



# TOWN OF MOUNT GILEAD BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

110 West Allenton Street, Mount Gilead, North Carolina, 27306

March 1, 2022

The Mount Gilead Board of Commissioners met at 7:00 p.m. at the Mount Gilead Fire Station, 106 E. Allenton St., Mt. Gilead, NC on March 1, 2022, for the regular monthly business meeting. Present were Mayor Beverly Harris, Mayor Pro Tem Tim McAuley, Commissioners Paula Covington, Mary Lucas and Vera Richardson, Town Manager David Smith, Town Clerk Amy Roberts, Police Lieutenant Austen Morton, Public Works Director Daniel Medley. Absent were Police Chief Pat Preslar and Fire Chief Keith Byrd.

Mayor Harris called the meeting to order promptly at 7:00 p.m. with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM I. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Commissioner Lucas made a motion to adopt the agenda. Mayor Pro Tem McAuley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Richardson made a motion to approve the February 1, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Richardson seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved.

ITEM III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Jamie Kellis, 410 W. Allenton St., Mt. Gilead – Ms. Kellis just wanted to speak and show her support for the proposed new Community Garden to go in the middle of the walking trail beside the Elementary School.

Ms. Christy Barringer, Hwy 73 Mt. Gilead – Ms. Barringer thanked the Board for considering the opportunity to allow her to start a Community Garden.

Mr. Tim Patterson – 510 North Pine Street, Mt. Gilead – Mr. Patterson spoke about ongoing problems with the Mt. Gilead Police Department being complacent. He spoke of all the drug activity he witnesses and wishes our Police would step up and help with this problem. He says there are problems with young teenagers on his street with speeding, violence, and drugs. He wants the Board to get serious about fixing the issues the Town has with these drugs. Speak with the store owners of the Town. He cares about the people of this town and wants to see it do better.

Mr. Chuck Routh, 310 E. Allenton St., Mt. Gilead – Mr. Routh passed out a timeline and a written version of the topic(s) he spoke about. In summary, Mr. Routh stated that at the January 5, 2022 Board meeting that three of the Commissioners held an illegal open meeting prior to the regular meeting and decided to remove some action items from the agenda that was unanimously approved as an amended agenda. He also stated that on February 14, 2022 Commissioner Lucas directed a town employee to run copies of an employee evaluation of the Town Manager and stamp envelopes for these evaluations to be mailed in. She instructed another employee to hand deliver several other of the evaluations to other employees as well as other Council members. She handed the mayor her evaluation packet during a Meet and Greet at the Speckled Paw Coffee Shop on Tuesday, February 15, 2022. Mr. Routh stated that these acts were in violation of the Town Manager's contract that in summary states that the Manager's evaluation would be at his

six-month anniversary date and would be a mutually agreed upon criteria between the Town Council and the Manager. He stated that these acts were also in violation of the Town Charter, section 5.7. Mr. Routh stated that these acts potentially constitute misappropriation of Town funds, and that the timeline of events shows that a majority of the Board has made attempts to undermine the effectiveness of the newly hired Town Manager. He ended by asking that Commissioner Lucas resign her position as Town Commissioner stating that steps must be taken to restore the integrity and effectiveness of the Board to allow the Town Manager to develop and execute plans to make the 2040 Comprehensive Plan a reality.

Ms. Rachelle Rossignol, 300 Highland Ave., Mt. Gilead – Ms. Rossignol presented a petition from some of the residents on Highland Avenue requesting speed bumps be placed on each end of Highland Avenue. The petition notes also requested that our officers keep a watch on Highland Avenue so that they could see people speeding on a road that is 15mph.

Mr. Benjamin Blake, 301 W. Haywood Lane, Mt. Gilead – Mr. Blake addressed his comments to Mayor Harris. He wanted her to know that he has been very impressed with her as our newly elected Mayor. He praised the fact that she is very detailed and takes notes and really listens to what the people want and tries to get the answers to the citizens questions. He thanked her for efforts. He also thanked the new Town Manager for his efforts and wanted him to know that he has inspired him as well as many others around town.

#### ITEM IV. OLD BUSINESS

##### A. Revision and Approval of Tabled Board Meeting Calendar

Town Manager David Smith presented the Board Meeting Calendar through the end of the calendar year that included Budget Retreat special meeting dates as well as a couple of open dates in case any further budget discussions were needed. Commissioner Richardson made a motion to approve the Board calendar with a second from Mayor Pro Tem McAuley. The calendar was unanimously approved.

##### B. Town Response to LGC - 2021 Financial Audit Findings

As part of the new LGC requirements for 2021, any findings presented by an audit firm requires a written response and/or explanation and forward plan of action to rectify the problem(s). During the annual audit, JB Watson and Co. had a few findings that required a response from the Town, and it also required that these responses be approved from the Town Council in an open meeting. Town Manager David Smith presented the Town's responses to the Board for approval. Mayor Pro Tem McAuley made a motion to approve the LGC responses with a second from Commissioner Covington. Motion carried unanimously.

