

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

February 18, 2021

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met on Thursday, February 18, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., as a virtual meeting via Zoom.

Call to Order and Determination of Quorum. Mayor Cauthen, Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas, Commissioner Abernathy, Commissioner Atkinson, and Commissioner Neeley confirmed their attendance for the record. Mayor Cauthen determined there was a quorum.

Staff Present: David Pugh, Town Manager; Attorney Karen Wolter; Josh Watkins, Planning Director; Police Chief Adams; Joel Lineberger, Finance Director; 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. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to adopt the proposed agenda. Commissioner Atkinson seconded the motion. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor.

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. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atkinson. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor.

Open Session: Mayor Cauthen asked each of the Board members to confirm their attendance. Commissioner Abernathy present; Commissioner Atkinson present; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas present; and Commissioner Neeley present.

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

Public Comment (electronic): The Town Clerk read the following public comments into the record:

From: Eric <e_keziah@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2021 11:06 AM
To: TownofCramerton <townofcramerton@cramerton.org>
Subject: Carolina Thread Trail extension

Good day,

On behalf of the Tarheel Trailblazers, I support the proposal to fund the extension and improvement of the Carolina Thread Trail from Rocky Branch Park (RBP) Belmont to the existing trailhead on Eagle Rd. at the rescue center. This planned extension of RBP to create a joint park between the Town of Cramerton and the City of Belmont would be a tremendous asset to our local community.

Best regards,

Eric Keziah | Supply Chain Field Trainer
South - Southeast Regions
9399 West Higgins Rd | Suite 100 | Rosemont, IL 60018
O 803.802.6227 | M 704.309.7550
eric.keziah@usfoods.com

From: president@tarheeltrailblazers.com <president@tarheeltrailblazers.com>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2021 10:59 AM
To: TownofCramerton <townofcramerton@cramerton.org>

Subject: Bring more cycling to Cramerton!

I support the proposal to fund the extension and improvement of the Carolina Thread Trail from Rocky Branch Park (RBP) Belmont to the existing trailhead on Eagle Rd. at the rescue center.

This planned extension of RBP to create a joint park between the Town of Cramerton and the City of Belmont would be a tremendous asset to our local community.

Cycling/hiking have seen explosive growth over the past year, and will likely continue to grow rapidly for the foreseeable future. We need to develop quality projects such as this, and the volunteers of the Tarheel Trailblazers support this project!

Bryan Hall
President, [Tarheel Trailblazers](#)

From: Danielle Kelly <drl317@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2021 10:09 AM
To: TownofCramerton <townofcramerton@cramerton.org>
Subject: Carolina Thread Trail

Dear Town of Cramerton Planning committee:

I support the proposal to fund the extension and improvement of the Carolina Thread Trail from Rocky Branch Park (RBP) Belmont to the existing trailhead on Eagle Rd. at the rescue center. This planned extension of RBP to create a joint park between the Town of Cramerton and the City of Belmont would be a tremendous asset to our local community.

Thank you,
Danielle Kelly
Eagle Park Resident

From: Jeff Campbell <jeffrey_c_campbell@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2021 9:29 AM
To: TownofCramerton <townofcramerton@cramerton.org>
Subject: Thursday BOC Meeting - Support for Thread Trail

Good morning -

In advance of Thursday's Cramerton Board of Commissioners meeting, I wanted to voice myself and my family's support of the proposal to fund the extension and improvement of the Carolina Thread Trail from Rocky Branch Park (RBP) Belmont to the existing trailhead on Eagle Rd. at the rescue center. This planned extension of RBP to create a joint park between the Town of Cramerton and the City of Belmont would be a tremendous asset to our local community."

