

Walter M. Gardner, Jr.  
Mayor

Jeffery W. Parrott  
Administrator

## TOWN OF WARRENTON

*"Historically Great - Progressively Strong"*

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### The April 9, 2012 Minutes Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting

Those attending were:

Mayor Walter Gardner, Jr.	Jeff Parrott Town, Administrator
Commissioner Woody King	Goble Lane, Interim Police Chief
Commissioner Mary Hunter	Bill Perkinson Public Works Director
Commissioner Julius Banzet	Jennifer Harris, Warren Record
Commissioner Margaret Britt	Michael Acquesta, O'Brien & Gere
Commissioner Al Fleming	Bruce Whitten, Northstar/Carolinas, LLC
Commissioner Robert Davie	Jordan Nance, Carolina Solar Energy
Commissioner John Mooring	Annette Silver, Minute Taker

There were 25 citizens in attendance.

#### **Call to Order/Minutes/Agenda**

Mayor Gardner called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, then led a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. The proposed agenda was approved unanimously following a motion by Commissioner Banzet and a second by Commissioner Fleming.

#### **Public Comments and Reading of Preservation Month Proclamation**

Mayor Gardner noted that this was the third consecutive year Preservation Month has been observed in the Town of Warrenton and that he was pleased to sign the proclamation. Audrey Tippet (member of Preservation Warrenton) read the proclamation included in board agenda and it was then signed. Public comments were heard from Gabe Cumming, Warren County Economic Development Director and Pat Draffin with Robinson Ferry Restaurant and Tavern. Mr. Cumming spoke on the subject of the Warrenton Solar Farm (Highway 158 Bus W location) stressing that it would be a great benefit for Warrenton and Warren County. He recommended strongly the benefits of green energy production leadership. Of the 24 counties reviewed for the project Warren County is the only one with all the necessary requirements.

Pat Draffin with Robinson Ferry Restaurant and Tavern requested that two parallel parking spaces on N. Bragg Street behind his new restaurant be designated as Handicapped Parking. The spaces would be in close proximity to a lift, which will be installed for use by patrons. Some grading will be needed and the restaurant will assume

financial responsibility. Commissioner Fleming asked why the north side of building could not be used. Mr. Draffin explained area could not be used because of fire exits already installed. Commissioner Britt asked how long the process would take, and Bill Perkinson and Mr. Draffin thought only a few days would be necessary.

### **Presentations**

Michael Acquesta with O'Brien and Gere spoke to Board on Town Of Warrenton Collection System Asset Management Plan. Phase I Section A of the project has been completed. There still are sewer and pipe concerns but the project cannot be put out for bids until it is approved by the Board. Phases 2, 3 and 4 are in upcoming years and efforts will be made to secure grants to complete the project. Mr. Acquesta strongly recommended that the Town set aside money for future projects. Commissioner Mooring asked the average life of pipes, and Perkinson and Acquesta both thought approximately 50 years. Commissioner Fleming asked how long present pipes had been used. All thought approximately since the 1940s. Mayor Gardner stated that doing the necessary work on an annual basis does not bind the Town to continue all Phases. The Town of Warrenton Collection System Asset Management Plan resolution was presented. Mr. Acquesta asked the Board to disregard the fourth paragraph beginning with "whereas" (refers to County resolution which will be removed). Commissioner Fleming made a motion, followed by a second by Commissioner Britt, to accept the resolution presented with removal of the fourth "whereas" paragraph and then signed by Mayor and Town Administrator. The motion was approved unanimously.

Bruce Whitten with Northstar/Carolinas, LLC requested that the Franklin Hall Cottages presentation be tabled until the May 2012 meeting, the reason being his objection to rent recommendation information received from a marketing study. He hoped to have better information within a week for Board. Franklin Hall Cottages is planned to be a group of blue collar housing rental units for income-restricted individuals (annual income \$28,000 - \$32,000) of a minimum age of 55 years. Commissioner Mooring asked if these would be Section 8 or assisted living units. Mr. Whitten stated these units are neither and he believes Warrenton has that area covered with the other housing units in Town. The closest unit to what is anticipated for Warrenton (built by Northstar/Carolinas, LLC) is Foxborough Pines apartments in Henderson (Vicksboro area).

The last presentation was made by Jordan Nance, with Carolina Solar Energy, requesting a zoning change so that his company can build a solar panel farm on property presently owned by J. Boyd Davis Heirs on US Highway 158 Business West near E-Z Stor. The project will cover approximately 36.6 acres (32 acres for solar panels and 4.6 acre buffer) and will be a tie in to a Progress Energy Phase 3 project. Carolina Solar Energy was formed in 2004 and is a renewable energy company which has no living parts, requires no employees and needs no maintenance. The plan is to use local labor and train them for this new industry developing in North Carolina. References given are units at NCSU, the NC Zoo and Person County Solar Park. Commissioner Davie asked if a request has been made for Town protection, and Mr. Nance replied that he has not asked for such because the area will be surrounded by 6 ft fence and will be off-road. As stated by Mr.

