

**TOWN OF HOPE MILLS
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2018, 6:00 P.M.
SHERATON INN, CHAPEL HILL, NC**

Mayor Jackie Warner called the special meeting of the Hope Mills Board of Commissioners to order on Thursday, January 25, 2018 at 5:45 p.m.

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Jackie Warner, Mayor Pro Tem Mike Mitchell, Commissioners Jessie Bellflowers, Patricia Edwards, Megan Larson and Jerry Legge.

STAFF PRESENT

Town Manager Melissa Adams, Interim Town Clerk Deborah Holland and Finance Director Drew Holland.

1. Invocation.

The invocation was led by Finance Director Drew Holland.

2. Approval of Agenda.

Motion made by Commissioner Legge, seconded by Edwards and carried unanimously, to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of Discussion and decision on the Final Lake Park Concept Plan by WithersRavenel; Discussion of the Rules of Procedure, specifically pertaining to Rule #38 Vacancies; and Discussion on how to proceed with "Donut Holes."

Town Manager Adams commented she would follow the order of the agenda as presented aside from covering the Dam Safety Update first.

3. DISCUSSION TOPICS:

- Update report from Town Manager on Dam Safety and the approval letter.

Town Manager Adams commented she received word from Shane Cook of Dam Safety that the letter of approval was drafted and engineers were working to submit stamps on the EAP. Mr. Cook suggested the Board vote on a date for the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony as the Town is likely to have a digital copy of the approval letter by tomorrow.

Commissioners Legge and Bellflowers commented a date should not be set until the Town has the letter of approval in their possession.

Commissioner Larson suggested the Board not advertise a tentative date for the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony but note the location.

Mayor Warner commented the location for the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony would be on the grassy knoll by the dam during daylight.

Discussion pursued and the general consensus of the Board was to set the tentative date of the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Wednesday, January 31, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. pending the arrival of the digital copy of the approval letter.

Motion made by Commissioner Legge, seconded by Commissioner Edwards and carried unanimously, to approve Wednesday, January 31, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. as a tentative date for the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony contingent on the arrival of the digital copy of the letter of approval from Dam Safety.

Town Manager Adams commented the Ceremonial Impoundment of Water would feature ribbon and several pairs of scissors available for the Board and other officials. Invites would be sent to local state representatives, Cumberland County Commissioners, and representatives from ASI and Schnabel along with a Notice of Quorum and a press release.

- Protocol for inquires by Board members.

Mayor Warner reviewed the following topics while briefing the Board on protocol or proper procedure for Board members during meetings:

1. Take turns speaking at meetings.
2. Maintain decorum.
3. Direct questions to the Town Manager, not staff directly.
4. Contact the Town Manager regarding inquiries or suggestions, not Department Heads; follow chain of command.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell commented he's forwarded several emails from citizens to Town Manager Adams and she always handles them very expeditiously.

5. Previous rulings challenged in open session should be run by the Town Attorney.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell inquired if it is considered a motion to rescind or reconsider when Board members on the prevailing side bring an item up for reconsideration. Commissioner Legge responded rescind means to reverse a prior motion whereas reconsider means the Board wishes to hear further discussion.

6. When serving as liaisons to committees, Board members are there to listen and report back to the Board, not take over the meeting.

Mayor Warner requested a form be created so Board members may request items to be on the agenda prior to meetings.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell commented he prefers all agenda items be tabbed and additional items such as addendums be saved for the next meeting. Tabbed items allow Board members time to review background information prior to it being presented to them in open session which allows them to make educated decisions.

Discussion pursued regarding presentation items that are not available to the Board until meeting nights. Town Manager Adams commented presentation items are typically meant to be heard not discussed. Mayor Warner commented the Board needs to be civil and work as a team regardless if they do not agree on the item of discussion.

- Lists of Board priorities to use for discussion at the Budget Retreat for FY 2018/2019 on March 3, 2018 at Camp Rockfish.

Mayor Warner commented Finance Director Drew Holland and Interim Town Clerk Deborah Holland would be recording the items each Commissioner would like to cover during the Budget Retreat but the items would not be discussed this evening.

Finance Director Drew Holland commented the Board may voice what their priorities are and which projects they would like to see completed for the upcoming fiscal year. Mr. Holland listed the following items that are to be presented at the Budget Retreat:

1. Replacement of Town Hall carpeting.
2. Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan which includes the Golf Course Property.
3. Update on the Public Safety Facility.
4. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) overview.
5. Debt and finance update.