Thanks -

Jeff Campbell
Jamie Campbell
Hudson Campbell
Peyton Campbell

(Residents of Belmont off of Eagle Road)

From: Sarah Kaufmann <sarahkaufmann@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2021 9:16 AM
To: TownofCramerton <townofcramerton@cramerton.org>
Cc: Dave Baker <davidbaker.ce@hotmail.com>; Eric Smallwood <esmallwood@cramerton.org>; Nick Barringer <nick.barringer@alphafa.com>
Subject: Support for Rocky Branch Park - Cramerton

Hello,

Please consider this attached letter for public comment on Thursday February 18. Thank you.

MEMORANDUM

February 12, 2021

TO: Town of Cramerton
FROM: Rocky Branch Park Trail Enhancement Committee
SUBJECT: Rocky Branch Trails Enhancement Project – Cramerton Trail

The Rocky Branch Park Trail Enhancement Committee is proud to report that we have raised \$127,200 from grants and community fundraising through January 2021. In addition to these funds raised, the City of Belmont has also committed \$156,000 in matching funds towards the project.

In January we began construction of the Carolina Thread Trail segment in Belmont, which serves as a primary thoroughfare through the park and provides for more inclusive community access. Construction of a beginner and intermediate trail is planned to be completed by mid-2021.

The Rocky Branch Park Trail Enhancement Committee is committed to continued fundraising to invest in the construction of a contiguous park into the Town of Cramerton. Funds raised would be used for upgrading and rerouting a 0.6 mile natural surface multi-use Carolina Thread Trail connecting Cramerton and Belmont and an adjoining 0.6 mile hiking and biking trail. These trails will provide a safer pedestrian corridor between communities in an area that today is without sidewalk or proper pedestrian/bicycle crossings at the road and railway intersection.

The Tarheel Trailblazers plan to provide volunteer maintenance to the park and trails through an MOU (memorandum of understanding) with the Town of Cramerton. This will mirror the successful agreement executed between the Tarheel Trailblazers and the City Belmont which has provided the maintenance for Rocky Branch Park for over seven years.

We kindly request support from the Town of Cramerton to contribute funds for the construction costs for these Cramerton trail phases as an investment in the community. These phases are on track to be completed within six to nine months of receipt of funding and will be widely recognized in the region due to its interconnection to a regional network of trails. This plan provides for the completion of a high-quality trail system and park in 2021 at a substantial value to the Town.

Sincerely,

Tarheel Trailblazers
Rocky Branch Park Trail Enhancement Committee

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

- a. Minutes**
 - i. February 4, 2021 meeting minutes.**
- b. Resolution**
 - i. Resolution #2021-01 - A resolution presenting for Cramerton Police Officer Randy Smith with his service weapon.**
- c. Budget Amendments**
 - i. Budget Amendment #5 - #8 for FY 2020-2021.**
- d. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Appointments**
 - i. Bryan Andrea as a full member.**
 - ii. Tina Berens as a full member.**

A motion was made by Commissioner Atkinson to approve the proposed consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor.

Old Business

- a. Villages at Cramerton Mills (VCM) Rezoning Request Consideration**
 - i. Action Item: Consider a rezoning request by the Villages at Cramerton Mills, Phase 1D, which is being marketed as “The Terraces” and is specifically identified as Parcel ID# 195932 located off of Hamrick Road in Cramerton. (Note: There is no current physical address for this parcel.)** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to approve the zoning request by the Villages at Cramerton Mills, Phase 1D, which is being marketed as “The Terraces” and is specially identified as Parcel ID #195932 located off of Hamrick Road. The motion was seconded by Commissioner

Abernathy. Commissioner Atkinson voted yes; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor.

Note: This action is being taken in accordance and compliance with NC Law. The Cramerton Board held the official public hearings for the Villages at Cramerton Mills conditional rezoning request at the February 4, 2021 meetings, and has accepted public comment for at least 24 hours after the close of the public hearing before considering adoption. Cramerton has also continued to take public comment on this item and will read any additional comments into the record on this section of the agenda.

