

**MINUTES**  
**September 19, 2006**  
**Town Council Meeting**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Prosperity, SC 29127**

Council Attendance: Mayor Larry Spotts, Councilmen: G.W. Dawkins  
Allen Gallman, Chad Hawkins, & Derek Underwood

Administrative Attendance: Karen Livingston, Clerk Treasurer;  
Hank Bufkin, Attorney; Sabrina Manning;  
Benji Sease, Chief of Police; Scott Wilson, Acting  
Chief of Police; Craig Nelson; Adrien Navarette

Mayor Spotts called the regular meeting to order. Mayor Spotts welcomed everyone and thanked everyone for attending. Councilman Gallman opened the meeting with prayer.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

There are two sets of minutes that need to be approved. Mayor Spotts asked for a motion to approve the August 15, 2006 minutes.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Gallman to approve the minutes of the August 15, 2006 meeting as written; seconded by Councilman Dawkins and so approved unanimously.

The second set of minutes is from the Special called meeting of August 22, 2006.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Gallman to approve the minutes of the August 22, 2006 meeting as written; seconded by Councilman Hawkins and so approved unanimously.

No one signed up to speak in open session.

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

**Electrical, Fire Dept., Parade Comm. & Rescue Squad:** Councilman Underwood stated that the electrical department budget is in line. On September 19, 2006, Chief Bowers attended the pre-bid meeting for the new fire department. Bids will open on October 3, 2006. If all goes on schedule we will have a new Fire Department next Spring. First parade committee meeting was held. Last year the committee carried over a surplus of \$1300. Due to this the Town should not have to put in the \$500.00 budgeted. Decorations were discussed. Council members should each submit three names for consideration as the 2006 Grand Marshal. In case of inclement weather WKDK had been the previous means to communicate this to the public. The broadcast is no longer live on

Sunday. The Committee will now use the Town weather hotline. The entry fee will be \$15.00. An additional \$5.00 fee has been implemented for late applicants. There will be no outside vendors on parade day. Main Street merchants can set up in their own doorway. The float will be utilized again. Additional volunteers are welcome to help with the parade both in the planning process and on parade day. Council, Mayor and Mr. Bufkin asked for clarification of the vendor situation at the parade. Mr. Underwood explained that the wording in the parade policy was such that during the extremely crowded Main Street sidewalk situation there could be no street vendors. This is in part due to safety concerns. Mr. Underwood had nothing to report from the Rescue Squad.

**Sanitation, Streets, & Buildings Departments:** Councilman Dawkins stated that the state highway department will furnish the 5 gallons of yellow paint for the curbs and sidewalks. We will have to buy gray paint. We will paint them ourselves when we get the paint. On Thursday, September 21, 2006, at 10:30 the man will spray again for mosquitoes. This will be posted on the Town Sign. Because we have no word on the grants that we have out - we will patch the tiles again. Mr. Fred Sexton requested overtime for two men on Sunday. This would be more efficient, not as much foot traffic while the stores are closed plus it would not cut into their regular town duties. The epoxy previously discussed by council will be ordered. This work will begin week after next and will be performed on Sunday. Mr. Gallman requested we revisit the list of building owners that need to receive letters about the condition of their buildings. Mayor Spotts passed on an updated list. The town clock is partially working again. Approval was given for Councilman Hawkins getting an estimate from a company to fix the clock.

The SCDOT has reconfigured the switch in the traffic light at Bowers BP. This configuration should eliminate the hesitation problems.

The SCDOT cannot dictate the inlets and outlets of the Post Office because it is private property. Councilman Hawkins volunteered to speak with the postmaster on behalf of the Town Council. Councilman Hawkins and Councilman Underwood will go together and inform Councilman Dawkins as to the progress.

**Water and Sewer:** Councilman Gallman stated that the water and sewer departments are running smooth. Two lift stations were cleaned to insure the smooth running. There were several minor leaks nothing major but all were fixed.

**Police Department:** Officer Wilson stated that for the month of August there were 7 arrests made, 9 warrants served, the department answered 64 calls for service 43 citations issued, 24 moving and 19 non-moving violations. Officer Wilson looked into unsightly properties on Shealy Drive. Officer Wilson stated the department needs new bulletproof vests. Benji's vest is approaching 5 years. Officer Wilson's vest is approaching 5 years. Craig was never issued a new vest. The vests can cost from \$400.00 to \$600.00. The

Prosperity Masonic Lodge has assisted in the past. Matching grants are sometimes available. Our department has the policy in place - officers are required to wear vests. Research is presently being done on purchase options, quality options and real

department need. After additional discussion, council decided to consider the purchase of vests.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Gallman to approve the purchase of two vests; Seconded by Councilman Underwood and so approved unanimously.

