

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

Goals and Objectives Meeting

February 27, 2021

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met in special session for goals and objectives work session on Saturday, February 27, 2021 at 9:00 a.m., in the Community Center and via Zoom.

Board Members present: Mayor Will Cauthen, Mayor Pro Tempore Demetrios Koutsoupas, Commissioners Dixie Abernathy, Richard Atkinson, and Susan Neeley. Commissioner Helms was absent.

Staff Present: David Pugh, Town Manager; Karen Wolter, Town Attorney; and Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk.

Call to Order and Determination of Quorum: Mayor Cauthen called the meeting to order and determined a quorum was present. He thanked everyone for being in attendance for this meeting.

Adoption of Agenda for this meeting: Commissioner Neeley made a motion to approve the proposed agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atkinson and approved by all.

Introduction of Facilitator: Darren Rhodes, Program Manager Rural Economic Development for NC Department of Commerce. Mr. Darren Rhodes introduced himself and went over his role as the facilitator and the ground rules for today's meeting.

Discussion of Retreat Goals: Commissioner Neeley stated she wants to work with the various departments and agencies on how we will accommodate the proposed population increase. Mayor Cauthen recommended working on actionable goals and objectives by setting up a one (1) year, five (5) year, and legacy spreadsheet for different timelines for these goals that will be easy to share with our citizens. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas stated he would like to see some community/neighborhood quick wins such as Timberlake being repaved, neighborhood wayfinding signs, minimum housing updates, COVID rebound and how we will be able to help our local businesses and continue with Town events, how will the updated Land Use Plan and how and downtown parking lot improvements. He said he wanted to discuss the COVID-19 rebound and how we will be helping our local businesses, eventual return to holding Town events and sports events, and how to get back to life before COVID-19. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas said he wanted to discuss growth and development like the updates Land Use Plan and how does that fit with what we have and how it affects any future projects. He listed transportation and infrastructure impacts including stormwater, Catawba Crossings Bridge, South New Hope Road, and the Silver Line and how does our Town fit into all of these developments. Commissioner Abernathy said she liked the idea of organizing our goals for today's session and the development of a spreadsheet for the goals. Commissioner Atkinson stated he would like to discuss flood mitigation as a new river committee has been formed. He said the new Land Use Plan will help with what our process will be to meet our criteria and flood mitigation could be a part of that. A critical path with steps will need to be set up as the Town grows for the police, fire, and other Town departments to strengthen our communications with the community. The goals and objectives need to be shared with constituents. Commissioner Atkinson stated that a comment was made about the size of the police department and the public at large doesn't know about our police department serving the Town of McAdenville. He also said we need to make an investment in the Town's beautification.

Review of Goals and Objectives:

- **Guiding Principles:** The Board discussed the guiding principles and the four (4) prongs of the visual mission statement. The three (3) guiding principles are: 1) maintain the efficient delivery of services at the highest level; 2) ensure financial stability and resiliency; and 3) actively collaborate with regional municipalities in order to share goals, resources, and appropriate information. Discussion was held regarding aligning the guiding principles with the mission statement for consistency. The Board agreed to adding

amenities such as outdoor recreation especially with upcoming projects. The Town Manager will add this to the draft document as the fourth guiding principle.

- **Actionable Goals and Objectives:**

- **Maintain 40% general fund balance restriction.** The Board discussed moving this item under guiding principles as financial stability.
- **Pursuit of Regional Goals. Cultivate connectivity with Cramerton and within the Region.** The flood mitigation, Silver Line, widening of South New Hope Road, Lakewood Road improvements, the effect of road projects at Wilkinson Boulevard that affects both Cramerton and McAdenville, Masonic Lodge parking lot, possible boardwalk for the downtown area, and discussion with downtown business owners about buildings may be placed under the regional goals.
- **Manage future growth and development.** Mayor Cauthen said the MT Land Project could be a 1 year, 5 year, and legacy project as it is a multi-phase project. Engineering has been completed for the River Link Greenway and would be a one (1) year goal. A survey is being completed for the proposed True Homes pocket park and this would be a quick win for that neighborhood. Satellite offices are planned as part of the MT Land Project for various Town departments. New Style development on South New Hope Road now includes two (2) business/institutional buildings along with the thirty (30) plus single-family residential units.
 - Analyze and address the needs of each department when residential increases occur. The updated Land Use Plan will provide census information and identify areas of development. Each department may be able to provide what they will need based on the projections for different phases of growth along with the increased population.
 - Recruit and retain the most effective personnel for Cramerton. Mayor Cauthen stated a compensation analysis needs to be completed this year.

- **Promote a connected and inclusive community.** The Board discussed physical and social connectivity to include sidewalks; wayfinding signage; the proposed natural trail on Cramer Mountain Road and a crosswalk at Baltimore; updates to the Town's website; communication using social media; creating a spotlight page for events; and an updated list of projects. Physical connectivity would include the continuation of the sidewalk from the railroad tracks near the Southpoint EMS station; Rocky Branch Trail; pedestrian bridge on Lakewood Road; repaving and widening of Cramer Mountain Road adding a possible bike lane; and improvements to Market Street/Wilkinson Boulevard and Lakewood Road. The Board discussed the importance of continuing with connectivity with all parts of the Town.

- **Continue organized, deliberate, and sustained citizen engagement.** The Board discussed one (1) year goals, five (5) year goals, and legacy goals to include removal of the concrete block retaining wall in front of the Mayflower Meadows neighborhood with the addition of some type of landscaping; continued improvements to Central Park; neighborhood pocket parks; placement of wayfinding signage in neighborhoods and the monument signs at New Hope Road and Lakewood/Wilkinson Boulevard; revitalization of downtown to include autonomous parking options; possible change of traffic for the Eighth Avenue railroad underpass using signalization and signage; road maintenance including paving; consistent assessment of roads and infrastructure including stormwater; replacement and relocation of dog park; improved lighting with continued enhancements at the Veterans Memorial; placement of wrought iron sign on monument at Centennial Center; pressure wash downtown railroad underpasses and paint the outside fascia; lighting on murals; increased neighborhood street lighting; improving river health with an increase of recreational activities; private participation for the Helix/R structure; and completion of River Link Trail; Silver Line light rail; Catawba Crossings Bridge; widening of South New Hope Road; synchronized lighting along Wilkinson Boulevard; widening of Wilkinson Boulevard along with the bridge; and sidewalk improvements on New Hope Road. Quick wins include a clean up scheduled for the historic Baltimore School on April 17th. The Brownfields grant monies would be used for a full study for improvement to the water treatment plant property. The Board discussed ways to ensure connectivity to the Town once the MT Land Project has been developed.

- **Prioritization:** The Board asked Mr. Rhodes what plans were in place by the State of North Carolina regarding rebounds from the COVID-19 pandemic. He advised that there

had been the CARES Act and they worked with communities on how to better support their businesses and to diversify their local economy. Many municipalities had a lot of retail but little to no commercial or industrial businesses. They are working with municipalities about a recovery strategy. Mr. Rhodes stated he would send the Town Manager information about this topic.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Commissioner Abernathy to adjourn at 11:48 a.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley. Commissioner Atkinson voted yes; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas voted yes. The vote was 4 to 0 in favor.

Will Cauthen, Mayor

ATTEST:

Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk