

Minutes Work Session February 4, 2019 at 7:30 PM

Mayor Reid called the meeting to order. Commissioners present were Sid Eley, Frank Norman and Gracie Felton. Mayor Pro Tem, Quentin Jackson was absent due to a court order. Others present were Town Manager, Pam Hurdle, Sarah Mathis-Weeks, Mary Hurdle Weeks, Scott Mathis, Anne and Greg Benton, Diane Stallings, Murielle Harmon, Kim Brinn, Sara Winslow, Kay and H. B. Matthews, Edgar Salvo, Buck Bunch, William T. Winslow, Reginald White, Earnell Brown, Deon Robinson, Nelson Nako, Martha Borders, Reta Blair, Sharon and Jim Smith, Ashley Hodges, Jerry and Missy Mimlitsch, Sharion Sumrall, Connie Brothers and Peter Williams.

Sid Eley had the prayer.

Mayor Reid led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Scheduled Business

Tourism Director, Sharon Smith said she had sent a letter to members of council with an attachment about the 2nd Annual River Bash. Horace Reid asked about the time frame, alcohol and where it would happen. Frank Norman selling of beer will it be controlled? Sharon Smith said an arm band has worked good in the past and those persons issuing the arm bands would be responsible for checking identification. Frank Norman asked if they would be limited to the number of drinks. Sharon Smith said she didn't think they would have a limit but abide by applicable laws. Frank Norman asked how the alcohol would be monitored as to not allow an adult to give their beer to an underage person. She said they would have a lot of people watching including those serving the alcohol. Gracie Felton was concerned as a downtown business person when events like this are scheduled and they close the street downtown she has never been of the street closing. She asked that they notify the businesses downtown if the streets would be closed and if they are will here customers still be able to access her business in the back. Sharon said they should still have access but this event is during the evening so it shouldn't be a problem, but she would love to talk to Gracie about how to notify all the businesses downtown. Gracie suggested notifying and getting business owners input. Sid Eley said the street closing would be 6-10 PM on that date.

Deon Robinson presented a project he is calling Hertford Village. He was proposing a hotel, he said he understood with a hotel they would need more events and restaurants. He said this is just the early stages and a hotel is a very big investment and he said if they could bring a hotel to Hertford, he would need a lot of support. The property will be next to the new library on the water. He mentioned apartments, stores, office spaces, and restaurants around the hotel. Mayor Reid asked if the area he was talking about would be large enough to accommodate what he was planning. Deon said it would be tight, but he has seen this size project done on less land. Frank Norman asked how many stories he is looking at just for the hotel? Deon said he was looking at 5 to 6 stories. Frank Norman said he thought it was a good concept and idea.

Mayor Reid asked if the property across the street was to come available would he consider moving his project across the road? Deon said that would be a better location, but it would depend if the price was right. Murielle Harmon thank Deon for having the vision and entertaining the idea of the possibilities. She told Deon I'm sure you know to aim high and make modifications and she was sure modifications would have to be made. She asked was he looking for investors or partnerships? Deon said right now he was looking at incentives from the town. Murielle asked again if he was looking for investors or partnerships? Deon said no he and his team could handle the project. Martha Borders said she is in favor of the concept, but she is on the Planning and Zoning Board of Adjustments and she had been reading in the manual and what she has read the town only supports 3 story structures, but she said she hadn't finished reading the entire manual. Martha Borders asked where the parking would be located. Deon said he was looking at under the deck parking for the apartments. She reminded him we are in a low water level. She then asked where would parking be for the retail part? Deon said some could be in the front, but he didn't have all the parking worked out he would need an engineer. She suggested that he would need to furnish at least 2 parking spaces for each condominium. Kim Brinn asked what was the name of his company and how was he getting funding other than the county and the city? Deon said the name is One BlueSky Investments is the parent company. He said he had been doing investments in commercial and residential properties for years and didn't want to get into details of the funding at this time. A citizen asked if he had done something like the projected project and if he would elaborate on his background. Deon said he had not done a hotel before but apartments, retails and single family he has done. He said in Georgia he developed a 147-lot community that is in the works. He said he is just a developer not a general contractor. Earnell Brown said when she looks at his plan, she thinks about infrastructure she thinks about the 2 lane roads, traffic, and suggested zoning to help get that together to accommodate more traffic. She is also concerned at the wet lands and how high the water gets. She asked he had checked to see what type of retail he was wanting to be in his project? Deon said he wanted to get more involved before he did that. He said he knew the need was for more restaurants. Earnell asked if he had a target date? Deon said he didn't have a date at this time. A citizen asked Deon if he had a portfolio that they could review? Deon said he would forward one to the manager. A citizen said he heard him say he wanted to go up 70 feet how far underground? He couldn't say at this time. Greg Benton asked the council to look at revising the ordinance on the building height since the fire department now has a ladder truck. Sid Eley said he is extremely happy to see this and agreed with Mr. Benton that the fire department has a ladder truck to handle a higher structure. He wished him well. Deon Robinson said it will also bring more jobs to the area. Mayor Reid thanked him for being here.

