

MINUTES
Snow Hill Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting
Wednesday, May 26, 2010—7:00 p.m.
Snow Hill Town Hall
201 North Greene Street, North Carolina 28580

The Snow Hill Board of Commissioners regular meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 26, 2010 at the Snow Hill Town Hall with the following members present: Mayor Dennis Liles; Commissioners Laura O'Brien, Becki Scarborough, Geraldine Shackelford, Bobby Taylor and Roger Whitson. Others present were Town Clerk Michelle Strickland, Town Attorney Brian Pridgen, Interim Town Administrator/Public Works Director Dana Hill and Finance Officer Andy Harris.

- 1. Call to Order** – Mayor Liles called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.
- 2. Prayer** – Prayer was offered by Commissioner Shackelford.
- 3. Pledge of Allegiance** – The Pledge was led by Commissioner Shackelford.
- 4. Roll Call** – Ms. Strickland called roll. All members were present and a quorum was declared.
- 5. Consider Approving Meeting Agenda** – Motion was made by Commissioner Scarborough, seconded by Commissioner Shackelford and carried unanimously to approve the agenda with item 10a1 “Water and sewer rates” being moved to 7a and Item 7 “Public Hearing – Proposed Water/Sewer Rates” be moved to item 7b and the agenda renumbered due to their being two listed as item 9.
- 6. Consider Approving Meeting Minutes: May 10, 2010** – Motion was made by Commissioner Scarborough, seconded by Commissioner Whitson and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the May 10, 2010 meeting.
- 7. Public Hearing – Proposed Water / Sewer Rates**
 - a) **Finance and Administration Report on Water and Sewer Rates** – Commissioner Whitson spoke regarding the need to do something with the water and sewer rates due to the deficit in the water and sewer fund balance. Commissioner Whitson went over (a copy hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes) a handout that listed actual costs of providing water and sewer as well as samples of water bills at the old and proposed rates. Mr. Whitson went over the proposed rates from the Finance and Administration Committee. The rates proposed to begin with the July 1, 2010 bill are \$5.00 per 1,000 gallons of water, \$9.50 per thousand gallons of sewer, a \$2.00 availability fee for in-town customers, a \$10.00 availability fee for out-of-town customers, and a \$10.00 alternative water fee.

- b.) Public Hearing – Proposed Water/Sewer Rates** – Mayor Liles announced at 7:13 p.m. that the Board would be opening the floor for the public hearing on water and sewer rates.

Mrs. Lorraine Washington came forward to ask the Board how many people actually use just 1,000 gallons of water. Ms. Strickland informed Mrs. Washington there were quite a few customers that used 1,000 gallons or less and that the billing would remain the same as far as billing in hundreds of gallons billed at the thousand gallon rate. Mrs. Washington asked about the difference between the in-town and out-of-town water rates. The Board informed Mrs. Washington that the difference would come in with the availability fee, \$2 for in-town and \$10 for out-of-town.

Ms. Iola Hill Johnson came forward to speak to the Board about her not living in her house full-time and having to pay for water and sewer even if there was nothing used. The Board informed Ms. Johnson that with the proposed rates she would not pay for water and sewer if there was nothing used. She would only pay the \$2.00 availability fee, \$10.50 garbage collection fee, and \$10.00 alternative water fee. If there is no water used, the bill will be \$22.50. Ms. Johnson asked why she had to pay for garbage collection when some weeks she had no garbage. Mr. Hill informed her that the Town had no way of knowing when she had trash and when she didn't and that the contract with Onslow Container was based on how many cans were out there, not how many they pick up.

Ms. Michelle Giles stepped forward to ask a question about the water rates but before she asked the question figured out the answer from the handout.

Ms. Joyce Paige came forward and stated that after the discussion she understood the proposed rates better. Ms. Paige informed the Board that she felt out-of-town customers should pay more than in-town customers.