Action Item: Consider adopting a consistency statement regarding Villages at Cramerton Mills Conditional Rezoning request. A motion was made by Commissioner Atkinson to adopt the consistency statement regarding the Villages at Cramerton Mills. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor. Mayor Cauthen read the consistency statement into the record:

WHEREAS, the Town of Cramerton Planning and Community Development Department received a request from Bowman Development Group to amend the CZ zoning of property identified by Parcel ID # 195932; and,

WHEREAS, this request was subject to Public Hearing before the Town of Cramerton Board of Commissioners on February 4th, 2021; and;

WHEREAS, the Town of Board of Commissioners has determined that the proposed request is reasonably consistent with the intent of the Town of Cramerton Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The Future Land Use Plan recommends Planned Mixed Use in this area. As a component of a larger development encompassing single family residential, multifamily residential, and planned commercial along the S. New Hope Corridor, the rezoning of these areas to add single family attached and single family detached housing is in keeping with the intent of the Planned Mixed-Use district of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

WHEREAS, in accordance with the provisions of North Carolina General Statute 160A-383, the Board of Commissioners does hereby find and determine that the adoption of an ordinance rezoning the following described property is reasonably consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Land Use Plan and that the adoption of an ordinance rezoning the following described property is reasonable and in the public interest due to its consistency with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and, as a result, its furtherance of the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, on the basis of the foregoing findings and conclusions, that the Town of Cramerton Board of Commissioners moves that the request for rezoning be approved.

Agenda Items Not Requiring a Public Hearing

a. Parks and Recreation

i. Greenway Trails Construction

1. Rocky Branch Trail

- a. Action Item: Consider approval to contract with Nature Trails, LLC for construction on the Rocky Branch Park Trail, Cramerton section.** The Parks and Recreation Director the Rocky Branch Trail at the Stuart W. Cramer High School connects the Town to downtown Belmont. Construction on the Carolina Thread Trail in Belmont has already started and goes to the edge of the Stuart W. Cramer High School property. Quotes were received from two (2) contractors for the construction of the enhanced natural surface greenway. The quotes received were \$45,490.00 from Nature Trails, LLC and \$49,335.00 from Blue Ridge Trail Works. The Town is working with Dr. Houchard with Gaston County Schools about a memorandum of understanding for another Cramerton park and be an extension of the Rocky Branch Park for one contiguous park that crosses jurisdictional lines. Nature Trails, LLC is the contractor on site constructing the Rocky Branch Belmont section and is the lowest responsible bidder. The Town is expecting \$99,000.00 in revenue from FEMA for the February 2020 flood and a portion of this could be allocated to this project. The Rocky Branch Park Committee and The Tarheel Trailblazers have committed to fundraising at least half of the money to build this trail and reimbursing

the Town for this project as well as sign the memorandum of understanding for maintenance of the trails system. Commissioner Abernathy asked about the type of material to be used for the surface trails and how does this compare to other trails. Mr. Smallwood advised the trail surface will be some form of aggregate gravel or crushed concrete similar to what is in Central Park. Commissioner Abernathy commended him and his team regarding this project. A motion was made by Commissioner Atkinson to approve the contract with Nature Trails, LLC for \$45,490.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes; Commissioner Neeley voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor.

b. Public Works

i. Road Maintenance Capital Projects 2021

1. Engineering Contract

a. Action Item: Consider approval of final engineering contract with LaBella. The Town Manager stated the contract with LaBella Engineering contract is a not to exceed amount for construction documents and administration of \$117,735.00. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas asked if LaBella Engineering would be the inspectors on this paving project. The Town Manager said yes. LaBella were the engineers and inspectors during the 2017 paving project and B&N Grading was the paving contractor. A motion was made by Commissioner Atkinson to approve the final engineering contract with LaBella Engineering. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas seconded the motion. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Commissioner Neeley voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor.