Commissioner Bellflowers requested the following items be discussed at the Budget Retreat:

1. Phase II Lake Park.
2. Public Safety Facility Station near the Jack Britt area.
3. Irrigation for Lake Park.

Commissioner Edwards requested the following items be discussed at the Budget Retreat:

1. Bus/shuttle/cab system for seniors.

Mayor Warner commented Life Line transportation system is already in place for seniors and disabled citizens. Discussion pursued about getting the word out as most seniors in the area are unaware the service is available.

2. Golf course plan to include seniors.
3. Review survey results of Golf Course Property.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell requested the following items be discussed at the Budget Retreat:

1. Fayetteville Area System of Transit (FAST) bus stops and service.
2. Parks & Recreation Master Plan and hear from McAdams Company.

Town Manager Adams and Finance Director Drew Holland commented they requested a representative from McAdams Company attend the Budget Retreat to present to the Board. Town Manager Adams commented Heritage Park would be discussed during the Board Retreat as well.

Finance Director Drew Holland commented for clarity, that a master plan is a concept, not engineering, and the Town would need to hire separate contractors to complete different phases of projects.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell inquired if the Town was receiving grant money for the Lake Park project. Town Manager Adams commented she applied for the PARTIF Grant last year but the Town was ineligible as we did not have a master plan.

Finance Director Holland commented there is currently no funding for any Parks & Recreation projects; the Town must first prioritize projects, determine the costs, prepare master plans, then seek out funding or grants. Town Manager Adams commented the Lake Park and Heritage Park could be grouped into one PARTIF Grant.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell inquired if it is cost prohibitive to combine all Parks & Recreation projects under a bond. Finance Director Holland responded the bond process would take approximately a year in a half. Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell inquired if the Town opted for a bond, would the General Assembly allow for a 1% increase in sales tax locally to retire the debt. Finance Director Holland responded he would look into it but if the Town did approve a tax increase, it would likely be towards property taxes.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell inquired if the amount needed to fund Parks & Recreation projects could be borrowed without the need for a bond. Finance Director Holland responded it would be feasible without a bond. In order to do so, the Town would need to determine the amount needed to fund the projects and the Town's current debt capacity at that time.

3. Museum project.
4. Hiking Trail.

Town Manager Adams commented a hiking trail is currently not a feasible option as it is a liability.

5. Badge system for employees.

Town Manager Adams commented she and Finance Director Holland looked into it and determined the cost outweighs the benefits but will take another look at it.

6. Televising meetings.
7. Switching from Dixie Youth to an unaffiliated league (according to citizen input) as travel ball would open up a revenue stream.

Town Manager Adams commented we would need the proper facilities to do so. Commissioner Legge responded we do not have the proper facilities to host travel ball tournaments.

8. Grant for Reid's Journey.
9. Upgrade water and electric by burying the lines.
10. Install more sidewalks throughout the Town by taking out a lien.

Town Manager Adams commented it could be done through a special assessment or rise in taxes.

Commissioner Legge commented Willie Blake, a local CPA, has offered to donate a property by the lake. Finance Director Holland responded it would not be an item for discussion as it does not impact the budget.

Commissioner Legge requested the following items be discussed at the Budget Retreat:

1. Parks & Recreation Reserve Fund.
2. A park with swing sets and other equipment in lieu of dedicated land or housing developments when lots become available.

Discussion pursued regarding Cumberland County's development guidelines versus Hope Mills concerning annexations. Commissioner Legge commented anything that is in our Municipal Influence Area should be approved by the Town before the project moves forward.

Commissioner Larson requested the following items be discussed at the Budget Retreat:

1. A Fire substation / Public Safety Facility in the Jack Britt area so the Town may end their costly contract with Stoney Point Fire Department.
2. Allow a company to utilize the Golf Course Property and maintain the grounds in lieu of leasing it from the Town.
3. More Town staff in Public Works and Grounds Departments to beautify the Town.

Discussion pursued regarding condemning a home on Fountain Lane or giving the owner fair market value as it is currently a nuisance.

Mayor Warner called for a recess at 7:50 p.m.

At 7:55 p.m. the Board returned to session.

Mayor Warner requested the following items be discussed at the Budget Retreat:

1. Art in the Park Grant.

Interim Town Clerk Holland commented the Town hopes to have the Grant application out by next week. Town Manager Adams commented the process takes about sixty days.

2. Retention ponds area behind the library.

Town Manager Adams responded that Town has a plan for that area but has not yet budgeted for it.