Mayor Spotts instructed Karen Livingston to work with Chief Sease on the specifics of the vests purchase.

Councilman Gallman would like the need for vests to be monitored and recommendations brought to council, as vests are needed.

Councilman Underwood spoke on behalf of making sure the Town of Prosperity has adequate police coverage to ensure the security of the Town. Council agreed that the police department schedule needed additional personnel. Interviews are being conducted for an interim person. A full time person is presently going through the police hire process. This process should put him on our streets as a certified police officer in December. Councilman Underwood asked if council would like to consider voting on offering hours with the Town of Prosperity Police Department to off duty sheriff deputies. Several citizens have had situations come up during the hours that we do not have an officer. Councilman Gallman made council aware of the break-ins to his nephew's store (The Spot). Mayor Spotts spoke up that some of these occurrences were while town officers were on-duty. We have offered \$11.00 per hour to them before. Councilman Underwood made council aware of Whitmire paying them \$15.00 per hour for the same coverage we are requesting.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Underwood to allow the Prosperity Police Department to hire off-duty sheriff deputies at a pay rate of \$15.00 per hour to fill the schedule as needed; Seconded by Councilman Gallman and so approved unanimously.

Mayor Spotts instructed Officer Wilson to work with Karen Livingston to work out the scheduling and payment of the additional staff from the county.

**Recreation & Parks:** Councilman Hawkins stated that soccer registration is complete with 129 participants divided into 14 teams, 12 of which are age 4-9. Shag and line dance classes are in the works. Self-defense classes are a possibility for the future.

**Utility Department:** Mr. Fred Sexton checked into the curb problem at the Stable. Several anchor pins had come up through the top. The maintenance guys took care of the problem. A gentleman that did damage to the BMW that he was driving is inquiring about compensation from the Town. The appropriate reports were not filed at the time of the occurrence.

The under ground transformer behind Town Hall is leaking. It has not been leaking long. Mr. Sexton will investigate further and repair or replace as required. This transformer was previously rebuilt so it cannot be rebuilt again.

The Utility Department is in desperate need of a qualified employee, someone that has a high school education that also wants to come to work and learn the trade. Two employees were cut from the budget in the past. At present we have annual projects that are left undone for daily tasks. Council suggested taking applications and asked Mr. Sexton to bring back a recommendation to council.

Council inquired of the railroad bank weed growth situation. After discussion the utility department will make a recommendation in the spring as the growing season comes up again.

**Town Attorney:** Mr. Bufkin would like to discuss a contract matter in executive session.

**Clerk/Treasurer:** Ms. Livingston scheduled a meeting with First Automotive who has the state contract on preventative maintenance for town equipment. Mrs. Livingston will report back to Council.

Councilman Underwood stated the owner of the German Restaurant would like to use the wooden picnic tables again for the Octoberfest Celebration that she is planning.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Underwood to allow the German Restaurant to use the picnic tables October 20-21; Seconded by Councilman Hawkins and so approved unanimously.

Mrs. Livingston noted the provision that the tables must be back at 10:00 AM on Sunday due to the shelter being rented in the afternoon. Councilman Underwood said he would take care of that.

Councilman Underwood expressed a desire to have a town flag design. Council took this as information.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mayor Spotts announced personnel issues and a contractual matter for discussion in executive session.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Hawkins to go into Executive Session; Seconded by Councilman Dawkins and so approved unanimously.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Gallman to come out of Executive Session; Seconded by Councilman Hawkins and so approved unanimously.

Mayor Spotts announced the discussion of the annual auditing contract. Mrs. Livingston explained that as we put out the request for bids we received one bid. The bid came from McGreggor and Company, LLP. The bid amount is between \$18,000 and \$23,000 depending on the amount of work to be done.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Gallman to accept the Audit bid of McGregor and Company, LLP; Seconded by Councilman Underwood and so approved unanimously.

Mayor Spotts announced that one of the personnel issues discussed was the Town Attorney position. The town attorney is a two-year appointed position. Mayor Spotts made the recommendation that before we reappoint we should advertise the position to see what else is available and who else may apply. Councilman Underwood stated that he would like to see Mr. Bufkin appointed for another two years.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Gallman to retain our town attorney for another two years; Seconded by Councilman Underwood.

Mayor Spotts opened the floor for discussion with the statement that he was going to vote against it because he thought we should get other options and bring it up later without voting on it tonight - after we get other options to look at. Councilman Hawkins stated that our town attorney has the history and the background of our town and if we look for another attorney that history would be lost. Councilman Underwood stated that he thought Mr. Bufkin put his heart into his work and that he looks out for the best interest of the town. Councilman Hawkins said that he did not think we could find anybody any better.

**VOTE:** Mayor Spotts called for a vote on the previously stated motion. All council members voted yes. Mayor Spotts voted no. Mayor Spotts stated that, the vote was four to one. Mayor Spotts then appointed Mr. Bufkin as town attorney for another two years.