Ms. Carolyn Newcomb asked about the Town customers not paying for the alternative water fee until December, 2009, nine years after the fee went into effect. The Board informed Ms. Newcomb that not charging the alternative water fee had cost the Town around \$367,000.00 overall. There was discussion of not meeting qualifications for grants or loans with the fund balance the way it was right now.

Ms. Clara Shaw came forward to thank the Town for taking care of the issues that she had brought up at the last meeting regarding her water bill. Ms. Shaw stated that she was now ok with her issues. Ms. Shaw commended Mr. Hill for his work with her water and tree problem.

Mr. Leonard Phillips came forward to ask about zoning in Snow Hill. Mr. Phillips stated that he feels that if the Town were to annex and rezone then it would not be in the financial situation that they are in.

Mrs. Ren Baker spoke regarding the inside and outside water rates. Mrs. Baker stated that she feels that those who are out of town that receive Town services have no liability for those services. Commissioner Taylor stated that voluntary annexation has been occurring.

Mr. Jim Baker stated an observation in that the proposed rates were actual costs. Mr. Baker feels that the Board has done well in that the only cushion that the Board has given themselves to increase fund balances is the proposed availability fee.

Mayor Liles closed the public hearing at 7:31 p.m. with their being no further comments.

8. Presentations

- a. *Michael Rhodes – Greene County Health Director – Animal Control Memorandum of Understanding* – Mr. Rhodes came forward to speak to the Board about a Memorandum of Understanding (a copy hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes) regarding the joining together of the Greene County and Town of Snow Hill Animal Control Programs. Mr. Rhodes explained that the request was for \$16,000.00 and would allow the County program to service the Town of Snow Hill better since losing their animal control officer. Mr. Rhodes spoke on hiring a shelter attendant. Commissioner Whitson asked Mr. Rhodes how the County Animal Control Program was funded. There was discussion of what the Town had done before they had a full-time animal control officer. There was discussion of how long Snow Hill had had an animal control officer.

9. Report of Officers

- a. *Mayor- Appointment of Interim Town Administrator* – Mayor Liles announced that Mr. Dana Hill, Public Works and Utilities Director had been appointed as Interim Town Administrator.
- c. *Finance Officer:*
 1. Proposed Audit Contract – Mr. Harris went over (a copy hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes) the proposed audit contract between the Town of Snow Hill and Barrow, Parris, & Davenport, P.A. for the Board to consider.
 2. Draft Budget Worksheet – Mr. Harris went over (a copy hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes) the proposed budget worksheet for 2010/2011. Mr. Harris indicated cuts in the all funds totaling approximately \$100,000.00.

d. *Town Administrator:*

3. *Mutual Aid Agreement for disasters* – Mr. Hill spoke on (a copy hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes) a Mutual Aid Agreement for disasters with the County handed down from the State. Mr. Hill recommends favorable consideration of the agreement.
4. *Tax Collection Agreement* – Mr. Hill shared (a copy hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes) a draft copy of a contract drawn up by Greene County authorizing Greene County to provide for the listing, supervising and collecting of Ad Valorem Taxes for the Town of Snow Hill. There was discussion of a minimal collection rate being included in the agreement. Ms. Strickland handed out (a copy hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes) a memo of what she feels are the advantages for leaving the tax collection in-house. Ms. Strickland advised the Board that there was other background information that was personnel related and if they had any questions on that, those should probably be handled in a closed session. Ms. Strickland handed out (a copy hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes) information on the parcels that were still due to the Town of Snow Hill for 2009 and informed the Board that this also documented whether the parcels had been paid to Greene County.
5. *Law Enforcement Services* – Mr. Hill spoke to the Board about law enforcement costs. Mr. Hill informed the Board that he has had conversation with Mr. Don Davenport, County Manager and Sheriff Lemmie Smith regarding possible contract arrangements. Mr. Davenport would like the Town to inform him of any offer that the Town comes up with. There was discussion of paying for law enforcement with county and town taxes. There was discussion of wanting to see a special car for Town patrol. Mr. Hill informed the Board that he would like some direction on hours of coverage and such so that he knows how to progress. There was discussion that Hookerton pays \$18,000.00 a year for 80 hours of coverage a week.