2. Loan Options and Discussion

a. Action Item: Resolution #2021-02 - To approve financing terms for the 2021 Street Maintenance Project, which reflect the results of the Financing RFP. A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas to approve Resolution #2021-02 to approve financing terms for the 2021 Street Maintenance Project. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Commissioner Atkinson voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor.

b. Action Item: Resolution #2021-03 - To authorize filing of an application for approval of a financing agreement authorized by NC Statute 160A-20. A motion was made by Commissioner Atkinson to approve Resolution #2021-03 to authorize filing of an application for approval of a financing agreement authorized by NC statute 160A-20. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley. Attorney Wolter asked that the proposed resolution be amended removing the word unanimous at this time. Commissioner Atkinson restated his motion recommending the approval of Resolution #2021-03 as amended. Commissioner Neeley seconded the motion. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor.

c. Action Item: Capital Project Ordinance #2021- 01 - For the 2021 Street Maintenance Project. Discussion was held regarding the timeline and the importance of the engineer providing specifications from the paving contractors and bid certifications to align with the LGC meeting time frames. The Town Manager stated there are two (2) more years on the 2017 road financing loan. This loan does not necessarily need to be paid off prior to obtaining an additional loan. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to adopt Capital Project Ordinance #2021-01 for the 2021 Street Maintenance Project. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atkinson. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor.

Board of Commissioners

i. Cramerton Board of Commissioners Vacancy

1. Action Item: Consider appointment of vacancy applicant candidate to the Cramerton Board of Commissioners to fill the remainder of former

Commissioner Donald Rice's term, which expires December 2023. Mayor Cauthen stated six (6) applications were received and the Board chose to interview four (4) of the applicants. Commissioner Abernathy made a motion to nominate to appoint Wil Neumann. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atkinson. Commissioner Neeley voted no. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted no. The vote was 2 to 0. Mayor Cauthen stated the motion failed. Commissioner Neeley made a motion to nominate Houston Helms. Mayor Cauthen stated he failed to vote during the first motion. He stated his vote was nay regarding the nomination of Wil Neumann. Commissioner Neeley restated her motion to nominate Houston Helms to complete the remainder of former Commissioner Donald Rice's term which expires December 2023. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. Commissioner Abernathy and Commissioner Atkinson commented on the rating system and thought this exercise was to assist in removing emotions of the debate. Mayor Cauthen stated the scoring was to determine whether or not there was a consensus as to the number one candidate. The first ranked candidate for the morning ranked high in the morning interviews but ranked low in the afternoon interviews and the candidate that ranked low in the morning was ranked high in the afternoon so there was divergence of opinion. The exercise was not in replacement of the discussion or vote but was to guide in how this process could work. Commissioner Abernathy voted no; Commissioner Atkinson voted no. Mayor Cauthen voted yes in favor of appointment of Houston Helms. The vote was 3 to 2 in favor of appointment of Houston Helms. Attorney Wolter stated Mr. Helms will need to be sworn into office and will be able to serve as a full member at the next scheduled Board meeting. Mayor thanked all the applicants, Commissioners, and staff for assisting in this process.

Detailed minutes for the following Agenda Item:

Board of Commissioners

Cramerton Board of Commissioners Vacancy

- 1. Action Item: Consider appointment of vacancy applicant candidate to the Cramerton Board of Commissioners to fill the remainder of former Commissioner Donald Rice's term, which expires December 2023.**

Mayor Cauthen: A quick recap for everyone who may not have been here for this process up to this point. We received six (6) wonderful applications from applicants that were willing to fulfill this term. The Board selected four (4) interviewees and this past Saturday we had an opportunity. Each interviewee/applicant came in and interviewed with two groups each time, two (2) Commissioners and the Mayor each time, and we had some wonderful conversation. We had an incredibly deep field of talent to choose from and based on the activity up to this point and the high caliber of those candidates there is a divergence of opinions on those candidates so at this point I will open the floor for nominations and discussion. Commissioner Abernathy.

