

March 1, 2019 (Recessed Meeting - Retreat)

Minutes of the recessed meeting of the Mayor and Board of Commissioners of the Town of Elkin, March 1, 2019, 9:00 a.m., at the Heritage Arts and Trails Center.

Present: Mayor Sam Bishop, Commissioners Cicely McCulloch, Jeff Eidson, Will Gwyn, Tommy Wheeler and Skip Whitman.

Also present: Town Manager Brent Cornelison, Assistant Town Manager/Director of Recreation and Parks Adam McComb, Finance Director John Holcomb, Public Works Director Robert Fuller, Police Chief Monroe Wagoner, Interim Fire Chief Kevin Wilson, Economic Development/Planning Director Leslie Schlender, Downtown/Community Manager Laura Gaylord (joined the meeting at noon), Police Captain Josh Tulbert, Town Attorney Raymond A. Parker and Town Clerk Cathie Tilley.

Guests:

- Candidates for Board of Commissioner: John Wiles, Dennis Lazar, Robert Ball, Jr., Matthew Schrum, Barry Huff and Evelyn Green.
- Tribune Editor Wendy Wood

Welcome and Introductions – Mayor Bishop

- Reconvened the recessed meeting and welcomed everyone.
 - o Told everyone there were eight people who expressed interest in Commissioner Whitman's seat: Robert Ball, Evelyn Green, Barry Huff, Lestine Hutchens, Dennis Lazar, John Myers, Matthew Schrum and John Wiles. Received another letter yesterday from Courtney Snyder.
- We will be going into closed session at noon to look through the letters.
- Hope to be able to select someone for Skip's seat when we return to open session.
- Our meeting today will be informal.

Town Manager Cornelison:

- Explained to commissioners that they have two sheets at their seats.
- Some of the items listed on the sheets will have budget implications.
- Explained how to rank the items.
- This will allow staff to have a better understanding of what the Board is thinking about in terms of funding.
- Pointed out the sheet for special appropriations.
 - o Asked commissioners to write amounts in if they wanted to give more or less than requested.

Mayor Bishop turned the meeting over to Town Manager Cornelison.

Financial Overview – John Holcomb:

- **GENERAL FUND:**
 - o Total fund balance this year - \$2,796,486 (last year \$2,844,050)
 - Change from prior year - \$47,564 or 1.7%

- Unassigned fund balance percentage – dropped from 39.6% to 35.2%
- NC Local Government Commission fund balance for fiscal year ending June 30, 2017 ranged from 1.49% to 1,114.68% (for towns with a population range of 2,500—9,999)
 - Average is 76.65%
- Briefly looked at and discussed tax levy
- Much discussion regarding outstanding property taxpayers
- Debt Service:
 - Town Hall Building – last payment June 20, 2019
 - Public Works Facility – last payment April 1, 2019
- Economic Development Incentives:
 - PGW – last incentive payment will be in 2020
 - Skull Camp – last incentive payment will be in 2019
- **WATER FUND:**
 - Have increased water rates over the years
 - 2019 water rates are \$16.50 for a minimum of 2,000 gallons plus a volumetric rate of \$7.00/1,000 gallons in excess of the minimum allowance of 2,000 gallons
 - PGW is our largest water consumer
 - Water operations profit:
 - 2017 - \$118,385
 - 2018 - \$262,739
 - Dr. Ship Whitman Analysis:
 - Target – 1.03
 - 2012 – 0.49
 - 2018 – 1.12
 - Discussed history
 - We currently do not have any Water Fund debt
 - Dr. Whitman explained to the candidates for the vacant commissioner’s seat how, in the past, the town was taking money from the General Fund to supplement the Water Fund (approximately three million dollars)
 - Still does not understand why this cannot be paid back to the General Fund from Water Fund profits
 - Mr. Holcomb explained we cannot do this because it was a contribution, not a loan
 - Commissioner Whitman wants something in writing stating this

9:30 – 9:35 a.m. – five-minute break

West Elkin Water Tank and Water Plan CIP Update - Robert Fuller and Ryan Hager (Project Engineer W.K. Dickson)

- Mr. Hager said the town has discussed selling more water to Ronda
 - If that happens, there are several things that must be done
- Presented a review and current status of the Water System Capital Improvement Plan Update (originally dated February 13, 2015)

