

Walter M. Gardner, Jr.
Mayor

John Freeman
Administrator

TOWN OF WARRENTON
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March 8, 2010 Board of Commissioners Minutes

The March 8, 2010 meeting of the Town of Warrenton Board of Commissioners was held at the Warrenton Town Hall.

Those present were:

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

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

Mayor Gardner then presented the minutes from the meeting of February 8, 2010 for approval. Commissioner Mooring moved that they be approved. Commissioner Banzet noted a typographical error on page 4 and Commissioner Mooring moved that the minutes be approved as amended; Commissioner Banzet seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Public Comments

No members of the general public were in attendance or signed up to speak.

Committee Reports

Finance Report

Commissioner Hunter had reviewed the February checks in excess of \$10,000 and reported them appropriate. They were \$11,556.87 to MIT for the monthly cost of health insurance, \$14,973.15 to Warren County for the monthly water purchase and \$ 52,845.21 to Sheehy Ford for the purchase of the new Public Works work trucks. She then asked Mr. Freeman for the finance report. He began by introducing a budget amendment to reflect several unbudgeted items which totaled an increase of \$108,480 in both revenue and expense (see attached report). With the assurance that revenue and expense were balanced, Commissioner Banzet moved to approve the proposed amendment; Commissioner Blalock seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Mr. Freeman then presented the year-to-date cash flow report through the month of February reflecting the amendment just

approved which shows that all funds are on budget target. In answer to Commissioner Blalock's question about whether any departments looked as if they would be over budget at the end of the year Mr. Freeman said that the Streets Department might be two or three thousand over but that all funds should be under budget. He also said that cash flow had improved by about \$100,000 but that advantage would likely be reduced as ad valorem tax revenue had been received earlier than the previous year and had already met its budgeted amount. Although four months remain they tend to produce little more in the way of tax revenue, only about \$26,000 last year. Commissioner Blalock asked if delinquent taxes were tracked separately, and whether that might have boosted the tax revenue total as he had noted relative to fire department finances. Mr. Freeman said that they were tracked separately in the management software but combined for the purpose of this report, and he had not analyzed them at this point. He then pointed to the Sales and Use Tax revenue report which was running 9.3% less than last year, but as Mayor Gardner said was ahead of the 20% reduction budgeted.

Human Resources/Information Technology

There was nothing to report.

Public Safety

Mayor Gardner opened the Public Safety report by announcing a demonstration of the new fire truck and Public Works work trucks in the parking lot. At 7:10 all commissioners except Mr. Mooring went outside to examine the new vehicles, and all returned to the meeting room at 7:25.

Commissioner Blalock then turned to Chief Younts for a review of the monthly activity report. There were no questions from the Board relating to the monthly activity report but Mayor Gardner asked if car owners had to sign a release before police officers would unlock their cars. Chief Younts said that a release had to be signed before they would do anything and Commissioner Tippett asked if any new equipment had been acquired as her car had been damaged by the effort. Younts said it had and he believed that most vehicles could be opened successfully.

Commissioner Blalock reported that the Fire Department had been fairly quiet although that morning a brush fire nearly burned the former Harris Turner funeral home on Franklin Street and did damage a neighbor's hedge row.

Mr. Freeman reported that Fire Marshall Chris Wright had no inspections to report for the month.

Revitalization/Historical

Commissioner King reported that the Revitalization Committee continued to work on Springfest on courthouse square, and encouraged the Board to attend on April 24. As last year, events were being coordinated with the county for County Government Week. It would be a busy weekend as the Preservation Warrenton home tour was scheduled, and Mayor Gardner said North Carolina Baptists were sending an out-of-town work group to town that weekend.

Commissioner King also announced that there were two vacancies on the Revitalization Committee and invited suggestions for names of possible new members.

Beautification/Facilities

Commissioner Tippett addressed the question of building permits to Mr. Freeman who responded that he had received copies of permits issued since August 2009 and that the county's code compliance administrator had assured him that he would receive copies ongoing.

Commissioner Tippett reported that the Citizens Advisory Board had drafted a suggested ordinance to address broken windows which should be reviewed for comment. Mayor Gardner requested that the historic Warrenton banners along Main Street be repaired and replaced before the busy weekend of April 24 when there would be

many visitors. Commissioner Mooring suggested taking the ones far up North Main Street and re-installing them downtown. Mr. Freeman said that he had discussed with Mr. Perkinson having an inventory done of banners and brackets so they could be replaced as necessary. Commissioner Banzet mentioned that the parking space lines in front of the post office should be repainted and Mr. Freeman said a work order had been entered as one had to replace and repair damaged trash cans and holders. Commissioner Tippett asked Mr. Perkinson if the sidewalks could be cleaned before April 24 and Mayor Gardner said that the Fire Department had done it once and he would see if it could hose the sidewalks off again.

Public Works

Commissioner Davie asked Bill Perkinson for his report. Mr. Perkinson reported that the flow for February at the WWTP was high at 21 million gallons treated but that the plant had stayed healthy. Several major repairs had been completed that, while expensive, were accomplished at less cost than if new parts had been ordered rather than old ones adapted. The replacement of the rotor cost a little over \$10,000, including the cost of bringing in a 50 ton crane and installing new bearings, while a new rotor would have cost \$32,000 for the part alone. The repaired rotor was running well. Mr. Freeman added that photos of the collapsed rotor had been sent to county manager Linda Worth to supplement the application for funding for urgent need. The rotor, next to the critical clarifiers and installed at the same time, had collapsed from the metal fatigue identified in the clarifiers.