Continued Business

None

Council concerns

Frank Norman addressed concerns that Quentin Jackson had about changing the name from commissioner to councilor. He said the reason was when they are away at meetings people confused the town commissioners with the county commissioners. He said he would hold off on the lighting project for now. He said Commissioner Jackson was really concerned about the cameras on King Street. Manager Hurdle said she had pictures showing what the cameras are viewing. Chief Brown said the camera in question is on King Street and the camera shows a corner of a porch and the corner of a house which had been forwarded to Mr. Jackson and he thought he was satisfied. Frank Norman said he had contacted the owner of 106 W. Grubb Street and 203 Church Street and hope to have a meeting with Mike Zarpas soon to resolve some issues with the property. He had requested the manager to address concerns he had with a contract with Inteliport.

Pam Hurdle she said contract dated back to 2012 when they started charging for equipment attached to electric poles and the water tower. She said they sent him a letter in January 2017 that the total due to date was \$9,440.64 and he had paid \$7,502.00 leaving a balance of \$1,938.64. She said we charge him every 6 months \$1,500 plus 3% agreement increase plus we charge \$56.00 for him to have attachment on an electric pole. She said he currently owes the town \$3,824.81. Frank Norman thanked her for presenting the information he said Inteliport wasn't in the red like he thought but they weren't in the black. He wanted them to allow for as much transparency as possible and would like to have some form of streaming for those who can't be in attendance since then were at capacity again tonight. He said it would also help as Ms. Harmon has reminded them that some need reminders because their memory is slipping.

Frank Norman was please with the website presentation from Civics

Pam Hurdle said the amount to redesign the webpage would be \$8,000 with them starting now and paying in next budget year. She said they would have the capability of doing agendas and it could prepare the minutes for them. She said it would allow them to send out agendas electronically to whoever they wish to send. She said that would cost additional \$5,425 which wasn't a necessity right now. She said they are ready to begin work now. Frank Norman asked for clarification that this wouldn't just design the website but offer a secure website.

Frank Norman said he had tried to reach out to Ms. Penny about the ElectriCities Strategic Plan, and she has been reluctant to get back with him. He felt the survey results might be one sided, he thinks they could have done a better job communicating with council and they will work on that moving forward.

Frank Norman said they have discuss changing the day or time of council meetings he would like to get feedback from the citizens. The reason he would even entertain the thought of moving the meetings would be to allow citizens to attend both the town and county meetings. If they decided to change the day or time, he knew that would require charter change but with speaking with representatives in Raleigh they don't see that as a big deal.

Frank Norman wants them to have a conversation about how to work through issues with manager/council form of government. He said he didn't want council to become town managers but felt some oversight is required.

Frank Norman said that he wanted to have an executive session and the difference between the executive session and closed session is the manager wouldn't be included in the executive session. He also said the clerk would not be required if they had a record keeper.

Frank Norman said he still wanted a representative present at the meetings.

H. B. Matthews felt the town's current website was satisfactory. He said he would members of council or a local organization tell the citizens what is missing from the website. Frank Norman said its user friendly, not as informative and not secure. He would like to allow citizens to pay bills on line and you can't do that unless you have a totally secure website. Also, he said this group has expertise with working with municipal websites.

Martha Borders suggested for the survey for the meeting day or time change that we put the survey in with the utility bills and specifically say when you are thinking of changing the day and time. Frank Norman said a lot of people don't look at the information added in the utility bills he admitted he didn't. Martha Borders said she was sorry that more people couldn't weigh in on the ElectriCities strategic plan. She said she had several neighbors who don't have internet. She was told they have a paper survey at the office. She asked why wasn't that mailed out or the people notified about the paper copy. Frank Norman said that was something he was working on with the manager trying to work on communication better.

Sara Winslow asked did they receive 3 bids for the website? Frank Norman said they had 2.

Murielle Harmon seems to be some disconnect about the ElectriCities strategic plan. She said first there is no deadline. Why can they asked for an extension and lay it at their feet since they didn't provide a deadline.

Earnell Brown said she went online took the survey and submitted and she said she is familiar with strategic planning and she felt someone from Hertford should have had some input. She felt not only did they need a deadline, but they needed to go into churches and talk to the people. She asked if they are proposing 2 different types of websites? She said one is for you to go to pay bills when out of town and the other is information for the town with minutes. She said she had never seen the 2 mixed. Frank Norman said they are building a website to do both. He said Manager Hurdle could ask for an extension for the strategic plan surveys.

