

**MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL**  
**October 8, 2019**  
**Whitsett Town Hall Building**

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

The regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council was held on Tuesday, October 8, 2019 at the Whitsett Town Hall. The following members of the Town Council were present: Mayor Richard Fennell, Council Members Jerry Rice, Cindy Wheeler, and Lee Greeson.

Also present were Town Administrator Ken Jacobs, *The Alamance News* reporter Tomas Murawski, and five area residents. Absent was Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia.

Mayor Fennell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., noted that a quorum was present; and asked Council Member Jerry Rice to offer the invocation. A moment of silence was observed by all those present to honor the memory of Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown who passed away on September 12. [Mayor Pro Tem Brown had served as Council Member since the Town became incorporated in 1991.]

**SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR**

Mayor Fennell asked for any speakers from the floor, and no one responded.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**1. Adoption of the Minutes**

Mayor Fennell asked for any changes to the minutes for the September 10, 2019 regular meeting; and hearing none, asked for a motion to adopt the minutes. A motion to adopt the minutes as written was made by Council Member Jerry Rice; motion seconded by Council Member Cindy Wheeler. The motion to adopt the September meeting minutes passed by unanimous vote.

## **2. Action on Documentation for Submission to BGMPO on the Widening of US Highway 70**

Town Administrator Ken Jacobs had delivered to Council advance packages of documents proposed for submission to Wannetta Mallette who heads up the Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO) based in Burlington and who has substantiated a strong track record as prime advocate for the Town on highway matters.

The Town documents included the following: (1) Economic Development Plan, (2) Long-Range Strategic Plan, (3) Descriptions for Neighborhood Business vs. Highway Business, (4) Permitted Use Schedule, and (5) Article XII Commercial Architectural Standards.

The Economic Development Plan and the Strategic Plan were introduced and redeveloped specifically for defending the Town's position in opposition to the initial NCDOT proposals for the widening of US Highway 70, as outlined in the minutes from the US 70 Feasibility Study Kick-off meeting. Even though expected stages of numerous proposals were in their infancy, Council Members felt they should go on record at the outset, illustrating how current plans would have a crippling impact on the Town's designated business district along the US 70 corridor.

The Planning Board had held a special meeting on September 17 solely for a comprehensive review of the documents, which resulted in a Board vote to recommend to Council that both Plans be accepted by resolution and submitted to BGMPO. Kudos from Council Members were given, in particular, to the unprecedented Economic Development Plan.

Mayor Fennell initiated the motion to formally adopt the two Plans as policy and submit them along with the [above-mentioned] existing auxiliary documents to BGMPO. The motion was simultaneously seconded by Council Members Jerry Rice and Lee Greeson. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

## **3. Any Other Old Business**

Mayor Fennell asked if there were any other old business; and there was none.

## **BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **1. Planning Board**

In the absence of the Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia, Town Administrator Jacobs reported that this month's Board meeting had been cancelled; but that members convened at the special meeting on September 17, as referenced earlier in item 2 under Old Business.

## **2. Enforcement Officer**

Enforcement Officer Jacobs reported that Guilford County had been notified to proceed with demolishing the house at 814 NC Highway 61. Following consultation with Town attorney Joe Kalo, who advised the Town of its authority to have residual debris removed, bill the property owner, and place a lien on the property, also cautioned the Town on how it proceeds in taking these steps. The Town, therefore, would prefer that Joe Kalo manage effecting the processes.

With regard to the sign violations at the Smart Shop 3 market, a letter to the property owner explained allowable signs and cited that fines would be imposed for each day the business remained in noncompliance. All the illegal Coke signs have been removed.

Jacobs reported that two development clearance certificates (DCCs) had been issued since last Council meeting: (1) to contractor LaTour Electric to install a gas line and modify electrical service for a vent-free firebox at 333 Brightwood Church Road, and (2) to property owner J.K. Black at 7235 Whitsett Park Road for major renovations to the principal residence. The latter had been a case whereby the property owner had ignored and averted for months the permitting processes required by the Town and the county.

## **3. Town Administrator**

Town Administrator Jacobs reported the following informational items:

- Town Hall Activities: (1) Lab results were received for the triennial water testing for lead and copper; and all five residences were rated “no detection.” Those results were then sent to the water customers who participated; and finally forwarded to the NC Public Water Supply Section (PWSS) to meet requirements. (2) The Town’s five CDs at First Bank since February 2017 incur, on average, \$700 per month in dividends. (3) The acquired forested lot at 7201 Whitsett Park Road, has been cleared and has become a notable contrast. Have been notified that the Part F parks and recreation grant funds can now be applied for; and am scheduled to meet with the new state consultant on November 13. Council may want to consider naming the park in Andy’s memory; and all members reacted with pleasure.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Appointment to Fill Town Council Vacancy and Swearing In**

[A Council seat became vacant due to the sudden passing of Andy Brown.]

Mayor Fennell stated that three Town Council seats were available for the upcoming municipal election. Incumbents Council Member Jerry rice and himself had filed for re-election to two seats; and newcomer Jamie King had filed for candidacy for the third. Although Andy Brown had opted out of re-election this year, his passing left a seat open and eligible for Council Members to immediately appoint a resident and property owner to the position to serve out the term until the end-of-year election.

Council Member Lee Greeson made a motion to appoint Jamie King as Council Member; motion seconded by Council Member Jerry Rice. Motion carried by unanimous vote; and Mayor Fennell asked Mr. King to come forward to take the oath of office. Following the swearing in, Mayor Fennell invited Jamie King to occupy his Council Member seat.

## **2. Any Items from Council Members**

Mayor Fennell asked for any items from Council members; and there were none.

## **3. Announcements**

Mayor Fennell asked for any announcements; and Council Member Jerry Rice reminded everyone to vote on November 5.

## **4. Speakers from the Floor**

Mayor Fennell asked for any speakers from the floor; and no one asked to be recognized.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business before the Council, Mayor Fennell invited a motion to adjourn. Council Member Jerry Rice made the motion to adjourn; motion seconded by Council Member Jamie King. The motion passed by unanimous vote; and the October 8, 2019 Town Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:29 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, November 12, 2019 at the Whitsett Town Hall.

/s/

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Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

/s/

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Richard Fennell, Mayor

**APPROVED:** November 12, 2019