinding signage. Mayor Cauthen asked about the Cramerton and McAdenville Northern Connector Greenway. A meeting is scheduled next week with the Town of McAdenville and Carolina Thread Trail. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas asked about the brownfields grant. The Town Manager stated an update will be offered in the spring per Jessica Martin with Withers Ravenal.

Manager's Report: The Town Manager stated he would be out of the office tomorrow.

General Staff Reports:

Two Rivers Utilities: Kyle Butler distributed his report. Clearing for Phase 5 of the Cramer Mountain Sewer Easement has been completed. Survey work for Phase 6 of the Cramer Mountain Sewer Easement Clearing will begin later this month.

Finance Department: Mr. Lineberger stated the budget process has started with the department heads. He has not received any capital outlay requests from departments at this time. A budget amendment will be prepared for the repairs to the Central Park bathroom. Positions for a Public Works employee and Parks and Recreation are open will be advertised soon. He stated he would be out of town for several days.

Commissioner Neeley asked about the speed limit on Armstrong Road that changes from 35 to 45 to 35. The Town Manager stated he and the department heads are working on that issue.

No other staff reports at this time.

Topics of Discussion for Each Commissioner:

Commissioner Neeley stated the Community Committee is planning a River Sweep on Saturday March 28th. Milk jugs are to be collected for the Easter Egg Scramble scheduled for April 9th. She advised Chief Adams that one of the residents who lives on Eighth Avenue is concerned about speeding. Chief Adams stated he would have the radar trailer placed on Eight Avenue. The Community Committee is working on replacing American flags around Cramerton. She stated Fred Glenn spoke at the County Commissioners meeting about the history of the Baltimore School.

Commissioner Neeley she and other volunteers were at various schools reading the “Cat in the Hat” book.

Commissioner Rice stated he attended the county commissioners meeting for the Baltimore School historic preservation resolution. He attended the City of Belmont’s council meeting. He attended the City of Lowell’s dedication of the Flats. He thanked everyone who voted in the primary election.

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas stated he would like to receive some additional information for the upcoming river sweep as one of the teachers at Stuart W. Cramer High School is interested in having students volunteer. Mayor Cauthen stated chaperones will be needed to assist with the students. He asked that the Board receive follow up regarding the stormwater drainage that was addressed at tonight’s meeting. He asked about any updated information on the development on the Duke Energy Substation. The Town Manager stated he has sent letters to Duke Energy about dedication of acreage to the town.

Commissioner Atkinson asked if the town has a plan regarding the stormwater issue. The Town Manager said a study was completed in 2008 and some areas were owned by the mill. Commissioner Atkinson asked that staff follow up on this item. Commissioner Atkinson stated he was looking forward to the walk through of the museum area for the historical society. He said they are going to work with Fred Glenn for information about the Baltimore School. Commissioner Atkinson said he would like to review the wayfinding plans and present his ideas to the Town Manager.

Mayor Cauthen stated there will be some future fundraising needed for the Baltimore School for renovations. He stated additional lighting had been placed on the Veterans Memorial and thanks was given to Rodney Baker with Public Works. Mayor Cauthen thanked everyone for their professionalism tonight during the public hearing.

The Finance Director stated the Community Foundation still has an active 501(c)3 account open which could be dedicated for donations to the Baltimore School.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atkinson and approved by all.

Mayor William Cauthen

ATTEST:

Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk