

Walter M. Gardner, Jr.
Mayor

John Freeman
Administrator

TOWN OF WARRENTON
"Historically Great - Progressively Strong"
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April 11, 2011 Board of Commissioners Minutes

The April 11, 2011 meeting of the Town of Warrenton Board of Commissioners was held at Town Hall.

Those present were:

Mayor Walter M. Gardner, Jr.	John Freeman, Town Administrator
Commissioner John Mooring	Town Attorney Mitch Styers
Commissioner Jules Banzet	Jennifer Harris, Warren Record
Commissioner John Blalock	Public Works Director Bill Perkinson
Commissioner Mary Hunter	
Commissioner Audrey Tippet	
Commissioner Robert Davie	
Commissioner Woody King	

Mayor Gardner called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. He then presented the proposed agenda for approval. Commissioner Blalock moved to approve the agenda; Commissioner King seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

There being no member of the public who wished to make public comment Mayor Gardner then presented the consent agenda that included:

- A. Minutes of Board meeting March 14, 2011
- B. Minutes of Public Hearing March 14, 2011
- C. Y-T-D Cash Flow Report
- D. Y-T-D Tax Revenue Report
- E. Y-T-D State Shared Revenue Report
- F. Checks in excess of \$10,000
- G. WC Health Dept sewer adjustment request (98k for \$784)
- H. Public Works Monthly Report
- I. WWTP Monthly Report
- J. Police Activity Report

Commissioner Banzet moved that the consent agenda be approved; Commissioner Mooring seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Public Safety

Commissioner Blalock asked Chief Younts for a report, and he in turn asked if there were questions stemming from the monthly activity report. There being none Mr. Blalock asked about the reported burglary which Chief Younts explained was the theft of copper from a vacant funeral home rather than breaking into an occupied building. Mr. Blalock inquired about the status of hiring a parking enforcement person, and Chief Younts said

that one had been hired but had never come to work. Commissioner Mooring asked if the officers could do it, to which Chief Younts replied that they could not do it and perform their duties but that they were doing it on a sporadic basis. Mr. Mooring asked if tickets are being written and the answer was that parking limits are being enforced but not as consistently or as efficiently as with a dedicated employee. Mr. Mooring observed that it would be a good time for officers to walk up and down Main Street, and Younts said that they were doing it more.

Mayor and Fire Chief Gardner reported that the fire department had been the site for a training program the previous weekend. Eighteen fire chiefs and a total of 50 had attended Fire Chiefs 101, a mandatory program for new chiefs and every five years for serving chiefs.

Public Works

Commissioner Davie turned to Director Bill Perkinson and the discussion turned to the request under New Business for the purchase of a cargo trailer to replace the Public Works van. A written justification had been included with Board meeting preparation packets but primary points were that the aging and increasingly expensive to maintain van would be replaced with a larger, more efficient trailer. This would remove one vehicle from the replacement rotation and save \$540 annually in insurance costs. The trailer fully outfitted with racks and safety lighting would cost approximately \$10,000 an amount which Mr. Freeman said was available from current revenues. Commissioner Mooring noted that this would reduce gas and maintenance. Following some discussion about security and where it would be kept Commissioner Davie moved that the purchase be approved from Water Sewer revenues (not reserve funds); Commissioner King seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Mr. Freeman then requested that three vehicles be declared surplus and sold by sealed bid at the stated reserve. All have been replaced. Mr. Davie moved that the following vehicles be sold by sealed bid at the stated reserve; Mr. King seconded the motion which passed unanimously:

1978 Chevrolet Kodiak dump bed truck, VIN CCE618V148072, 84,999 miles; reserve \$1,750

NOTE: The scrap value of the leaf box is approximately \$400; simple scrap value of the truck is \$1610.

Because of this the recommended reserve would cover at least scrap value for the Town while the scrap value of the box alone would provide incentive for the prospective buyer.

1997 Chevrolet C150 utility van, VIN 1GLF25W9V1059094, 174,799 miles; reserve \$2,000

1988 Ford Ranger, VIN 1FTBR1001JUA, 89,165 miles; no reserve

Commissioner Davie ended his report by complimenting Mr. Perkinson and the grounds crew for their work cleaning gutters, mowing grass and keeping everything presentable.

