

**TOWN OF HOPE MILLS
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 14, 2019, 7.00 P.M.
BILL LUTHER BOARD MEETING ROOM**

Mayor Jackie Warner called the special meeting of the Hope Mills Board of Commissioners to order on Monday, January 14, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT.

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

STAFF PRESENT.

Town Manager Melissa Adams, Town Clerk Jane Starling, and Development & Planning Administrator Chancer McLaughlin. Also present were Town Attorney Dan Hartzog, Jr., and Cumberland County Planner, Betty Lynd.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

The invocation was led by Commissioner Jerry Legge, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Jackie Warner.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS.

Motion made by Commissioner Legge and carried unanimously, to approve the agenda as presented.

2. PRESENTATIONS.

- a. For the purpose of continuing a Public Hearing. (*Case P18-40: Revision and Amendment to the Hope Mills Zoning Ordinance amending Article XIV Signs, Section 102A-1402. Sign Definitions; Section 102A-1404. Signs Permitted in any district, sub-section H. Temporary political signs & sub-section L. Sandwich board signs; Section 102A-1405. General site and sign specifications; sub-section C. Freestanding sign location – all districts (excluding billboards), sub-section D. Maintenance and appearance & sub-section G. Unsafe and unlawful signs; Section 102A-1406. Signs permitted by district, sub-section A. Residential and conservancy districts & sub-section B. Professional, commercial and industrial districts; Section 102A-1407. Billboards (off-premises signs), sub-section A. General provisions; and Section 102A-1408. Signs prohibited.*) This was tabled from the Board's December 3, 2018 meeting.

Development & Planning Administrator Chancer McLaughlin commented the Board has held a number of Sign Ordinance workshops over the past few months, and then read over the categories of changes that are being considered.

Mayor Warner invited the public to speak stating there was not a limit on the time they could speak.

Mr. Ralph Huff, 606 Forest Lake Dr. Fayetteville, NC commented; the ordinance is not reducing the size of signs by 50%, it is cutting the allowed size by 60 to 80%. Mr. Huff feels Hope Mills is easy to do business with and doesn't want that to change.

Mr. Joe Riddle 125 Great Oaks Dr. Fayetteville, NC commented; Hope Mills should not try to emulate other markets and he disagrees with monument signs on the interstate.

Mr. Matt Blashfield, 303 Williams St. Fayetteville, NC commented; as a sign maker, he is aware the size of lettering should be related to the speed limit, he offered to provide statistics to Development & Planning Administrator Chancer McLaughlin.

Mr. Tommy Bradford, 460 Willow Bend Lane, Fayetteville, NC 28303 commented; Hope Mills is business friendly, unlike Fayetteville, and requested that it remain unchanged.

Mr. Dennis Bruckner, Duneland Signs, 3502 Golfview Rd. Hope Mills, NC 28348 commented; the quality of the sign and not the size is the important factor. Mr. Bruckner requested the Board be more liberal with the allowable size.

Ms. Jennifer Hixson, 5789 Rockfish Rd. Hope Mills, NC 28348 commented; she recently moved back to Town and hopes to establish a business here. Ms. Hixson requested the Board not limit signs except in terms of quality and further commented Hope Mills is not Cary or Pinehurst and the Town should take pride in who we are, not try to emulate other municipalities.

Mr. Bill Mcfayden, 2105 Cloverfield Lane Eastover, NC, former owner of Mcfayden Music, commented; Hope Mills incubates successful small business and requested the Board look at their ordinances as a way to help business and not hinder it.

Ms. Casey Shaffer, 4322 Dominique St. Hope Mills, NC commented; she is present to represent the Chamber of Commerce Board and she attended school for marketing. Ms. Shaffer went on to say the restrictive sizing on signs could be a deterrent to small businesses wanting to come to Hope Mills that don't have a large budget.

Mr. Ronald Maury, Legion Rd. Hope Mills, NC commented; he has lived here 3 years and over his 75-year lifetime has seen towns try to re-invent the mouse trap. Mr. Maury requested the Town be smart in the amendments to the ordinance and not overthink it.

Mr. Grilley Mitchell, 4056 William Luther Dr. Hope Mills, NC commented; the Town will receive a lot of collateral damage and fallout if they don't get the Sign Ordinance changes right. Mr. Mitchell requested the community not be a victim of bad decision making.

Mr. Gary Isaacs, 3925 Castlefield Lane Hope Mills, NC commented; his concern is for the safety at the corner of Footbridge Lane and Camden Road where the sign blocks the view of those making a left turn. Mr. Issacs feels the sign should either be farther back or higher up to provide better visibility. Mr. Isaacs commented his only concern is the safety of the residents, not the appearance of signs.

Mayor Warner inquired whether the amendments to the ordinance causing concerns are the changes to height and size. Mr. McLaughlin responded they are and clarified that real estate signs and banners are not being considered for amendment in the current proposed version. Mr. McLaughlin commented if we reduce the height allowance, we'd then have to reduce the size as well because of the scale. The current amendment only refers to freestanding signs and doesn't affect a business wall sign.

Commissioner Bellflowers commented the reason he requested the continuation of this hearing was so that common ground could be reached. Commissioner Bellflowers requested Development & Planning Administrator McLaughlin explain a tiered approach. Commissioner Bellflowers also commented that one week is not long enough for new business banners.

Development & Planning Administrator Chancer McLaughlin commented that ultimately, we are trying to find a middle ground where businesses feel like the Town is not heavy-handed while giving the Board the ability to address concerns that are raised in the community.

Commissioner Edwards commented she agrees with Commissioner Bellflowers and the Town should to go with a tiered approach. Commissioner Edwards requested Development & Planning Administrator Chancer McLaughlin make the changes and come up with something that is agreeable for all parties.

Mayor Pro Temp Mitchell commented he raised this issue back in 2012 and as a small business owner, he understands the need for larger signs on four lane roads. Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell noted in speaking with members of the business community, he found they were not opposed to monument signs. Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell commented that 60 or 90 days was a more reasonable time to allow for new business banners.

Commissioner Larson commented she majored in marketing prior to moving to Hope Mills in 1992; she was responsible for nine stores in multiple communities, all having their own sign ordinances, and believes the ordinances did not affect the areas as far as sales. Commissioner Larson also commented she receives multiple calls from citizens concerned about the current look of signs in Town and their desires should be taken into account. Commissioner Larson feels that monument signs are the way to go.

Commissioner Legge commented he has a problem with the small, non-professionally made signs that staff collect every day. Commissioner Legge commented he does not

want to run businesses away from Hope Mills, and would like to have more time to review the changes Development & Planning Administrator McLaughlin comes up with.

Development & Planning Administrator McLaughlin commented that because the Board is making an amendment to the current proposed ordinance change, it will have to go back before the County Planning Board after approval by the Board of Commissioners.

Motion made by Commissioner Bellflowers and carried unanimously, for Development & Planning Administrator McLaughlin to bring requested changes back to the January 22, 2019 regular meeting.

3. ADJOURNMENT.

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

Mayor Warner adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Jackie Warner, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jane G. Starling, CMC, Town Clerk