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May 14, 2018 (REGULAR MEETING)

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Mayor and Board of Commissioners of the Town of Elkin, May 14, 2018, 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall.

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

Also present: Town Manager Brent Cornelison, Town Manager/Finance Director John W. Holcomb, Assistant Town Manager/Recreation and Parks Director Adam McComb and Town Clerk Cathie Tilley. (Absent: Town Attorney Raymond Parker)

Mayor Bishop welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. He asked Police Chief Monroe Wagoner to lead our Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Bishop asked for consideration of the Consent Agenda.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA (Tab A)**

The following items were presented for the consent agenda:

- Minutes of April 9, 2018 (Regular Meeting)
- Minutes of May 1, 2018 (Recessed and First Budget Workshop)
- Set Public Hearing for June 11<sup>th</sup> to Consider Zoning Request from R-8 to R-20)
- Budget Amendment for Church Street Paving Costs (included as Exhibit A)

A motion by Commissioner Eidson to approve the Consent Agenda was seconded by Commissioner Wheeler and was unanimously approved.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- Mayor Bishop asked for anyone wanting to speak to come forward.
  - o David Bents – 608 Brookwood Drive:
    - Spoke regarding paying taxes to both the Town and Surry County on his aircraft located at the Town of Elkin Airport.
      - Town does not benefit from the taxes paid to the County.
      - Airport needs major maintenance/repairs.
      - Surry County/Mt. Airy Airport benefits from taxes collected by the County.
      - Thinks this is lopsided.
    - Time was called before Mr. Bents finished his presentation.
      - Planning/Zoning Director George Crater has Mr. Bents' presentation and will provide copies to the Town Manager and Commissioners.

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- There being no further comments, Mayor Bishop closed the Public Comments period.

#### **INTRODUCTION OF MATTHEW CRAWFORD:**

- Town Manager Cornelison had Matthew Crawford come forward and introduced him as Elkin's new Fire Chief.
- Everyone welcomed him.

#### **MAYOR AND BOARD COMMENTS FOR STAFF**

- Commissioner Wheeler:
  - o Thanked Public Works for patching hole on Front Street.
- Commissioner Whitman:
  - o Happy Church Street is open.
    - It looks terrific.
    - Excited to see how that area is going to look with the roundabout.
- Commissioner Eidson:
  - o Thanked staff for helping with Explore Elkin events.
  - o Gave a special thank you to Police Chief Wagoner for getting the street closed in a timely manner for the kick-off event at the Reeves to celebrate our trails and river.

#### **REGULAR MEETING**

##### **1. *Surry County Leash Law Presentation – Abraham Doby (Surry County Sherriff's Department)***

- Mayor Bishop asked Police Chief Monroe Wagoner to speak to this matter, and he presented the following information:
  - o Surry County has an Animal Control Ordinance that includes a Tethering Ban.
  - o A copy of guidelines regarding the sanctions used for violation of the Tethering Ban is included in the Agenda.
  - o Other municipalities within the County have adopted the Tethering Ban portion of the ordinance.
  - o Requesting approval of the Tethering Ban by this Board.
- Commissioner Whitman made a motion to approve the ordinance as presented. There were no questions. Upon a second by Commissioner McCulloch, an Ordinance to Abate Animal Nuisances (Amended May 14, 2018) was unanimously approved. (Copy may be found in Ordinance Book 5, Pages 2018-05-0004 through 2018-05-0006.)

##### **2. *Main Street Advisory Board (MSAB) MSD Tax Rate Increase Request – Jennifer White (Laura Gaylord gave this presentation)***

- Referenced a list of the MSAB Members and the minutes from the Advisory Board's April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- This is the 20<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of Elkin being in the State's Main Street Program
- The MSAB depends on MSD tax funds to pay for downtown projects.
- The MSD tax rate has remained the same since its inception.
  - o Referenced in the Advisory Board minutes where a motion was approved to increase the MSD tax rate from ten cents/\$100

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valuation to fifteen cents/\$100 valuation with the stipulation that the Town of Elkin Board of Commissioners would match the amount of the increase each year for the MSD budget.