- Objectives:
 - o Review system deficiencies
 - o Project type categories
 - o Capital improvement outlay—then and now
- Previous recommendations:
 - o Raw Water Improvements (COMPLETED)
 - o Extension of North pressure zone further south on North Bridge Street (COMPLETED)
 - o Further evaluation of infrastructure serving the Ronda BPS
 - o Replace stressed water lines
- Showed a map of all the projects we are working on
 - o Discussed the projects
- There are five different project categories:
 - o Raw water supply
 - Included improvements to the raw water line, emergency raw water line and raw water pumping station (some remaining work to be done at the pump station)
 - Showed slides of how comprehensive the work was
 - o Water supply
 - West zone improvements for additional supply to Wilkes County and North zone tank control modifications
 - FY 17-23; Cost \$3,344,000
 - o Fire protection
 - West zone improvements and east zone improvements
 - FY 17-22; Cost \$1,667,000
 - o Aging infrastructure
 - North zone improvements and east zone improvements
 - Scheduled FY 21-30; Cost \$3,091,000
 - o Miscellaneous
 - System needs and costs provided by Elkin staff
 - FY 15-30; Cost \$1,069,500
- CIP Summary:

o Water Supply	\$3,344,000
o Fire Protection	\$1,667,000
o Aging Infrastructure	\$3,091,000
o Miscellaneous	<u>\$1,069,500</u>
▪ Total Cost	\$10,946,500
▪ Less Raw Water Supply	<u>\$1,775,000</u>
• Balance	\$9,171,500
- Next Steps:
 - o Generator at WTP
 - o West zone water supply improvements
 - o Waterline replacement improvements
 - o Noted that realistically we need two water tanks for each zone
- Questions to be answered:
 - o When will improvements be needed?
 - o How will improvements be funded?

10:05 – 10:10 a.m. – five-minute break

YVSA Update – Nicole Johnston

- J. L. Lowe, Jr., YVSA Chairman, gave a brief history of the Yadkin Valley Sewer Authority.
- Nicole Johnston and Benjie Thomas:
 - o Presented and discussed several pictures including but not limited to:
 - Facility (Operations Center)
 - Several pieces of equipment
 - Routine tasks:
 - Cleaning
 - Inspections
 - Unclogging
 - Major repairs
 - Pump stations - removing debris from inside
 - Unclogging pumps
 - Installing service taps
 - General maintenance and repairs
 - Being a good neighbor
 - Assisting with cleanup at the library after flood
 - How the wastewater treatment process works
 - Before and after pictures of completed projects
 - Lab building
 - North Bridge Street repairs done prior to repaving
 - Weyerhaeuser connection
- Discussed:
 - o New projects
 - o High priority areas
 - o Cost to sustain the sewer system
 - o Capital projects
- Mr. Lowe:
 - o Our meetings are the second Tuesday each month and everyone is invited to attend.
 - o Thanked Commissioner Whitman for how much he has meant to Elkin, for everything he has done for Elkin and how much he is appreciated by Elkin.

11:00 – 11:10 a.m. – ten-minute break

Prior to the next topic, Town Manager Cornelison informed the Board of a new program that will be available to town employees, an Employee Assistance Program.

- The League of Municipalities recommended a company, McLaughlin Young Group, out of Charlotte to work with the town.
 - o Some concerns addressed by the McLaughlin Young Group include but are not limited to: stress, depression/anxiety, grief, family conflict, work-related issues and alcohol or drug use.

- Cost to the town is two thousand dollars a year.
 - o The League reimburses the full amount back to the town.
 - o Services are free to full-time employees.

Special Appropriation Request Discussion – Brent Cornelison and Board

- Reminded the Board of the amounts these entities received last year.
- Following is what they are requesting this year:
 - o Elkin Jaycees - \$4,000
 - o Elkin Rescue Squad - \$11,058.30
 - o Watershed NOW - \$1,500
 - o Elkin Valley Trails Association - \$13,000
 - o Surry County EDP - \$15,000
 - o Northwestern Regional Library - \$86,868
 - o Grace Clinic - \$3,000
 - o Foothills Arts Council - \$8,022.50
 - o Foothills Arts Council – Foothills Theater - \$5,000
 - o Foothills Arts Council – Elkin Valley Fiddlers - \$1,000
- Following much discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to add a couple of requests to our budget and fund the other requests as follows:
 - o Fireworks will become a line item in Recreation and Parks
 - o Surry County EDP will become a line item in Economic Development
 - o Elkin Rescue Squad - \$8,200
 - o Watershed NOW - \$1,500
 - o EVTA - \$10,000 (\$3,000 is in our budget to pay for signs)
 - o Foothills Arts Council - \$11,000
 - o Northwestern Regional Library - \$75,000 plus \$5,000 from the Lillard Fund (next year will be the final year to receive money from the Lillard Fund)
 - Total in Lillard Fund is \$10,311.95
 - o Grace Clinic will not receive funding

12:30 – 1:30 p.m. – Lunch

Lunch and Closed Session for Board

- Mayor Bishop said the Board needed to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of a prospective public officer.
- Commissioner Wheeler made a motion for the Board to go into closed session as previously stated. Upon a second by Commissioner McCulloch, the motion was approved. The Board left open session at 12:30 p.m.
- The Board returned to open session at 1:15 p.m.
- Mayor Bishop said the Board considered potential candidates for commissioner while in closed session.
 - o No decision will be made today.

Master Plan Presentation, Withers and Ravenel – Gary Warner

- Gave a very informative presentation on this project with discussion that included but was not limited to:
 - o Project purpose
 - Framework for the future of Elkin
 - Goals and action items require a town-wide focus
 - Plan will provide goals and objectives that serve as the foundation for future planning and development
 - o Project process
 - Planning framework
 - History
 - Demographic trends
 - Existing conditions
 - Guiding documents and plan review
 - Town observations
 - Vision development
 - Built on common themes from public involvement, research, existing conditions assessment and team observations
 - Goal-oriented and based on meaningful objectives
 - Sets the foundation for planning recommendations and implementation strategies
 - Two-day vision workshops to gather community and stakeholder input
 - Plan and guidelines
 - Community character and guidelines
 - Infrastructure and public utilities
 - Transportation, connectivity and gateways
 - Land use and growth management
 - Economic and tourism development
 - Parks, trails and natural resources
 - Implementation strategies
 - This is our next step
 - o Ultimate goal is that Elkin become a destination place

Contracting vs. Full and/or Part-time Employees – Brent Cornelison and Staff

- This is for maintenance in the downtown area
- Showed a map of the areas that are currently maintained
- Current man-hours to maintain this area:
 - o Public works – 1812
 - o Recreation and Parks – 100
 - o Part-time employee – 615
 - Total – 2527
- One full-time employee:
 - o 2080 man-hours
 - o Cost is \$39,976.62
- Cost to contract:

- Basic maintenance - \$30,000
- Snow removal - \$6,000 (based on three occurrences)
 - Total - \$36,000
- Basic maintenance includes:
 - Mow, weed-eat and trash pick-up weekly (40 weeks)
 - Leaf removal during the fall
 - All spraying (weeds, pre-emergent, etc.)
 - Apply fertilizer on appropriate turf areas
 - Prune bushes two times/year
 - Mulch all beds one time/year
 - Limb trees (parking areas only) two times/year
 - Plant spring and fall annuals
 - Water planters three times/week (maximum)
 - Clean restrooms and empty trash 3 times/week
 - Hang banners and Christmas decorations
 - Remove and install shades at Rock Façade Park
- Supplemental maintenance:
 - Add \$5,000 to Recreation and Parks part-time salaries
 - Position will work six hours on Saturday and four hours Sunday ten months/year
 - Will clean restrooms at Farmer's Market on Saturday morning before opening and clean and close afterwards
 - Clean Rock Façade restrooms and check Downtown trashcans Saturday and Sunday
 - Follow-up cleaning after Car Shows and Downtown Block Parties
- Cost comparison:
 - Contract:
 - Maintenance contract - \$30,000
 - Snow removal - \$6,000
 - Part-time salary - \$5,000
 - Total - \$41,000
 - Full-Time:
 - Hire full-time employee - \$39,385.62
 - Additional help 447 hours - \$8,464.12
 - Supplies, equipment, etc. - \$2,500.00
 - Total - \$50,349.74
- Potential savings:
 - Competitive bidding may lower costs
 - Could combine bid with cemetery contract to help lower costs
 - Currently budget \$5,541 for part-time salary for downtown.
 - This would cover a part-time employee for Recreation and Parks
- The question is, "How high is the priority for this?"

2:35 – 2:40 p.m. – five-minute break

Heritage Center Update – Leslie Schlender, Brent Cornelison and Robert Fuller

- Street and parking design estimates:
 - o Showed and discussed drawing of the possible design of the outside of the facility
- Paving Estimates:
 - o Standard Street:
 - Paving - \$40,000
 - Curb and gutter - \$60,000
 - Total - \$100,000
 - Funding:
 - Powell Bill
 - o Received \$124,000 in current FY budget
 - \$20,000 is for salaries
 - \$104,000 is for street/sidewalk improvement
 - o Proposed completing Standard Street with Powell Bill funding
 - o Will leave \$4,000 for minor repairs and patching
 - o HATC (parking areas):
 - Paving - \$35,000
 - Curb and gutter - \$20,000
 - Total - \$55,000
 - Funding:
 - General Fund – could be completed at the same time as Standard Street
 - Grants – would be completed based on securing grants
- Interior:
 - o Presented drawings of potential placement of exhibits
 - o She and Brent met with contractor recently
 - Contractor firmed up placements of exhibits
 - Trying to keep all the pieces balanced
 - Trying to make this a place that will make people want to stay here
 - o Discussed grants
 - o Proposed the town cover the costs of admin and construction documents - \$12,500
 - o Presented proposal from Design Dimension
 - Explained why it would be beneficial for the town to continuing working with them.