#### ITEM V. NEW BUSINESS (pages 5-43)

##### A. Community Garden Presentation-Poplin/Barringer

Ms. Mary Poplin presented a written layout and plan (attached to agenda packet) to form a Community Garden at the Walking Trail at the corner of South School Street and W. Allenton Street. She stated that she has received donations from several community members to help get the project up and running. This community garden would be a free community gardening spot as well as an educational area for the elementary students to come and learn how to grow vegetables and fruits and learn where food comes from. They plan to eventually have a satellite garden as well at the Highland Community Center. The only thing that would be needed from the Town is the location and access to water. Commissioner Lucas made a motion to approve the Community Garden at the Walking Trail. Commissioner Richardson seconded the motion. The Community Garden was unanimously approved.

##### B. Budget Amendment BA2022-0301

Town Manager David Smith presented a budget amendment needed to repair two sinkholes that have formed in town. There is a sinkhole on W. Haywood Lane at a cost of \$23,180 and another sinkhole on W. Second Ave. at a cost of \$36,200. Neither of these emergency repairs were

budgeted for and therefore need funding to be pulled from Fund Balance to cover these costs. Commissioner Covington made a motion to approve BA2022-0301. Mayor Pro Tem McAuley seconded the motion. BA2022-0301 was unanimously approved.

C. Approval of 2022-2023 Contract to Audit Accounts

Town Manager Smith presented the 2022-2023 proposed Contract to Audit the Town of Mount Gilead Accounts through JB Watson and Co. Mayor Pro Tem made a motion to accept the proposed Contract with a second from Commissioner Covington. The Audit Contract was unanimously approved.

D. Cancellation of Deed of Trust Agreement – Rehab Grant- Property of Sylvia Ann Leake  
Town Attorney, Mr. Max Garner of Garner Williamson, PA requested that the Town make a decision concerning and Rehabilitation Grant for the property on the corner of Northview Rd and N. Main Street deeded to James D. Dawson in 1990. One of the stipulations of the grant was that the property could not be sold within 5 years, or the total amount of the grant would come due. The property was sold in 1994 to Ms. Sylvia Ann Leake and now deceased husband, Torrence. Because the 5-year timeline was broken and there is no record of this transaction being forgiven by the Town of Mount Gilead, Mr. Garner is requesting that that Town approve the prior sale of this property which will allow the debt to be cancelled. Mayor Pro Tem McAuley made a motion to approve the prior sale of the property at the corner of Northview Road and N. Main Street. Commissioner Lucas seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

E. City Limits Business Listing

At the request of Commissioner Covington, Town staff provided the Board with a listing of all brick-and-mortar businesses in the city limits of Mt. Gilead.

F. Invoice Cloud Upgrade Contract

Town Manager Smith presented an upgraded software contract through Invoice Cloud that will allow Town staff to be able to service customers more efficiently through the use of credit and debit cards inside Town Hall as well as enhanced viewing of customers invoices, bank draft, paperless billing and pay by phone. Commissioner Covington made a motion to approve the upgraded contract. Mayor Pro Tem McAuley seconded the motion. The contract was unanimously approved.

ITEM VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Community Appearance Board

Ms. Susie Routh gave a report about the Community Appearance Board's first meeting. It was held at Cotton and Wood and the committee unanimously named Ms. Susie Routh as Chairperson of the committee and Ms. Patsi Laracuate as the Vice Chairman. The Board decided that they would meet the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at Cotton and Wood. The Committee's first project, in conjunction with the Town is the entrance signs coming into Town. The first sign will be the welcome sign coming into Town from Highway 109. Mulch has been placed, as well as a few trees and the CATB will now decide upon some plants to fill in around the sign.

B. Parks and Recreation Committee

Mr. Matt Crump gave a report about the Parks and Recreation Committee's first meeting. It was held on February 15 at 7 p.m. at Luna's Restaurant. The committee unanimously voted Mr. Matt Crump to be the Chairman and Mr. Chris Lucas to be the Vice Chairman. They will meet the third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at Lunas restaurant. Mr. Crump stated that they have hit the ground running with Dixie Youth baseball sign ups as well as MSA youth soccer sign ups. Park Program registration has begun as well.

ITEM VII. STAFF REPORTS (pages 43-61)

A. Staff reports were presented by Public Works Director Daniel Medley, Police Lieutenant Austen Morton, and Town Manager David Smith. Written reports were provided by Police Chief

Keith Byrd and Code Enforcement officer Brandon Emory. All reports were attached to the agenda packet and a copy of these reports are available for public viewing in the Clerk's office at Town Hall.

ITEM VIII. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Covington wanted to state a public Thank You to Mr. Matt Crump for organizing a community campaign to help a family in Mt. Gilead who lost their home due to fire. Commissioner Richardson announced that the annual May Day celebration will be held on May 7, 2022 at Highland Community Center.

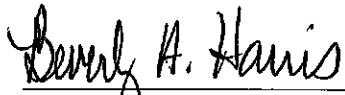
ITEM IV. CLOSED SESSION – Personnel NCGS 143.11 (6) (a)

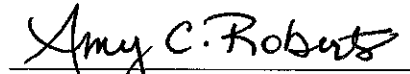
Commissioner Covington made a motion to go into closed session. Commissioner Richardson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

After a personnel discussion, Commissioner Lucas made a motion to return to open session. Commissioner Richardson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM V. ADJOURNMENT

With no more Board business, Commissioner Lucas made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Richardson seconded the motion. Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:41 p.m.

  
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Beverly A. Harris, Mayor

  
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Amy C. Roberts, CMC