- This increase is based on numerous projects needed in downtown.
  - Had examples of MSD taxes now versus how much they will be with the proposed increase.
  - Noted other municipalities in North Carolina, their populations and their MSD tax rates.
    - Average MSD tax rate statewide is 17.9 cents.
  - Provided a list of projects the MSAB would like to begin undertaking if they had funding.
  - Talked about completed projects, projects that are under way (security cameras, awnings at Farmers Market, etc.) and projects considered important (safe sidewalks, ADA updates, parking, sidewalk bumpouts, pedestrian refuges, etc.).
  - Also presented a 'wish list' of projects that the Advisory Board would like to see done that totals over \$260,000.
    - Provided slides of the parking lot behind Kennedy Auto and Southern on Main as an example of one of the projects that has been discussed for several months.
      - With the MSD increase, MSAB could begin Phase 1 of this project.
      - Could pay to extend the landscape island and landscape the area before the alley and parking lot are paved.
- Following the presentation, Ms. Gaylord said the Main Street Advisory Board requested approval from the Board of Commissioners to increase the MSD tax rate to fifteen cents per \$100 valuation and for the Town to match these funds.
- Following additional discussion, the Board instructed Town Manager Cornelison to work with staff to meet with property owners in the municipal service district to be sure the majority of them are in favor of increasing the MSD tax rate. Also, the Board wants to know where the money is going.
3. *Update on July 4<sup>th</sup> FreedomFest – Thomas Eidson, President Elkin Jaycees*
- The Elkin Jaycees put on the Independence Day Celebration each year.
  - Our local Jaycees group is considering moving away from the Jaycees Organization (National and State).
  - This will keep more funds locally.
  - Currently, each of our members pays \$70.00, and \$67.50 goes to the State organization.
    - This would give our organization an additional \$2,500.00 each year.
      - We would re-invest this money in Elkin.
  - In the past, we have had members who were very involved with the State Jaycees Organization; this is not so now.
  - Our current group is more focused on local community service.

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- Following this presentation, it was the consensus of the Board of Commissioners to support the Elkin Jaycees' decision to withdraw from the national and state wings of The Jaycees Organization.
  - 4. *Rescue Squad Funding Request – Chief Jeff Whitaker and Assistant Chief Mike Bovender (Chief Whitaker made the following presentation)*
    - There were some questions about our budget request that was submitted to the Board of Commissioners.
    - Referenced the following documents submitted to the Town February 20, 2018:
      - o Letter requesting an appropriation of \$12,000 from the Town.
      - o 2018-2019 budget estimate.
      - o Rescue Squad Financial Statement for year ended June 30, 2017.
    - Used appropriation from Town of Elkin last year to purchase:
      - o New ambulance (\$71,000)
      - o Generator (\$36,766)
        - Once installed will allow our building to be used as a relief shelter in the event of heavy inclement weather or natural disaster.
    - Our purchases go back to the community.
    - Some current needs include:
      - o Communication equipment – what we're using is antiquated; want to get on the same page as fire departments and other emergency agencies.
      - o Turn-out gear – current gear is old; new gear will provide full-body protection.
    - We try to be good stewards of donated funding.
    - Our parking lot needs to be re-paved, our building needs repairs and we are trying to plan for the future.
    - We do not put money back to hold onto it; there is always a plan.
    - Commissioner Whitman:
      - o It is important to take time to have these discussions to prevent the public from getting filtered facts.
      - o It is important for everyone to know our expenditures have exceeded our revenue for the past three years.
      - o Noted:
        - Town is required by the State to balance the budget.
        - Town continues placing capital needs on the back burner.
        - We are living above our means.
        - We need to work together to develop a culture to forge private/public partnerships
      - o We still have a \$153,000 shortfall.
    - Commissioner Kennedy:
      - o Downtown is requesting money.
      - o We are increasing our water bills, and the Sewer Authority is probably increasing their fees.
      - o We are managers of the taxpayers' money.
      - o With this shortfall, we cannot fund everyone.
    - Mr. Whitaker:

- By not being funded by the Town, we cannot do what we plan to do.
- Buying the PPE and radios will cost over \$64,000.
- Commissioner Eidson:
  - I am not sure I am comfortable cutting funding for the Rescue Squad to zero.
  - I do not want to send a message that would cause Surry County to consider cutting their funding.
  - I think we should fund them the amount we did last year.
- Commissioner Eidson made a motion to fund the Rescue Squad six thousand dollars (\$6,000.00) this year. Commissioner Wheeler seconded the motion.
  - Following additional discussion, Commissioner Wheeler rescinded his second to the motion and Commissioner Eidson rescinded his motion.
- Commissioner Eidson made a motion requesting the Rescue Squad to bring back a revised budget request (based on the cost of the protective gear and radios) for the commissioners to evaluate. There were no questions. Upon a second by Commissioner Whitman, the motion was unanimously approved.

*Outstanding Budget Considerations – John Holcomb*

- General Fund (at the end of the first budget workshop):
  - The starting point from the budget workshop was a deficit of (\$209,386)
  - Made the following changes:
    - Removed Rescue Squad funding - \$10,000
    - Transferred interest earned on YVSA outstanding loan balance to General Fund from Water Fund - \$24,447
    - Added funding to Grace Clinic - (\$3,000)
    - Reduced Master Plan cost from \$75,000 to \$50,000 - \$25,000
  - Current projected deficit - (\$152,939)
- Water Fund (at the end of the first budget workshop):
  - Projected increase - \$152,068
  - Made the following changes:
    - Transferred interest earned on YVSA outstanding loan balance to General Fund from Water Fund – (\$24,447)
    - Impact of proposed rate increases of \$1.00 to minimum bill and \$1.00 to volumetric rate - \$143,792
  - Current projected increase - \$271,413
- Referenced the Executive Summary (included as Exhibit B):
  - The above figures reflect:
    - General Fund:
      - Shell Building – no funding
      - Funding to Economic Development capital reserve – no funding
    - Water Fund:

- One dollar increase to both the minimum bill and volumetric rate
- Transfer of interest earned on YVSA outstanding loan balance from Water Fund to General Fund
- Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Board that a second budget workshop would need to be held.
- Town Manager/Finance Director Holcomb asked Board members to let him know if he needed to provide any other information prior to the next budget workshop.

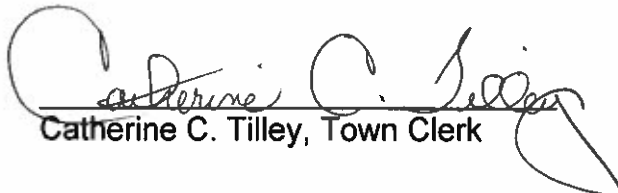
**VARIOUS ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER CONSIDERATIONS (Mayor Bishop):**

- ABC Board:
  - o We have a request to reappoint Robin Turner to this board.
    - Upon a motion by Commissioner Eidson to reappoint Robin Turner to another three-year term on the ABC Board and a second by Commissioner Kennedy, the motion was unanimously approved.
- Main Street Advisory Board:
  - o Recommendation to appoint Amanda Edgerly, Kerri Ferrari and Alan Parsons to this advisory board.
    - Upon a motion by Commissioner Kennedy to appoint Amanda Edgerly, Kerri Ferrari and Alan Parsons to serve on the Main Street Advisory Board and a second by Commissioner McCulloch, the motion was unanimously approved.

There being no further business, Commissioner McCulloch made a motion to recess until June 1<sup>st</sup> at 1:30. Upon a second by Commissioner Kennedy, the meeting recessed at 7:00 p.m.

  
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Sam Bishop, Mayor

Attest:

  
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Catherine C. Tilley, Town Clerk