



TOWN OF MOUNT GILEAD BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

110 West Allenton Street, Mount Gilead, North Carolina, 27306
January 4, 2022

The Mount Gilead Board of Commissioners met at 7:00 p.m. at Mount Gilead Fire Department, 106 East Allenton Street, Mount Gilead, North Carolina for the regular monthly business meeting. Present for the meeting 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 Chief Pat Preslar and Public Works Director Daniel Medley.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Beverly Harris called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM I. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A. Substitute Agenda

Commissioner Paula Covington made a motion to adopt the substitute agenda amending Items 1, 5, 6, 7 and 8 under NEW BUSINESS to discussion Items rather than action items. Commissioner Richardson seconded the motion. The Substitute Agenda was unanimously adopted.

ITEM II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. December 7, 2021 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Lucas made a motion to adopt the December 7, 2021 minutes with a second from Commissioner Covington. Minutes were unanimously adopted.

ITEM III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Patty Almond, 210 East Allenton Street, Mt. Gilead – Ms. Almond addressed the Board about using private email addresses to conduct Town business. She stressed the importance of always using a public email for transparency and for legal purposes citing the fact that if someone were to subpoena email records all their private emails would be subject to public scrutiny.

Ms. Patricia Lilly, 3131 Pleasant Valley Rd., Mt. Gilead – Ms. Lilly addressed the Board with several items. 1) She would like to have public works to check out the area at the corner of Pleasant Valley Road to see about putting up a fence by the bridge. She feels its dangerous and someone is going to go down that embankment. 2.) She asked the question if there was a Town Cemetery that anyone from the public can be buried in. 3.) She thinks that the new Mayor needs an office...somewhere that citizens can come and sit down and address concerns with her. 4.) She thinks that the mayor needs to get to know people in the community. “Get out and greet the ones who elected you and talk to us about our needs”. 5.) She thinks the parking in Parkertown needs to be addressed. The new sign that was put up is blocking the only area where people could park when they needed to gather at someone’s house in Parker Town. There is a lot of elderly people in the area and there seems to be a lot of funerals up there lately and no where to park. 6.) She asked if there was any money in the budget to help Senior Citizens with housing and repairs. She sees the need for help among some of the elderly community that either can’t afford to do it themselves or don’t have the ability to do the work themselves.

ITEM IV. OLD BUSINESS

None

ITEM V.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Action for Town Innovation Progress – Town Manager David Smith

1. Creation of Community Appearance Tree Board (CATb) – Discussion

Town Manager Smith spoke to the Board about the importance of forming a Community Appearance Tree Board to help create visual spaces throughout town to place trees and scenic scapes. He asked the Board's blessing to move forward with the creation of this Board. The Board took no action at this time.

2. Creation/Re - Activation of the Mount Gilead Parks and Recreation Commission

Town Manager Smith stated that he would like to move forward with the re-activation of the Parks and Recreation Committee. Per the by-laws the committee would consist of 7 members throughout the community and would help make vital decisions about the parks and the recreational programs and events held throughout the community. At the December meeting, a citizen spoke during public comment suggesting the reactivation of this committee as well, volunteering himself to help form and move the committee forward. Smith said he would like for the Board to receive applications for this committee and choose its members at the February Board meeting. Commissioner Covington stated that she thought this was a great idea. Commissioner Covington made a motion to reactivate the Parks and Recreation Committee and elect its members at the February 1, 2022 Board meeting based on a Master List of Applicants that will be provided. Mayor Pro Tem McAuley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

3. There was no Item 3 included on the Agenda under New Business.
(Making note of this for public records purposes)

4. Direction on Town Hall/Police/Public Works Office Move

Town Manager Smith spoke to the Board about the efficiency and location(s) of the Administrative Departments within our Municipality, and he stressed the need to become more Customer Service oriented. He spoke about our current Town Hall and how it is not very efficient or customer friendly. Staff has stated that they have had customers complain many times about the lack of easiness of getting in and out of Town Hall to pay a utility bill. After discussions with Department Heads of Public Works and the Police Department, all agreed that moving Town Hall to Main Street was the most efficient and customer service friendly option because of the customer drive through window. This drive thru window would also make the Town Hall more COVID safe by creating a way for people not to have to enter Town Hall to make a payment.

The Police Department would then move to its original location (across from Town Hall) in the current Public Works Building and Public Works would move to the current Town Hall. Public Works is already utilizing the garage and office on the backside of the current Town Hall and the warehouse behind Town Hall. They have their heavy equipment stored in a fence behind Town Hall and the Public Works vehicles are parked in the parking lot beside Town Hall.

Smith noted that money has been placed in the 21-22 budget to do renovations to the current Town Hall and to the current Police Department. He stated that it made sense to utilize these funds that had already been approved to make this multi-department move. Commissioner Covington stated that she did not think the move was a good idea. She said that she has spoke several members of the community that said they felt safer with the Police Department being on Main Street. The consensus among the Board was that all members of the Board did not want the Police Department to be moved off Main Street.