Commissioner Neeley: I would like to nominate

Commissioner Atkinson: I would like to make a motion to nominate

Mayor Cauthen: I'm sorry I recognize Commissioner Abernathy as she has her hand up.

Commissioner Neeley: Okay.

Commissioner Abernathy: Thank you Mayor. I am prepared to make a motion for the appointment to fill this vacancy. The motion that I would like to make is for candidate Wil Neumann. I base this motion on several reasons. I would like to echo what you said Mayor. The level of candidates/applicants that we had was simply outstanding. I think it says a lot about our Town that the little group we interviewed was just a representation of the experience, the talents, and the competencies that are out there among our citizens, people who are ready to get involved and ready to lead.

I make this motion for Wil Neumann based on a few points. First of all, his experience on our Planning Board. He has served as the chair there for two (2) years. He also has other experiences on the hospital board and serving in the North Carolina General Assembly. I also appreciate the fact that Mr. Neumann has not served on our Town Commissioners Board before. I actually see that as a strength. I think it is an indication of a healthy, moving, involved Town

as we have different leaders who are able to step up and have a turn to serve their community in this capacity.

I also nominate Mr. Neumann because I was very pleased at my fellow Board members suggested a rating system that we would use so that we could get some kind of collective consensus, not to determine any of our votes but to inform our decisions. I know that all four of us were involved in that, with confidence in the collective groups. That whatever the lowest mean score was that certainly that could be considered as a statistical means by which to view the strongest person coming out of the interviews. I make this motion for Wil Neumann because indeed he did have that top-ranking score of 2.0.

I make the motion for Wil Neumann to fill our current vacancy on the Board of Commissioners.

Mayor Cauthen: Thank you for that motion. Do we have a second?

Commissioner Atkinson: I second it.

Mayor Cauthen: We have a motion and a second. Any more discussion.

Commissioner Atkinson: Yes, I would like to make some comments. I looked at this like everybody did with four extremely talented people. I want to thank them for their time and effort in putting their applications in and also interviewing with two different groups. I broke it down personally as sort of political experience and non-political experience and then tried to look at that. And obviously that is Houston and Wil with political experience and non would be Scott and Nelson. However, both of those have their strengths and weaknesses. But one of the things that I considered very thoroughly I think was let's say everybody is qualified, and I have said and still maintain, I will be happy with any of the candidates on the Board. However, we sort of agreed on a system and based on that system Wil is the candidate. Now I think his background, his personality, and his credentials are certainly qualifying. But one of the things that I am looking at is our geographics area of our Town, and Woodbridge is an area that the large contingent area of the Town, and is growing, without a representative there.

Mayor Cauthen: Do you mean Timberlake.

Commissioner Atkinson: I mean Timberlake. I am sorry. Without a representative on council however I think that is important. I will go back to this. When we were dealing with leaf issues, I had several people from Cramer Mountain call me and they called me because I was their commissioner. And I think that we relate to people especially I am sure people relate to Dixie that way and Susan also. I think that is an unrepresented area and Wil would do a good job of representing that area and that is my reasoning and that is not to slight anybody else either because we interviewed four qualified people. So that is why I am supporting Wil Neumann. Thank you.

Mayor Cauthen: Thank you for your comments.

Mayor Cauthen: At this time, I will record the votes of the other Commissioners.

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas: No.

Commissioner Neeley: No.

Mayor Cauthen: That motion fails. I will reopen the floor to additional motions.

Commissioner Neeley: I make a motion to nominate Houston Helms to fill the vacant seat of Donald Rice until the term ending December 20, 2023.

Mayor Cauthen: Thank you Commissioner Neeley. I apologize. I need to go back because we had a 2 to 2 vote that resulted in a tie on that motion the Mayor does need to break that tie. I will vote no so that motion does fail. I apologize, Susan you have the floor to make your motion.

