



**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
February 20, 2023
Regular Meeting
7:00 PM**

Mayor Huneycutt welcomed everyone and asked the town clerk to call the roll. Commissioner Brett Barbee, Commissioner Joey Carpenter, Commissioner Lanny Hathcock, Mayor Chris Huneycutt, Commissioner Latoya Jackson and Commissioner Bud Smith were all present. Mr. Doug Burgess, Town Administrator, Mr. TJ Smith, Chief of Police, and Mr. Reggie Bowers, Utility Supervisor were also present. Town Attorney Albert Benschhoff was present.

Mayor Huneycutt asked everyone to stand for the pledge of allegiance to the flag and that was followed by devotions from Commissioner Barbee. He stated he was blessed to serve a town who believes in devotions and prayer time. Each decision of the board should be based from prayer and God's word. He spoke on 2 Chronicles 7:14-15, "If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. Now my eyes will be opened and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place." He spoke on decisions made tonight and in any future meeting should be based on prayer and God's word. He then led in prayer.

Mayor Huneycutt let the board know that an amendment to the agenda needed to be made. Public Hearing #2 will be rescheduled. It is not complete through the planning and zoning board. Commissioner Barbee made a motion to amend the agenda to remove public hearing #2. Commissioner Jackson seconded. Voted and carried unanimously.

Mayor Huneycutt opened the public hearing and stated that the purpose of this public hearing is to hear comments for, or against, the intent to close and abandon a portion of a street (lane or alleyway) lying within the boundary of Tax Parcel Number 650301380727 containing 0.35 acres, more or less. No one spoke for or against and the public hearing was declared closed.

Mayor Huneycutt entertained a motion to approve the minutes of January 10, 2023 and January 17, 2023. Commissioner Jackson made a motion to approve the minutes from January 10, 2023 and January 17, 2023. Commissioner Carpenter seconded. Voted and carried unanimously.

Mayor Huneycutt entertained a motion to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$860,637.63. Commissioner Barbee made the motion to approve the accounts payable and Commissioner Hathcock seconded. Voted and carried unanimously.

Mayor Huneycutt called for a decision regarding the public hearing. Mr. Mike Efird shared the order to close the street. The notice to close this street was placed in the local newspaper, Stanly News & Press on January 10, January 17, January 24, and January 31. All contiguous home owners were mailed letters of notification on February 9 by certified mail. Public notice was placed on the property in the form of two signs. All advertisements and notifications have been executed that were required by General Statute 160A-299. The final approval is now in the hands of the town board. A motion was made by Commissioner Hathcock to close this road mentioned above. It was seconded by Commissioner Smith. Voted and carried unanimously.

Open Forum

Ms. Tina Booth and Ms. Dolly Tucker signed up to speak – but said they both have no comments at this time. They had signed up just in case they needed to speak. Both ladies came because of the public hearing #2 that was removed from the agenda.

Department Updates

Budget and Finance

Commissioner Barbee referred to Mr. Burgess for an update. Mr. Burgess reported that revenue in the general fund is at 93% and expenditures at 68%. In water fund, revenue is at 40% and expenditures are at 38%. With sewer fund, revenues are at 57% and expenditures are at 51%. Commissioner Barbee asked Mr. Burgess to go over the codification. Mr. Burgess stated that our ordinances had not been codified in approximately 20 years. Our attorney has advised us to get that done. He recommends that we go ahead and do this. The contract will be with North Carolina League of Municipalities and the total will be approximately \$20,000. One-third of this amount is due up front and the remainder due will come out of next year's budget. Mr. Burgess proposes that we move forward with this codification of the town ordinances. Commissioner Barbee made a motion to codify the ordinances as stated by Mr. Burgess. A second was made by Commissioner Jackson. Voted and carried unanimously.

Cemetery and Streets

Mayor Huneycutt stated that Commissioner Carpenter will be the commissioner over this department. However, tonight Commissioner Hathcock is going to give the report. He referred to Mr. Bowers. Mr. Bowers informed the board that he had been working with Mr. Mark Cash on cleaning up the ditches and replacing the collapsed storm drains. New signs are being put up in addition to cleaning the sides of the road. New stone and scraping the dirt roads has been completed. The rain is washing it off about as fast as they get it out. They are trying to keep the ruts out of the roads. Mr. Bowers stated that they will be going around and paving some of the pot holes within the next week.