Smith stated that another option would be to consider moving the current Town Hall into the Public Works Building and renovating it to create a drive thru window as well as possibly creating a permanent Board Chambers to hold meetings. Smith said he could get a cost analysis done to see the costs of renovating the Public Works building to become a Town Hall as well as completely renovating the current Town Hall to make it compliant. Mayor Pro Tem McAuley asked Smith to bring some cost estimates to do this analysis to the February 1st Board meeting. Mayor Pro Tem McAuley made a motion to have a cost analysis done comparing the costs of renovating the Public Works Building to become Town Hall or completing renovating the current Town Hall to be compliant and efficient. Commissioner Covington seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Acknowledge/Permission to start utilizing the New Mount Gilead Re-Branding Logo that was part of the Comprehensive Plan – Discussion

Town Manager Smith stated that he would like to start utilizing the logo that was adopted with the passing of the Comprehensive Plan. He reminded the Board that this logo would not replace our current Town Seal but would be more of a branding logo for signage and more of a forward-thinking logo when moving ahead with our Comprehensive Plan. No action was taken.

6. Permission to proceed with Design/Cost Estimates Albert Johnson Memorial Park - Discussion

Town Manager Smith addressed the Board requesting permission to proceed with the design and cost estimates of the Albert Johnson Memorial Park. The Mount Gilead Civitan Club has partnered with the Town to get this project off the ground and would like to see some specific costs and designs to start fundraising. There were some designs done of the gazebo utilizing the top of the old water tower in 2018 but no cost estimates have been found. Since the Board changed this agenda item from action to information only, Smith asked the Board to clarify what that meant. He asked if he was supposed to go back to the community and the Civitans and tell them that the project wasn't feasible when this Park was part of the approved Comprehensive Plan. Mayor Pro Tem McAuley stated that it wasn't costing us anything to give permission to move forward with this. Commissioner Richardson asked Smith if it was going to cost us anything to get cost estimates and design. Commissioner Lucas felt we should table it until we have more information. The consensus of the Board was not to move forward but asked that Smith bring back some cost estimates at the February 1 meeting.

7. Refurbish Mount Gilead Welcome Sign on NC Hwy 109/Lewis Street - Discussion

Town Manager Smith stated that one of the main projects he would like to get up and going is refurbishing all the Welcome Signs entering the Town. The first sign he plans to refurbish is the sign coming into town on NC Hwy. 109/Lewis Street. He and the Public Works Director are working with Duke Power to get some permanent lighting to the sign as well as doing some landscaping around the area which could include some fencing and shrubbery and trees. He also would like to have all the church and civic club signs either removed or re-worked into a more feasible sign board where all the signs are together on one board. He mentioned that he would also like to investigate filling in the potholes and doing some light grading/graveling of the parking lot that surrounds the sign because it is being used as parking by the church across the street as well as a turn around spot for drivers. No action was taken.

8. Request to have additional Lighting installed on Main Street Parking - Discussion

There has been an observation that the gravel parking lot downtown between the Redevelopment Corp building and the Police Department is extremely dark at night due to poor lighting in that area. Because of the Dance Studio holding classes in the evenings,

there are lots of children that come out to that dark parking lot. Town Manager Smith is requesting to add more lighting to Main Street at the end of this parking lot on the Main Street side as well as lighting on the back side of the car wash on Alley Drive to help with this problem. It was consensus of the Board to have Smith explore with Duke Energy the best options to fix this lighting problem.

9. Appointing a Delegate to the Piedmont Triad Regional Council

Town Manager Smith stated that we need to delegate a Board member as the Town's representative to the Piedmont Triad Regional Council. Commissioner Lucas stated that in the past it has always been the Town Manager that was the representative. Smith stated that the most recent representative was the former Mayor, Chip Miller. Smith said he would be glad to represent that the Town if that is the pleasure of the Board because he is already heavily involved with them anyway. Mayor Pro Tem McAuley made a motion to elect Town Manager David Smith as the Town representative to the Piedmont Triad Regional Council. Commissioner Lucas seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

B. BUDGET AMENDMENT BA2022-01-04

The Police Department is receiving two new patrol vehicles that will be delivered in the next coming days. One of these vehicles is a replacement for a total loss wrecked vehicle. A portion of this expense is being paid for by insurance reimbursement and the Board approved to pay for the cost of the other new vehicle to replace/retire the old Dodge Charger that was in bad shape. Commissioner Richardson made a motion to approve the budget amendment BA2022-01-04 with a second from Commissioner Lucas. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM VI. STAFF REPORTS

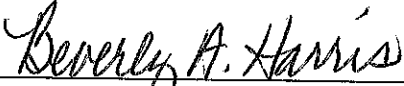
Staff reports were presented by Town Manager David Smith, Police Chief Pat Preslar and Public Works Director Daniel Medley. A written report was provided by Brandon Emory, Code Enforcement Officer with Alliance Code Enforcement. All reports were attached to the Board Packets are available for public inspection in the Town Clerk's office.

ITEM VII. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Richardson made a public thank you to the Mt. Gilead Police Department, specifically Chief Preslar, Lieutenant Morton, Corporal Stone and Officer Almond for their help in delivering Fruit Baskets to the seniors in the community from the Mount Gilead Concerned Citizens during the Holidays.
Mayor Harris wanted to thank all the citizens for attending the meeting.

ITEM VIII. ADJOURNMENT

With no more Board business, Mayor Pro Tem McAuley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Richardson seconded the motion. Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:40 p.m.



Beverly A. Harris, Mayor



Amy C. Roberts, CMC, Town Clerk