e. *Revenue Collector:*

1. *Return Check Policy* – Ms. Strickland went over (a copy hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes) a memo that she had prepared proposing an increase in returned check fees from \$25.00 to \$35.00. Ms. Strickland recommends favorable consideration to the increase.
2. *Notary Fees* – Ms. Strickland went over (a copy hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes) a memo proposing an increase

in Notary fees. Ms. Strickland informed the Board that currently the Town charged \$5.00 per signature for out-of-town customers. Ms. Strickland proposed to begin charging \$2.00 for in-town customers and \$5.00 for out-of-town customers as a way to generate revenue. Ms. Strickland recommends favorable consideration of this change in Notary fees.

3. *Privilege License Form* – Ms. Strickland asked for the Board’s approval to use the Privilege License form that the office has stock of and provided (a copy hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes) a sample of the form. Ms. Strickland advised the Board that these forms would be used for the fee that had set for Internet Café’s to begin on July 1, 2010.

10. Report of the Boards, Commissions, Committees and/or Taskforces:

a. *Finance and Administration: Report and Recommendation*

1. *Proposed Budget Work Session – June 14th 6 p.m.* – Commissioner Whitson announced that the next regular meeting on June 14, 2010 will begin at 6:00 p.m. instead of 7:00 p.m. in order to have a budget work session.

b. *Public Works Committee Chairman:*

1. *Options for sale of Fire Station* – Commissioner Taylor spoke to the Board about the possible sale of the Fire Station to Greene County Board of Education. Commissioner Taylor went over an agreement that had been e-mailed to him by Superintendent Patrick Miller to purchase the property for \$60,000.00. This would be split into payments of \$12,000.00 per year for 5 years. Mr. Pridgen pointed out that this would be set up a little differently and that the Board of Education would enter into contract with the Town rather than having traditional promissory notes.

11. Unfinished Business and General Orders: none

12. Public Comments – Mr. Jim Baker came forward and spoke to the Board about the consideration of taking function over form during their meetings to allow comments as topics arise. Mr. Baker also spoke on his opposition to forced annexation. Mr. Baker informed the Board that he felt that friendly annexation could be achieved.

Ms. Corrine Shackelford spoke to the Board about being annexed by force.

Ms. Iola Hill Johnson came forward to ask the Board about pets and inquired on whether there was a leash law in Snow Hill. The Board informed Ms. Johnson to contact the County animal control and that there was a leash law.

Ms. Clara Shaw came forward and spoke on her concern of the police budget, the zoning of Internet Café's, and animal control. Ms. Shaw commended the Board on what they had been doing and commended Mr. Hill and Ms. Strickland for helping her so promptly after the last meeting with her problem with her water bill.

Ms. Joyce Paige came forward and spoke to the Board about the pub that was opened in her neighborhood. She expressed her distress over the business being there. Ms. Paige informed the Board that she felt that they needed to take a look these things before they opened.

Ms. Michelle Giles came forward to ask the Board when the proposed rates would come into effect. The Board informed her that, if approved, they would be effective with the July 1, 2010 bill. Ms. Giles also asked the Board about whether they would be posting the position of Town Administrator. The Board informed Ms. Giles that since the vacancy was so new that they really didn't know what would be done at this point but that they didn't want to make a hurried decision.

Mrs. Ren Baker came forward and informed the Board that she wanted to encourage them not to add funds for animal control. Mrs. Baker informed the Board that she did the tax listing for Greene County and that there was a place on the tax listing where taxpayers were supposed to list their animals and that is where funding came from for animal control. Mrs. Baker also informed the Board that she wanted to discourage the Board from turning over tax collection to Greene County. Mrs. Baker commented that she felt collection rates will return to normal when the office has slowed down with everything that it has been going through.

