

**TOWN OF HOPE MILLS
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2018, 8:00 A.M.
ROCKFISH CAMP AND RETREAT
226 CAMP ROCKFISH ROAD, PARKTON, NC**

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

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

STAFF PRESENT

Town Manager Melissa Adams, Interim Town Clerk Deborah Holland, Finance Director Drew Holland, Parks & Recreation Director Kenny Bullock, Public Works Director Hector Cruz, Inspections Ray Reeves, Fire Chief Chuck Hodges, Deputy Fire Chief Steve Lopez, Police Chief Joel Acciardo, Stormwater Administrator Beth Brown and Development & Planning Administrator Chancer McLaughlin. Also present was Administrative Assistant Tiffany Gillstedt.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jackie Warner called the special meeting of the Hope Mills Board of Commissioners to order on Saturday, March 3, 2018 at 8:31 a.m.

Leandro Silva, Assistant Director of Camp Rockfish welcomed the Town of Hope Mills.

1. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

The invocation was led by Finance Director Drew Holland, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Jackie Warner.

2. Approval of Agenda.

Finance Director Holland commented the agenda featured the additions of topic #7 – Town Hall Entrance Security and #11 – Bus System.

Motion made by Commissioner Legge, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell and carried unanimously, to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of topic #7 – Security Access for Town Facilities and #11 – Bus System.

3. Discussion topics.

The following topics were discussed during the Budget Retreat:

1. CIP Overview.

Finance Director Drew Holland reviewed the items of priority for the Capital Improvement Plan. Town Manager Adams commented a new phone system and carpeting for Town Hall have been a priority for the last five years but continue to be cut from the budget.

Finance Director Holland commented the cost to purchase a new phone system would be about \$28,000 along with an ongoing maintenance agreement. The last quote to replace the carpeting in Town Hall was \$50,000.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell inquired if the Powell Bill Fund covers Stormwater projects. Finance Director Holland and Stormwater Administrator Beth Brown responded Powell Bill is relating to the Streets department. Stormwater Administrator Brown commented the Stormwater department works in conjunction with Public Works and funds typically come out of Stormwater or Powell Bill depending on the project.

1. Financial Update.

Finance Director Holland reviewed last year's finances and the finances for the upcoming year commenting the value of 1 cent of property has increased by 1.78%. Finance Director Holland also reviewed motor vehicle tax, recreation tax, refuse tax, stormwater tax and Town debt. Finance Director Holland reviewed the effects of commercial/residential development in depth.

Town Manager Adams commented Development & Planning Administrator Chancer McLaughlin has been working to strengthen the Town's PWC agreement. Town Manager Adams commented she met with Cumberland County Manager Amy Cannon and Assistant County Manager Tracy Jackson to discuss the issues Hope Mills is facing with our Municipal Influence Area and strengthening the Town's relationship with the county.

Commissioner Legge commented Valley End Phases I and II are prime examples of what is being discussed as the streets are not up to the Town's standards.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell inquired if it is legal for the Town to assess homeowners for sidewalks much like sewer tax. Finance Director Holland commented it is not illegal but in order to make the Town more walkable, the main roads would be the focus which would be a Town-wide assessment.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell inquired if the Town would participate in any revenue sharing if staff were to begin collecting permitting fees. Town Manager Adams responded she could not answer that question as she is in ongoing negotiations with the county.

Commissioner Larson commented the county is required to check to ensure they are up to Town standards but they are not fulfilling their duties.

Mayor Warner commented the issue Hope Mills is facing is the rate at which we are growing and Cumberland County Planning not being able to keep up with it. Mayor Warner commented Hope Mills is the fastest growing municipality in the region.

Stormwater Administrator Beth Brown commented Hope Mills Stormwater department requires an installation bond versus the City of Fayetteville which requires 125% of the installation cost that goes into an escrow account.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell inquired if the Town was revenue neutral on last year's revaluation. Finance Director Holland responded the Town nearly broke even last year therefore the tax rate had to be adjusted.

