



MARCH 3, 2020

The regular meeting of the Board of Aldermen was held on Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at 6:00 pm in the Assembly Room of the Municipal Building.

The following members of the Governing Body were present:

Mayor: Danny Ritchie  
Alderman: Terry Yount  
Alderman: Dennis Anthony  
Alderman: Matt Johnson  
Alderman: Rick Cline

Others present:

Town Manager: Sherri Bradshaw  
Town Clerk: Sherry Dula  
Attorney: Rod Willcox

Mayor Ritchie opened the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

**Approval of Minutes:** The Council voted unanimously to approve the February minutes by a motion from Alderman Johnson, seconded by Alderman Anthony.

**Public Hearing** – The public hearing was opened at 6:03 pm by a motion from Alderman Yount, seconded by Alderman Johnson. The hearing is being held to hear comments regarding the request by Mark Benfield to close a portion of Kenmore Drive off of Zion Road. The street is in Drexel's extra-territorial jurisdiction. The street was part of a planned subdivision approved in 1972 but never developed. Mr. Benfield recently purchased this land and in order for the neighbors to extend their property line the partial road closure is needed. No one was present for comment so the public hearing was closed at 6:04 pm by a motion from Alderman Cline, seconded by Alderman Anthony.

A motion was made by Alderman Yount, seconded by Alderman Johnson to accept the request from Mark Benfield to close a portion of Kenmore Drive and the vote was unanimous.

**Code Enforcement** – Todd Justice, Code Enforcement Officer, was present to introduce himself and to review the general procedures for code violations. He reviewed 5 different violations he will be enforcing in the Town which include: 1) Minimum Housing, the most complex to enforce 2) Non-residential Buildings 3) Abandoned Mobile Homes 4) Abandoned or Junked Vehicles 5) Nuisance Abatement. Mr. Justice gave the Council a few details from his background. He stated he was in the military and law enforcement. Mayor Ritchie asked if he was a sworn officer. Mr. Justice stated that he is not but with his background in law enforcement he was trained to handle and diffuse difficult situations and if they can't be diffused, he doesn't have a problem just walking away. Mayor Ritchie stated he feels that Mr. Justice will address each issue with common sense.

**Drexel Properties Update** – Manager Bradshaw reviewed the updates to the Drexel Properties progress. She stated the ARC grant application for sewer infrastructure rehab is still moving forward. They have called with further questions and very favorable comments have been made concerning this project. The EPA grant application is in the final scoring stage which will be expected in mid-March. EPA award announcements will be made in early May. NC Rail is interested in marketing the back portion of the property once the town has more details on utilities and rail spurs. Norfolk Southern has gotten estimates on rail spurs which is 2.8 million for 2 spurs. Alderman Johnson asked about the acreage of the back portion of the property and Manager Bradshaw stated it's approximately 69 acres. Alderman Johnson also asked if all utilities would be accessible for the back portion for marketing purposes. Manager Bradshaw stated that all utilities will be available as well as internet being accessible.

Manager Bradshaw stated that the property is only 2.4 miles from I-40 which is another selling point. Manager Bradshaw made the Council aware that a letter was drafted and signed by Mayor Ritchie and was sent to Rep. Hugh Blackwell. She stated that Rep. Blackwell has been very helpful with providing contact names for the town to use in helping further our efforts in the clean up process. A representative from the Governor's office visited on Feb. 28<sup>th</sup> and a member of NCDEQ called on March 3<sup>rd</sup> which resulted in scheduling a conference call with NCDEQ for Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup>. Alderman Cline said that he thought we had agreed not to ruffle any feathers until the EPA grant was awarded and Manager Bradshaw said that Rep. Blackwell did not contact any of these people himself, he just gave us the information. Also, the EPA is federal funds and we are contacting individuals on the state level at this time.

**2019-2020 Audit Contract** – The proposed 2019-2020 Audit Contract with Boggs, Crump & Brown was presented in the amount of \$11,700. The total expense includes the audit and all annual reports required for the town to file. A motion was made by Alderman Johnson, seconded by Alderman Anthony to accept the 2019-2020 Audit Contract with Boggs, Crump & Brown for \$11,700 and the vote was unanimous. A copy of the contract is attached as part of the minutes.

**Hollar Street Paving Project** – On Thursday, February 27, 2020, three bids were received and opened for the Hollar Street Paving project. The low bid was from Midstate Contractors, Inc. of Hickory, NC. Their total bid is \$184,311.75. Todd Poteet, West Consultants recommends awarding the contract to Midstate Contractors, Inc. Alderman Johnson asked to recuse himself from voting on the contract acceptance because he works for Midstate Contractors but Mayor Ritchie stated that according to our town ordinance he must vote regardless of his employment with Midstate. Mayor Ritchie asked which side of the street will have the sidewalk and Manager Bradshaw stated on the right going toward the school. She stated the street was wide enough for the sidewalk to be placed without getting easements from the residents. The Board is a little concerned about the residents who park on the street. Chief Treadway stated that he has spoken with them before and they will stop for awhile and then go right back to doing it. He said that if we also had a “no parking” sign at the top of the street maybe they would have more leverage when telling them not to park on the street. All Board members were in agreement with putting up more “no parking” signs. A motion was made by Alderman Anthony, seconded by Alderman Yount to accept the bid from Midstate Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$184,311.75 and the vote was unanimous.

**Advertisement of Unpaid Taxes** – Chelsea Carswell, Tax Collector is asking for approval to advertise any unpaid property taxes on April 5, 2020, A motion was made by Alderman Johnson, seconded by Alderman Yount to advertise unpaid taxes on April 5, 2020 and the vote was unanimous.

**Departmental Reports** – The Council reviewed the Financial and Tax reports for the month of February, 2020. A copy of each report is attached as part of the minutes.

**Drexel Police Report** – Chief Treadway was present to review the Police report for the month of February, 2020. He reviewed the report and said that it was a rather slow month. A copy of the report is attached as part of the minutes.

**Attorney Report** – Mayor Ritchie thanked Attorney Willcox for the information he gathered on service animals in the town hall. Service animals must be trained to perform specific tasks for their handlers. Attorney Willcox stated that we do not have to change our ordinance, we just have to post notices that only registered service animals are allowed on the premises. A motion was made by

Alderman Anthony, seconded by Alderman Johnson to post service animal signs and the vote was unanimous.

**MINUTE BOOK # 60**

**PAGE 26**

**MARCH 3, 2020**

**Miscellaneous** –

- Next meeting will be April 7, 2020 at 6 pm
- Budget Workshop will be March 17, 2020 at 10 am
- Thank you note was read from the Draughn High School Boosters for the town’s donation to the 2020 Cupid’s Arrow Race
- Alzheimers Association sent thank you for our donation in honor of Benny Orders
- Alderman Anthony relayed a thank you from Heritage Middle School for the town’s donation of sand for the softball field
- WPCOG Annual Meeting – April 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Hickory Metro Center at 6 pm

**Adjournment** – A motion was made by Alderman Yount, seconded by Alderman Anthony to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:39 p.m. and the vote was unanimous.

TOWN CLERK \_\_\_\_\_

MAYOR \_\_\_\_\_

ALDERMAN \_\_\_\_\_

ALDERMAN \_\_\_\_\_

ALDERMAN \_\_\_\_\_

ALDERMAN \_\_\_\_\_