

December 11, 2012 Regular Monthly Meeting

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2012
7:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

Governing Body Present:

Mayor	Jeff Smart
Mayor Pro-Tem	Tony Clewis
Council Members:	Pat Preslar
	Abbie Covington
	Johnathan Buie
	Dewey Brower

Staff Present:

City Manager	Marchell Adams-David
City Attorney	Steve Futrell
Finance Officer	Jill Dickens
Fire Chief	David Knight
Interim Police Chief	Amery Griffin
Zoning Officer	Gail Strickland
WTP Superintendent	Robert Brown
HR Director	Edna Titch
P&R Director	Mitch Bowman

Others Present: Beth Brown, Ken Anderson, Al & Barbara McCormick, Colie Milson, Edwin Waldo, Laura Edington and Steve Davis

Call to Order. Mayor Jeff Smart called the meeting to order.

Invocation. Pastor Al McCormick of First Pentecostal Holiness Church in Hamlet offered the invocation.

Adoption of Agenda. Councilman Pat Preslar and Mayor Pro Tem Tony Clewis made the motion and second to adopt the Agenda as presented. All were in favor.

Consideration of Minutes. Minutes of the regular monthly meeting on November 13, 2012 and work session minutes from November 6, 2012 were unanimously approved by motions of Mayor Pro Tem Tony Clewis and Council Member Abbie Covington.

Old Business:

Bland Annexation Certificate of Sufficiency – Mayor Smart advised the Acting Clerk has prepared the Certificate of Sufficiency that will go on record for the Annexation.

Resolution Fixing Date of Public Hearing for Bland Annexation. Pursuant to GS 160A-31, a resolution fixing the date for a public hearing on a voluntary annexation submitted by Bland Inc. was adopted by motions of Mayor Pro Tem Tony Clewis and Council Member Abbie Covington. The hearing was set for January 8, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at Hamlet City Hall.

New Business:

Presentation by Auditor. Mr. Ken Anderson presented Council to give an overview of the 2011/2012 Audit for the City of Hamlet. The City received an unqualified opinion on the June 30, 2012 financial statements resulting in a good report. The trend analysis for the past 6 years was discussed. The General Fund had decreased from Year End 2011 to Year End 2012. Mr. Anderson commented that one reason was a \$361,000 transfer to the Visitors Center Renovation. For the General Fund, the current year expenditures exceeded the revenues by \$227,344. For the Water and Sewer Fund, the current year revenues exceeded the expenditures by \$214,244.00. Governmental activities debt increased from \$1,185,300.00 to \$1,483,513.00 for a current year increase of \$298,213.00. Business type activities debt decreased from \$1,315,760.00 to \$1,288,157.00 for a current year decrease of \$27,603.00. The property tax collections were up for the year with an overall collection rate of 94.68%. The City was not subject to any compliance audit for the current year. The report was submitted to the Local Government Commission and accepted.

Mr. Anderson called Council's attention to a mandatory governance letter and stated the need to discuss the matter. He cited G.S. 159-13(a) that notes, "Budget Ordinance shall authorize all financial transactions of the local government." The audit found transactions in the city's police department that were not authorized and occurred outside of the city's normal budgeting process. He stated that beyond the violation, the audit went well and commented that Finance Officer Jill Dickens is doing well and provided all information in a timely manner.

Councilman Preslar inquired on the repercussions of the violation to the City. Mr. Anderson stated he was not sure. He felt the City would receive a letter from the LGC and the City will have to address the issue. (Exhibit A is attached as part of the minutes)

Public Hearing – McCormick Rezoning: A public hearing was advertised for the rezoning of 1 parcel owned by Albert and Barbara McCormick located at 1723 East US 74 Highway. The request is to rezone Lot #3 only of parcel 749104816179 from B-2 (General Business) to Residential Agriculture 20 (RA-20) zoning. The Planning Board gave favorable recommendation.

Mayor Smart opened the Public Hearing. No one addressed Council. The Public Hearing was closed.

