

**TOWN OF WEDDINGTON
SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
2017 BOARD RETREAT
FEBRUARY 11, 2017 8:30 A.M.
MINUTES**

The Town Council of the Town of Weddington, North Carolina, met in a Special Meeting/Retreat at the Weddington Town Hall, 1924 Weddington Road, Weddington, NC 28104 on February 11, 2017 with Mayor Bill Deter presiding.

Present: Mayor Bill Deter, Mayor Pro Tem Don Titherington, Councilmembers Mike Smith, Scott Buzzard and Janice Propst, Planning Board Chairman Rob Dow, Finance Officer/Interim Clerk Leslie Gaylord, Town Planner/Administrator Lisa Thompson

Visitors: Craig Hazeltine, Dan Barry

Welcome and Agenda Review Mayor Deter opened the February 11, 2017 Special Town Council Meeting/Retreat at 8:30 a.m. There was a quorum. Mayor Deter indicated that the key is not to solve the problems here but to identify them.

1. **Adoption of the Agenda.** Planner/Administrator Lisa Thompson requested that the agenda be amended to add authorization for the Town Administrator to send out job offers to prospective candidates for the positions of clerk and deputy clerk.

Mayor Pro Tem Titherington made a motion to amend the agenda with the addition recommended by staff. All were in favor, with votes recorded as follow:

AYES: Councilmembers Smith, Buzzard, Propst and Mayor Pro Tem Titherington

NAYS: None

2. **Successes, Priorities Review.** Planner/Administrator Thompson reviewed the following suggested priorities for 2017:

- Creating a Sense of Place –Economic Development Opportunities / Branding / Events
- Quality of Life – Planning Practices/Ordinance ideas
- Infrastructure Improvements Opportunities

Priorities and action items from 2016 were also discussed and reviewed. Mayor Pro Tem Titherington felt that 70% of the action items had been completed and those that were not have been carried over to this agenda. Mayor Deter indicated that there is a spreadsheet documenting the action items, the person(s) assigned to following up on those items and

their current status and he suggested continuing with this practice and updating it going forward to assist in staying on top of things.

3. **Mayor/Council/Administrator mode of communication preferences.** Council discussed their preferred means of communication.

Councilmember	Preferred Means of Communication	Comments
Mayor Bill Deter	Phone/email/text	Will generally respond within 8 hours and more likely three.
Janice Propst	Phone/email/text	Prefers text particularly in an emergency. Also send a text if you have sent her an email that is important.
Mike Smith	Phone/email/text	Text or phone to let him know if there is an important or time-sensitive email.
Don Titherington	Text/phone	Due to his work/travel schedule, text is best and if needed he can usually respond by text or phone pretty quickly.
Scott Buzzard	Text/email	Text to let him know you need 5 minutes to speak with him. If you email him, text him to let him know.

Mayor Pro Tem Titherington also requested that if an email is sent that is requesting or requires action by the council that the word "Action" be included in the subject line and that the email include the date and/or time the action is needed by.

Council expressed their approval of Planner/Administrator Thompson's weekly memo to Council and their desire for her to continue doing this.

Planner/Administrator Thompson requested that Council schedule meetings with her if they anticipate they will need more than 30 minutes of her time and that preferably the meetings would be during hours that Town Hall is not open to the public.

Roads

1. **Review and Consideration of Weddington Matthews/Tilley Morris Roundabout Funding.** Council received the following memo from Town Planner/Administrator Thompson:

Changes were made to spot safety funding that gives NCDOT the ability to submit projects that haven't been able to be submitted in the past. A push has been made to complete intersection projects with extra funding available that didn't meet the crash criteria (which is what kept this intersection from being submitted). NCDOT doesn't know how long this extra money will be available. There is a project list where 2-3 projects are selected every 3 months. It was suggested by NCDOT to get this RAB on the next project list in case funds are depleted. The next project submittal is due in two weeks. Spot safety funds will cover 1M for each project. The local jurisdictions are expected to fund 20%. The more the town funds, the better the B/C ratio. The money can be set aside as committed fund balance and the money isn't required to be paid until the project is under construction. NCDOT will require a letter from the Town stating that money has been set aside for this purpose. The proposed cost is \$1.3M at this point which can be reduced once it's engineered. *Staff recommends assigning \$260,000.00 within fund balance to the Weddington Matthews/Tilley Morris Intersection.*