Pay Study Discussion – Brent Cornelison

- Pay study completed by MAPS Group in 2008
 - o Many pay scales were starting well below average of similar size cities and towns
 - o Gave recommendation to help with compression and those starting salaries that were below average
- Departmental recommendations:

- Each position was reviewed within each department
- Gave recommendations to adjust pay and pay scales to get positions and salary ranges to comparable levels with cities and towns used in the study
- Compression recommendations:
 - Option 1 – place all employees at least within the minimum of the competitive salary range recommended and add 1%/year of service
 - Option 2 – reduces competitive salary range by 7% and place all employees at least at the minimum of the salary range and add .5%/year of service
 - Option 3 – reduces competitive salary range by 7% and places all employees at least at the minimum of the salary range, adds .75% for each year of service and gives each employee a 1.5% increase
- Discussed pay adjustments since the Pay Study was done.
- Showed how compression is created and how it can be fixed
- Discussed fixing compression and keeping budget constraints in mind
 - Commissioner Whitman wants to know how our employees are paid compared to others in the state
- Suggested considering an incentive program to give employees an opportunity to increase their value to the town.
- Proposal for 2019-20 Budget Preparation:
 - Consider 2% cost of living pay increase and .5% years of service increase since 2009 or consider a 2% cost of living pay increase and a .25% years of service increase since 2009 in the next two fiscal years
 - Consider approving manager and department heads to create an incentive-based compensation package for future discussion

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES AND CIP REQUESTS

- *Recreation and Parks (Adam McComb)*
 - Projects for 2019-20 and upcoming projects 3 years out:
 - Crater Park (\$33,000)
 - Additional parking (gravel/stone)
 - Asphalt demolition and removal - \$13,000
 - Create parking (gravel/stone) - \$20,000
 - East Depot Alley (\$35,000)
 - Public Works asphalt paving
 - Baseball Field #1 Upgrade (\$45,000)
 - New LED light fixtures (use existing poles and electrical)
 - Concrete block backstop base 36" height
 - Padding for backstop
 - Black netting for backstop material
 - Fence upgrade (similar fencing on tennis court)
 - New dugouts and benches

- Project List:
 - Crater Park gravel parking (CIP) - \$33,000
 - Paving East Depot Alley (Public Works CIP) - \$35,000
 - Fitness Equipment (CIP) - \$20,000
 - Field #1 Upgrade (CIP) - \$45,000
 - Trail Bridge III Project (NCRTP & EVTA) - \$125,000
 - Crater Park Lighting Project (Elkin City Schools) - \$100,000
 - 1 – 2 Years Out: Pool plaster, tile, coping and lighting:
 - Last plaster, tile, coping was spring 2005 (\$130,000)
 - Plaster is beginning to crack, water loss, tile breaks and pool coping repair needed (est. \$100,000)
 - 2 – 3 Years Out – Old water treatment plant:
 - Safety issues and curb appeal (\$100,000)
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- *Economic Development (Leslie Schlender)*
 - Main Street and Community:
 - Total private investment from January 2018-December 2018 - \$2,300,939
 - Total public investment (Heritage Center/Rock Façade/Infrastructure repair) - \$1,254,506
 - New businesses – 20
 - Businesses closed – 10
 - Pressing issues:
 - Get more buildings ready for lease
 - Buildings used for storage only, sitting idle, no improvements and no for lease or for sale signs
 - Sidewalk repairs around town hall, Dirty Joe's, etc.
 - Add more awnings to Farmer's Market
 - Lighting up Main Street and more of downtown for holidays
 - Economic Development:
 - Project Sundae—not ready to announce; Project X expansion; relocations; product
 - Multi-family housing; other housing projects
 - Planning transition/TRC/code enforcement
 - Building Reuse Grant; grants for exhibits
 - NC Trail Days support
 - Tourism:
 - Elkin TDA
 - Tourism Partnership of Surry County
 - Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor
 - *Public Works (Robert Fuller)*
 - Completion of Church Street Project
 - Paving/curb and gutter/sidewalk
 - Standard Street redesign