Commissioner Neeley: I make a motion to nominate Houston Helms to fill the vacant seat of Donald Rice until the term ends December 20, 2023. I appreciate all of the other folks that came. They are excellent and they are stellar folks and I appreciate all of them. Thank you very much. I make that motion.

Mayor Cauthen: Thank you Susan.

Mayor Cauthen: Do we have a second.

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas: Second.

Mayor Cauthen: Thank you Mayor Pro Tem. We have a motion and a second. Any further discussion.

Commissioner Atkinson: I have some comments.

Mayor Cauthen: Commissioner Abernathy.

Commissioner Abernathy: I appreciate the motion and the second. I understand and agree with everyone who is talking about the stellar qualifications of all the candidates that we had but I also agree with the comment Commissioner Neeley just made that she appreciates the four candidates who interviewed. I do as well. I appreciate them so much that I am not a big fan of wasting their time. I really don't understand the philosophy that the same leaders, over and over, and over, and over, serve on the Board. I don't see the harm, and I actually see a great benefit in allowing other qualified leaders to step up and get an opportunity as well.

The second comment I would say is I don't quite understand where the rating system that we all agreed to comes into play with this particular motion. The mean scores were 2.0 and then two people tied with 2.5, including Mr. Helms. The difference between 2.0 and 2.5 with four people ranking on four variables ends up in a statistically significant mean difference if you are using a confidence interval of .05. So again, if that ranking system was not going to make any difference at all I really wonder at why that exercise was suggested to us in the first place. Thank you.

Commissioner Atkinson: I want to follow that up and basically when I understood the rating system and the scoring system, that was supposed to take out the emotions out of this debate I thought.

Mayor Cauthen: Let me correct you Commissioner Atkinson. That is not what that was supposed to do and this also addresses Commissioner Abernathy's question. It was supposed to determine whether or not there was a consensus to the number one. The scoring resulted the number one from the morning was ranked quite low by the afternoon candidates and the number one for the afternoon was ranked quite low by the morning candidates meaning that we had a divergence of opinion. At no time was that to replace a vote or discussion. It was hopefully to at least to guide us so that we knew better how this procedure could work. But as Karen, when she sent out that exercise, our town attorney, she made it clear this was not in replacement of the discussion and motion. It was just to help us in our process. But please continue.

Commissioner Atkinson: Okay, so if you follow that process of a scoring system then you come up with a tie. Then you go to see who voted for the second tier and that is when get and where Neumann comes out with the extra vote. Because you have to go to the fourth tier for Houston. So that should qualify as that is how it is done. I know we don't have to stick to it and I know we could change all of our votes. But we agreed on a system and we spent our time and everybody else's time and we are coming back around to where we started before we even opened it up.

Mayor Cauthen: Thank you.

Commissioner Abernathy: First of all, Mayor in your comments you said you wanted to address my question. I did not ask you a question. I made some statements about the statistical analysis and about the reasons why we used that ranking system. And my point was, and I never implied that the ranking system would be used to make anyone's decision. In fact, I have already stated that verbatim. I simply said that a ranking system like that that we all four would only be encouraged or told we that we could use that for a reason. It certainly would not be an exercise in wasted time. And the reason why you do something like that is to help inform the decision that you are going to make. You are exactly right Mayor that exercise gives you an idea of the collective consensus. Numbers don't leave a lot up to interpretation. The numbers speak for themselves. 2.0, 2.5 and 2.5. I am feeling at this point, and this is the last thing I will say on the matter, that the ranking system was suggested to provide a quantitative measure, a number if you will, to support the motion that you and Commissioner Neeley, and Commissioner Koutsoupas support if the number came out in agreement with what you all were hoping it was. And now that it has not come out that way, all of sudden the number is insignificant and the whole exercise of ranking was one that really shouldn't have been paid attention to anyway. Thank you.

Mayor Cauthen: I apologize if I mis-characterized any of your comments in responding.

