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**CITY OF HAMLET REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, JULY 10, 2018, 2018 - 7:00 PM
MINUTES**

Governing Body Present:

Mayor	Bill Bayless
Mayor Pro-Tem	Johnathan Buie
Council Member	Eddie Martin
Council Member	Jesse McQueen
Council Member	David Lindsey
Council Member	Wendy Massagee

Staff Present:

City Manager	Jonathan Blanton
City Attorney	TC Morphis
Finance Officer	Jill Dickens
City Clerk	Gail Strickland
IT	Zach Garner
Public Works Director	Billy Stubbs
Police Captain	Marc Terry

Others Present: Brett Hanna, Dave Click, Linda Bayless, Nick Kirkland, Pastor Tommy Hill, Yen Solihin, Brent Barbee, Don Norton, Joy Smart, Kay Cavendish, Tim Nevinger, Gerald Potoka, III, Robin Hewitt, Teresa Taylor, Amy Guinn and Christine Carroll with the Richmond County Daily Journal

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Bayless called the meeting to order.

2. Invocation

Pastor Tommy Hill of First Freewill Baptist Church offered the prayer.

3. Adoption of Agenda

Council Members Buie & Martin motioned to adopt the agenda. The vote was 5-0.

4. Approval of Minutes

Motions to approve the June 12, 2018 Regular and Closed Session Meeting Minutes were made by Council Members Buie and Martin. The vote was 5-0.

5. Comments from Attendees

Mrs. Teresa Taylor of Briarwood addressed Council. She expressed concerns with overgrowth on several different vacant lots. She also stated on June 30th she contacted the Hamlet Police Department regarding a large party with loud music. Once the police arrived, the music was turned down for a short period of time. Three hours later 41 shots were fired right behind her house and casings were found in the siding of a neighbor's house. She feels the overgrown lots added to the situation. Mrs. Taylor said she knows the Police Department knew about the party, it was on Facebook. Based on the comments, she was hoping the patrol would increase but it did not. An elderly neighbor was told she had to give her name and phone number if she reported an incident. She does not think this is correct. Older people may be afraid to give the information for fear of retaliation. Mrs. Taylor said she wished her neighborhood had the same police presence and effort as the missing dog. She is glad the dog was found but the problems are going on constantly. She thinks their presence would benefit. The report she received from the Police Department stated numerous cars and multiple people were at the party. She expressed concerns of property values due to the incidents. Mrs. Taylor also advised the street has 2 potholes. She asked what could take place to help. Gail Strickland asked Mrs. Taylor to call with the addresses to the adjoining overgrown lots and the City would work on the issues. Council Member Buie suggested Staff locate the properties. He also asked Billy Stubbs to address the pot holes and Captain Marc Terry to have the Police Department address the situation. Mrs. Taylor also reported when she went to the Police Department to ask for the report she was told there was no record of the calls. Mr. Buie stated the Police Officers have been more visible recently. The City Manager thanked Mrs. Taylor for coming. He advised he would provide the OCA Report and look at the potholes. Mr. Blanton also reported 4 people were taken to jail from the incident in her neighborhood. Mrs. Taylor asked if the City could provide extra patrolling in Briarwood and Captain Terry confirmed.

New Business

6. Public Hearing #1. ESA No. 1. Quasi-judicial Hearing – ESA Solar/Greentegrity Land Investment LLC – Parcel ID 7491 04 71 9745

The Mayor announced ESA Solar and Greentegrity Land Investment LLC have submitted a Special Use Application for a 37- acre tract to use the property as a Solar Farm. The Mayor opened the Public Hearing and swore in the 5 potential witnesses speaking on the matter.

Applicant's Presentation: Attorney Brett Hanna addressed Council. He asked if anyone else spoke on the matter, other than the ones taking the oath, he have an opportunity to respond. He announced he has an appraiser and engineer available to answer any questions. He provided Council and Staff with an Affidavit. The Attorney stated they have met all requirements outlined in the Solar Application. They are requesting setbacks of 120 feet, stating the terrain of the land descends. They will utilize approximately 25 acres of the subdivided 37 acres. The parent tract is more than 200 acres. The panels will be more than 138 feet from any residential property line. He stated the engineer's affidavit will address safety and asked if there were any questions.

Mayor Bayless asked if anyone else wished to speak on the matter.

Attorney Hanna asked Attorney Morphis if the Affidavit could be entered into evidence. Mr. Morphis confirmed. (Attachment A)

With no one else addressing Council, the Mayor closed the Public Hearing.

The Mayor read the Findings of Fact. Item 1 states the application is complete and the development as proposed in the application will comply with all applicable conditions, standards and regulations set forth in the Ordinance. Item 2 reads the use will not materially endanger the public health or safety if located where proposed and developed according to the plans submitted. Item 3 says the use will not substantially injure the value of the adjacent or abutting properties and Item 4, addresses the location and character of the use, if developed according to the plans submitted and approved, will be in harmony with the area in which it is to be located and in general conformity with the plan of development for the City of Hamlet and its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Council Member Buie motioned, to approve the Solar Farm Application based on the Findings of Fact. Council Member McQueen provided a second and all approved. The vote was 5-0.

