

MINUTES  
LOUISBURG TOWN COUNCIL  
April 18, 2022

The Town Council met on Monday, April 18, 2022 at 7:30 PM at the Town's Operations Center. Mayor Christopher Neal and Council Members Betty Wright, Emma Stewart, Bobby Dickerson, Mark Russell, Tom Clancy and Silke Stein were present. Mayor Christopher Neal welcomed everyone and opened the March Regular Town Council meeting.

Following the roll call, Mr. Mike Anderson gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Louisburg resident, Mr. Bobby Cooper, led the citizens of Louisburg in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States. Immediately following the Pledge of Allegiance, Mayor Neal asked everyone to observe a moment of silence for the fallen Franklin County Sheriff's Department K9 Major, killed in the line of duty.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Neal called for a motion to adopt the agenda. A motion was made by Council Member Emma Stewart to accept the agenda. The motion was seconded by Council Member Betty Wright. Motion passed without objection.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Mayor Neal called for a motion on the minutes of the March 21, 2022 Town Council Meeting following their review by Council. Council Member respectfully brought to the Council Members' attention that there was a word omitted in a comment that she made at the meeting. On page 5 of the minutes, the next to the last sentence should read, "She also noted that what other towns are doing does NOT have any bearing on this; they aren't Louisburg". Council Member Russell made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2022 Town Council meeting as corrected, with a second by Council Member Wright. The motion passed without objection.

PRESENTATION

Town of Louisburg Economic Development Coordinator Monique Wilkins presented a Power Point Presentation showing the plans for the new website for the Town of Louisburg. This is a completely new website not just an updated one. It features a new History of Louisburg page, incorporates the former Downtown site, and will include an Agenda and Minutes of Town Council Meetings page. Council Member Stewart advised the citizens that the new website is being funded by an Economic Development Program Grant making this free to the Town of Louisburg. A website could cost as much as \$25,000 to \$30,000; this is a significant savings.

Council Member Stewart made a motion to move into Closed Session; seconded by Council Member Wright. The motion passed without objection.

#### CLOSED SESSION

Council Member Clancy made a motion to return to Regular Session; seconded by Council Member Russell. The motion passed without objection.

Mayor Neal stated that there were two (2) items discussed in Closed Session with no action taken. Council Member Stewart made a motion that Mr. Jonathan Barlow be hired as the temporary Town Administrator, working parttime until a new Town Administrator is hired. This motion was seconded by Council Member Wright. The motion passed without objection.

#### PUBLIC HEARING

Council Member Clancy made a motion to open the Public Hearing segment of the meeting; seconded by Council Member Russell. The motion passed without objection.

- Adoption of 2030 Comprehensive Plan:

Town Planning and Zoning Administrator Philip Slayter presented the request to Adopt the final amended draft of the *2030 Louisburg Comprehensive Plan*. This is the final step necessary to meet State law requiring the Town to have a current Comprehensive Plan in place. It is recommended that this Plan be updated at least every ten (10) years. The last Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1998. This plan lays out the principle land use for the Town. This new Plan was developed over time since October 2020 from Consultant input, Citizens' insight, surveys, an ad hoc advisory committee, and public input. Every effort was made to draft a plan to satisfy town and public needs. Council Member Stein commended the effort of the ad hoc advisory committee members Council Member Betty Wright, Louisburg Planning Board Chairperson Ms. Fannie Perry, and Dr. Brown from Louisburg College. Council Member Clancy made a motion to close the Public Hearing segment of the meeting; seconded by Council Member Russell. The motion passed without objection.

#### ORDINANCE TO ADOPT 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Mayor Neal presented an Ordinance to Adopt the Town of Louisburg's 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Council Member Russell made a motion to approve **Ordinance No. 2022-6**, An Ordinance to Adopt the Town of Louisburg's 2030 Comprehensive Plan; seconded by Council Member Dickerson. The motion carried without objection.

#### CONSIDERATION OF "REVENUE REPLACEMENT" STANDARD ALLOWANCE FOR ARPA FUNDS

Louisburg Finance Director Sean Medlin brought before the Council the request to move forward in accepting funds under the American Rescue Plan Act and to elect the "standard allowance" allowing the Town of Louisburg to spend the \$1,000,000 on government services.

Council Member Stewart made a motion to Adopt **Resolution No. 2022-R-7**, A Resolution Accepting Federal Funds Under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA); seconded by Council Member Dickerson. The motion passed without objection.

#### APPROVAL OF ENGINEERING CONTRACT FOR PUMPSTATION PROJECT

Town Administrator Jonathan Franklin presented a contract between the Town of Louisburg and Municipal Engineering for the Green Hill Pump Station Relocation- State No. SRP-W-0206 ("Project"). The cost will be funded by 50% grant funds and 50% low interest loan up to \$1,034,996. This pumpstation currently handles 40-50% of the day-to-day operations now and will add to its service when the Green Hill subdivision is completed. A motion to approve the Engineering Contract for the Green Hill Pump Station Relocation was made by Betty Wright; seconded by Council Person Dickerson. The motion passed without objection.