In regard to the current state of sales tax distribution, Mayor Warner commented she is currently working to extend the Town's agreement with Fayetteville through 2019.

Commissioner Legge inquired if there is an ordinance in place that prevents the Town from requiring developers to install sidewalks. Finance Director Holland responded once a development is permitted by the county it is difficult for the Town to go back if a site plan was approved without sidewalks. Town Manager Adams commented in moving forward, the Town now has that requirement in place.

Commissioner Legge commented 17 miles of sewer line need to be replaced as they are not able to handle the amount of water going through them. Stormwater Administrator Brown responded her department installs the minimum required size and the pipes are currently unable to handle the amount of rainwater.

2. Public Safety Facility.

Finance Director Holland commented we are at the programming stage of the project and comparing optimum usage versus the minimum amount needed. Town staff was able to narrow the square footage down to 39,425 square feet. Finance Director Holland commented the Town will likely meet with Garner & Brown Architects again in March. Fire Chief Chuck Hodges commented the Town wishes for this facility to be in use for fifty years.

Commissioner Bellflowers inquired what the Town plans to do if the current land does not offer adequate space for the future combined facility. Finance Director Holland responded the facility will fit on the current plot but the real issue is determining where to house both the Police and Fire Departments during the 18 month building process. Finance Director Holland commented temporary housing would likely be mobile structures.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell inquired how the Town will fund the combined Public Safety Facility. Finance Director Holland responded the Town will finance through long-term debt.

Mayor Warner commented C. Wayne Collier Elementary school is a good option for the future facility due to the amount of land it sits on. Finance Director Holland responded if the Town chooses a different plot of land to house the facility, we would have to start the process over again. Discussion pursued regarding the amount of time and money the Town has invested in

the project. Finance Director Holland commented the fee to Garner & Brown Architects is 4% of construction cost with over \$70,000 already invested in the projects we are eight months in.

Further discussion pursued regarding retrofitting the current fire station and adding substations throughout Town to end existing agreements with local fire stations. Fire Chief Chuck Hodges commented the current building needs to be completely redone and the areas mentioned for substations are not viable options as they are not within the Town limits. Fire Chief Hodges and Deputy Fire Chief Lopez suggested the Town tread lightly in ending mutual aid contracts.

3. Fire Station Substations Update.

Finance Director Holland reviewed maps of the two locations the Town would eventually like to house Fire Department Substations. One is located near Traemoor Village, Jack Britt area and the other location would be near Legion Road.

Commissioner Bellflowers inquired the methods the Town is using to search for available property. Finance Director Holland responded we cannot be too specific as once word gets out that the Town is interested in a plot of land, the price goes up.

Discussion pursued regarding selling a piece of the property the Town owns off Elk and Legion Road that is not a feasible option for a substation.

4. Infiltration Basins behind the Library.

Stormwater Administrator Beth Brown reviewed the cost estimates to upgrade the appearance of the current infiltration basins behind the library.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell commented perhaps the infiltration basins could be added to the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan or the Public Safety Facility.

Mayor Warner commented the cost to upgrade the current infiltration basins is not currently feasible and suggested the Board place this project on hold.

Mayor Warner called for a brief recess at 10:30 a.m.

At 10:41 a.m. Mayor Warner called the meeting back to order.

5. Televised Board Meetings.

Finance Director Holland commented we will record meetings beginning on March 19, 2018 and the cost to air through Fayetteville Government Access Channel (FAYTV) would be \$15,264 for a year. The City of Fayetteville would air the meetings at no charge during the current budget year to allow us to test drive the system so we may determine if it is worth the investment.

Mayor Warner clarified the meetings would not be aired live and would run on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. beginning in July.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Bellflowers and carried unanimously, to approve a trial run beginning March 19, 2018 until June 2018 to test the video system and approve funds for the agreement with Fayetteville to air meetings in the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year Budget.