Cumming, solar energy is a fast-moving business and Warrenton/Warren County can become a leader in green energy production. Commissioner King asked if Carolina Solar Energy would consider Town annexation. Mr. Nance said that he will discuss the possibility with others in his company and respond at a later date. Mayor Gardner stated that a public hearing meeting will be needed and scheduled before any decision can be made by the Board on re-zoning.

### **Consent Agenda**

- A. Minutes of Board meeting March 12, 2012
- B. Year-to-Date Revenues and Expenditures Reports (Budget vs. Actual)
- C. Monthly Checks Report
- D. Public Works Monthly Report
- E. WWTP Monthly Report
- F. Police Activity Report

The consent agenda was approved unanimously following a motion by Commissioner Davie and second by Commissioner King.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Public Works**

Commissioner Davie and Bill Perkinson reported that the Assets Management Plan has been completed with submission to State to follow. Routine maintenance and improvements to the sewer lift station and streets is on schedule for this time of year. Commissioner King wanted to know how far the parking extends on Main Street. Mr. Perkinson stated to his knowledge parking goes as far as College Street. Commissioner Davie asked if Mr. Draffin's request was a feasible project. Commissioner Hunter compared the Draffin request to the parking beside Wesley United Memorial Methodist Church on Church Street. Commissioner Davie made a motion to approve the designation of two spaces for handicapped parallel parking on Bragg Street behind Robinson Ferry Restaurant, pending project review. The motion was seconded by Commissioner King and approved unanimously. Commissioner Mooring asked who was responsible for grass cutting of area on Crockett Street which appears to be a health concern. Mr. Perkinson knew of the area (owned by Heirs of A. D. Harris) and will follow up on Mooring's concern. Commissioner Mooring asked if Town is still employing the grounds keepers for the Warrenton Cemetery. Mr. Perkinson responded some work has been done. It was agreed the contract may need to be reviewed.

#### **Public Safety**

Commissioner Banzet and Interim Police Chief Lane report that an animal complaint form has been created to give a paper trail for reports on stray animals. The Police Department continues to have good cooperation with citizens.

### **Finance and Administration**

Commissioner Hunter had no report other than what appears in attached consent agenda.

### **Human Resources/Information Technology**

Commissioner Fleming reported the need to reschedule the Town Hall Renovation Survey Committee meeting. The Human Resources Committee recommends an elevated interim police chief salary for Goble Lane. He will remain interim police chief until completion of the department investigation. There was no Information Technology report.

### **Revitalization/Historic**

Commissioner King had no report from the Historic District Commission. The Easter Egg Hunt April 7 was considered a success. The next meeting of Small Town Main Street is scheduled Tuesday, April 10, 2012. Lastly, he issued a reminder to all regarding the scheduled Spring Fest Saturday, May 5, 2012 rain or shine.

### **Beautification/Facilities**

Commissioner Britt thanked Bill Perkinson and staff for pruning trees and painting parking lines. She has been unable to get a response from the family of the Dr. Angela Williams concerning property at 210 E. Macon Street regarding the blue tarp removal but is still trying.

### **Planning/Zoning/Annexation**

Commissioner Mooring presented Roy Pat Robertson to Board to explain a request for zoning change to property on corner of Halifax Street and Westside Street. Marie Martin owns a 1.85 acre tract zoned commercial and wants to sell as residential which will require a zoning change. Commissioner Mooring asked why it was zoned as commercial. It is believed Mr. Martin requested the commercial zoning. Such action would require a Public Hearing. Mayor Gardner suggested that a public hearing be set for May 14, prior to the Town Board meeting. Commissioner Mooring made a motion to have a Public Hearing May 14, 2012 at 6:40PM to discuss zoning issues both for properties on US Highway 158 Business W and Halifax Street/Westside Street. Commissioner Davie seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously. Mayor Gardner instructed Mr. Parrott to send letters to surrounding property owners.

### **Unfinished Business**

Commissioner Mooring was still compiling information with funeral directors thus had no formal report.

Mr. Parrott presented information to Board of Town regarding the use of the King Street facility as temporary location of the Town offices during renovations. He and Mayor Gardner have looked at and considered several downtown options but none are workable without major renovations. The Town Hall has approximately 2935 square feet of workable area and the King Street facility has approximately 3418 square feet. A contractor will be needed, and the estimated cost to renovate is \$145,000. The cost of using the Willoughby Harris building would include the purchase of building

(approximately \$130,000) plus renovation. Also of concern is the removal of the commercial structure from the tax books. Commissioners Mooring, Hunter and Britt voiced concern that it would be inconvenient for customers to pay water bills at the King Street facility. Mr. Parrott stated that a small construction trailer could be placed near the Town Hall for that purpose. Commissioner Mooring asked what the approximate cost of the third floor renovation will be, and Mr. Parrott stated that it was approximately \$30,000. No action was taken on the renovation issue.

Commissioner Britt asked about men's bathroom problem in Town Hall. Mr. Parrott informed the Board that the room had been sealed and the cost to repair it would be approximately \$3,000. There was discussion on whether to repair now or wait, since renovations to the entire building may begin soon. Currently, the men are using the bathroom in the adjoining Firemen's Museum, which is also in a state of disrepair. Mayor Gardner reminded the Board of the scheduled Saturday, April 21, 2012 Board Retreat/Work Session which will run from 9:00AM until 4:00PM.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45PM