

**HAMLET CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM
201 MAIN STREET, HAMLET, NC 28345
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2019
7:00 PM
MINUTES**

Governing Body Present:

Mayor Pro Tem	Jesse McQueen
Council Member	Eddie Martin
Council Member	Wendy Massagee
Council Member	Maurice L. Stuart, II

Staff Present:

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

Others Present: Rosa Garcia, Pastor Eddie McLean, Roselyn Zapata G, Glenda Hampton, Geraldine Ludlum, Nicole Blake, Addison Player, Bernice Owens, Bobbie Williams, Katrina Chance, Tim Nevinger, Kay Cavendish, Amy Guinn, Nelson David, Sr., Kelley Bryant, Robert Singletary, Jr. and Audrey Stuart

1. Call to Order

Mayor Pro Tem Jesse McQueen called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Invocation

Pastor Eddie McLean of King's Gate Church offered the Prayer. A Moment of Silence was observed in memory of Council Member Joe Robinson.

3. Adoption of Agenda

Council Member Martin motioned to adopt the Agenda and Council Member Stuart provided the second. The vote was 4-0.

4. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the August 13, 2019 Regular Meeting were approved by motions of Council Members Stuart and Martin. The vote was 4-0.

5. Comments from Attendees

The City Manager announced Mayor Antonio Blue of Dobbins Heights had asked to address Council again regarding sewer tap rates for persons that were part of the Sewer Project in Dobbins Heights. Mayor Blue thanked Council for listening. He stated he had spoken with Council before and brought paperwork for Council to review. He requested that people that were part of the project pay a tap fee of \$500.00, not the current rate of \$1,000.00. Mr. Blanton responded Bishop Wooten had provided paper work, but the sewer rates had increased from \$500.00 to \$1,000.00 several years ago. He stated

he does not have the authority to waive or reduce fees that have been adopted by Council; only Council could do so. The Manager asked Attorney Morphis if he had anything to add. He did not. Council Member McQueen suggested Council revisit the matter as an Agenda Item at the next Council Meeting with the paperwork from Mayor Blue. Mr. McQueen offered his suggestion as a motion and Council Member Martin provided the second. Mr. Blue responded Council has the paperwork and this is dragging the issue on. He said delaying the matter would require Bishop Wooten to pay the higher rate or have repairs on his septic system. Mr. McQueen responded this was not a clear-cut matter and it had never been on the Agenda. Council voted 4-0 to the motion.

Old Business

6. Public Hearing No. 1 – Commercial Vehicles Parking on Residential Lots.

Council Member McQueen stated, at the June Council meeting, Council discussed the issue and sent the matter to the Planning Board for their recommendation on the proposed Ordinance Text Amendments. The Planning Board met on July 15, 2019 and offers a favorable recommendation to the amendments. A Public Hearing was advertised for August 13, 2019. At the August Council Meeting, the Public Hearing was postponed until September 10th.

Council Member McQueen opened the Public Hearing and asked for the matter to be continued to the next meeting, explaining in the event of a tie, they would need the Mayor to break the tie. The Public Hearing was closed. Mr. McQueen motioned to postpone until October 8, 2019. Council Member Martin provided the second and the vote was 4-0.

7. Consistency Statement and Decision of Text Amendments for Commercial Vehicles.

This item was moved to the October Meeting with the Public Hearing.

New Business

8. Public Hearing No. 2. – Zapata Rezoning

Mr. McQueen announced Filiberto Jimenez Zapata and Rosa I Garcia Alarcon, new owners of property located at 177 Louis Breeden Blvd. (Hwy 38) have filed a rezoning request. The parcel has a house and a building located on it. The owner attempted to have electricity turned on at the building to use for storage and was informed by Richmond County Building Inspections that it was zoned commercial and would need to be rezoned to residential to have power. Current Zoning is (B-3) Neighborhood Business. The request is to rezone to Residential 6. The Planning Board met on August 19, 2019 and offers a favorable recommendation for the rezoning. A Public Hearing has been advertised, first class letters mailed to surrounding property owners and the land posted with a rezoning sign. The Mayor Pro Tem opened the Public Hearing. No one presented. The Public Hearing was closed.

9. Consistency Statement and Decision of Rezoning for Zapata Rezoning.

The NC General Statutes now require the Board to complete the Consistency Statement prior to making a rezoning decision. Mr. McQueen motioned to approve the Consistency Statement. Council Member Massagee provided the second. The vote was 4-0.

Council Member McQueen provided the motion to approve the rezoning. Council Member Martin provided the second and the vote was 4-0.

10. Re- appointment to the Hamlet Planning Board.

Mr. McQueen stated when several appointments were made to the Hamlet Planning Board last year, the Members' terms were staggered to ensure their terms did not conclude at the same time. Council

agreed those appointed for 1 year would be re-appointed for a 3-year term. Mr. Tony Clewis' 1-year term as a Regular Member expires October 8, 2019. Mayor Pro Tem McQueen provided the motion to re-appoint Mr. Clewis for a 3-year term. Council Member Stuart gave the second and the vote was 4-0.

