

## MINUTES

The Board of Councilmen of the Town of Rural Hall held a budget planning session on January 24, 2020 at 10:00 AM in the Town Hall Conference Room. The following members were present: Mayor Timothy M. Flinchum - presiding; Mayor Pro Tem John N. McDermon; Councilwoman Susan H. Gordon; Councilman Ricky S. Plunkett; Councilman Jesse A. Stigall; Town Manager Megan M. Garner; Town Clerk Dora K. Moore; Fire Chief Andy Marshall; and Public Works Director Jason Hill.

Adoption of Agenda: Mayor Pro Tem John N. McDermon made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Councilman Jesse A. Stigall seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Security – Cameras are budgeted for Covington Park. With the addition of the License Plate Agency (LPA), staff would like a uniform system for Town Hall and the LPA; although Covington Park may require something different. The North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM) will do an assessment of Town Hall for safety recommendations. Manager Garner noted staff is trying to find a happy median between ensuring adequate security and allowing the public to feel welcome. Employees with conceal carry permits are permitted to carry on Town property.

Town Hall Garden/Gazebo Area – A plan was developed several years ago to develop the vacant lot adjacent to Town Hall as a walking garden area with a gazebo. Cost was and continues to be a concern.

Community/Senior Center – Manager Garner noted the Town has 5 acres of undeveloped property on University Parkway, which joins an historically designated property. The acquisition agreement says the property must be used for a community purpose. Councilman Plunkett suggested building a new LPA facility in a few years and repurpose old Town Hall as a community center.

Jackson Street and Covington Park Parking – There is potential for property acquisition in the area. Property across from Covington Park on Church Street is currently available but is not desirable due to the lay of land. Council suggested discussions be held with adjoining property owner Deborah Jackson regarding purchasing her parcel or a portion of it on Cherry Street for parking. Council also suggested looking at property adjacent to Ms. Jackson's property. Staff will also look at grant opportunities.

LPA, Downtown Area and Growth – The upstairs interior of the old Town Hall is currently being demolished for the LPA.

Council inquired if the property on Glade Street across from current Town property may be available.

Mayor Flinchum suggested the Town could possibly lease parking to the old Pepsi building as a development stimulus.

Council expressed a desire to see downtown come to life and making the Town more welcoming. Manager Garner recommended a consulting company be hired to develop a strategic plan. This could be an 18 to 24-month process that would include staff, Council and the community. Staff has one proposal for \$50,000.

Council also suggested the Historical Society map historical structures and their history.

Cash Points – It is anticipated the Cash Points will be ready for business the week of February 17.

Little Italy Rezoning Request – Council consensus was to support Little Italy's rezoning request. Mayor Flinchum encouraged the Council to individually express their support to City-County Planning.

Citizen Safety & Perception – Council requested a second community event, similar to National Night Out, be held each spring. They would like to revitalize the neighborhood community watch groups and publicize more safety and preventative measures.

Fire Department – A letter will be sent to Forsyth County disputing the cancellation of fire inspections, investigations and plan reviews in the Town based upon the 1974 agreement. Staff is working with King to develop a contingency plan.

Councilman Plunkett shared his desire for the Town to absorb the annual fees as a business incentive if the Town begins to conduct fire inspections. Manager Garner cautioned that if the Town contracts with King, the fire department will need to find a way to pay the fees, which is currently unbudgeted. After discussion, the consensus was applicants expect to pay a plan review fee. Furthermore, Councilman Plunkett believes an additional fire department staff member is needed.

Sidewalks – The Town has an older plan that can be evaluated

Feasibility Study Requests – Council consensus was to submit the Broad Street/Highway 65 intersection for a feasibility study. A flashing caution light needs to be evaluated as well.

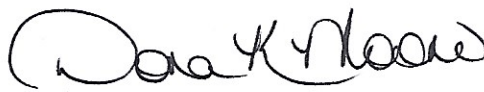
Improvements to Academy Street was also discussed.

Fiber Optic Internet and 5G Deployment – A desire to provide more options to the community was discussed.

Hospital – Several years ago, an attempt was made to bring a hospital to the King area. Mayor Pro Tem McDermon feels it is time to pursue a hospital in our area. Council agreed and requested an inventory of available property and buildings be done so professional services such as attorneys, medical, outpatient facility, and/or a hospital can be pursued.

Annexation – Council requested letters be mailed to adjoining properties of the Town explaining services to the Town and how they can become a part of the Town.

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilman Ricky S. Plunkett to adjourn at 1:55 PM.



Dora K. Moore  
Town Clerk