Council determined that this intersection is a priority but they need further clarification and information before making a decision on funding and requested the following from Planner/Administrator Thompson:

- Verify in writing that 20% funding is needed
 - Determine when the construction would be completed if the project is funded
 - Add discussion and consideration of the roundabout funding to the Agenda for the February 13, 2017 Regular Town Council Meeting
2. **General Road Discussion.** Council received the following from Planner/Administrator Thompson:
 - NCDOT's resurfacing plan is attached.
 - There are conflicting views if NCDOT will provide a 20% match along with a municipal contribution of only 5%. Mr. Ainsworth did not believe this to be the case. However, they are discussing this idea internally for future projects and will update the Town on those discussions.
 - The BOCC is considering a transportation matching program to get local Union County projects funded. If a project is within a jurisdiction, the County would team with the jurisdiction to help fund projects. This is on the BOCC agenda February 20, 2017.
 - NCDOT is looking at obtaining Right of Way on Antioch Church Road near Longleaf in order to cut the bank down near the utilities and relocate the utilities.
-

Mayor Deter suggested that Planner/Administrator Thompson and Councilmember Buzzard attend the Union County Board of Commissioners meeting on February 20, 2017.

Councilmember Buzzard believes the Town should reengage the municipalities that participated in the Local Area Regional Transportation Plan (LARTP) to see if they would be interested in updating it. He believes that Bjorn Hansen with Union County would be willing to assist at the County level and add credence to the plan. Mr. Hansen was instrumental in the development of the original LARTP. He suggested that Mayor Deter mention it to the mayors of Waxhaw, Marvin and Wesley Chapel to see if they would be interested.

There was discussion as to whether or not to add Stallings and/or Indian Trail to address the Chestnut Road/Potter Road/Weddington-Matthews Road side of Weddington. Councilmember Buzzard felt that from speaking with them previously they did not seem to be very engaged. There was concern that their needs might focus away from Weddington.

It was determined that there is no time restraint for updating the LARTP and that the Town should start by reviewing its priorities to determine if they are already on the LARTP or if they need to be added or removed.

Planner/Administrator Thompson gave an update on Antioch Church Road and Longleaf. She believes NCDOT has this on their radar as a priority and is trying to get funding for the improvements as soon as possible. They are looking at gaining right-of-way to be able to relocate utility poles. General consensus was that cutting the bank back would be a much better alternative than installing a mirror.

Council discussed the need to continue to get its own car counts and speed data to be able to give to NCDOT as support for the Town's needs. Council also discussed trying to capture crash data internally as they do not feel the NCDOT data for this is accurate. Councilmember Smith agreed to take the lead on this and put some feelers out with the state police and the sheriff.

Branding

1. **Town Survey.** Planner/Administrator Thompson provided Council with the results of the previous two surveys completed in 2006 and 2012.

Council discussed the following:

- Changes to the Town since the last survey
- Costs of conducting a survey
- Format of survey to try to reduce the risk of someone completing the survey multiple times
- Response rates for various format types
- Designing questions that are not leading
- Types of issues to be included in a survey
- Conducting the survey in-house versus outsourcing

Council unanimously agreed that a survey should be conducted and instructed staff to begin the process. Councilmember Propst will assist.

2. **Street Lighting.** Council discussed possibly putting a regular streetlight at the intersection of Tilley-Morris and Weddington-Matthews Roads. There is already a pole there so it should be relatively simple to add a light. Mayor Deter has spoken with Steve Baucom at Union Power and believes the cost to the Town would be approximately \$11 to \$15 per month per light which would be added to the Town's electric bill. Council agreed to move forward with the streetlight at Tilley-Morris and Matthews-Weddington Roads. Council will also begin to identify other areas in Town to consider. Council agreed that they are not interested in extending the decorative streetlights on Highway 84 so this item can be removed from the current year budget.

3. **Sidewalk Policy** The Council received the following memo from Planner/Administrator Thompson:

Greenways/Multi-use paths continue to be an interest of the residents according to Town surveys. They can be a great means of exercise and recreation.

If the Town wishes to pursue greenways, staff is of the opinion that the following shall be considered prior to implementation.