Moving to Public Works Mr. Perkinson reported that the sewer jetting/video project had commenced on February 8 and was well underway with employee John Limer working with the contractor. Commissioner Blalock asked if they had discovered any areas of major I&I yet and Mr. Perkinson said they had found a number of problems but the video had not yet been analyzed.

About the Streets Department he said the staff is cleaning gutters, utilizing a bobcat and the flatbed truck. They planned to edge all the curbing when the gutters were clear and the soil dried out. Regarding Sanitation he repeated that the trash containers would be replaced and repaired on Main Street and some discussion followed Commissioner Mooring's suggestion about cutting down heavy duty polyethylene barrels which might be more durable.

Commissioner Davie then reported on his investigation of water tower management. The Town owns three water towers which could serve as cell transmitter platforms for companies looking for existing platforms. For several years the Town has had a non-exclusive contract with Alltel/Verizon which allows other companies to utilize the platform installed by Alltel on the King Street tower. He had contacted two large cell tower operators, SBA and Utility Service Communications which are ~~not interested in this area at this time~~ but have other commitments in the area. Compared with these tower operators there is a cell tower management company called American Tower Corporation which does not have competing interests in the area and that would market the location and manage the towers for a percentage of the revenue. Mr. Davie said there is not a lot of current interest in the area as triangle growth has not reached this area as it has in Oxford (which realizes \$90,000 in such revenue), but feels it is important to "get on the map" to be positioned to take advantage of that growth when it comes. Commissioner Mooring said installing platforms on the two unused towers could be complicated by more stringent OSHA requirements but that if windload and frequency permitted, a second level could be installed on the King Street tower. Mr. Davie said that if these locations were in the American Tower database prospective carriers would know what locations already exist. Mr. Mooring said the county ESC is already marketing tower locations heavily and asked if a partnership would be desirable. Mr. Davie said that his concern was revenue to benefit the Town. Mayor Gardner thanked Mr. Davie for his work and asked him to continue the investigation and to submit copies of the contracts to Mr. Styers for review.

Zoning

Commissioner Mooring said he had nothing to report at this meeting. Mr. Freeman reported that letters had been mailed to property owners affected by the Historic District Commission ordinance and that he next focus would be on a similar mailing to owners affected by the Vacant Property Registry. Mr. Mooring recommended that the mailing be sent to all property owners in C-1 and C-2 districts rather than just those identified as vacant.

Unfinished Business

Mr. Freeman said that the topic of contracted fire inspectors had been included on the agenda at Board request but that no further information was available.

New Business

Mr. Freeman presented a two request for adjustments of utility bills. The first was for Alpheus Jones at 211 Fairview Street for a leak at the connection on the customer side of the meter that prevented him from receiving the water metered. This was researched by Mr. Perkinson and determined to be a Town problem corrected by staff. The amount is a combined credit due of \$293.43 (\$125.25 water and \$154.21 sewer plus \$13.94 capital reserve). Commissioner Blalock moved that the adjustment be made; Commissioner Banzet seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The second request was from Rachel Hargrove at 703 North Main Street for a sewer adjustment of \$148.83. She had had a leak in January in which her normal use of 2-3,000 gallons had jumped to 30,000. After the repair it returned to 3,000 gallons. Commissioner Blalock moved that the adjustment be approved; Commissioner Banzet seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mayor Gardner then recommended that those commissioners who had not already received the state mandated ethics training take advantage of the invitation of Warren County to join a webinar session at the library on March 30 from 4:00-6:00pm at no cost. He asked that those who planned to attend notify Mr. Freeman who would relay the information to the county manager's office.

Resolutions

Mayor Gardner presented a resolution confirming the Town acquisition of Ridgecrest Extension and Currin Lane as part of the submission to NCDOT for adding them to the Town street system eligible for Powell Bill funding. The Board approved the acquisition at its meeting on August 10, 2009 and the deed was recorded on March 4, 2010. With the correction of a date, Commissioner Blalock moved to adopt the resolution; Commissioner King seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

In answer to Mayor Gardner's question about whether there was any additional business Commissioner Tippet said she did have one item. She spoke of her feeling the need to review and recommend agenda items earlier than when the Board packets are delivered two or three days before a meeting. She asked if others felt the need of an agenda meeting but the consensus was that agenda items could be forwarded to Mr. Freeman at any time, and Commissioner Blalock pointed out that an item could be added to the agenda up to the beginning of the meeting itself. Mr. Styers suggested that the proposed agenda be emailed ahead of time. Following up on that idea Commissioner Mooring said he would like to have the packets delivered by email which would have the advantage of a full digital copy of the entire packet. Commissioner Blalock expressed concern about staff resources and Commissioner Banzet expressed his preference for a printed version. Mr. Freeman said it could be done with some initial assistance as all the material was digital.

There being no further business Commissioner Banzet moved to adjourn. Mayor Gardner declared the meeting adjourned at 8:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

John Freeman
Town Administrator