Councilman Buie made a motion to approve the Rezoning Petition and Councilman Brower offered the second. The motion was approved unanimously.

City of Hamlet Updated Mitigation Plan. Mayor Smart explained Donna Wright from Richmond County has provided a new Mitigation Action Plan that addresses the hazard mitigation goals developed by each municipality and county. For the City to seek federal reimbursement from an

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event such as a hurricane, an up-to-date hazard mitigation plan must be in place. FEMA has given approval for the plan. Mayor Pro Tem Tony Clewis left the meeting momentarily.

Resolution to Adopt Pee Dee Lumber Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Mayor Pro Tem Tony Clewis re-entered the meeting and offered the motion to approve the Plan and Councilman Buie offered the second. The plan was adopted unanimously.

Presentation by Patt Crissman with The Wooten Company. Mayor Smart advised Patt Crissman and the Wooten Company have been working the past several months to develop a Parks & Recreation Master Plan. The information presented at the meeting will be for information purposes only to show where the City is hopefully headed. Ms. Crissman provided Council with a draft copy of "City of Hamlet Parks and Recreation Master Plan" for review.

Ms. Crissman called Council's attention to the Table of Contents for review. To prepare the Master Plan, the Wooten Company looked at the population, recreation registrations, and inventory of existing parks. Based on that information, the Wooten Company looked at 2 potential park sites: East Hamlet Avenue and Boyd Lake Road as the location for a gym or multi-purpose recreational complex. The Army Corps of Engineers conducted a study for wetlands at both sites. The East Hamlet site is wooded and has topographic challenges but would be an asset to the East Hamlet area. After the Public Meeting held on November 15, 2012, the Wooten Company began to look seriously at the Boyd Lake location.

Ms. Crissman noted the need for feedback on the master plan as soon as possible, hopefully before Christmas, to nail down any plan provisions. The application for the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grant is due by the end of January.

After the Public Hearing, and receiving input from citizens and Council, it was determined the greatest desire was a multi-purpose facility at the Boyd Lake property. The Army Corps of Engineers has determined there are no wetlands on the property. Mrs. Crissman presented 2 drawings: one of the site and one of the floor plan of a 10,000 sq. ft. building to be located near the rear of the property with parking in front. The site is large enough to also accommodate practice fields or smaller activities and possibly a walking trail. The building is designed for seating for 300 with 126 parking spaces. The floor plan includes a basketball court, vestibule, restrooms, storage, catering kitchen and 3 activity rooms. Certain items could be eliminated to reduce the cost. The estimated cost at present time is \$2 million.

Councilman Preslar asked if the proposed complex could tie in with the existing walking trail. Ms. Crissman advised there are several possibilities to connect the two, but the City would need to contact NCDOT about a crosswalk across Boyd Lake Road. Mayor Smart asked if more land was acquired, what would it be used for and Ms. Crissman answered that would be determined by the wants of the community. She stated many of the surveys listed a water park as a high priority for the City. She explained that a town normally has to have a population of at least 25,000 to sustain a public swimming pool. She stated the city may want to consider a splash park that has water

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features and then phase in a swimming pool. Communities have found splash parks to be great revenue generators.

Council Preslar inquired on the plans for the existing Memorial Park. Mitch Bowman, Parks & Recreation Director replied the gym would remain and be used for practices. Ms. Crissman stated it is good to spread out the activities throughout the town. She suggested that the City also look in the south and west sides for areas to locate mini or neighborhood parks.

Mayor Smart asked what would be the City's next step in the process. Ms. Crissman reiterated the need for comments prior to Christmas. She will attend the January 2013 Council meeting and suggested that Council hold a public hearing at that time on the city wide comprehensive plan and the Boyd Lake Park master plan.

Councilman Preslar asked if the project could tie in to the fields across the street. Jeff Smart commented that the City had spent \$90,000 upgrading the facilities in the last 12 months. Ms. Crissman stated for the Park and Recreation Trust Fund, you can only spend the funds on one site.