Discussion items:

What areas of town (if any) would Council like to connect? schools, shopping, ball parks etc.

Create a Greenway Master Plan. If the town has a master plan, the Town can require sections that are shown on the map within a development to be constructed or require the applicant to pay a fee-in-lieu of construction for the Town to connect areas near-by.

This fee is based on the tax value and the number of lots. The fee goes into a restricted fund balance account that can only be used to implement the master plan.

Update the ordinances to require construction or fee in lieu as mentioned above.

Consider Loop Maintenance cost. Recommend - \$6.00/sq ft. x .02 for a 20 year repaving cycle. This covers on-going maintenance as well.

Council discussed their interest in a downtown loop and whether it would be too much to expand beyond that. They felt that the plan should be tied into the downtown overlay district. Planning Board Chairman Rob Dow stated that the downtown overlay district could be strengthened to push for connectivity into the surrounding neighborhoods. He also stated that the plan should be tied into the LARTP. Councilmember Buzzard pointed out that NCDOT will be widening Providence Road and will also be putting in bike lanes as part of the Rea Road Extension so this would provide the Town with two long

corridors and we should therefore consider expanding the loop from the downtown area down 84 to Rea Road Extension and back down Providence Road.

Planner/Administrator Thompson pointed out that development within the downtown overlay district will require sidewalks around the properties so this would essentially mean the Town would only need to add sidewalks to Highway 84. Council wants the Planning Board to explore the issue further.

4. **Water/Sewer.** General consensus of Council is that the Town should be a facilitator between neighborhoods wanting water and the County but the Town should not be a funding agent. Council instructed Planner/Administrator Thompson to work with Union County to determine options to help facilitate. Councilmember Propst and Mayor Pro Tem Titherington will assist with this.

The Union County Board of Commissioners will be meeting to discuss the County's master sewer plan. The Council would like to have someone from the County explain the master plan at a future Town Council meeting.

5. **Economic Development/Master Planning** The Council received the following memo from Planner/Administrator Thompson:

Downtown Master Plan Update

The existing downtown master plan was completed in 2005. Objectives received from a charrette and public input meetings are attached. Over that last 17 years, residents and Council's opinions have evolved and therefore the Master Plan should be updated to reflect Weddington's character. With purchasing opportunities and owners willing to work together, staff is of the opinion that it's time to update the town's master plan for a more cohesive build-out.

Other branding opportunities

Discussion:

Downtown district monumentation/plantings

Wayfinding signs

Newsletter themes

Festivals

Website

Council clarified that there was never a downtown master plan. In the past, presentations were made but were never adopted and the downtown overlay district is all there is.

Discussions about the downtown overlay district included:

- Engaging landowners to discuss Council's vision of the downtown area with them
- Development needs to be developer driven rather than Council driven
- Timing is right to look into this because several properties are for sale
- We don't control it but how can we impact it?
- There will be costs for property owners but also benefits
- Property owners were approached in the past and indicated a willingness to work together but the problem has been finding a developer to work with them
- Legality of looking for a single developer to work with the various property owners to develop a coordinated plan
- Assigning a Planning Board and/or Council member to work with a developer to help move a cohesive vision forward
- Strengthening the vision encompassed in the downtown overlay district to try to make it more cohesive
- Recognition that unless we own all the parcels there is a risk the area will be developed piece-meal rather than cohesively. Hopefully the restrictions and requirements in place in the overlay district will make it more attractive to develop together.
- Distinction that the Town is not promoting or adding any commercial but is just trying to manage and make a unified coordinated plan for what we already have

Council instructed Planner/Administrator Thompson to review the current plan and to get with the Planning Board to identify any areas that can be strengthened and also to have ongoing communications with the property owners.

6. **Long Term Median Planting.** Planner/Administrator Thompson discussed that NCDOT has extra right-of-way along Providence Road in front of the Weddington Activity Center that the Town may be able to purchase at minimal cost. It is a 0.97 acre strip that NCDOT purchased as part of the widening of Providence Road and no longer need. The strip runs from the Harris Teeter almost all the way to the driveway of the Activity Center and would enable the Town to effectively control the appearance of the downtown core. The cost is estimated to be approximately \$25,000 to \$35,000. Council directed Planning Board Chairman Dow and Planner/Administrator Thompson to find out a price for the land.

