



**TOWN OF MOUNT GILEAD
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES**

110 West Allenton Street, Mount Gilead, North Carolina, 27306
March 7, 2023

The Mount Gilead Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at the Highland Community Center, 131 Hoffman Rd, Mt Gilead, NC, for the regular monthly business meeting. Present were Mayor Beverly Harris, Mayor Pro Tem Tim McAuley, Commissioners Paula Covington, Mary Lucas and Vera Richardson, Interim Manager Ray Allen, Town Clerk Amy Roberts, Police Chief Talmedge Legrand and Public Works Director Daniel Medley.

ITEM I. Mayor Harris called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA
Commissioner Richardson made a motion to adopt the agenda as is with a second from Commissioner Lucas. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. February 7, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes
Commissioner Lucas made a motion to approve the February 7 regular meeting minutes. Commissioner Covington seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved.

B. February 27, 2023, Special Called Meeting Minutes
Mayor Pro Tem McAuley made a motion to approve the February 27 Special Called meeting minutes. Commissioner Richardson seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved.

ITEM IV. NEW EMPLOYEE INTRODUCTIONS
Town Clerk Amy Roberts introduced the new Customer Service/Accounts Payable Clerk, Mollie Lee. Mollie began work on February 20, 2023. Police Chief Talmedge Legrand told the Board that Officer Eric Williamson, who was currently a Reserve Officer, has joined the force full time and he will fill his final open full time position that has been vacant for nearly two years. Mr. Ray Allen announced that the newly hired Town Manager, Dylan Haman, is working part-time with him on Thursdays and Fridays and after next week, will work with Mr. Bill Zell until he begins full time on May 15, 2023.

ITEM IV. PUBLIC COMMENT
Mr. Tim Patterson, 501 Pine Street, Mt. Gilead – Mr. Patterson stated that he hopes that the Board will consider the in-town residents when considering this lake sewer extension that is being discussed because he has been begging for a long time for someone to figure out where the horrible odor is coming from on his street. He stated that the smell is gut-wrenching and several of his neighbors had complained about this to him, so he was speaking for everyone. He said it was so bad that residents can't even sit on their front porch for the stench of the sewer and it has become embarrassing. He also stated that he hopes the Town will consider paving Pine Street soon because the pavement is cracking and needs repairs.

Mayor Harris stated that she has received several complaints from some of the downtown business owners about the parking on Main Street. She stated that some of the downtown businesses have asked if there was anything that could be done because there is nowhere for customers to park on Main Street some Saturdays and wondered if it would be worth considering asking downtown business owners to park behind their respective businesses to help relieve some of this traffic flow. She stated that it is a good problem to have because that means people are catering to our businesses. She stated that she had been asked if the Board might consider 2-hour parking on Main Street, especially if the Town continues to thrive and all businesses become occupied. Commissioner Covington stated that Troy had to implement 2-hour parking on their Main Street, and it seems to be working for them.

ITEM VI. OLD BUSINESS
None

ITEM VII.**NEW BUSINESS**

- A. **Presentation of the 2021-2022 Financial Statements**
Ms. Deneal Bennett, of JB Watson and Co. presented the 2021-2022 Financial Statements to the Board. *NOTE: The complete 2021-2022 financial statement is available on the Town's website and there is a copy for public viewing in the Clerk's office at Town Hall.* She also presented the 2022-2023 Engagement letter and audit contract for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Commissioner Richardson made a motion to approve the 22-23 Audit contract. Commissioner Covington seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
- B. **Discussion of NC 731/NC 109 Intersection**
Mr. R. J. Monroe, NCDOT District Supervisor, spoke to the Board about the need for a four-way stop sign at the intersection of NC 731 and NC 109 (currently a caution light). In light of the many wrecks that have occurred at this intersection and the number of complaints from citizens and the Town, a study was done, and it was determined that this intersection needed a four way stop. Commissioner Lucas asked how they would alert citizens about this change. She was concerned that log trucks that are used to barreling through that intersection were not going to know to stop and that it may cause an even bigger disaster. Mr. Monroe stated that NCDOT will place warning signs at least 30 days prior to the change and that there will "Stop Ahead" signs placed in every direction to alert drivers. Town Clerk Roberts asked what criteria were needed for them to consider adding a stop light at this intersection rather than a four-way stop. Mr. Monroe stated that based on the study and the "numbers" provided from the study, this intersection did not warrant a stop light. He stated that if later down the road the subject of adding a stoplight can be re-visited if NCDOT sees that the four-way stop is not working.
- C. **Utility Preliminary Engineering Agreement- NCDOT**
NCDOT presented a Utility Engineering Agreement that will allow NCDOT to submit a project for construction along NC109 that will require certain engineering plans for adjustments/relocations to be made to the Town's existing facilities/lines. NCDOT agrees to reimburse the Town for any engineering expenses incurred. Commissioner Covington made a motion to accept this agreement with a second from Mayor Pro Tem McAuley. Motion carried unanimously.
- D. **Request for the Board to Consider Applying for Grants for Low Income Residents**
Mr. George Knight spoke about the need for grants to help some of the older and less fortunate residents in our Town. He said he knows there's money out there and would really love for the Board to investigate these grants. Interim Manager Allen assured the Board that he would be sure to pass this along to Dylan when he comes on Board so he can start looking for some of these grants available.
- E. **Request for Resolution Regarding School Calendar Flexibility**
Dr. Dale Ellis and Dr. Tracy Grit with Montgomery County Schools spoke to the Board about the need for local control of the school calendar. He stated that he has presented a resolution to the State requesting this flexibility and is hoping to get the approval of each Town to also create a resolution in support of this effort. Allowing more local control and flexibility will make year end and semester end testing timelier for each school. Commissioner Richardson made a motion that the Town approve this request and create a resolution in support of School Calendar Flexibility. Commissioner Covington seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
- F. **Request of Mr. Jerry Thompson to allow Urban Archery Season**
Mr. Rupert Medford with the NC Wildlife Association spoke to the Board at the request of Mr. Jerry Thompson, a local resident, who is homebound and could not be present but is requesting the Board consider adopting an Urban Archery Season. According to Mr. Medford, this would allow the archery season within Town limits, with bylaws and regulations created by the Town. Interim Manager Allen stated that if the Board considers this a Public Hearing would need to be held so that citizens either for or against have the chance to be heard on this matter. The Town would also have to adopt an ordinance making it legal to hunt inside the city limits during the regular deer season. Mr. Allen stated that Mr. Thompson's request may be too late for this year as the deadline to apply is April 1, 2023 and the next Board meeting to approve the ordinance and any regulations would not be until at the minimum April 4, 2023. The Board decided to table this discussion until more research can be done and they stated that they would like to hear from other citizens to get a feel from the general population about this subject. Mayor Pro Tem made a motion to table this discussion later. Commissioner Richardson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
- G. **Mount Gilead Industrial Committee Closeout Donation**
Interim Manager Allen stated that Mr. Jack Jordan of the Mount Gilead Industrial Commission had closed out the account of the Commission and sold the property on Lily's Bridge Road associated with this. He has donated the proceeds from the sale back to the Town. The donation was in the amount of \$39,460.43 and was available to be appropriated by the Board of Commissioners as needed but he requested that, if possible, he would like to see the funds be used for economic development or parks and recreation within the Town. Commissioner Covington made a motion to accept the donation but stated that she would like to discuss the use of this donation during the annual Budget retreat in April. Commissioner Lucas seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- H. Approval of Interim Manager Contract – Bill Zell
Interim Manager Allen stated that his last day would be March 10 and that Mr. Bill Zell will be back to work as the Interim Manager once again on March 13. Mr. Allen presented the Employment Agreement for Mr. Zell and stated that it is identical to the past agreement between Mr. Zell and the Town with the exception of the date changes of a 60-day contract to begin March 13, 2023, and end on May 12, 2023 and the mileage rate changed to the current IRS standard allowance of \$.655 per mile. Commissioner Covington made a motion to approve the Employment Agreement for Mr. Bill Zell. Commissioner Richardson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. The Board thanked Mr. Allen for his service to our Town.

ITEM VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Community Appearance Tree Board
Committee Chairman Patsi Laracuate reported that the CATb had a town trash pickup scheduled for February that got rained out. The committee plans to reschedule for March. The CATb is considering joining the Adopt-A-Highway program through NCDOT to help clean a portion of NC109. She stated they are also looking for donations and grants available to help with the repair and/or replacement of the Town's entryway signs. Commissioner Covington reminded Ms. Laracuate that they are an advisory committee and that all considerations should come before the Board of Commissioners for approval. Ms. Laracuate stated that she has created a survey for the public to get feedback from citizens about replacing and/or repairing the Town's entryway signs. She also put in a call to the Interim Manager about a meeting to discuss how this survey will be going out to the Public. Ms. Laracuate also stated that she was under the impression that the Town Manager and/or the Town Clerk were supposed to be members of this committee. She stated that the Town Clerk told her back in October that she was only a member by default and was no longer a member of the committee. Ms. Laracuate stated that she wanted clarification as to whether the Town Manager and/or the Clerk is supposed to be part of this committee. Commissioner Richardson stated that we would have a new Town Manager in May and that maybe he could clarify or review this. Ms. Laracuate stated that Mayor Pro Tem McAuley was on the committee so she asked if that was enough Town support. Board members agreed that Mayor Pro Tem McAuley's membership will suffice until the new Town Manager could review this committee's rules and regulations.

ITEM VIII. STAFF REPORTS

Staff reports were given by Public Works Director Daniel Medley**, Police Chief Talmedge Legrand and Interim Manager Ray Allen and were attached to the Board Agenda Packet. A copy of their complete report is available in the Town Clerk's office for public review.

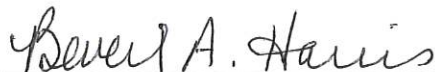
**Public Works Director Medley presented some quotes to the Board for solar light fixtures to be placed in front of the entryway signs from all directions. He asked for permission to purchase one of the lights so that we can determine if this is the route the Town wants to take. The Board granted Medley permission to purchase one of these lights for reference.

ITEM IX. MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS REPORT

None

ITEM X. ADJOURNMENT

With no more Board business Commissioner Covington made a motion to adjourn the meeting with a second from Commissioner Richardson. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:20 p.m.



Beverly A. Harris, Mayor



Amy C. Roberts, Town Clerk