Council Members Buie and McQueen motioned to require 120 ft. setbacks for the project. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

7. Public Hearing No. 2. Text Amendment Solar Ordinance – Solar Panel Array for Richmond Early College

Mayor Bayless opened the floor to the Public Hearing. Mr. Brent Barbee of Richmond Community College addressed Council to discuss the request. He explained the college has received a grant to place a solar panel array near the rear of the campus. The goal is to provide educational uses for the College and Early College students in various capacities. The generated solar power will go into batteries for recharging. Council Member Buie asked for the location of the project and Mr. Barbee advised it will be to the left of the substation near the Forte Building.

Council Member McQueen asked why the College was required to apply for the Text Amendment. Attorney Morphis explained the current Solar Ordinance we have in place is for bigger projects and this request is for educational, demonstration projects. Making the revision will require a zoning compliance only, no special use application. As currently written, the request would be considered a Level 3 Solar Project and is not permitted in the College's Zoning District. Council Member Lindsey asked why the College is in a residential zoning district. Gail Strickland explained the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Maps were adopted by Council in 1991, before her employment with the City so she does not have an answer. Mr. Lindsey asked if the ground mounted panels would be available for anyone. The Attorney stated it is tailored for educational use. Council Member McQueen asked if the City could waive the \$150.00 fee paid by the College. Council Member Buie stated the College is a partner with the City and he feels the refund should be given. City Manager Jonathan Blanton stated the fee could be waived.

With no further comments or questions, the floor to the Public Hearing was closed.

8. Consistency Statement and Decision of Solar Ordinance Text Amendment.

The Consistency Statement from the Planning Board was read by the Mayor. Council Member Buie made the motion and Council Member McQueen provided the second to approve the Consistency Statement. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

Council Members McQueen and Buie motioned to waive the \$150.00 fee. A vote of 5-0 was received.

Council Members Buie and Martin motioned to approve the text amendment. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

9. Discussion: Pool Fill Adjustment

The Mayor stated a number of citizens have expressed concerns with the water rates when filling a swimming pools. Staff was asked to investigate and prepare a draft form for adjusting sewer bills when pools are filled. The City Manager reported currently, if you fill a pool you pay for the sewer. He has researched other municipalities, including Rockingham, and has developed a form for such adjustments. The Mayor stated Staff should read the water meters before and after the fill for actual readings. Council Member Buie motioned to approve the form with the change and Council Member Martin offered the second. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

10. Proclamation Capital Highway and Monroe Avenue High Schools Biennial Reunion.

The Mayor read the Proclamation honoring the alumni and their schools.

11. Approval of Tax Releases.

Council Members Buie and Massagee made the motion and second to approve the Tax Releases. A 5-0 vote was received.

Other Business

12. City Manager Report.

The City Manager reported several items. He apologized for recent technical difficulties with the recording equipment and an issue with uploading the videos to the County. He advised Staff has worked with the manufacturer and the County and he is confident they worked out the problems. He also advised the meeting was on Facebook Live as a trial run. Mr. Blanton thanked the Attorney General for his involvement in the past 10 months to 1 year in the 6 Federal Indictments that were recently reported. The Manager also thanked those that came to the fireworks, staff for their work in preparing and thanked all that participated in the canine search.

Council Member McQueen reported of the 6 indictments, only 1 had a Hamlet address.

Council Member Lindsey inquired if the current IT person had received training with the recording equipment and the Manager verified he had.

13. Comments of Council.

Council Member Martin expressed thanks for all that helped with the fireworks and search for the lost dog.

Council Member Lindsey said the kids had a good time at the super soaker provided by the Fire Department. He also reported the Entrance Sign on Highway 74 looks much better since Public Works worked on the area. He also said the fireworks were good.

Council Member McQueen expressed his appreciation for the work that went into the July 4th festivities.

Council Member Buie announced July 20th is the last day for regular soccer sign-ups and July 27th is the last day for late signs ups. He also called attention to the recent Melvin Ingram Day and the City's Basketball Camps this year, saying this was the first time the gym had been utilized in the summer since the installation of the HVAC unit. He also thanked all that worked to make the fireworks happen. He was told the City of Hamlet had the largest show in North Carolina.

14. Mayor's Comments

Mayor Bayless thanked all that came to and worked at the fireworks, and stated he was glad the dog was found. He reported he has been with the Manager on several occasions to look at the complaints and encouraged the citizens to call with any issues.

15. Motion to go into Closed Session per NCGS§ 143-318.11 (a) (3) (5) for contract discussion and attorney-client privilege.

At 7:47 pm, Council Member Buie made the motion to go into Closed Session per NCGS§ 143-318.11 (a) (3) (5) for contract discussion. The second was offered by Council Member Martin. A vote of 5-0 was given.

At 7:55 pm Council Members Buie and McQueen made a motion and second to return to open session. A vote of 5-0 was given.

In open session, Council Member Martin made a motion to approve the EMS Contract as amended with the City paying 50% of the ambulance fuel. Council Member Massagee provided the second and the motion was approved with a vote of 5-0.

16. Motion to adjourn.

At 7:57 pm, Council Members Buie and Martin made the motion and second to adjourn. The vote was 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Gail M. Strickland
City Clerk