6. Security access for Town Facilities.

Finance Director Holland commented the Town wishes to implement new security access for the Town facilities to include Town Hall, Parks & Recreation and Public Works. An employees' ID card would serve as a fob in lieu of an access code to enter a building and the total cost estimate for the three buildings would be \$35,751.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Edwards and carried unanimously, to approve the Security access for Town facilities to be added to the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year Budget.

7. Town Board Pay Study.

Town Manager Adams commented staff researched other municipalities comparable in size to determine a proper pay increase for the Town Board. Along with a salary increase, the Board would receive a monthly cell phone and travel allowance as well as vision/dental coverage and life insurance.

Motion made by Commissioner Legge, seconded by Commissioner Larson to accept Town staff proposal for a pay increase for the Town Board beginning with the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year Budget and the motion carried with a vote of 3 ayes and 2 noes by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell and Commissioner Edwards.

8. New Personnel Policy.

Finance Director Holland commented Town staff worked in conjunction with the MAPS Group to develop a new Personnel Policy in an effort to retain qualified employees and keep turnover costs down. It was unanimous among the Board to review the new policy prior to adoption as the item will be added to the March 19, 2018 agenda. Finance Director Holland directed the Board to contact Town Manager Adams prior to March 15, 2018 should they have any questions or concerns.

9. Up & Coming Weekly.

Town Manager Adams commented the Town made a one year agreement with Up & Coming Weekly which ends on September 5, 2018. The Board must decide whether to continue on or end the partnership.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell inquired the Town's advertising budget. Town Manager Adams and Finance Director Holland responded the Town does not have a set advertising budget as it is different for each department.

Commissioner Bellflowers inquired which methods we utilize for advertising. Town Manager Adams responded we advertise through the Fayetteville Observer and social media.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell commented the Administration department is lacking in advertising and social media presence. Town Manager Adams responded she is currently working on addressing that matter without having to add additional staff.

Commissioner Edwards commented she is in support of renewing the Town's agreement with Up & Coming Weekly as she has heard all positive reviews from residents and local businesses.

Discussion pursued regarding terminating the agreement with Up & Coming Weekly prior to September. The consensus of the Board was to honor the Town's agreement with Up & Coming Weekly.

Motion made by Commissioner Legge, seconded by Commissioner Bellflowers to honor the agreement with Up & Coming Weekly through 9-12-2018 and discontinue using Up & Coming Weekly and not budget for the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year and the motion carried with a vote of 3 ayes and 2 noes by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell and Commissioner Edwards.

Mayor Warner called for a brief recess for lunch at 12:05 p.m.

At 1:00 p.m. Mayor Warner called the meeting back to order.

10. Hope Mills Bus System.

Parks & Recreation Director Kenny Bullock presented the information provided by Fayetteville Area System of Transit (FAST) Director, Randy Hume regarding the Hope Mills Bus System. Five circulator options were offered for an internal shuttle bus and a connector bus with an operating subsidy cost of either \$96,750 or \$77,410.

Discussion pursued regarding funding sources. Mayor Warner commented the previous Board heard this presentation from Randy Hume and agreed to pay for the Taxi Voucher Program.

Commissioner Bellflowers wished for Randy Hume to return to present the Hope Mills Bus System options to the new Board. Mayor Warner responded the bus system would not be included in the 2018-2019 Budget if the Board waited to take action.

Finance Director Holland suggested the Town move forward in the Voucher Program for seniors and the Board may hear the Bus System presentation from Transit Director Hume.

Commissioner Bellflowers suggested the Board select either the shuttle bus or connector bus option to narrow their focus. Mayor Warner commented the Town will opt for the connector option.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Bellflowers and carried unanimously, to approve further discussion from FAST Transit Director Randy Hume and add the connector bus option to the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year Budget with the option to remove from the Budget after hearing further discussion.

11. Parks & Recreation Comp Plan.

Finance Director Holland reviewed the cost comparisons for the newly revised Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Bellflowers was in agreement that in order to move forward, a comprehensive plan is required to seek grant funding.

Discussion pursued regarding funding through a PARTF Grant. Town Manager Adams recommended the Town begin with the Lake Park and Heritage Park prior to the Golf Course Property.

