

Minutes
Town Council Meeting
August 16, 2005
PROSPERITY, SC 29127
7:00 PM

Council Attendance: Mayor Bruce Connelly, Councilmen Larry Spotts; Derek Underwood; Allen Gallman & G.W. Dawkins

Administrative Attendance: Missy Grubbs, Clerk Treasurer; Fred Sexton, Public Works Director; Hank Bufkin, Town Attorney; Benji Sease, Chief of Police; Sabrina Manning, Recreation Director

Mayor Connelly called the meeting to order. Councilman Gallman opened the meeting with prayer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Connelly presented the minutes of the July 19, 2005 council meeting to Council for approval.

Councilman Spotts stated that the attachment mentioned in the minutes was not attached. Ms. Grubbs stated that one of the attachments was originally left off but put in Councils boxes later. Councilman Spotts stated that he did not receive it. Ms. Grubbs stated that she would put another copy in his box. Councilman Spotts also questioned on page when the Mayor reminded everyone there could be no interaction with Council during "Open Session". Councilman Spotts stated he had looked back through the Town ordinances and Roberts's Rules of Order and could not find where it stated this. Mayor Connelly stated that the Freedom of Information act would not allow interaction in Open Session.

A MOTION by Councilman Underwood to approve the minutes of July 19, 2005; Seconded by Councilman Gallman and so approved unanimously.

WELCOME NOTE:

Mayor Connelly welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked all in attendance for coming.

Mayor Connelly stated the Town's administration had reviewed Mr. Hare's request to be on the agenda. The request was declined because it was not specific.

OPEN SESSION:

Ms. Anna K Singley introduced herself to Council and stated that she lived at 524 S. Main St in Prosperity. She stated that she wanted to speak to Council about Frog Level Art Center. She stated that it would be a nonprofit organization. They are ready to start landscaping and she would like to request some help from the Town with mowing and leveling of the area around the building. Some of the trucks that were paving the streets had parked on the property during wet weather and left ruts that make it difficult to mow the grass. She stated that she would also like to look into adding some ponds. The buildings that are there are being renovated and there will also be a small park around the building. Mayor Connelly stated this would be put on the agenda for next month.

Mr. Daniel Hair introduced himself to Council and stated that he lived at 340 Langford Street in Prosperity. He stated that he had come to the Council regarding the community of Langford Street. He stated that they would like to know what happened to their petition to stop the construction of the Utility building on Langford Street. Mayor Connelly stated that Council could not interact with him under Open Session. Mr. Hare asked if Council received the petition prior to construction starting on this project. Mayor Connelly stated that Council could not interact with him. Mr. Hare stated that Council decided to put this building on Langford Street without knowing how it would affect the community. Mayor Connelly stated he would be glad to talk to him after the meeting, but could not interact with him during Open Session.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES:

Electrical and Fire Department: Councilman Underwood stated that during the last council meeting Mayor Connelly asked for the quote regarding the Conifer Drive project to be reviewed and reported on tonight. He stated that along with Mr. Sexton, they had come up with some new figures for this project. He stated that the initial quote called for underground wiring instead of overhead wiring which would change the price. The original quote was \$30,938.48. After refiguring the quote it was agreed upon that the new quote would be \$20,000.00. This would cover the costs of this project. Mayor Connelly asked if Councilman Underwood could get a copy of the figures to each Council member.

Councilman Underwood stated that he had talked to the Fire Department and the Rescue Squad and felt that Council should do something to show our appreciation for what these two groups do for this Town. He recommended that Council make a \$50.00 donation to each group to help offset the cost that they might incur during the upcoming festival.

A MOTION by Councilman Underwood to donate \$50.00 to the Rescue Squad and \$50.00 to the Fire Department; Seconded by Councilman Dawkins.

Councilman Spotts questioned where these funds would come from. Ms. Grubbs stated that it would come from this year's budget. The Motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Underwood stated that on the budget for the Fire Departments the line item for the phone bill had a current total of the \$282.00. Ms. Grubbs stated she would look into that line item further and get back with him on it.