Commissioner Hathcock mentioned he had received some complaints regarding the no parking signs that were placed in Ruby Ridge Subdivision. He stated that it was a letter from the fire marshal that prompted this. The individual signs on the streets are coming down and a single sign will be put at the beginning of the subdivision and this will be placed in all subdivisions. No one will be singled out.

Police Department

Commissioner Hathcock referred to Chief Smith. Chief Smith recognized Officer Allen who will be sworn in by the town clerk. The town clerk administered the oath of police officer to Officer Allen. The audience applauded Officer Allen.

Chief Smith recognized Sergeant Bryce Kaus for responding to mutual aid with the North Carolina Highway Patrol. Sergeant Kaus administered stop sticks at Newsome Road and North Carolina Highway 24/27 in the Town of Red Cross. The North Carolina Highway Patrol was in a high-speed pursuit with a vehicle stolen off of a car lot in the Town of Southern Pines in Moore County. The vehicle had been driving at a high rate of speed and in a careless and reckless manner while going through multiple

jurisdictions. The suspect vehicle was eventually stopped because of these stop sticks administered by Sergeant Kaus and the suspect was arrested by Trooper Smith with the North Carolina Highway Patrol. He was given a pin to wear proudly. The audience applauded Sergeant Kaus for his great work.

Chief Smith mentioned that Sergeant Eschert was invited to Georgia from the Georgia Police K-9 Foundation. This is completely paid for. K-9 Joker was invited along with Sergeant Eschert due to his following on social media and how our community has come together through him and built lasting relationships with the public. Attendees will have an opportunity to meet K-9 Joker along with his handler, Sergeant Eschert. In turn, Sergeant Eschert and K-9 Joker will meet other K-9s and their handlers from across the United States. Chief Smith congratulated Sergeant Eschert for all of this hard work. The audience applauded.

Chief Smith reported there were 780 field contacts, 191 escorts, 146 calls of service. Out of 200 traffic conducted stops, 82 citations were written and 10 arrests were made.

Mr. Burgess mentioned that the police department has requested a radar speed indicator sign that can be placed in different locations in the town. The cost is \$4,235. Mr. Burgess made a recommendation to purchase one to see how it does. It is a solar powered device. He is requesting the board approves the purchase of this device. Chief Smith stated that this sign also computes statistics regarding the times and speed of vehicles. Commissioner Hathcock made a motion to purchase the sign. Commissioner Barbee seconded. Voted and carried unanimously.

Parks and Recreation

Commissioner Jackson reported that Mr. Almond had shared with her that there are currently no updates, but he will bring an update at the next monthly meeting. He was currently at a basketball game that he heads up at the Oakboro gym.

Public Works

Commissioner Smith referred to Mr. Reggie Bowers. Mr. Bowers stated that in the water department, six new water meters were installed at new residential dwellings. He said that six old meters were replaced. They worked on 3 meters and also on the fire hydrant on Hatley Road. The department worked on a 6" water leak on Hamilton Road. Mr. Bowers has been working to switch the water over from Stanly County to a new 12" water line which will feed Charlotte Pipe.

In sewer, the department worked on five E-1 pumps and also worked on clean outs, 2 of them were stopped up. They worked on 3 pump stations. They jetted out an 8" sewer line which is the main sewer line coming down Highway 742. He has to jet out a certain amount each year for the state. This particular one was 600 feet. The department also worked on a 2" force main on Cross Creek. They also had to work on a 2" force main on East Eighth Street. They started up a new pump station on Buster Road. He continues to work with Mr. Mark Cash on the I & I and locating those leaks, especially when it rains. They are checking the sewer laterals going to the houses and looking for leaks. A new generator for the Forest Creek Pump Station will be installed.

Advisory Board/Code Enforcement

Commissioner Hathcock referred to Mr. Efirm. Mr. Efirm reported on some different projects he's working on to keep the board informed. Currently, he is working with Blue Dot Concrete to obtain what is need for their business to start up on South Main Street/Highway 742. There will be a quasi-judicial meeting next month regarding this special use permit with Blue Dot.