Commissioner Neeley: I would like to make a comment. I have a vote just like everybody else. We have one vote each. Commissioner Abernathy and Commissioner Atkinson gave their opinions. This is my opinion. I am sure that you are going to acknowledge that I have an

opinion and my vote. I had a motion to nominate Mr. Helms. And I want to keep that forward. So, if we could just get on with it please.

Mayor Cauthen: Commissioner Abernathy do you have a response to that.

Commissioner Abernathy: I just want to remind Commissioner Neeley we recognized your motion. In my comments I specifically recognized your motion, but this is part of the parliamentary process. It is after the motion and the second we get a chance to discuss.

Commissioner Neeley: Thank you for sharing. Thanks for sharing that.

Mayor Cauthen: We have a motion and a second. Commissioner Abernathy how do you vote on the motion.

Commissioner Abernathy: No.

Mayor Cauthen: Commissioner Atkinson how do you vote.

Commissioner Atkinson: No.

Mayor Cauthen: That results in a 2 to 2 tie. I as the Mayor will break this tie. And it will come as a surprise to no one that I am going to vote in the affirmative. At this point I will state again as I have throughout this process, I know we have had a commissioner mention that they actually see experience on this Board as a weakness. I absolutely could not disagree more about that. I think going through the process of meeting the citizens of this Town, shaking their hands, and speaking to them on their front porch, and building trust with them, being elected twice to this Board, serving tirelessly for nine (9) years on this Board, any time he has been asked to give of himself he has. and that counts. So, at this point that vote is recorded as a 3 to 2 vote and that vacancy will be filled. Karen procedurally we will handle this at the next Board meeting.

Attorney Wolter: That is right. The Board has appointed Mr. Helms as the new commissioner to fill Commissioner Rice's seat. He will need to be sworn in by the clerk or by the Mayor. Because of the COVID restrictions and the virtual requirements these days there is a procedure he can follow, but as soon as he is sworn in and his sworn statement is filed with the clerk, he will be a full member of this Board. He will appear as a full Board member by the next meeting, or sooner.

Mayor Cauthen: Thank for that update. Thanks to all the applicants who worked through this process. And thank you to all the Commissioners and staff for putting the process together.

ii. Cramerton Planning & Zoning Board Vacancy

1. **Action Item: Consider BOC sub-committee timeline for applicant review and interviews.** The Town Manager stated that Commissioner Neeley, Commissioner Atkinson, along with Mayor Cauthen are the ad hoc committee for selection of the Planning and Zoning Board member. Copies of the applications received will be available next week. The ad hoc committee agreed to meet on February 24th from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

iii. South Fork River

1. **Action Item: Resolution #2021-04 - Supporting Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation to apply for grant funding for South Fork River Dam study.** Commissioner Atkinson voiced his support of this resolution. Discussion with the Catawba Riverkeepers was held about the importance of a hydrolysis study from an engineer to determine the impact of taking the water level down to Lake Wylie which would help with flood mitigation and opening the waterway from the Town of McAdenville to the Lake Wylie Dam to also allow for waterway recreational activities. Environmental studies will need to be completed on both sides of the spillway dam to test for contaminants. American Riverkeepers will be able to assist with the cost of the engineering studies and physical removal of the spillway. Commissioner Atkinson made a motion to support Resolution 2021-04 and to apply for grant funding for the South Fork River Dam study. Commissioner Neeley seconded the motion. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor.

BIG BOARD: The Town Manager stated there are no further updates on the Masonic Lodge. Staff will follow up with Senator Harrington's office to see if there have been changes to the timeline in reference to the NCDOT 29/74 widening project. Commissioner Atkinson asked about the status of the Helix/R statue. The Town Manager stated he is going to follow up with Gary Fankhauser and then provide cost information to the Board during the budget process. A copy of

the wayfinding signs updated draft will be provided to the Wayfinding Sign Committee tomorrow. Mr. Bizzell has returned details for the larger monument signs. The Town Manager stated he spoke with U.S. Congresswoman Foxx's district manager regarding the brownfields grant. He also discussed the cleanliness of the local post office. The same information that was provided to Representative McHenry's office regarding the last request for cleanup of the post office will be send to U.S. Senator Foxx's office.