Chief Benji Sease introduced Adrien Navarrette. He comes to us from the Newberry County Detention Center where has been a correctional officer for a little over a year. He is bi-lingual and will be an asset to our police department.

In her absence Councilman Hawkins introduced LaPrecious Mathis. Mrs. Sabrina has accepted a full time position as assistant to the clerk treasurer. We have hired LaPrecious Mathis as the recreation coordinator. She has a BS in Sports Management from North Greenville University. She has worked with all type of sporting activities and has some grant writing experience. We would like to thank Mrs. Sabrina for the good foundation she has laid. We are looking forward to building it and seeing where it goes.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **DEBT SET-OFF ORDINANCE**

**A MOTION** by Councilman Underwood to accept second reading of the debt set-off ordinance; Seconded by Councilman Hawkins and so approved unanimously.

### **ADDITION OF STREET LIGHTS**

Mr. Fred Sexton estimates an additional ten or twelve street lights are needed. Research is being done into low-pressure sodium lights. These project the lights more directly and

are more energy efficient. Cutoff Cobra lights are also an option. These also project light to specific areas. Chief Sease expressed his thoughts on the safety issues within the communities building up but leaving the street areas dark. This was taken for information with the thoughts that citizens with specific thoughts or concerns will be asked to voice these during open session at the next council meeting.

### **OUTDOOR PARK HOURS**

Councilman Hawkins stated that in 2007 “day light savings hours” will be extended. Daylight savings hours will start the second Sunday in March and end with the first Sunday in November. This in mind the Community Parks Committee recommends that park hours be established as April through August 6:00AM to 9:00 PM and September through March 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM. This recommendation is being made for the Town Center Facility only.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Underwood to establish the outside park hours as recommended by Community Parks Committee; Seconded by Councilman Hawkins and so approved unanimously.

The park hours are not recommended to apply to activities organized by the Town Recreation Department.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Underwood to amend the motion to establish the outside park hours as recommended by Community Parks Committee established hours for organized town activities will supercede the regular hours; Seconded by Councilman Gallman and so approved unanimously.

### **UTILITY VEHICLE**

Research has been done on both new and used vehicles. Council was made aware that the trucks listed on the state surplus website move quickly. State regulations mandate that these vehicles come out of their fleet after so many miles. The town will salvage a truck it already owns. We are not adding an additional truck. The funds for this vehicle will come from reserves. There is no line item for the purchase of a vehicle.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Dawkins for Mr. Sexton and Mrs. Livingston to work out the details of the purchase of a used utility truck from State Surplus on Wednesday morning, September 20, 2006; Seconded by Councilman Gallman and so approved unanimously.

Mrs. Livingston clarified that the motion will stand for the purchase of a used utility truck from State Surplus in the event the specific truck is gone. This motion is for one truck only. Mr. Sexton made council aware of the need for an additional truck after this purchase. The next truck does not have to be a truck with bins on it.

### **PAINT FOR THE CURB**

Discussed earlier in this meeting.

**EXCESSIVE TRASH THROWN OUT THROUGH TOWN**

Officer Wilson put together a packet of information for review. Officer Wilson, Councilman Underwood, and Councilman Gallman will work together on a proposal for council regarding implementing a plan for reducing the trash being left beside the roads in the town.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**APPOINTMENT TO ZBA**

Mr. Sonny Edwards has had some health problems and has asked to be removed. At request of council Mrs. Livingston has spoken with Mr. Robert McFall. He has agreed to serve.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Hawkins to appoint Mr. Robert Mc Fall to the Prosperity ZBA; Seconded by Councilman Underwood and so approved unanimously.

Mrs. Livingston will notify Mr. McFall.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Prosperity's Hoppin' was a huge success. Mayor Spotts thanked Mrs. Karen and her staff for putting the Festival together. Mayor Spotts has not really heard any complaints. We look forward to bigger and better next year.

Mayor Spotts stated that citizen participation has been very disappointing for "Town Talk". We will try it one more time and then make a decision as to whether the public really wants this time to speak with council informally. The third quarterly Town Talk was publicized more than efficiently.

Mayor Spotts made a plea to the citizens of the town to please help with the litter throughout the town. He would like the citizens of the town to report littering to officers, town hall or a councilman so the proper steps can be taken.

Mr. Gallman requested the officers to do some additional patrols on Byrd Street. There is a "special needs" home on the street and people are speeding on that road.

Officer Nelson suggested an organized crime watch program. Several citizens have inquired and are interested in seeing a program like this developed for Prosperity.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Dawkins to adjourn the meeting at 9:04; Seconded by Councilman Underwood and so approved unanimously.

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Karen L. Livingston Clerk- Treasurer