#### RESOLUTION TO DECLARE 807 ½ KENMORE AVENUE SURPLUS PROPERTY

Louisburg Planning Administrator Philip Slayter advised that there is a "postage stamp" property owned by the Town of Louisburg that the town would like to declare as surplus and return it to the private market. A developer desires to buy this property and join to other property, offering 2.5 times the current fair market value. A motion to Approve **Resolution No. 2022-R-8**, A Resolution to Declare and Dispose of Surplus Property, was made by Council Member Clancy and seconded by Council Member Dickerson. The motion passed without objection.

#### DISCUSSION OF PERSONNEL POLICY & CLASSIFICATION STUDY

Mayor Neal opened a discussion to revisit the topic of studying and updating the Town of Louisburg Personnel Policy which was tabled in the February 21, 2022 Town Council Meeting. This study would be conducted through an agreement between the North Carolina League of Municipalities and the MAPS Group at a cost of \$13,200. Council Member Stewart asked a question regarding the Scope of Services; what are "compression issues" that are mentioned. Town Administrator Jon Franklin stated that this is a great question and deferred to Planning Administrator Philip Slayter for clarification. He explained that this relates to the levels that are within a typical grade (multiple steps). Typically, this is 2.5% increase both up and down and across the grades.

Mayor Neal stated that the last time this study as discussed there was a concern of the source of funds to cover the cost of this study and that the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) can be used for this purpose. Mayor Neal stated that he believes that this study is a good idea for the Town of Louisburg. Council Member Stewart agrees with Mayor Neal. Council Member Stein wanted to verify that the MAPS Group will provide guidance if they think that the town needs to add positions. Council Member Clancy made a motion to approve this Personnel Policy and Classification Study; seconded by Council Member Dickerson. The motion passed without objection.

#### DEPOT HILL DISCUSSION

Mayor Neal opened the discussion with the “rest of the story” as he called it. Concerns have been expressed about the Mayor overstepping his authority by allowing work to continue on the project after the Council voted to temporarily pause construction. Mayor Neal explained that contractors returned to the project to install the steel beams to support the ceiling based on approval received prior to the shutdown. This was explained to the Council on their earlier tour of the project.

Council Member Stewart stated that the structural engineer had submitted a letter stating his professional opinion of the project with his seal affixed and because of this did not need to appear in person as some Council Members had requested. Mayor Neal added that all contractors on this project are certified and bonded as necessary.

Mayor Neal referred to a concern at a previous meeting regarding that there was not a budget for Depot Hill. He stated that there was a budget for this project. Congressman David Price and his staff toured the property and has provided Federal funds for the project.

Council Member Clancy advised that there is \$1.4 million to fund this project and he doesn't feel that this will be sufficient for the work that needs to be completed. He is concerned with what will happen when the money runs out and the project is not complete. Mayor Neal assured him that there is actually about \$2 million including state and federal funds, and that if this project doesn't continue, future funding from these sources will be very limited for the Town of Louisburg. Mayor Neal feels that the completed Depot Hill project could be a “jewel” for the Town of Louisburg and that it could increase the chance to attract businesses to Louisburg.

Council Member Dickerson stated that he had confirmed that the structural engineer was not coming to speak to the Council and asked if the contractor, S&S Enterprises, could possibly meet with the Council. Mayor Neal agreed to set up the meeting and have a Special Called Meeting to expedite resolving issues and to alleviate further delay in construction. Council Member Stewart made a motion to meet on Monday, May 2, 2022 at 5:30 pm at the Operations Center with the contractors of the Depot Hill project contingent on the contractors' availability. The motion was seconded by Council Member Russell and passed without objection.

#### ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Town Administrator Jonathan Franklin gave a brief overview of his written report to the Council adding that the financials were accidentally left out of the Council Members' packets. Council took this item for information.

Mr. Franklin stated that it was with a heavy heart that he is leaving his position as Town Administrator and he thanked the Council and citizens of Louisburg for the opportunity to serve. He received a standing ovation as Mayor Neal wished him well in the next chapter of his career and life.

#### MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Neal reported that he had the opportunity earlier that day to swear-in Officer Adam Rooker, a new hire with the Louisburg Police Department at their staff meeting.

At the March 21, 2022 Council Meeting, the Daughters of the Confederacy requested that all items contained in the time capsule at the base of the monument be returned to them. Mayor Neal reported that the capsule has sustained heavy water damage and that all papers were destroyed. There was one coin remaining that was heavily caked with corrosion and it has been presented to a representative of the Daughters of the Confederacy.

#### POLICE REPORT

This report was accidentally left out of the Council Members' packets.

#### FIRE REPORT

This report was accidentally left out of the Council Members' packets.

#### COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Neal called for any comments by Council Members.

Council Member Stewart stated that it had been a pleasure to work with Jonathan Franklin.

Council Member Dickerson shared that he had also attended the staff meeting of the Police Department and that Chief Jason Abbott had announced to his officers that the Town of Louisburg had not had a single break-in reported by a town business in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2022. Chief Abbott stated that this has not happened during his tenure and commended his officers for their diligent patrols.

Council Member Stein shared that she had attended the farewell service for the Franklin County Sheriff's Department K9 Major. She was touched by the number of agencies that attended the service. She also stated that as always the Louisburg Fire Department is looking for volunteers. She thanked Mr. Franklin for setting the stage for this Council to take Louisburg forward and grow.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

The mayor opened the meeting for public comment. There were no public comments at this meeting.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Clancy made a motion to adjourn with Council Member Russell giving a second. Motion passed without objection.

Submitted



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Lori Rogers, Temporary Town Clerk