Sanitation and Streets: Councilman Dawkins stated that work needs to be done on the sidewalks. He stated that this should be done in a few weeks. The Utility Department will also be working another Saturday on the debris pick up.

Building, Recreation and Parks: Councilman Gallman stated he had not received any more information on the buildings unless Mr. Bufkin had. He stated that recreation had a fantastic year in baseball. Each group had a team represented at playoffs. Ms. Manning stated that soccer registration is going good. The registration deadline will be August 23rd. Forms are available here at Town Hall or on our web site. Space is available from ages 4-14. We are looking forward to a great year and are anticipating a great turn out like last year. Councilman Gallman asked how many kids were registered. Ms. Manning stated that so far 30 have signed up and we anticipate 150-200 to sign up.

Mr. Bufkin stated that two buildings in Town had been questioned in our last council meeting. The first building in question is the one beside the Chinese restaurant. He stated that he had sent the owner a letter. The property owner had contacted Ms. Cantrell and there was a meeting set up between the owner and Ms. Cantrell. The property owner stated he wanted to be in compliance with the Town's ordinances and regulations.

Mr. Bufkin stated that the other property in question is out on Langford Street. Nathaniel Wise owns the property but there is a mortgage held against the property by Ladison Hamm. There is a relative who lives in Columbia who is trying to help get the property deeded back to the Hamms. Mr. Hamm has agreed to help to do what ever is necessary to secure the property.

Mayor Connelly stated that he would like to address some issues in the recreation department. He stated that the Town has a mutual agreement with Newberry Recreation. Newberry Recreation does not have a soccer program and the Town does not have football program. There is a mutual agreement that they can come here to play and we can play up there. Discussion followed regarding recreation.

Police Department: Chief Sease had no report at this time. Councilman Spotts stated he had been questioned by citizens regarding the speed limit on highway 76 past the school going from 35 mph to 55 mph. He stated that citizens would like to see the 35 mph speed zone extended past Wessinger Drive. Chief Sease stated that he has sent requests to the Highway department in the past regarding this issue however the request was denied. Councilman Spotts stated that he would like to see the Town make this request again. Chief Sease stated that he agreed with Councilman Spotts and would work on it. Councilman Dawkins asked about an Officer being at the school directing traffic when school takes in and lets out. Chief Sease stated that if the Officer on duty does not have a call then they should be at the school directing traffic.

Councilman Underwood asked the Chief if he thought a formal request from Council to the Highway department would help with the request to extend the speed zone. Chief Sease stated that a request straight from Council would be great.

Water and Sewer Department: Councilman Spotts stated the time clock at the Park Well had to be changed out. Bishops Hydrant service checked and flushed all the hydrants in the Town. There are three hydrants that they will have to come back and work on. The suction pipes were replaced on both motors on lift station #4. Councilman Dawkins asked if all the hydrants were red. Councilman Spotts stated all but one he thought was red. Discussion followed regarding the significance of the color of the hydrant.

Town Administrator: Mayor Connelly stated that Ms. Cantrell was unable to attend the meeting due to a death in her family. He stated the only thing that he was aware that Ms. Cantrell wanted to report was on the upcoming festival. Mayor Connelly encouraged everyone to support the festival's events. Frogmore Stew tickets are available now at Town Hall. He stated that this is a big revenue for the festival. He stated there would also be tours through the Civic Center and Town Center on Friday night and Saturday. Mayor Connelly went over the schedule of events for the festival.

Town Attorney: Mr. Bufkin stated that at the last meeting he was asked to find out about the use of availability fees. He stated that in the Town there are water, sewer, and electric available to places that are not being utilized. He stated that he had reviewed this situation with other municipalities in the area and there seems to be a very strong consensus that sewer availability should be charged. The charges are supported by ordinances. He stated that he had requested copies of some of the ordinances for review.

Old School Renovations: Mayor Connelly stated that on Friday night there would be tours available through the Old School as mentioned earlier. Most of the wiring, demolition, and plumbing are done. They are ready to start putting up insulation. The building itself has been there for over one hundred years and hopefully with the renovations that are taking place it will be here another hundred years. He stated that he invites everyone to come out and take a tour of the building to view the progress.