Council discussed additional landscaping around Town Hall. The contractor who did the recent repairs recommended adding river rock instead of mulch to the beds around Town Hall to help with drainage and assist with the prevention of future damage to Town Hall. There was discussion of various pricing options ranging from \$1050 for just the front of

Town Hall to \$6550 to do around the whole house. Councilmember Smith will get with the landscaper to clarify the different quotes.

7. **Town Festivals.** Councilmember Smith presented a proposal for two to four food truck events to be held in May. The events would be coordinated by Sharon Sanders and Sanna Tucker who are both citizens of Weddington. Council agreed to the following:

- Events to be held two consecutive weekends (May 5th and May 12th) to start with. The events will be held from 5:30-8:30 p.m. If possible, have the other two Fridays in May as rain dates.
- Events will be held at Weddington Town Hall.
- Costs are estimated at \$500-\$600 per week and are not to exceed \$1500 for the two events to include a DJ, port-a-johns, a Sheriff's deputy and the cost for a banner.
- Council has no interest in movie nights or alcoholic beverages at this time.
- Town staff will not be needed at the events and Town Hall will not be open to the public.
- Town Attorney Anthony Fox is to be consulted regarding any potential liability issues.
- If the events are successful, costs may be less in the future because we may be able to secure sponsorships.

Council agreed that we will not have an Easter Egg Hunt this year due to staffing reasons and because the local school students will be on Spring Break so attendance is likely to be down. The Town will find out dates of local church events and post these on the Town's Facebook page so citizens will be aware of alternatives.

The new Administrative Assistant will be the point person for events in the future. Councilmember Propst will assist with the Tree Lighting event again this year.

Town Budget

1. **Town Hall Maintenance and Forecast.** Council approved the following:

- Electrical and plumbing inspections of Town Hall. Electrical inspection is estimated at \$150.
- Insulating around the thresholds of Town Hall's three exterior doors
- Installing a sink for staff use in the current deputy office. Cost is estimated at \$1200.

2. **5 Year Budget Forecast.** Finance Officer Gaylord presented a Fund Balance Projection for FY2017-FY2024. The forecast estimates a healthy fund balance for the time period presented.
3. **FY2017 Preliminary Budget Discussion.** Finance Officer Gaylord presented a preliminary operating budget for FY2018 as well as a preliminary list of expenditures to be discussed and considered. Council reviewed the operating budget. Council discussed the following changes and/or additional items they would like to see incorporated in the next draft of the budget:
 - Increase the litigation line item to \$100k
 - Reduce festival net costs by \$1500 and add this as costs for food trucks
 - Increase winter maintenance and mulching estimate to \$15k to allow for replacement of plants that die. No additional median landscaping is recommended at this time.
 - Add up to \$143k for our total estimated share of the Rea Road co-share
 - Include \$30k for building maintenance
 - Include \$35k for USI inspection costs
 - Budget merit raises at 3%
 - Adjust hours and salary rates for the new positions to amounts included in job offers

Planning

Current Issues/Best Practices

1. **Minimum Lot Size.** The Planning Board is wrestling with how to increase the minimum lot size to greater than 12,000 square feet while still allowing flexibility to the builder on an exception basis. The consensus of Council is that they would like to see the minimum lot size increased as long as it doesn't change the total lot yield. Over the course of time the average minimum lot size has been getting smaller. There was discussion as to whether this is due to the developer including more open space and if there could be an option to reduce the amount of view shed in the front of a development in order to save trees or some other feature in the back. Council instructed Planner/Administrator Thompson to research minimum lot size and bring a recommendation back to Council.
2. **Flag Lots** The Council received the following definition and recommendation for flag lots from Planner/Administrator Thompson:

Flag lots are so named because of the long, narrow strips of land resembling flag poles that extend from the typically rectangular main sections of these lots -- or the "flags" -- out to the street. Flag lots create situations where a single-family house may be located

immediately behind another single-family house. The rear house gains street access through a narrow strip of land. This layout of residential development creates emergency serviceability issues, does not enhance the character of the residential neighborhood and creates a disjointed pattern of development which may negatively impact the surrounding property owners. In addition developers tend to use flag lots to obtain additional lots. The most recent complaint was over rear/side yard setbacks in Bromley. Staff recommends prohibiting flag lots within the Town of Weddington.