Resolution of Support for Clean Water Management Trust Fund. Mayor Smart advised the Clean Water Management Fund has provided funding for several water projects in Hamlet through the NC Rural Center, most recently the Water Lake Dam Project. Councilman Preslar advised the funds were \$500,000.00. Councilman Preslar reminded Council that the City raised water rates a few years ago to stay within the parameters to receive funding when needed. Mayor Pro Tem Clewis stated the City sells water to both Richmond County and the City of Rockingham. He offered the motion to adopt the Resolution. Councilman Buie provided the second and the motion was approved unanimously.

Tax Releases. The Tax Collector submitted tax releases with interest totaling \$67.79 and tax refunds with interest totaling \$3.95 per Richmond County Tax Collector. The motion to approve the Tax Releases as presented was offered by Council Member Covington and second given by Mayor Pro Tem Clewis. The motion was approved by all.

Other Business.

Comments from Attendees. Mayor Smart explained the Comments from Attendees portion of the meeting was moved to the end due to the Auditor's need to attend another meeting. No one presented Council; however, City Manager Marchell David introduced Twilla Allen with the Lumber River Council of Governments. Ms. Allen stated that she is the City's point of contact. She offered her assistance in any way and advised that she will come to at least 2 meetings each year. Mayor Smart recognized Edwin Waldo from the Boy Scout Troop at Fellowship Methodist Church and thanked him for his attendance.

Department Head Report.

Gail Strickland provided the dates for basketball registration.

City Manager Report

Marchell David provided the Christmas and New Years Holiday schedule and the garbage schedule for the two weeks involved. She also advised that City offices and buildings will be closed for 2 hours on December 19th for the Annual Christmas Luncheon at the Fire Department. The meal will be cooked by employees. The City of Hamlet will host Business After Hours on December 19th with a treat in each venue.

Mrs. David encouraged parents and coaches to stop by City Hall to look at the proposed complex on Boyd Lake Road. She emphasized that endeavors to improve the quality of life are important. We want Hamlet to be a good place to work and play. She concluded her comments by wishing everyone a safe and happy Christmas season.

Comments of Council.

Council Brower wished everyone a Happy Christmas and asked that we remember the recent losses in our community.

Council Buie reminded everyone to be thankful for what we have and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Council Preslar thanked those protecting our liberties and freedoms. He said in light of the recent tragedies we should hold our loved ones close.

Council Member Covington stated she was looking forward to 2013 and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Mayor Pro Tem Clewis inquired on the number of football teams this year. Mitch Bowman advised a total of eighteen. It was discussed that Hamlet is the only entity that offers football and cheerleading in the county. He advised that Hamlet's Old Fashioned Christmas went well and offered thanks to the Police Department, Fire Department and Miranda Chavis for their participation. He also gave a reminder of the Finding Santa Contest where entries have an opportunity to win \$500.00. The Mayor Pro Tem discussed the utilization of WD James Park and suggested the City look for other areas for similar parks. He concluded by encouraging everyone to spend time with their family and to have a safe and wonderful Christmas.

Mayor's Comments.

Mayor Smart began his comments by saying the City of Hamlet had a successful 2012 and he is looking forward to 2013 and planning for the future in Hamlet. He acknowledged that projects cost money, but hopes that Council can make the projects happen. He thanked the volunteers that participated in the Old Fashioned Christmas and wished everyone a safe and happy holiday.

Closed Session. At approximately 8:01 p.m., motions to go into Closed Session per NCGS § 143.318.11 (a) (6) were presented by Mayor Pro Tem Clewis and Council Member Covington. The motion passed unanimously.

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Open Session. At 9:20 p.m., Council Member Preslar and Mayor Pro Tem Clewis motioned to close the executive session and return to open session. All were in favor of the motion. The Mayor reported that Council had discussed a proposed Pay Plan and Job Classification Study presented by Staff. Mayor Pro Tem Clewis made a motion to adopt the Plan as presented and Councilman Preslar provided the second. The motion was unanimously approved by Council.

Adjournment. With no further business to discuss, Councilman Preslar and Mayor Pro Tem Clewis motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Strickland, Acting Clerk