NEW BUSINESS

Swearing in of Reserve Officer: Chief Sease stated that he has been with the Town for four years. He stated that shortly after he was hired the Town hired Officer Scott Wilson. He stated that Officer Wilson had been sent to numerous classes in order to get qualified to train reserve classes. He commended Officer Wilson on the great job he has done. The reserve program started last year and five people were interviewed. Three initially dropped out when they found out what was involved and the time it would take to become a reserve officer. Two individuals went through the course however Jaime Martin was the only one that successfully completed it. He has put in a lot of time and effort into becoming qualified as a reserve officer. Mr. Martin will be working for free; the only thing that the Town will be providing for him is workman's compensation

coverage in case of an injury on duty and his uniforms. Mr. Jamie Martin was presented to Council and he read his oath.

Status of 04/05 Audit: Mayor Connelly stated that Dean Richardson could not be here tonight and asked Ms. Grubbs if she could bring Council up to date on the audit. Ms. Grubbs stated that she wanted to make Council aware that there have been some set backs in our audit. She stated that Council had originally given a strict time line as to when they wanted the final audit back. She stated that two sets of detail general ledger reports from our system have been given to Mr. Richardson and they both contained errors that originated from the software program. The Town's software company, Nicholson, has been contacted both times and they have fixed programming issues. At this time Mr. Richardson does not have an accurate set of report to begin the 04/05 audit. She stated that the audit is already running two months behind because of programming problems. This will most definitely delay getting the audit back. These issues that have been incurred are errors on Nicholson's behalf not Mr. Richardson's or Town administrations. She stated that contact is still taking place with Nicholson regarding these programming errors. Mayor Connelly asked what kind of excuses Nicholson was giving if any. Ms. Grubbs stated that she had not received any answers from them at this time. Some of the problems have been identified and they are working to correct them. She stated that she would like to detail the problems incurred to the head of company, which is Don Nicholson. Mayor Connelly stated that a record of the problems needed to be put in writing to Mr. Nicholson.

Resolution to Appoint Voting Delegate to S.C. Rural Water Association:

Ms. Grubbs read the resolution regarding voting delegates for the SC Rural Water Association (see attached).

A MOTION by Councilman Dawkins to approve the resolution that would appoint Mr. Sexton as voting delegate for the SC Rural Water Association and Councilman Spotts as alternate voting delegate; Seconded by Councilman Underwood and so approved unanimously.

Resolution to Authorize Town to be reimbursed for Civic Center Expenses:

Ms. Grubbs presented Council with the resolution to review before voting. Mayor Connelly stated that back in June the County Council and Planning Committee told the Town that there would be money available immediately from the One Cent Sales Tax Funds. At that time the Town was instructed to move forward with this project that would be funded by this money. Last week notification was received that the funds were not available yet and that they would probably not be available until around September 15th. He stated that the Town project funded by these funds is the Civic Center. This project has already begun and the Town is already incurring some bills from it. This resolution is to allow the Town administration to withdraw money from the Town reserves to pay current bills owed until the funds become available. At that time the Town will be reimbursed the amount spent to date.

A MOTION by Councilman Gallman to approve the resolution to authorize the Town to pay expenses to the Civic Center to be reimbursed by One Cent Sales Tax Funds; Seconded by Councilman Dawkins and so approved unanimously.

Mr. Bufkin stated that he wanted to make Council aware that earlier in the meeting when voting on the resolution to appoint voting delegates to S.C. Rural Water Association Councilman Spotts should not have refrained from voting because he was actually being appointed. He stated that he would suggest that Council revote on this resolution and ask Councilman Spotts to refrain from voting. Mayor Connelly stated that he would ask for this motion to be made again and that Councilman Spotts refrain from voting

A MOTION by Councilman Dawkins to approve the resolution that would appoint Mr. Sexton as voting delegate for the SC Rural Water Association and Councilman Spotts as alternate voting delegate; seconded by Councilman Underwood and so approved unanimously. Councilman Spotts refrained from voting.

A MOTION by Councilman Dawkins to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 pm; seconded by Councilman Gallman and so approved unanimously.

Toni Melissa Grubbs
Clerk/Treasurer