Mr. Jim Davis is wanting to divide some existing property near his home between East Second Street and East Third Street in order to split it up for his family before he passes away. He also plans on downsizing and hopes to build a new house on that property. Mr. Efirm isn't sure yet if it will be a major subdivision or minor subdivision. At this time, Mr. Davis is just looking to divide the property. There won't be any construction in the near future.

There's another request from Mr. Kerr who is looking to close an alleyway between 323 West Eighth Street and 721 Center Street. This is just in the beginning stages, but it will be coming up in the near future.

Mr. Efirm continues to work with Express Mart at the Big Lick intersection for them to rezone the property, demo the old store and build a new store. This will be an improvement for our town.

Mr. Efirm is still working with Mr. Matthew Whitley regarding rezoning his property and dividing the property into two lots. The planning and zoning board tabled this to the next meeting until they have a chance to look at some of the issues that were brought up during the public meeting of the planning and zoning board on February 14, 2023.

True Homes has met all the requirements that the town has put before them. They have already purchased the 12 permits for the town houses and that work will be started shortly. Completion date is expected to be late 2023.

Forest Creek Phase 3 Subdivision is in the final process of completing the streets and infrastructure. They will soon be looking for a final plat so they can begin building. This may come up at the next meeting and Mr. Efirm just wanted the board to be aware.

Finally, Mr. Efirm reminded the board we have been in the grant process to get funds to complete the sewer line from Highway 742 to Equalization basin on Fourth Street. The town should hear about this on Tuesday, February 21, 2023.

Board Comments:

Commissioner Smith thanked the citizens for being here tonight. He mentioned how important public opinion and concern is and how it does make a difference. He shared how it does matter and if you see something, say something especially if it's near and dear to your heart. He appreciates the voices he hears from the town.

Commissioner Jackson congratulated Officer Allen and welcomed him to the town. She also thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Commissioner Hathcock wanted to piggyback on what Commissioner Smith said. He wanted the citizens to know they could call the commissioners if they had any concerns. He also congratulated Officer Allen,

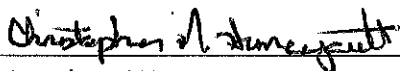
Sergeant Eschert and K-9 Joker. He is very proud of K-9 Joker for receiving this invitation and knows that he will represent the town well. In addition, he commended Sergeant Kaus for deploying the stop sticks. He thanked everyone for coming out tonight.

Commissioner Carpenter congratulated Officer Allen, K-9 Joker along with Sergeant Eschert and Sergeant Kaus for deploying the stop sticks. He mentioned he was impressed with what Sergeant Kaus did. He appreciates everyone coming out.

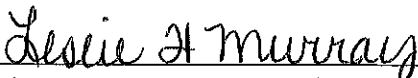
Commissioner Barbee agreed that it was nice to see so many people in the audience because they all care. He said the citizens voted the commissioners in and he wants to do what's right for them. He stated that decisions have to be made. The board investigates items brought to their attention. According to Commissioners Barbee, we shouldn't be having problems that we had 50 years ago. We should be fixing problems so the future commissioners don't have to deal with them down the road. He wanted to thank all of the officers for what they do as well as K-9 Joker. He thanked Mr. Bowers for what he does with his department and mentioned how valuable he has been. He thanked the citizens for allowing him to sit on the board.

Mayor Huneycutt stated the town has some wonderful employees and he is so grateful for that. Mr. Bowers does a great job. Mayor Huneycutt congratulated the officers and mentioned Officer Allen especially as being the new officer. He welcomed him to Oakboro Police Department. He went on to congratulate Sergeant Kaus for deploying the stop sticks and Sergeant Eschert and K-9 Joker. He stated it was a wonderful thing for K-9 Joker to be known throughout and not just in Oakboro. He was glad to see everyone at the meeting tonight because it shows they care about what's going on in their town. He's thankful the citizens have bestowed confidence in the commissioners to represent them to the best of their abilities. He thanked each board member for their work. He hopes that everyone has a safe night.

Commissioner Jackson made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Smith seconded. Voted and carried unanimously.



Christopher N Huneycutt, Mayor



Leslie H. Murray, Town Clerk/Finance Officer