11. Establish Date of ETJ Relinquishment Public Hearing.

Mr. McQueen announced Council needed to set a date for the Public Hearing on the ETJ Relinquishment. He motioned to set the date as October 8, 2019. Council Member Massagee provided the second. The vote was 4-0.

12. Approval of Tax Releases.

Mayor Pro Tem McQueen motioned to approve the Tax Releases. Council Member Martin provided the second. The vote was 4-0.

13. Resolution 2019-08 – Donation of Surplus Property.

Mayor Pro Tem McQueen read the Resolution that stated the Hamlet Water Plant has chlorine scales that are no longer needed and has requested to donate them to The Town of Winnsboro, SC as allowed by NC General Statute 160A-280. The City Manager added the scales were of no value to the City and in the spirit of harmony and as a good gesture, the City would like to offer them to the Town of Winnsboro. Council Member Martin gave the motion to adopt the Resolution. Council Member Massagee offered the second. The vote was 4-0.

14. Mayoral Proclamation – Chiari Malformation Awareness Month.

Mayor Pro Tem McQueen read the Proclamation.

Other Business

15. City Manager's Report.

Mr. Blanton provided an update on former employee Cheryle Dennis. She has been admitted to Hospice Haven in Rockingham and her family has stated she loves having visitors.

The Manager asked Council for consensus to extend late registration for football and cheerleading for one additional week due to low registration numbers. Council discussed waiving the late fees, but determined they could not since late fees have already been collected. Council agreed to the extension.

The City Manager offered condolences to the recent passing of Council Member Robinson. He thanked the family for requesting donations to the City Lake project in lieu of flowers. Mr. Blanton advised the City has received a dozen donations and thanked the donors.

Mr. Blanton also thanked Vulcan for partnering with the City on the Lake Project. The company gave an incredible deal on the rip rap that has been placed. The addition has added to the clean and fresh look and provided a safe place for families.

An update on the mural by Mr. Stuart Carmichael was also given. The artist should complete the wall this week.

Mr. Blanton advised he had 2 Scopes of Work he wanted to discuss with Council and apologized for not getting the information to Council earlier, but he provided it as soon as he received it.

The Manager first spoke on the Scope of Work from Grimes Engineering, stating it was finalized on Monday. The company helped rehabilitate the dam at the Water Lake 8-9 years ago. They have provided a similar Scope of Work to Rehabilitate the dam at City Lake. Around 2010 – 2011, the State of NC advised the City needed to make provisions to rehabilitate the dam and get a plan of action in place. One has not been developed. The report from Grimes is split into 2 phases. Mr. Blanton stated it is a comprehensive and fair proposal. He asked Council to consider approving the Scope of Work, stating it is only a matter of time before the State makes the City take action. At this point, the City has some lead way in the plans rather than when the State comes in and mandates. The Scope of work will put the City in a competitive position to apply for USDA funding to use toward rehabilitation of the dam in the next fiscal year.

The second report Mr. Blanton discussed was a Scope of Work for a Master Plan for City Lake. He and the Wooten Company have met several times over the past few weeks discussing potential ideas for the lake, looking at sites for improvements. The two main objectives he wanted to look at are extending the walking trail and the construction of a splash pad in between the former VFW Building and the Hamlet Senior Center. The Master Plan would bring together a lot of ideas, stakeholders, and put the City in a competitive position with an Engineering Report for the 2020-2021 funding cycles for numerous NC Parks & Recreation Grants. This is not the approval of any plans, but approval of moving forward with an Engineering Report to create a Master Plan to have a vision and a clear course of action moving forward. The City Manager discussed the Wooten Company's recent study at the WWTP. The City will use the study next year as it plans for expansion to work toward the two million-gallon capacity. Ideally, Mr. Blanton would like for the report the Wooten Company compiled at the Sewer Plant, the Engineering Report from Grimes Engineering and the Wooten Company's proposal for a Master Plan for City Lake to be combined into one project and one grant proposal to USDA, to NC Parks and Recreational outlets for grants, and then for them to be considered as one major project within the next 12 to 18 months.

He asked for consensus or a vote of Council to approve the 2 Scopes of Work and stated he had discussed them with Mayor Bayless, who had no reservations with them. He provided the cost of the Master Plan from the Wooten Company as \$18,500.00. Mr. Blanton explained the Grimes Engineering Report is split into two phases. It will be somewhere between \$25,000.00 to \$39,000.00. He stated the first step in getting the dam rehabilitated is to get an engineering report to see exactly what the City is facing and then moving forward with that.

Mayor Pro Tem McQueen stated the dam project is something that has been going on for a long time and has to happen. He inquired if Council should consider both at one time. Mr. Blanton explained funding would come from two accounts, the dam from the Enterprise Fund and the Wooten Company's proposal from the General Fund. He advised they can be considered individually or in the totality. Attorney Morphis stated it was best to vote rather than consensus. It was Mr. Blanton's recommendation that Council move forward with both.