3. Reconsider information from Randy Hume regarding Fayetteville Area System of Transit (FAST).
4. Look into 5310 Connectivity Grant Money.
5. Continue to fund Citizens Academy and offer to the local youth.
6. Formulate incentives to encourage home owners and business owners to renovate dilapidated residential and commercial properties.
7. Establish a Hope Mills Small Business Service Award given each month to businesses who give back to the community in some way.
8. Parking for museum.

Town Manager Adams suggested the Board consider the following items for discussion at the Budget Retreat:

1. Parish House.

The Historic Preservation Commission has advised the Town not to sell the property and if they were to demolish the home they could use the lot for parking. Another option would be to sell it to Dr. Raynor who has remained interested in the property. Town Manager Adams suggested a shared parking lot if Dr. Raynor were to purchase the property. This option would allow the Town to recoup the money lost on the church property.

2. Overlay District.

To protect and control the development of certain areas such as the Historic District. Work with the Fayetteville Cumberland Economic Development Corporation and review zoning plans to determine the vision the Town has for the area in regards to appearance and the types of businesses.

- Update report on the Pier Bulkhead Boardwalk up to the Boat Ramp at the Lake Park.

Town Manager Adams reported Public Works Director Hector Cruz is scheduled to meet with Fleming & Associates and the contractor for the pier to discuss expectations and a new timeline for the completion of the pier. Town Manager Adams will update with further information at the Board of Commissioners meeting on February 5, 2018. The construction of the pier will not be affected by the impoundment of water in the dam. The contractor is currently installing the decking board on the pier.

- Discussion and decision on the Final Lake Park Concept Plan by WithersRavenel.

Commissioner Larson updated the Board on the recent Lake Advisory Committee meeting she attended. The Lake Advisory Committee opted for Concept Plan #1 which included the addition of the recently donated Saleeby property. The Lake Advisory Committee suggested the parking lot feature angled parking and crush and run in the case that the park design were to change in the future.

Motion made by Commissioner Bellflowers, seconded by Commissioner Legge and carried unanimously, to accept Concept #1 for the Lake Park based on the recommendation by the Lake Advisory Committee.

- Discussion of the Rules of Procedure, specifically pertaining to Rule #38 vacancies.

Commissioner Larson commented the book she received during her Essentials of Municipal Government course specifically addressed the rule in question concerning vacancies; the Mayor Pro Tem would assume the Mayor's duties and the Board would vote on extended duties. This is according to G.S. 168-70 in which the elected Council appoints and fills its own vacancies. Commissioner Larson commented she would like the Board to follow Trey Allen's Rules of Procedure.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell commented he is not in favor of modifying Rule #38.

Motion made by Commissioner Bellflowers, seconded by Commissioner Larson to the rescind the motion to adopt Rule #38 in the Rules of Procedure and the motion carried with a vote of 4 ayes and 1 no by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell.

Motion made by Commissioner Legge, seconded by Commissioner Bellflowers to adopt Rule #38 as read in Trey Allen's Rules of Procedures in that vacancies are filled by the Board and to direct Town Attorney Hartzog to incorporate into the Hope Mills Rules of Procedures and the vote carried with 4 ayes and 1 no by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell.

Commissioner Larson commented Town Attorney Hartzog is making changes to Rules #3, #16, #38 and #39.

- Discussion on how to proceed with "Donut Holes."

Mayor Warner commented the previous Board visited Raleigh in an effort to gain information on the procedure to annex approximately one hundred addresses that are not considered part of the Town but lie within. To annex these properties in, the addresses would have to be sent to the General Assembly and added to a Bill authorizing the Town to close the donut holes. Mayor Warner inquired if this is something the Board wished to pursue and if so, the Town would need to move quickly in order to meet the deadline to file a bill.

Commissioner Legge inquired if the Town would be required to provide water and sewer to the donut holes properties. Mayor Warner responded the properties already have water and sewer.

Mayor Warner commented many of these areas already receive services from the Town such as trash pickup but are not paying taxes.

Town Manager Adams commented this item could be added to the February 5, 2018 agenda and Planning & Development Administrator Chancer McLaughlin will provide the maps displaying the donut holes for the Boards review. A resolution requesting the General Assembly allow the Town to pursue a bill to allow for the annexation of the donut holes will also be up for approval during the February 5th meeting if the Board so wishes.

The general consensus of the Board was to add the abovementioned items for approval to the February 5th agenda.

4. Adjournment.

Motion made by Commissioner Legge, seconded by Commissioner Bellflowers and carried unanimously, to adjourn the meeting.

Mayor Warner adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

Jackie Warner, Mayor

ATTEST:

Deborah Holland, NCCMC
Interim Town Clerk