Finance and Administration

Mr. Freeman commented on the year-to-date cash flow report included in the consent agenda saying that it appeared that close attention would allow budget targets to be met. In response to the observation that Sales and Use Tax had increased 1.5% year to date Mr. Freeman said that this met projections for the year and helped in meeting budget targets. He cautioned that the next year's budget would be more of a challenge because a 5.7% decline in population in the 2010 census would affect state shared revenues and would haunt the Town for the next decade. He noted that the state uses a State Certified Population number that would not be calculated until September, but assumed that it would be similar. He said he would have the proposed budget ready for the May Board meeting. There being no further questions Mayor Gardner moved on to the next committee report.

Human Resources/Information Technology

Commissioner Banzet turned to Mr. Freeman for a report but there was none. Commissioner Davie asked if the Revitalization Committee had given permission to have traffic at its web site redirected to the new Town web site and Commissioner King, as chairman of that committee, said that he did have permission to do so.

Revitalization/Historical

Commissioner King began his report by presenting the nomination of resident Pam St. Louis to fill the vacancy created by Christy Serl's resignation for the Revitalization Committee. Commissioner Blalock so moved; Commissioner Mooring seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. King then reported that preparations had been finalized for SpringFest the next Saturday, April 16, and the program would proceed as presented with a good turnout of vendors, food and entertainment. He urged all commissioners to attend if possible.

He then reported on the second Town Café that had been a project of the Revitalization Committee and had taken place on March 15 at the Armory Civic Center. The great number of ideas gathered at the first Town Café event in November had been refined to seven by the Revitalization Committee. The 50 attendees gleaned a list of five priorities: a thriving downtown, investment and economic development, opportunities for youth, clean community and tourism. They then agreed to serve on committees for each. The goal is that these committees will be subcommittees reporting to the Revitalization Committee, giving it more support for its efforts.

Very much related to these efforts Mr. King described a trip to Benson the previous week by six committee members to attend a presentation of the Small Town Main Street program. Attendance was a prerequisite for applying for the program which does not offer financial support but provides technical guidance and assistance for the efforts of small towns to revitalize. He noted that the Town Café events appeared to fulfill the application requirement for community participation and that the Town closely fit the rest of the requirements. He did note, however, that only three communities statewide would be selected.

Beautification/Facilities

Commissioner Tippett reported on the Ridgeway Street sidewalk dedication on April 5 that was to include a healthwalk in conjunction with the "Healthy Carolinians" and the county Health Fair. Unfortunately it was a rainy and windy day that kept away the walkers but the dedication was held and the sidewalk is being used regularly.

Commissioner Tippett then observed that she had never seen the Town looking as beautiful with the combination of spring, the work of the county gardeners and garden club on courthouse square and the Town staff. She also noted the efforts of the Town street department to pick up trash along some of the worst streets. She invited the rest of the Board to walk around Town and enjoy its spring beauty.

Regarding the Town Hall feasibility study, Mr. Freeman said that the architect had been on-site twice in the last two weeks and he expected to have the study ready before the next Board meeting.

Planning, Zoning and Annexation

Commissioner Mooring introduced the subject of the proposed change to the Historic District Ordinance that would expand the section on "demolition by neglect" to include broken windows as well as adding a penalty. This has been discussed at the previous Board meeting, by the Citizens Advisory Board (that first proposed a simple ordinance to deal with broken windows downtown) and this Historic District Commission (that would administer the change). Mr. Freeman reported that both of the later committees supported making it part of the Historic District Ordinance if it facilitated its enforcement. Mr. Styers explained that his draft was intended to address the frustrations of four years of difficulties in dealing with a variety of problems over the years that had no enforcement solution, as well as the need for a penalty that could be imposed for non-compliance. There followed considerable discussion. Commissioner Mooring noted that the draft would encompass the historic district but Mayor Gardner said it could be changed to limit it to the downtown business district. Mr. Mooring expressed concern that most buildings would not be in compliance with one or another of the listed requirements and that this would give a Historic District Commission too much authority that some future HDC could use excessively, and that the potential cost of repairs would eventual driving residents and business owners out of

