

**TOWN OF GRIFTON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORKSHOP MEETING
August 1, 2017**

Present: Mayor B.R. Jackson; Commissioners Will Barnes, Mary Grace Bright, Mike Coles, Johnny Craft, Raymond Oakes; Manager Joe Johnson

Absent: None

Mayor Jackson called the meeting to order.

Mayor Jackson led the Board of Commissioners in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Recognition of Persons to be Heard:

*David Ingles of 6364 Niblick Road came before the Board to express his concerns about the drainage situation at a property he owns located at 585 St. David Street.

Mr. Ingles also expressed his dissatisfaction that the Town is not participating in National Night Out. He feels this should be a yearly event.

*Ardathy Spikes of 6748 Pitt Street came before the Board to express her concerns about the mobile home park on Pitt Street. She feels it is an eyesore and needs to be cleaned up. She also expressed her desire for a mobile home park not to return to that area.

Guest Speaker

1. Derrick Smith – Wooten Engineer

Manager Johnson informed the Board that he had received an email from Mr. Smith stating that he would not be able to make it to the meeting due to a conflict.

Manager Johnson informed the Board that the purpose for Mr. Smith coming to the meeting was to discuss the need for the Town to have a utilities assessment completed. He would have also informed the Board that there is grant funding available to have these studies done. The purpose of the study would be to give the Town a good understanding of where we are and what areas in water and sewer need to be addressed. Having this study completed will benefit us in future applications for funding projects and receiving grants for the projects.

Discussion/Action Items

1. *Grifton School – Cross Walk*

Mr. Kevin Smith, principal of Grifton School, came before the Board to request permission to paint a crosswalk on McCrae Street at the front entrance to the school and put up pedestrian crossing signs at the crossing. He feels this would help slow traffic down and allow them to have better control of where the kids should cross the Street. He also asked that the Town consider turning the school part of McCrae Street over to the school. He stated that he has not had any discussion with the school system concerning this item.

Mayor Jackson stated that all Mr. Smith's requests would be taken into consideration. Commissioner Bright commented that there has always been a debate about who owns that part of McCrae Street and feels we should get legal documentation before any decisions are made.

2. Shad Festival Committee's Request for the Lot Located on Brooks Alley

Manager Johnson stated that Mr. Bruce Clements made a request to the Board to rent or purchase the property located at 103 Brooks Alley for the purpose of placing a movable storage building on the property. The property value is listed at just over \$1900. If an offer is entertained for purchase we will need to advertise the offer and accept upset bids. However, if the lot is rented we need to determine the rate to charge for the rental.

Mayor Jackson stated that he feels purchasing should be taken off the table because then anybody would be able to buy it and we initially bought the property to put in a water main. Commissioner Coles agrees that the property should be rented to the Shad Festival for as long as it is in existence.

Commissioner Barnes agreed as long as the structure is not permanent.

Manager Johnson was advised to put this item on the consent agenda at the next meeting.

3. Pitt Street Trailer Park

Manager Johnson informed the Board that he was approached by the owner of the Pitt Street Mobile Home Park with an offer to donate the property "as is" to the Town.

The Board agreed that the Town should not accept the property donation and feels that the property should be cleaned up by the property owner in a reasonable amount of time.

4. Proposed Text Amendments – Electronic Gaming/Bingo Facilities

Manager Johnson stated that he presented a proposed text amendment for Grifton's Code of Ordinances to the Planning Board on July 20, 2017 that will allow for a controlled growth of the gaming industry. It was a unanimous decision by the Planning Board to accept the amendments as proposed. This would establish requirements that would make it difficult to find a location for a new gaming business. If the current locations leave another would not be able to replace it. Manager Johnson asked for Board comments on the restrictions.

Mayor Jackson commented that he is concerned with business access due to the volume of parking places being taken up in front of the gaming businesses. He would like to have designated time managed parking places.

Commissioner Barnes asked if this ordinance would prohibit any charity Bingo.

Manager Johnson replied that it would not prohibit any charity functions.

Manager Johnson went over the restrictions with the Board.

After a lengthy discussion on this matter, the Board instructed Manager Johnson to talk with the attorney concerning the legalities. They also feel the Board as a whole should have a good understanding of the ordinance and the restrictions. This item was tabled until the September Workshop meeting.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Craft stated that there are sink holes between Queen and Main Street, Cannon Blvd. and Main Street.

Commissioner Barnes asked how the grocery store is coming along.

Manager Johnson replied that it is moving forward.

Commissioner Barnes stated that before the next billing cycle he feels the businesses need relief from the utility bills.

Mayor Jackson suggested that the prior water rates be enforced until the rate study has been completed and the Board has had time to review the study.

It was decided by the Board to put this as a discussion item on next week's agenda.

Manager Johnson reminded the Board that the current budget is based on the rates first voted on in June, 2017.

Mayor Jackson commented that businesses that are leaving due to high water bills make an impact on the budget as well.

Commissioner Oakes asked about the Street light study for Ms. Moore.

Commissioner Oakes feels the street is well lit but would like something in writing stating there is adequate lighting in the area.

The Board instructed Manager Johnson to have this information at the next meeting.

Commissioner Oakes stated that he has had complaints about speeding on Church Street and asked about a radar machine and if it would cost the Town.

Interim Chief Andrews stated that there is a cost for the machine.

Mayor Jackson asked Chief Andrews to pay special attention to speeders on Church Street.

Commissioner Oakes stated that he has received several complaints concerning cats.

Commissioner Oakes stated that the culvert on Fairway Drive is washing out.

Commissioner Coles asked about the status of the RV Park.

Manager Johnson stated that the status is the same and there is still a lot of work that needs to be done.

Commissioner Bright asked about the tree that is down on Town property on Pitt Street and asked why it has not been removed.

Manager Johnson informed Commissioner Bright that only a small portion of the tree is on our property.

Commissioner Bright commented that we need to get the portion of the tree on Town property up.

Commissioner Bright stated that the buoy at the Town landing is not in the right place.

Commissioner Bright asked Manager Johnson if he has contacted anybody concerning the Depot Roof.

Manager Johnson replied that he has not been able to get anyone to return his call.

Commissioner Bright told Manager Johnson to have the attorney send them a letter because the work should still be under warranty.

Commissioner Bright commented that she was advised that there is a drainage pipe under the street on St. David that could be causing part of the flooding problem. She asked Manager Johnson to have the utilities department make sure the drain is clean end to end.

Commissioner Bright asked if there is a way to designate parking time for certain parking places. She commented that there are business owners that park on the street because they have nowhere else to park. She feels we should take a close look at this issue.

Commissioner Bright made a motion to enter into closed session to discussion attorney client privilege as authorized by G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Craft. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Jackson commented that the Board is now in closed session and the room should be clear of all but Board members.

Commissioner Barnes made a motion to exit the closed session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bright. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Jackson stated that he would like to recognize Andrew Eric Sutton with a plaque for building and donating picnic tables to the Town at the next meeting. Andy has done this in order to help with his Eagle Scout Rank. Mayor Jackson feels it is important to praise young people for their efforts in bettering their life and doing things for others.

There being no further business Commissioner Coles made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Craft. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted
Angel Hudson
Town Clerk