Council Member Stuart confirmed the funding for the dam report would come from the Enterprise Fund and inquired on funding for the report on the lake. The City Manager advised it would come from the General Fund, either Non-Departmental Professional Services or Parks and Recreation Facilities. Finance Officer Jill Dickens advised Parks and Recreation would be the appropriate fund. Mr. Stuart asked if the City was well within budget with both funds. Mr. Blanton replied the City has \$45,000.00 originally budgeted in Non-Departmental Professional Services. The City can transfer some of the money from Non- Departmental Professional Services to Parks and Recreation, if Council agrees, in the

form of a budget amendment in October or November.

Council Member Massagee stated it was difficult to make informed decisions when they just received the information. Mr. Blanton replied the proposal from Grimes Engineering was good for 30 days and with the next Council Meeting October 8th, Council could decide at that time. He apologized that Council just received the information. Mrs. Massagee said she felt the City should move forward with the Grimes proposal but they had not had an opportunity to discuss the other and what they want to accomplish. She added the City does not have a choice on the dam.

Mayor Pro Tem McQueen made the motion that Council accept the Wooten Company proposal for a study on the work to be accomplished at the City Lake. Council Member Martin provided the second. The City Manager discussed Mrs. Massagee's point, stating one of the key elements of the Wooten's proposal is a Kick/Off Work Session with City/Stakeholders. He read from the proposal, "Upon completion of the base mapping, meet with the City of Hamlet Staff to obtain input for the project, including key program elements, vision, phasing, to be incorporated into the schematic concept plans." Mr. Blanton continued that would include garnering community input to have a more thorough and broad scope of what the City wants to accomplish. The City would not be committed to the ideas; it would be a living document evolving within the scope of the proposal. Council Member Massagee stated they were looking at \$18,500.00 for the Master Plan. The City Manager confirmed and stated it would take into consideration what the City Leaders and the community want and then it will come back to Council for their consideration. The Board voted and the Clerk confirmed the motion passed with no opposition at 4-0.

Mayor Pro Tem McQueen asked for questions or comments on the Grimes Engineering proposal for the analysis of the spillway. Council Member Martin stated the City has no choice on the matter. He said the City should have dealt with it several years ago and has not. At some point, he feels the State will come in and at that time, tell them how and when they are going to make the repairs. Mr. Martin made the motion to accept the Grimes Engineering proposal. Council Member Stuart provided the second and the vote was 4-0.

Mr. McQueen asked if the City should waive the late fees for football sign-ups. The Manager stated the City has already accepted late fees this week. It would be a difficult precedent to set. He added Parks and Recreation has experienced a decline in tackle football registrations over the years. As of now, only 15 have registered for tackle.

16. Comments of Council.

Council Member Stuart thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and invited residents to come be a part of the City's decisions. He announced Dorothy Louise Strong Johnson, a native of Hamlet who graduated from Capital Highway School and now resides in Washington DC is celebrating her 100th birthday today. Mr. Stuart provided information on the Seaboard Festival and 5k race held the last Saturday of October. He encouraged everyone to make sure your family is registered to vote for the upcoming elections in November.

Council Member Massagee gave positive comments on the improvements to City Lake and explained her only concern with the Wooten proposal was the length of time to study it. She said she would appreciate more time to review before making decisions. The City Manager apologized for the short timeframe.

Mr. Stuart added he was very pleased with the City Lake improvements

Council Member Martin commended the City Manager for taking the initiative to get behind the work at the City Lake. He has been at the lake more often and noticed an increase in people there fishing and visiting.

17. Mayor Pro Tem's Comments.

Mayor Pro Tem McQueen echoed the positive comments on the improvements to City Lake. He commended the City employees that have been working there. He added the community is buying into the project, making donations. Council has received positive feedback and he wants the City to continue moving forward. He praised the Hamlet Police Department for stepping up and cleaning out some of the bad elements doing unwholesome things. He thanked all that had participated in the work and made donations.

Mr. McQueen stated he has received compliments on the streets and sidewalks that can be a problem this time of a year.

The Mayor Pro Tem advised he has been contacted by a person that owns property, in the City and outside the City, regarding security deposits for water accounts. The property owner asked if Council could do something with the security deposit for persons that own multiple properties in the town. Mr. McQueen said he would like the full Council to discuss to see if this is an option and asked the Manager to research to see if this is the practice of other towns. The City Manager stated he thought the property owner purchased outside the City limits and there is a \$75.00 security deposit required in the City's policy. He said at the time he discussed the matter with Council Member Massagee, the Mayor and Mr. McQueen. Mr. Blanton stated he does not have the authority to waive fees but he will look into the matter.

Mr. McQueen offered his condolences to the Robinson Family.

Also announced by the Mayor Pro Tem was the upcoming Seaboard Festival. He has met with the dedicated Committee and knows they have new additions for the Festival this year.

The Mayor Pro Tem provided information on the 11th Annual Indoor John Coltrane Music "Edu-tainment" Festival on Saturday, October 5th. He commended Gerard Morrison for his continued dedication to the event.

18. Motion to Adjourn.

At 7:46 pm. Council Members Massagee and Martin provided the motion and second to adjourn. The vote was 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Gail M. Strickland, City Clerk