Council unanimously agreed to eliminate flag lots with exceptions for stream crossings and topographical issues and requested that Planning Board make the appropriate changes.

3. **Requirements for Preliminary Plat/Construction Plan Review** The Council received the following from Planner/Administrator Thompson:

Staff received complaints about site distance issues and tree removal within land deemed as conservation area/open space. Developers at times use subcontractors to plant landscaping, grade property, etc. and information isn't conveyed correctly. This can be remediated if site lines and erosion control fencing/tree fencing are required on all plans.

Council unanimously agreed to require site lines and tree-safe fencing be shown on all plans.

4. **Signs** The Council received the following from Planner/Administrator Thompson:

Political Signs

In 2011 the General Assembly approved requirements for campaign signs. Because the town doesn't maintain rights-of-way within the town limits, the provisions below shall apply.

Compliant Political Signs Permitted. – During the period beginning on the 30th day before the beginning date of "one-stop" early voting and ending on the 10th day after the primary or election day, persons may place political signs in the right-of-way of the State highway system as provided in this section.

For purposes of this section, "political sign" means any sign that advocates for political action. The term does not include a commercial sign.

Sign Placement. – The permittee must obtain the permission of any property owner of a residence, business, or religious institution fronting the right-of-way where a sign would be erected. Signs must be placed in accordance with the following: (1) No sign shall be permitted in the right-of-way of a fully controlled access highway. (2) No sign shall be

closer than three feet from the edge of the pavement of the road. (3) No sign shall obscure motorist visibility at an intersection. (4) No sign shall be higher than 42 inches above the edge of the pavement of the road. (5) No sign shall be larger than 864 square inches. (6) No sign shall obscure or replace another sign.

Penalties for Unlawful Removal of Signs. – It is a Class 3 misdemeanor for a person to steal, deface, vandalize, or unlawfully remove a political sign that is lawfully placed under this section.

Staff recommends amending the Town's ordinances to reflect state requirements.

This covers signs in the NCDOT right-of-way and Council concurs with Staff's recommendation. There are also temporary political signs on private property included in our temporary sign ordinance so we need to correlate the dates on these so that they also match the state requirements. Mayor Pro Tem Titherington also requested that the signs not be permitted on trees, utility poles or traffic control signals.

5. **Noise** The Council received the following from Planner/Administrator Thompson:

Staff received complaints about construction noise. This can be addressed within Chapter 22 -1 under Excessive noise prohibited; exemptions. Typically towns exempt construction noises between certain hours of the week and weekends. Complaints received were mostly on weekends beginning prior to 9AM.

Planner/Administrator Thompson did not see where our ordinances currently address excessive noise. Council believes that we do have a noise ordinance and instructed Planner/Administrator Thompson to research if she has the most recent ordinances.

Authorization for the Town Administrator to Send Out Job Offer Letters to Prospective Candidates for the Town Clerk and Administrative Assistant Positions – *This item was*

added to the agenda by a motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Titherington under Adoption of the Agenda. Planner/Administrator Thompson wants to offer the position of Town Clerk to Ms. Karen Dewey for approximately 19 hours per week at \$21/hour and the position of Administrative Assistant to Ms. Janet Peirano for approximately 19 hours per week at \$16.50/hour. Councilmember Smith made a motion to allow Planner/Administrator Thompson to send out two offer letters to the prospective applicants. All were in favor, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES: Councilmembers Smith, Buzzard, Propst and Mayor Pro Tem Titherington

NAYS: None

Review Key Objectives and Assignments. Council agreed that the retreat was useful and focused.

Adjournment

Councilmember Smith moved to adjourn the February 11, 2017 Special Town Council Meeting. All were in favor, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES: Councilmembers Smith, Buzzard, Propst and Mayor Pro Tem Titherington

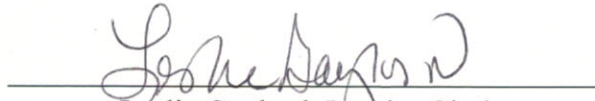
NAYS: None

The meeting adjourned at 1:16 p.m.



Mayor Bill Deter

Attest:



Leslie Gaylord, Interim Clerk