Manager's Report

- a. **COVID-19 (Coronavirus):** No other updates.
- b. **Cramerton BOC 2021 Goals & Objective Meeting:** Discussion of Time & Location. The Town Manager stated the meeting is scheduled for February 27th. The meeting will be from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Darren Rhodes will be in attendance as the mediator.

General Staff Reports (as needed)

- **Update from Two Rivers Utilities, Mr. Mike Bynum:** A copy of report will be placed in the minutes book.
- **Police Department:** Chief Adams stated he had nothing to report.
- **Fire Department:** Chief Foulk stated he had nothing to report.
- **Parks and Recreation:** Eric Smallwood stated the Town's parks remain closed due to flooding. The Goat Island playground will be reopened soon.
- **Planning and Zoning:** Nothing to report.
- **Town Clerk:** Nothing to report.
- **Town Attorney:** Nothing to report.

Committee Reports:

- **Community Committee:** Commissioner Neeley stated the annual Riversweep will be held on March 13th; the Easter Egg Scramble on April 1st; Baltimore school cleanup on April 17th. The committee is working on a butterfly and ladybug release; potting party; masks have been completed for Page Elementary and Belmont schools; mini-boat regatta; kayak storage; and manhole cover art.
- **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board:** Commissioner Abernathy stated she was not able to attend the last Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting.
- **South Fork River Health Committee:** Mayor Cauthen stated a meeting is scheduled for next Monday.
- **Centralina Regional Council of Government:** Mayor Cauthen stated he attended a recent meeting and they are under new leadership. They are providing assistance to the South Fork River Health Committee.

Topics of Discussion for Each Commissioner

Commissioner Abernathy asked that on page 3 of the agenda that the information regarding public comments be amended as it states the electronic comments will be read at the end of the Board meeting and tonight the emails were read at the start of the meeting. She sincerely thanked all of the applicants that applied for the Board of Commissioners and encouraged them to remain involved with the Town and to continue to look for opportunities for a chance to be involved in leadership for the Town.

Commissioner Atkinson thanked the candidates and advised that there was a vacancy on the Planning and Zoning Board and encouraged each of them to fill out an application to serve. He welcomed Houston Helms to the Board.

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas stated he felt all the candidates were amazing. He encouraged them to stay connected. He asked the Town Manager if someone could follow up on a repair to the pothole in the road near the intersection at Eighth and Market Streets. The Town Manager stated that Rodney Baker, Public Works Director, has already reached out to NCDOT regarding repair of this pothole.

Commissioner Neeley offered her thanks to all the candidates who applied. She congratulated Houston Helms for his appointment. She encouraged each of the applicants to apply for any open positions such as the current Planning and Zoning Board member vacancy. She stated the installation of a doorbell at the front door to Town Hall along with the placement of the Town Seal with the office hours looks great. She reminded everyone to remember your 3W's: double mask if possible; maintain six (6) feet of social distancing; and wash your hands and if no soap and water is available to use a hand sanitizer that is at least 60%. She said CaroMont Health will be providing vaccines for educators.

Mayor Cauthen stated all applicants were excellent and appreciated their willingness to serve. He thanked the staff for walking the Board through this process. Mayor Cauthen stated he was contacted by a resident and a member of the Villages at South Fork regarding an issue with a lack of street lights and the quality of the lights. The Planning Director stated the Town needs to consider adopting a light policy with measurable metrics and goalposts and he will begin working on this.

Adjournment: A motion was by Commissioner Neeley to adjourn at 8:49 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atkinson. Commissioner Abernathy voted yes; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor.

Mayor Will Cauthen

ATTEST:

Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk