

**TOWN OF GRIFTON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORKSHOP MEETING
February 6, 2018**

Present: Mayor B.R. Jackson; Commissioners Will Barnes, Mary Grace Bright, Claude Kennedy, Raymond Oakes; Manager Joe Johnson

Absent: Commissioner Craft

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:

1. Bruce Clements of 6776 Dupont Street came before the Board to request permission to put his signs up for his tax business. He commented that he does this annually. Mayor Jackson commented that he would like to make it where Mr. Clements would just go visit the Manager each year instead of Mr. Clements having to come before the Board. Commissioner Kennedy made a motion that Mr. Clements give the letter to request permission to put his signs up during tax season to the Manager in lieu of the Board. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barnes. The motion carried unanimously.
2. Russell Bowen of 6848 Railroad Street came before the Board to complain about his neighbors barking dogs. Mr. Bowen played a tape that he recording inside of his house that proved the barking dogs are heard inside of his house. Mayor Jackson informed Mr. Bowen that the Town is reviewing ordinances that may take care of his problem. Mr. Bowen commented that he works shift work and sleeps during the day and he needs his sleep. He also commented that he has had no help from the Town Managers or the Police Department in the last 16 years.

Discussion/Action Items

1. Animal Ordinance

Mayor Jackson read the verbiage for Title IX, Section 90.23 – Animal Noises Prohibited, with. Mayor Jackson mentioned the hours in the ordinance.

Commissioner Bright stated the owner of a dog that continuously barks should be held accountable.

The Board informed Manager Johnson to remove the hours in this section.

Commissioner Kennedy feels penalties should be in place and enforced.

Manager Johnson stated that the new ordinance will help with the issues at hand.

Commissioner Bright stated that she has concerns with calling it a kennel when they have more than 5 dogs or more than 3 cats. She feels the limitation should be the same for every animal. She also thought that microchipping would be required if the animal is picked up and returned. She commented, as well, on the concerns about cats being carried off.

Manager Johnson commented that establishing ownership of cats would help with the feral cats. He explained the rules of establishing ownership and one of those being that whoever feeds the cats would be considered the owner and would be held responsible for what that cat does to another person's property.

Commissioner Bright stated that the volunteers that put in their time and money to help decrease the feral cat population in Grifton should not be held responsible for what the cats do to another person's property.

Manager Johnson stated that he was asked to put something into place concerning cats. Commissioner Bright stated that he was asked to address cats with owners. Owners with 15 or more cats that are not being vaccinated or spay/neutered is what needs to be addressed.

Manager Johnson reminded the Board that all of this is under the Pitt County Animal Control ordinance. He commented that citizens with these problems can call Pitt County to address their issues. He also commented that when we contracted with Pitt County Animal Control we were no longer able to use our animal control ordinances. Commissioner Kennedy asked how the volunteers were helping with the feral cats. Commissioner Bright explained the process to Commissioner Kennedy.

Commissioner Kennedy commented that if we have an ordinance then it should read Pitt County/Grifton.

Commissioner Bright stated that she is confused in the sense that if we don't have an animal control ordinance then why are we putting it in our ordinance?

Manager Johnson stated that it is only in general provisions.

Commissioner Bright stated that she does not want people that are doing good by trying to control the feral cat population to be punished.

The Board instructed Manager Johnson to delete ownership definition and the number of animals a person can have.

Commissioner Bright stated that if a person has 5 dogs and doesn't clean up after those dogs it should be addressed.

2. Fire Department Funds

Chief Justin Johnson came before the Board on behalf of the Grifton Fire Department. He informed the Board that a Fire Truck that is ½ theirs and ½ of the Town's has been sold for \$25,000.

The Board directed Manager Johnson to put this item on the agenda for the next regular meeting next week. The Board will vote to allow the Fire Department to keep all \$25,000 to use towards debt payments.

Mayor Jackson stated that we have a Fire Department that comes when we need them, they are good citizens, and they work hard to keep our department running and pay the bills.

Manager's Update

1. Church Street Repairs

Manager Johnson stated that the guys are working as quickly as possible to determine if the water line on Church Street is supplying anyone and if we can possibly abandon that line. If we can't abandon it that pipe will be one pipe instead of 2. He is hoping to determine that this week. He also stated that the paver is coming in to give us an estimate on repaving what had been damaged during a line repair.

Mayor Jackson stated that they need to visit that site every day and keep it as smooth as possible.

2. Police Relocation Progress

Manager Johnson stated that relocation is going well and they will hopefully be 100% out of the old building by Friday of this week.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Bright informed the Board that the Catch the Vision committee would be meeting this Thursday at 7:00pm in the dining hall at the Mission Ministries on Highland Blvd. Commissioner Bright stated that the Catch the Vision Committee is holding a Town Commons cleanup day on March 10th and she asked Manager Johnson to have some pine straw or mulch there to spread.

Commissioner Bright asked about the logged property on Casey Drive/Church Street. She was under the impression that we would maintain it back so many feet.

The Board instructed Manager Johnson to look into this item.

Commissioner Bright commented that she has heard a lot of positive comments about the police department being more visible.

Commissioner Kennedy asked if Manager Johnson had any ideas about what type of fence should be used at the Depot. He also asked if CSX Railroad Company had any stipulations on what type of fence is used. He stated that the current fence is an embarrassment and asked if we could take it down.

Mayor Jackson asked Manager Johnson to get a price for the type of fence at the commons area.

Commissioner Oakes asked if a better job could have been done on the area on Church Street that had to be repaired by using a different type of rock or using a metal sheet.

Manager Johnson explained the reasoning behind why this area did what it did after putting the rock in. Manager Johnson also commented that he would need to see if we had the equipment to handle the metal sheeting.

Commissioner Oakes asked when Duke Energy would be finished replacing poles around town. He commented that it was getting a little aggravating.

Manager Johnson stated that they have not given him a timeline.

Commissioner Oakes stated that he was in agreement with Commissioner Bright that the area on Casey Dr/Church Street needs to be addressed. He feels it would give someone thinking about purchasing it a better view of what they are getting.

Commissioner Oakes asked if we had measurements of what area belongs to the Town at Mattie's Mini Park.

Manager Johnson responded that the area with the pole shed was the only part that belongs to the Town and the rest belongs to CSX Railroad.

Commissioner Kennedy asked Manager Johnson if he had a timeline on the FEMA property. Manager Johnson responded by saying it should be very soon.

Mayor Jackson asked if the paved area at the end of River Road that has been torn up by the garbage trucks has been addressed.

Manager Johnson responded by saying screens have been placed in that area.

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

Respectfully Submitted

Angel Hudson

Town Clerk