Connie Brothers asked about the proposal from J & M and asked where they are located. Frank Norman said they submitted a proposal. She told Frank he said he hadn't found anyone locally that could do the work? Frank Norman said he didn't say that. She said based of Ms. Murielle' comments he said he hadn't found anyone locally to handle what needs to be done yes or no? Frank said no. Frank said not with that level of security we need. Connie said they know of some people in Northeast North Carolina. She asked would they accept recommendations to

check into the other sources? Mayor Reid said that information should come in to Manager Hurdle.

A citizen asked do we currently have an administrator for the website and if so, who is it? Frank Norman said yes, our town manager. The citizen asked if in the future they would share with the citizen how the administrator is vetted on a secure financial system. Frank Norman said it would be the town manager. The citizen said on the survey there was no way to confirm you filled the survey out, he said he did it online, but he could have filled it out 30 times. He said he filled the survey out twice but only submitted once. Suggested in the future they may want some type of ID or address.

Susan Beckwith asked had a document generated to define the requirements of the town's website. Frank Norman said no. She said it had been 5 years since she worked on a website but said the town would need that in place. She said started to build a website before having those requirements is like trying to build a house without any plans. She said there is a formal process to go about building a website. Not sure why they are putting it out for bid when they haven't defined the requirements of what they want them to do. Frank Norman said they didn't put that out to the public, but it was done. He said he had help from the National League of Cities. Susan said inquiry and defining are two different things and for them not to confuse those two. She also suggested that they get citizen input since this will be a website they will have to live with for a long time.

A citizen asked how much the current website cost yearly now? Frank Norman said zero. He said he was wondering since the current website is broken and you can't access ordinances and stuff. Frank Norman said that had been fixed but citizens informed him it wasn't working again.

A citizen suggested that Ashley Hodges on Church Street was a government IT pro vetted to a top security level and they suggested that they speak with Mr. Hodges to get his input. Frank Norman said they had already been in contact with him.

H. B. Matthews said they talked about a concern for financial information on the website he suggested that they not have any financial information on the website. He said if they wanted to pay a bill anyone with a checking account you can pay online if the town is able to accept online but the town is not ready to accept online. Frank Norman said they would like to have it accessible for those that want to pay online.

Martha Borders asked did Hertford Housing have the cameras put up and King Street and why? Frank Norman said several problems including shootings and when law enforcement asked for information no one wanted to be helpful in helping to solve the crime. He said the cameras weren't to be directly involved with other people's homes just the apartments. This would aid Chief Brown in solving crime at the apartments. Also seen cameras used as a deterrent. His highest priority is for the safety of people living in this community.

Sarah Weeks asked about the Chamber of Commerce agenda item that was skipped over. Frank Norman said that wasn't skipped over but they had requested the Chamber of Commerce representative attend the regular meeting because they had some questions they had regarding if the Chamber is producing enough to continue to pay and be a member of the Chamber.

Connie Brothers said as the paper lady who is out early morning hours, she is grateful for the cameras on King Street but said they have just moved from King Street to other areas. Maybe in future they could look at what it would cost to add cameras to each street. Mayor Reid didn't think it was feasible at this time to put cameras all around town. Frank Norman said they are looking at installing the cameras including getting funding.

New Business

Pam Hurdle said the projected retreat date is March 1st and 2nd and the place will either be in Perquimans or the Outer Banks.

Pam Hurdle said Sid Eley currently holds the TDA appointment and his term ends this month and they would need to reappoint or appoint.

Pam Hurdle said she would have them approve the 2019 meeting calendar which reflects all the holiday that would fall on regular meeting days.

Pam Hurdle said they are projected a 1.1% rate increase to the electric rate, and she would be asking whether they want to pass on the cost or absorb.

Pam Hurdle said it time to renew the cemetery contract or put out for bid.

Pam Hurdle said she has talked to 2 different contractors about the municipal building renovations and both have said it would cost around \$8,000 just for a site plan.

Pam Hurdle said the town could get people over 55 years old to work through the workforce development program. She said they can work for 15 hours a week and we can have up to 4 to 5 people at no cost to us.

Pam Hurdle said she will have a resolution to surplus at Ford pickup with a blown motor.

Pam Hurdle a resolution for support the kids to school program funding will run out June 2019.

Martha Borders was wondering with the workforce program if they could get someone for code enforcement for 15 hours a week.

Frank Norman said the next was closed session next week for personnel issues.

Mayor Reid adjourned the meeting.