Motion made by Commissioner Bellflowers, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell and carried unanimously, to authorize the Town Manager to approve contracts with McAdams for the completion of the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan for \$45,180 and ETC Institute for the survey administration for \$12,000 and remain within the \$81,267 budget.

12. Museum House Renovation.

Development & Planning Administrator Chancer McLaughlin reviewed the Historic Preservation Commission's proposed renovations for the newly purchased Mill House. The Town budgeted \$224,000 for the Parrish House which was returned to the General Fund.

Discussion pursued regarding the use of local contractors.

Mayor Warner inquired the anticipated timeline in moving forward with the project. Public Works Director Cruz commented if he can compile the scope of work in the next couple weeks, the project can be put out for bid. Finance Director Holland commented once we receive the bids for the scope of work, a Budget Amendment would be written to pull funds from the Fund Balance for the Museum project.

Motion made by Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell and carried unanimously, to proceed with the museum house renovations.

13. Episcopal Church Parking Lot.

Finance Director Holland commented the church property was returned to the heirs but the Town still plans to make use of the parking lot that is owned by the Town. Pipes and inlets are already installed and the bids would be for paving, grading and erosion control.

Motion made by Commissioner Bellflowers, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell and carried unanimously, to receive rebids for the parking lot construction and report back to the Board of Commissioners.

14. Parrish House.

Finance Director Holland commented restoration of the Parrish House is not an option as it is too costly due to termite damage. Therefore the Town suggests we raze the structure and use the property for public parking. The estimate to demolish the house is \$11,000.

Town Manager Adams commented we may development some form of a shared parking agreement with Dr. Raynor as he has expressed interest in the past, which would give us an easement option.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Bellflowers and carried unanimously, to budget for the demolition of the Parrish House and engineering fees for the design of the parking lot in the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year Budget and allow the Town Manager to begin discussions with Dr. Raynor.

15. Dilapidated/Abandoned Homes.

Development & Planning Administrator McLaughlin commented under the new program, the Town would make an offer to the owner to demolish the identified residences. The offer would propose a 20% cost to the owner and the Town would cover the remaining costs. Town staff found the average cost to demolish a home to be around \$7,000. The program would run for two years and funds for the first year would be to identify and demolish four homes.

Motion made by Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Legge and carried unanimously, to fund the Demolition Program for the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year Budget.

16. Town Appearance/Sign Enforcement.

In an effort to regulate illegal signs more effectively, the Town has developed a new Sign Enforcement Zone Program. The Town of Hope Mills will be divided into five separate zones that would be enforced weekly allowing staff to conduct sign sweeps in a designated zone.

Town Manager Adams commented the Sign Enforcement Program is not a budgetary item but a new program Town staff wished for the Board to be aware of.

17. Overlay Districts.

Town Manager Adams commented after the March 8, 2018 meeting with Cumberland County Planning Staff, the Town will likely need to conduct a series of workshops to discuss overlay districts.

18. Donut Hole Annexations.

Development & Planning Administrator Chancer McLaughlin presented a series of maps provided by PWC displaying the proposed donut hole annexations and areas that receive water and sewer. Town staff has been in communication with the state legislature regarding a proposal to consider involuntarily annexing properties contiguous to the Town limits.

Town Manager Adams commented several workshops will need to be held to review the maps to identify proposed donut hole properties. Town Manager Adams suggested the Board allow Town staff to begin compiling a list of the true donut holes areas and any other preliminary information prior to meeting with the Board.

Town Manager Adams thanked all the Department Heads for their input and efforts in compiling all the information for this year's Budget Retreat.

Mayor Warner commended the Hope Mills Police Department for their quick apprehension of a drug store robber.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell expressed his appreciation for all Town staff and their efforts.

4. Adjournment.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Legge and carried unanimously, to adjourn the meeting.

Mayor Warner adjourned the meeting at 2:45 p.m.

Jackie Warner, Mayor

ATTEST:

Deborah Holland, NCCMC
Interim Town Clerk