town. Mr. Styers said that the power of the HDC is to refer problems and recommendations to the Board of Commissioners which would make the decisions. Commissioner Tippett said the draft seemed like “overkill” and that much of it was unreasonable. Commissioner Blalock said there were owners who just would not fix their buildings and Mr. Freeman said that was why this tool was needed. Mr. King said that some property owners would not cooperate out of the belief that the Town could not order them to make repairs, but Mr. Freeman said that zoning already gives the Town authority over what can be done with private property and is generally considered necessary in town. Mayor Gardner said that in the case of windows boarded up when the ordinance was adopted the proposed six month requirement to replace with appropriate windows was too little and suggested 36 months, with Mr. Mooring agreeing. Commissioner Davie said he liked the overall draft but agreed with Mayor Gardner about extending the time allowed to fix windows. Mayor Gardner suggested that the draft be sent back to committee and Mr. Mooring said he would call a meeting and invite the Citizens Advisory Board, Historic District Commission and other Board members.

Unfinished Business

Moving to the next item of Unfinished Business Mr. Freeman said that a proposal had been received from Ken Caudill of the Cary Fire Department to establish a fire inspection program for the Town, listing and evaluating the needs of each applicable building with a complete schedule for future inspections. This would cost \$2500 and would not include any inspections. Mr. Freeman said that a response had not yet been received from Warren County about revisions to the agreement presented at the Town’s request to provide these services. Commissioner Davie said he would like to retain Caudill but Commissioner Mooring said he would prefer to wait for the county response. Mr. Davie asked Mr. Freeman to request a revised quote from Caudill that would include the first round of inspections. Mr. Styers suggested that contracting with someone local would allow the money to go further as it would reduce travel time and expense. Several commissioners said they would prefer to spend the money locally in any case. Commissioner Blalock said that he would talk to several qualified inspectors associated with the fire department to see if they would be willing and able to perform the inspections.

New Business

The first agenda item having been addressed during committee reports Mayor Gardner presented the proposed revision to the Gifts and Gratuities section of the Town Personnel Policy Manual. The issue was sanitation employees reportedly asking for Christmas gratuities if off duty when residents left them out. Commissioner Blalock said he saw nothing wrong with accepting unsolicited tips at Christmas but that they should be divided equally among the street and sanitation workers. Mr. Styers said that no official policy should state that such tips are allowed. Commissioner Mooring moved that a clarifying sentence be added to the existing policy stating “In no case may an elected official or Town employee request a Gift or Gratuity, nor state or imply that the level of service to a resident or orders from vendors are tied to same.” Commissioner Banzet seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

In the next item of New Business Mr. Freeman explained the proposal of how to handle anticipated requests for privilege licenses for so-called Internet Cafes. He said that he had answered two past inquiries by explaining that these cafes were considered game rooms and would require special use permits. Because the industry has been aggressive and might be able to open in Town he recommended a rate of \$1000 per machine. Mr. Styers concurred with considering them game rooms and recommended that these fees could be approved now but should be incorporated with a revised privilege license fee structure in the upcoming budget. Commissioner Davie moved that the fee be set at \$1000 per machine; Commissioner Blalock seconded the motion that passed 6-1 with Commissioner Mooring voting nay.

The final item of New Business was the Water Shortage Response Plan, required for state compliance and by contract with water supplier Kerr Lake Water Authority. Commissioner Mooring moved that the plan be approved; Commissioner King seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Resolutions

The first resolution was a proclamation in support of May as Preservation Month, as set by the National Historic Trust and requested by Preservation Warrenton, Inc. Commissioner Hunter moved that the mayor sign the proclamation; Commissioner Davie seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The second resolution presented for consideration was stating opposition to the proposed resumption of uranium mining and milling near Roanoke, VA. This has been opposed by the Kerr-Tar COG, Roanoke River Basin Association and City of Virginia Beach. Commissioner Blalock moved that the resolution be adopted; Commissioner Mooring seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor Gardner announced the opening of several new stores downtown. The Mad Hatters antique mall will have its grand opening on April 15, while the Shop-N-Villa antiques and collectibles has opened in the former location of Shabby Chic and a new antique store was due to open at 142 South Main Street as soon as remodeling has been completed.

There being no additional business, Mayor Gardner declared the meeting adjourned at 8:38pm.

Respectfully submitted,

John Freeman
Town Administrator