- Worked w/Leslie on Heritage Center parking lot design
 - DOT paving project
 - 268 bypass and North Bridge Street
 - Oversight and correction
 - Paving project on Surry Avenue, Franklin Street, Vine Street and Cedar Street:
 - Weather issues affected this project
 - Surry Avenue and Vine Street are completed
 - Still working on Franklin and Cedar Streets
 - Meeting with roofers:
 - Developing a bid package and maintenance contract for Elkin properties
 - Town Hall roof replacement
 - Creek flooding clean-up:
 - Memorial Park Drive, Front Street and Standard Street
 - Raw Water Line Project:
 - Bidding, phase one, estimated completion March 28, 2019
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- *Fire Department (Interim Chief Kevin Wilson)*
 - Calls run in 2018
 - Medical – 447
 - Fire – 295
 - Total 742
 - New capital purchases:
 - New pickup truck - \$50,000 (placed in service mid-January)
 - Washing machine and dryer (wash turnout gear) - \$7,000
 - Air compressor (filling SCBA's)
 - Two new SCBA's
 - Five new sets of turnout gear
 - Members:
 - Volunteers – 23 active
 - Part-time – 10 employees
 - This number is down a little
 - May have some more coming on board
 - Full-time:
 - 3 firefighters
 - These are on a rotating 24 on 48 off schedule
 - 1 vacant Fire Chief's position
 - 1 grant-paid position expiring December 2020
 - Chief and grant positions are scheduled 8 am–5 pm Monday through Friday
 - Enviro-Safe:
 - Consultants hired to evaluate department
 - Response to satisfaction survey was high
 - Area fire chiefs met with consultants
 - Equipment and apparatus inspection completed

- Hope to have fire chief in place by July
- Project ongoing
- *Police Department (Chief Monroe Wagoner)*
 - Law Enforcement Risk Review Process:
 - Informed the Board that he (Chief Wagoner) and Captain Josh Tulbert met with the North Carolina League of Municipalities to learn about a program for police departments called the Law Enforcement Risk Review.
 - Noted fifteen police departments in the state have completed the review.
 - There are currently sixty departments in the state going through this process.
 - Presented the following facts regarding the Law Enforcement Risk Review:
 - NCLM Law Enforcement Risk Management Review Process is a program designed to assess a police department's adherence to best practices, court decisions and policies and procedures related to high-liability activities in law enforcement
 - Goal is to mitigate liability exposures, enhance officer safety and validate that training and operating procedures are up to industry standards
 - Review is free for members of the NCLM Property and Casualty Trust
 - Supported by NC Association of Chiefs of Police
 - Contains over 40 risk categories used for evaluation
 - There are five steps in the review process:
 - Initial risk review presentation
 - Agency internal review
 - NCLM policy review
 - NCLM site operations survey
 - Final validation
 - Our department is currently working through this review process.
 - Once our department is certified, we (police department) will receive a 14% reduction in our liability insurance
 - Training and Standards Audit:
 - Department was audited by the Department of Justice Law Enforcement Training and Standards on January 29th
 - Audit consisted of the accuracy of recordkeeping of all state mandated in-service training for the 2017-2018 training years for officer certification
 - We received 100% compliance
 - CIP
 - Ford stopped producing the Taurus

- Now producing Explorer and F-150 pickups
 - The Police rated Ford Explorer is the preferred vehicle
 - Cost in 2020 is approximately \$32,567
 - Plan to no longer request three vehicles every other year
 - We have evaluated the condition of current vehicles
 - Due to overall performance and low maintenance, will only request one Explorer in new budget
 - During transition of vehicles, may need one additional unit (during budget year—budget amendment)
 - Will continue to make each vehicle last as long as possible
- *Airport Layout Plan (Brent Cornelison)*
- Showed where next T-hangars will go
 - Next projects:
 - Apron expansion
 - Parallel taxi lane
 - Moved terminal building
 - This is an economic development tool
 - Looking at changing the route coming in
- *I-77 Construction Work (Brent Cornelison)*
- Will be repaving just below Jonesville to Hwy 21
 - Work will start the end of this month and last until 2021

Closing Remarks – Mayor Bishop


- Expressed appreciation to everyone for attending and to staff for their work.

There being no further business, Commissioner Wheeler moved to adjourn. Upon a second by Commissioner McCulloch, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.



Sam Bishop, Mayor

Attest:



Catherine C. Tilley, Town Clerk