

NORTH WILKESBORO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Work Session

Thursday, March 25, 2021

5:30 p.m.

At the Board of Education Commissioner's Board Room

Members present: Mayor Robert Johnson, Commissioner Angela Day, Commissioner Debbie Ferguson, Commissioner Michael Parsons, Mayor Pro-tem Andrew Palmer, Commissioner Bert Hall.

Staff present: Town Manager Wilson Hooper, Clerk Debra Pearson, Town Attorney Daniel Johnson, Town Planner Meredith Detsch, Tourism Director Crystal Keener, and NW Interim Police Chief Charles Thornburg.

- Call to Order- Mayor Robert Johnson
- Invocation- Mayor Robert Johnson
- Pledge of Allegiance- NW Interim Police Chief Charles Thornburg

VI. Action Items

- A.) Budget Workshop Schedule – Wilson Hooper
- B.) Rezoning Request – 341 Fairplains Rd. – Meredith Detsch
- C.) Proposed Text Amendments – Meredith Detsch

These items can be approved as a group or individually.

A. Budget Work Shop Schedule- It is the consensus of the Board to hold a budget work session on Tuesday April 13, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Location is to be determined. The conference room at the North Wilkesboro Police Department is being considered. **Motion to approve the date of April 13, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. was made by Commissioner Ferguson and seconded by Commissioner Hall. Motion unanimously carries by individual roll call of each Commissioner.**

B. Rezoning Request- Owners of a property at 341 Fairplains Road have applied for a rezoning of the property earlier denied by the Planning Board. In 1985 this property was zoned commercial and a barber shop business was started. In 2014 the property owner passed away and in 2018 the family wished to sell the property. The property owners thought they had lost the commercial zoning, not realizing it was “grandfathered” in. Meantime Planner Meredith Detsch is researching to find minutes, a zoning ordinance or resolution from that date to see what the zoning currently is. This item will be discussed at a future meeting.

C. The first proposed text amendments is for “*Cluster Development*” Small-A Text Amendment request has been made by Mr. Charles Vaughn. He would like to rezone areas for “cluster homes”. This is a development proposal to maximize land for residential use that otherwise may not be seen as favorable for normal development. Several articles of the zoning ordinance would be affected for this proposed change. The Planning Board heard this proposal at its March 11/12 2021 meeting. The Board recommended denial of the text amendment and it was brought to the Board of Commissioners for consideration. After discussion with Planner Detsch and Mr. Vaughn (via telephone call), some of the Board Members were cautiously in favor of more study going into the proposal. Both Commissioner Day and Ferguson were in favor of further study and for consideration. Commissioner Parsons cautioned on possible abuse of the text amendment and stated there should be careful, specific wording before any board consideration or approval. He suggested Mr. Vaughn go back to the negotiating table with the Planning Board and possibly bring this item back in May or June with any rewording or edits. ***No action was taken on this item at this time.***

The second item for a proposed text amendment is “*Reception Hall/Events Venue*”- North Wilkesboro business owner Valeri Guevara has petitioned to create a combination reception hall and events venue business in an existing North Wilkesboro building at 209 10th Street. This would make it necessary to change the text since the most similar use currently in the code is “recreation hall” which is intended to describe a venue much larger in scale than a combination hall and event venue. The Planning Board heard this proposal and agreed to recommend the text amendment change at their March 11/12 2021 meeting. **Motion to call for a Public Hearing on April 22, 2021 to approve the proposed text amendment by North Wilkesboro Town Commissioners was made by Commissioner Parsons and seconded by Commissioner Palmer. Motion unanimously carries by roll call of each Commissioner.**

VII. Possible Consent Items

- D.) Donation of Surplus Generator – Dale Shumate
- E.) Budget Amendments – Connie Bauguess
- F.) Accept Elevated Storage Tank Funding Offer – Wilson Hooper

Item D.) Donation of Surplus Generator- A generator at the Town’s Wastewater Treatment Plant recently failed. It has been replaced by Federal Government surplus generator. Town Manager Hooper intends to ask the Board to donate the generator to a charitable organization, His Light Ministry in Wilkesboro. Commissioner Parsons would like for staff to check and see if a North Wilkesboro 501-C business has a possible need of a generator. Town Manager Hooper will call upon 501-C business, Hope Ministries here in North Wilkesboro to see if they can benefit from the donation first.

