



TOWN OF MOUNT GILEAD BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

110 West Allenton Street, Mount Gilead, North Carolina, 27306
March 6, 2018

The Mount Gilead Board of Commissioners met at 7:00 p.m. at Mt. Gilead Fire Department, 106 E. Allenton Street, Mt. Gilead, and N C for a regular monthly business meeting.

Board members present: Mayor Joseph (Chip) Miller, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tem Tim McCauley, Vera Richardson, Paula Covington and Mitch Taylor, Commissioners.

Staff present: Town Manager Matthew Christian, Public Works Director Daniel Medley and Police Chief Pat Preslar.

CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Miller
MOMENT OF SILENCE
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ITEM I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:
Mayor Miller called for a motion to adopt the February 6, 2018 Agenda. Matthew Christian made a motion to add the introduction of a new police officer to the Agenda. Paula Covington made a motion to accept the agenda with the added introduction. Vera Richardson seconded the motion. Agenda was unanimously adopted.

ITEM II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Miller called for a motion to approve the February 6, 2018 minutes. Tim McCauley made a motion with a second from Vera Richardson. Minutes were unanimously approved.

ITEM III. INTRODUCTION OF NEW POLICE OFFICER

Police Chief Pat Preslar introduced newly employed police officer, Adam Lucas to the force. Mayor Chip Miller welcomed Adam. Adam comes with over 10 years of Law Enforcement.

ITEM IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

- A. Stephanie Ross – The Mt. Gilead Antique Mall will be having a Car Show on Saturday, April 14 to try to raise money to Save the Water Tower. There is a \$15 entry fee. Stephanie left flyers about the event.
- B. Phil Byrd – Asked the Board to consider more funding to bring in more bands for the May Day and Christmas Parade. He also asked to move the date of the Christmas Parade to the first Saturday in November to help bring in more traffic.

ITEM V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing - Strata Solar Farms

NOTE: *This is a summary of the Public Hearing for a Conditional Use Permit for Strata Solar Farms. A full evidentiary recording of the meeting is on file in the Clerk's office.*

Vera Richardson made a motion to open the Public hearing. Tim McAuley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Miller opened the public hearing remarking that all applicants for a conditional use permit are entitled to a legal hearing and that anyone involved with this public hearing is required to take an Oath. Mayor Miller proceeded to administer the Oath to all involved. He then turned the hearing over to Matt Christian, Town Manager, who presented the staff report and facts of the hearing to the Board members. He stated that Strata Solar Farms had submitted an application for a Conditional Use Permit to erect a solar farm on 40 acres of land on a leased parcel owned by Mr. Donald Scarboro (Zoned R15). Mt. Gilead Zoning Ordinance does not specifically delineate this request however it does fit into a utilities above ground category bearing the following conditions:

Strata Solar Farms gave a presentation to construct a Solar Farm on 40 acres of land on a leased parcel owned by Mr. Donald Scarborough (Zoned R15). The Mt. Gilead Zoning Ordinance does not specifically delineate for a solar farm. The solar farm does fit into a “utilities above ground” category which requires that it comply with the following:

1. All areas must be completely enclosed with a chain link fence no less than 4 ft. high.
2. Shall be screened
3. All buildings must be architecturally compatible with all surrounding dwellings and buildings.

Strata started their presentation with a history of their company and the processes of their business.

Strata provided an Engineer, a landscape designer, an MAI Appraiser, a Planning Consultant and a Vegetation Manager – all were sworn an oath at the beginning of the hearing and gave expert testimony. They presented substantial research, evidence, and plans which they contend meet the requirements of the Conditional Use Permit.

After Strata Solar Farms presented their evidence, Mayor Miller opened the floor for the Public to comment. Three members of the community took an Oath and spoke.

Mr. Allen Ingram spoke on behalf of the church. He said he was opposed to the Solar Farm because he feels like it will decrease property value around the farm. He hoped that the Board would consider this when making a decision.

Mr. Mitchell Lucas spoke as a concerned citizen. He was also opposed to the Solar Farm being erected in the existing site plan. He says that the Town has spent many years trying to beautify the town and that the Solar Farm can be seen from the road and is not a pleasant look for the town.

Ms. Kristin Perkins Mims spoke as a neighboring land owner and her concern was for property owners value decreasing due to the Solar Farm. She was also worried about taxes for the citizens and also asked about the cost of the power in the area.

With no other public comments, Mayor Miller opened the floor for the applicant to reply to any questions from the public.

Attorney for the applicant Ms. Karen Kameri, spoke to the Board and reminded the Board that the concerned citizens who spoke did not present substantial evidence that would warrant Strata Solar Farms not being granted a Conditional Use Permit. She also reminded the Board of the requirements of the permit and stated that Strata had met every component and requirement of the Conditional Use Permit. She urged the board to grant the permit based on the expert evidence presented.

Paula Covington made a motion to close the public hearing. Vera Richardson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Tim McAuley made a motion to table the vote until the next meeting. Vera Richardson seconded the motion. 3-1 motion passed.

B. Budget Amendments – Budget amendments were presented for approval. Paula Covington made a motion to approve the Amendments with a second from Vera Richardson. Board approved unanimously.

ITEM VII. STAFF REPORTS:
Attached to Agenda Packets

ITEM VIII. COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

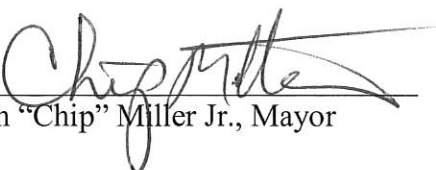
No reports to add

ITEM IX. CLOSED SESSION:

Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) – Attorney-Client Privilege, Paula Covington made a motion to go in to closed session with a second from Vera Richardson. Motion carried.

ITEM X. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro-Tem Tim McAuley made a motion to adjourn. Mitch Taylor seconded. Motion carried.


Joseph "Chip" Miller Jr., Mayor


Amy C. Roberts, Town Clerk