Ms. Carolyn Newcomb came forward and informed the Board that law enforcement had been a subject in the past and advised the Board that Hookerton sets their own schedule of coverage by the Sherriff's department.

13. New Business:

- a. Consider appointment of Interim Town Administrator – Motion was made by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Scarborough and carried unanimously to appoint Mr. Dana Hill as Interim Town Administrator.**
- b. Consider proposed Animal Control Memorandum of Understanding – This item was tabled by consent.**

- c. Consider authorizing contract with Barrow, Parris & Davenport, P.A. for Auditing Services – **Motion was made by Commissioner Whitson, seconded by Commissioner O'Brien to authorize entering into contract with Barrow, Parris, & Davenport, P.A. for auditing services.**
- d. Consider entering into Mutual Aid Agreement with Emergency Management – **Motion was made by Commissioner Scarborough, seconded by Commissioner Shackleford and carried unanimously to enter into a Mutual Aid Agreement with Greene County Emergency Management.**
- e. Consider Property Tax Agreement with Greene County – **This item was tabled by consent.**
- f. Consider amending Fee Schedule increasing Return Check Fee from \$25 to \$35 – **Motion was made by Commissioner O'Brien, seconded by Commissioner Taylor and carried unanimously to amend the fee schedule to increase returned check fees from \$25.00 to \$35.00.**
- g. Consider amending Fee Schedule increasing Notary Fee to \$2 for town residents and \$5 for out of town customers – **Motion was made by Commissioner Whitson, seconded by Commissioner Shackleford and carried unanimously to amend the fee schedule to increase notary fees to \$2.00 for town residents and \$5.00 for out of town customers.**
- h. Consider use of existing Privilege License Forms – **Motion was made by Commissioner Whitson, seconded by Commissioner O'Brien and carried unanimously to approve the use of existing privilege license forms.**
- i. Consider amending Fee Schedule to reflect proposed water and sewer rates; \$5.00 per thousand gallons for water, \$9.50 per thousand gallons for sewer with an availability fee set at \$2.00 per meter for in-town customers and \$10.00 per meter for out-of-town customers – **Motion was made by Commissioner Whitson, seconded by Commissioner Shackleford and carried unanimously to amend the fee schedule to reflect a change in rates as \$5.00 per thousand gallons for water, \$9.50 per thousand gallons for sewer with an availability fee set at \$2.00 per meter for in-town customers and \$10.00 per meter for out-of-town customers beginning with the July 1, 2010 billing.**
- j. Consider proposal from Greene County Schools regarding purchase of building located at 410 SE Second Street – **Motion was made by Commissioner Scarborough, seconded by Commissioner Whitson and carried unanimously to approve the purchase of the building located at 410 SE Second Street by Greene County Schools for \$12,000.00 per year for 5 years.**

- 14. Commissioner's Comments – Commissioner Taylor commented on zoning issues from the audience due to him serving on the Planning Board for the past 8 years. Commissioner Taylor does feel that the zoning does need to be cleaned up. Mr. Pridgen spoke on the clean-up of the zoning and suggested that the intern that the Town was going to be utilizing could work on this. Mr. Pridgen also spoke on issues of forced annexation and voluntary annexation.**

- 15. Consider Closed Session to discuss a personnel matter pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (6) – Motion was made by Commissioner Scarborough, seconded by Commissioner Shackelford and carried unanimously to enter into closed session at 8:44 p.m.**

Motion was made by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Scarborough and carried unanimously to reconvene in open session at 9:19 p.m.

- 16. Adjournment – Motion was made by Commissioner Shackelford, seconded by Commissioner Scarborough and carried unanimously to adjourn at 9:20 p.m.**

Dennis K. Liles, Mayor

Michelle Strickland, Town Clerk