Item E.) Budget Amendments- Town Manager Hooper presented three (3) Budget Amendments for approval by the Board at the next meeting.

- Amendment #9 reallocates monies from healthier line items to specific line items needing additional funding.
- Amendment #10 Amendment to Amend the Water Fund Budget
- Amendment #11 Amends the General Fund Budget to Powell Bill and Streets and Sidewalks.

Item F.)- Accept Elevated Water Storage Tank Offer-the Board will be asked at the next meeting to accept a Revolving Loan offer from the NC Department of Environmental Quality in the amount of \$1,973,196. for the construction of an elevated water tank at Industrial Park. This will be Resolution #2021-05. Groundbreaking for the elevated water tank will be held Tuesday, March 30, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. at the Industrial Park.

Possible Consent Items D. E. and F. will be placed on the consent Agenda for the April 6, 2021 Regular Board Meeting.

Work Items:

G.) Tourism/Marketing FY21-22 Needs Presentation – Crystal Keener gave a brief presentation on her needs in the Tourism/Marketing Department. The first item is a request for funds to help update the façade at 915 Park Place Alley. She has a UNC-G Design Alleyway Proposal Packet that offers ideas for updating the area. Crystal is asking for \$16,000.00 to update the area, which will include trimming back limbs on some of the trees, replace some of the seating areas, add pavers and plants. The second request is for funds to purchase new Christmas light decorations for Main Street. The options are colored spheres or skyline or string lighting, which connects from on building to another. Crystal is asking for \$2000. - \$3,000.00 for this project. Lastly, she wishes to increase the facade grants and include other town businesses, not just the businesses within the downtown district. A dollar amount was not specified. Commissioner Ferguson stated she appreciates the work of the Downtown Partnership and was pleased that we awarded the Morris’ for their contribution of improvements to the town of North Wilkesboro.

H.) Splash Pad Update- Town Manager Wilson Hooper and Town Attorney Danny Johnson reports that tomorrow, March 26, 2021 is deadline for Mr. Buster Mastin, owner of Mastin Aquatics to return all building materials purchased by the town to Parks and Recreation Director Nelson Martin at the North Wilkesboro Smoot Park Pool. Meantime the town has received three (3) vendor quotes to repair and complete the splashpad. These quotes range from \$150,000. \$162,000., and

\$155,000. The town has identified funds to complete this project. The town will also pursue legal options to try and recover funds lost due to Mr. Mastin’s failure to complete the project timely. Commissioner Palmer spoke in opposition to using additional funds to complete the project. He feels any additional funds would be better spent giving the park an overall update rather than focusing on the splashpad. Commissioner Parsons stated that it would cost money to “bulldoze it over” and if we spend money to do that, why not spend it to complete a recreational project that was offered to North Wilkesboro citizens almost 3 years ago.

I.) Zoning Ordinance and Town Code Update for 160D Project- Planning Director Meredith Detsch continued her coverage of the Planning Board’s recommendations for Chapters 1, 2, 5, and 19. She highlighted changes that included technical, grammatical and procedural. There is no action required by the board at this time. A public hearing will be called for to approve these Zoning Ordinance updates. This will be done at the April 6, 2021 Regular Board Meeting. A Public Hearing will be slated for May 4, 2021 to approve articles covered tonight.

With no other items or concerns to be discussed, Mayor Johnson called for a motion to adjourn. **Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Parsons and seconded by Commissioner Hall. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.**

Debra W. Pearson, CLERK

Robert L. Johnson, Mayor

APPROVED _____