

4/17/24

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Wade met in regular session April 9, 2024 at 7:00 P.M. at the Wade Town Hall.

Board Present

Mayor Johnny Lanthorn
Commissioner Jennifer Weaver
Commissioner Kevin Herring
Commissioner Huell Aekins
Commissioner Beth Ritchie

Board Absent

Commissioner Johnny Sawyer

Visitors

Mr. Thomas Neville, Town Attorney
2 Wade Citizens

Mayor Johnny Lanthorn called the meeting to order and opened with prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance

Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

Agenda Adoption

Commissioner Herring made a motion seconded by Commissioner Aekins to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2024 regular session. Commissioner Ritchie seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports

Board Members reviewed the reports and Commissioner Aekins made a motion seconded by Commissioner Herring to approve the reports as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Water Report

Commissioner Aekins made a motion to approve the Water Report and Commissioner Ritchie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Business Items

Speakers From the Floor

Mayor Lanthorn informed Board Members that no one had signed up to address the Board under the Speakers from the Floor agenda item.

Committee Reports

Beautification– No report was presented.

Park– Mayor Lanthorn stated that the Park needed some cleaning up. Commissioner Weaver stated that Parks & Recreation should be contacted about the installation of a mommy and me swing as well as the painting of the Community Center. Mayor Lanthorn stated that he was going to reach out to Jimmy McMillan from Parks & Recreation about getting assistance with these and other projects. He also informed the Board that the industrial blower was at Eastern Turf for repair, and so it was not available to help with the cleanup of the Park. He explained that Parks & Recreation had begun discing the multi-purpose field. Commissioner Weaver questioned if the sign on the gate at the Park displayed the correct times. Town Clerk Cindy Burchett will verify that the time on the sign matches the actual opening and closing of the gate.

Streets– Commissioner Aekins stated the streets were in good shape. Commissioner Herring stated that the limbs hanging over Clara St. needed to be trimmed.

2024-2025 Budget

Mayor Lanthorn stated that it was time to begin the discussion of the 2024-2025 budget issues. He informed the Board that there would not be any action taken and the goal was to identify projects, goals or purchases that should be included in the budget figures. He also stated that the tax rate should also be determined. Town Clerk Cindy Burchett stated that she would be working on a preliminary budget for the May meeting. There was a general discussion concerning the current water rates and the plan that called for a 10-cent rate increase in the per 1,000-gallon price. Town Clerk Cindy Burchett reminded the Board that the tax rate had not been changed in a while and that the last increase gave additional funding to the Fire Department as well as the Town. She also reminded the Board that the Town's portion of the 32-cent tax rate was only 19-cent. The Board discussed the issue of the County property tax reevaluation, the possibility of losing sales tax revenue and how the Town would be affected. Following discussion of these issues, Town Clerk Cindy Burchett explained that she would use the current figures to prepare a proposed budget for the May meeting.

Ordinance Restricting Tobacco and Vape Businesses

Mayor Lanthorn stated that County Commissioner Glenn Adams was pushing for an Ordinance that would restrict tobacco and vape businesses. Attorney Thomas Neville stated that he had received an email from the County Attorney Rick Moorefield regarding the matter. He asked if it was a problem for the Town. Mayor Lanthorn stated that it was not a problem, but the idea was to make sure that it did not become a problem in the future. Town Attorney Thomas Neville stated that the Town had an agreement to supplant the Town's ordinance with the County's and so if the County's Ordinance called for these restrictive measures, then the Town should follow suit with an Ordinance that was not more restrictive than the County's. Mayor Lanthorn and the Board agreed that the appearance of these businesses as well as their clientele did not make them a favorable asset for the Town. There was a general discussion concerning the issue and Mayor Lanthorn agreed to reach out to Commissioner Adams to get additional information.

Food Truck Event

Commissioner Weaver stated that she had people expressing an interest in being part of a food truck event in Town. Board Members held a general discussion concerning

setting aside a particular day of each month for the event. Mayor Lanthorn questioned if there would be a liability issue for the Town if the event were on Town property. Attorney Thomas Neville stated that it was governmental property and so there may be a zoning issue and liability would be an insurance coverage issue. He also expressed concern with how it would be determined who would and would not be allowed to participate in the event. Commissioner Weaver explained the protocol that was being used for the food truck event in the Bethany area. Mayor Lanthorn stated that the participants could sign a waiver. Commissioner Weaver stated that some food truck vendors had people that follow them from location to location. Board Members held a general discussion concerning the issue and agreed to check into the issue of zoning & liability before taking any further action.

Proclamations

Board Members reviewed a Proclamation for the 55th Annual Professional Municipal Clerks Week. Commissioner Herring made a motion seconded by Commissioner Aekins to adopt the Proclamation. Board Members also reviewed a Proclamation for the National Day of Prayer. Commissioner Ritchie made a motion to adopt the Proclamation. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

National Day of Prayer/Founder's Day

Commissioner Ritchie presented Board Members with a master spreadsheet with all the information regarding Founder's Day. She informed the Board that it could be changed or updated as needed. Commissioner Ritchie explained that the performances for the stage were set except for The Firehouse Dance Studio. Commissioner Weaver asked if Tarheel Challenge Academy had been contacted regarding presenting the colors in the parade and in the opening ceremony. Town Clerk Cindy Burchett agreed to contact the group. There was also a discussion concerning the acquisition of door prizes. Commissioner Ritchie informed the Board that she had a contact for the purchase of items with the Town's name that could be used as free give-a-ways. She also stated that she was working on getting information for T-shirts. It was agreed that additional issues and information would be addressed at the next Founder's Day meeting.

Mayor Lanthorn stated that he was working on getting the ministers lined up for the National Day of Prayer observance. Town Clerk Cindy Burchett stated that she was working with the Wade Family Medical Center to get decorations and refreshments for the event.

Announcements

Commissioner Ritche stated that because of the prior discussions that the Board held regarding the teachers at District 7 she had inquired about the number of teachers and found out there was approximately 20. There was a general discussion about how to recognize the teachers and how funds from Founder's Day could be used for this project.

Attorney Thomas Neville informed the Board that he had investigated what was necessary for the Town to change to staggered term limits. He explained he had drafted a Resolution of Intent To Consider An Ordinance Amending the Charter for the Town of Wade which would allow staggered terms. He explained how the process of staggered

terms would work. Mr. Neville stated that if the change in terms was something the Board wanted to pursue then prior to next election the Town would have to give notice of a public hearing and then approve the Resolution at the next meeting with an additional notice being required after the approval. Mayor Lanthorn asked that Board Members review the information, and the issue would be placed on the May agenda for discussion and consideration.

Mayor Lanthorn informed the Board that the information regarding the painting of the Town Hall was not received in a timely manner and could not be placed on the Agenda. He explained that he had reviewed the estimates and calculated that Doug Stevens & Donnie Lee were the lowest estimate. Board Members reviewed the estimates. Mayor Lanthorn asked that Board Members carefully review the estimates, and he would have Town Clerk Cindy Burchett put the item on the May agenda.

Adjournment

Commissioner Ritchie made a motion seconded by Commissioner Herring to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Cindy C. Burchett
Cindy C. Burchett, Town Clerk

Johnny Lanthorn
Johnny Lanthorn, Mayor