

Regular Session Board Meeting
February 12, 2024 @ 5:00 pm

Mayor Michael Speight called the meeting to order at 5:09 pm. Members in attendance were Mayor Speight, Mayor ProTem/Commissioner Jason Taylor, Commissioner Joyce Braxton, Commissioner Paula Lewis, Commissioner Jean Wooten-Jiles, Town Administrator Jennifer Stanley, Town Clerk Gracieann Etheridge, and Public Works Director Benjy Lassiter. Guests in attendance were Ms. Montressa Jacobs and Mr. Sunil Kumar.

Commissioner Lewis offered the invocation and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Wooten-Jiles seconded the motion and with none opposed, the motion carried.

Commissioner Wooten-Jiles made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 8 regular and closed session meetings. Commissioner Lewis seconded the motion and with none opposed, the minutes were approved.

The board recognized Ms. Montressa Jacobs to speak. Ms. Jacobs thanked the board for the opportunity and began to explain her non-profit food bank (Rella's Services). She is looking for a place in town to distribute food to the residents in need. If approved, the distribution would take place on the third Wednesday of the each month with the times being 10:00 am – 1:00 pm (approximately). Any leftover food would be taken to the 5-day pantry to be distributed from there. Any participants would need to fill out an information sheet to turn in on the day of distribution. The board agreed to allow Ms. Jacobs to set up to distribute food and the exact location would be determined. This will begin in April.

The board recognized Mr. Kumar to speak. Mr. Kumar thanked the board and stated that he has been having issues with loose dogs at the grocery store and what could be done. He was informed that any loose dog complaints will need to be directed to the county. Commissioner Taylor also explained to Mr. Kumar that in response to his previous request regarding the electric bill at the grocery store; the board has agreed to remove the multiplier of 80 from the billing account effective the upcoming billing cycle. Mr. Kumar thanked the board and also offered to allow Ms. Jacobs to set up in the grocery store parking lot for the food distribution.

McDavid Associates was not present, so Mrs. Stanley reported on the pre-construction meeting held that morning with McDavid Associates representatives David Weir and Inspector Henry Walker, Duke's representative Doug Greenly, Mr. Lassiter and Mrs. Stanley. Duke's will be conducting the sewer camera/cleaning/smoke testing. Work should begin the week of February 26th. Once completed the pay request will be submitted to the town. Duke's will need the ability to quick connect to fire hydrants, a secure place to park their equipment, and the ability to dump at the plant drying beds.

The board was presented with a "Hold Harmless Agreement" for the deed preparation for the acquisition of the land for the WWTP project. Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve the agreement. Commissioner Wooten-Jiles seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Due to the weather conditions of late, Hardy Construction has not been able to complete the repairs of the streets/drains throughout town.

The board was presented with three quotes for the fencing at the well on Railroad Street. Chain Link Fence Company has the lowest bid. Concerns were raised about the amount of fencing for the well. It was agreed to ask the inspector what the minimum requirement is for fencing around the well. This item was tabled until the March meeting.

Mrs. Stanley reported that the chair rack, mats, and cleaning supplies were installed and taken to the Community Building.

Mr. Lassiter reported that all the security lights on the list have been repaired.

Mrs. Stanley explained to the board that the forms and pictures of the equipment in their packet is the equipment that Public Works is seeking to surplus and place on GovDeals to sell. All of them will be listed immediately with the exception of the Bucket truck until we find a replacement for it. There is also an industrial floor buffer, but it has not been determined if it is operational. Commissioner Wooten-Jiles made a motion to declare the equipment surplus and place on GovDeals to sell. Commissioner Braxton seconded the motion and with none opposed the motion carried.

Mrs. Stanley reported that her two-year employment anniversary will be on February 21st. The board was presented with an administrator evaluation form for their approval. It was also recommended that Mrs. Stanley fill out the self-evaluation as well. Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve the administrator evaluation. Commissioner Braxton seconded the motion and with none opposed the motion carried. The board agreed to meet on Tuesday, February 20th at 2:15 pm to perform the evaluation.

Mrs. Stanley reported that a representative from Globe Life stopped by the office to offer supplemental insurance to the town employees. This would be like Aflac that employees currently participate in. The representative will return to speak to staff regarding their coverage.

Mrs. Stanley reported the interest earned over the past month as well as the account balances. She reported that the town received the official award letter for the CDBG-NR grant.

Mr. Rich Moore has also requested information to assist with a CDBG-I (infrastructure) grant. This would be used to rehabilitate the well on Railroad Street.

Mrs. Stanley explained that the reimbursement request in the packet was for Commissioner Wooten-Jiles' trip to the UCPCOG board meeting. Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve the reimbursement. Commissioner Braxton seconded the motion and with none opposed the motion carried. Mrs. Stanley clarified that in the future this reimbursement does not need to be voted on. It was reported that the 2023 CCR (Consumer Confidence Report – Water) is completed and available in the office and the link will be shared on the bills and the town website.

Mrs. Stanley called the board's attention to two items that were at their spots for the meeting. The first is information on the NCLM service to assist with grants – locating, filing and submitting applications, etc. It is a program that Mrs. Hurdle brought attention to at a past meeting. The cost is covered by the league up to \$30,000. The board agreed to table this item in order to review the information further. The second item was information from Mr. Bruce Naeglen on the MS & RP Advisory board. The board tabled this item as well in order to review further.

Mr. Lassiter reported that Public Works staff are continuing the lead and copper inspections. It was asked if the VFD at the WWTP that was damaged due to the power surge could be filed on insurance for reimbursement. Mrs. Stanley stated that she would contact the insurance company to find out.

It was reported that there is an influent pump that he has been nursing and it is in bad shape. Pearson Pump has repaired one pump and just picked up another pump to repair.

Mr. Lassiter reported that in a meeting with the engineer last week, he was informed that the town would have to pay up front to have the power re-routed for the WWTP project and be reimbursed from

the grant funds. It is expected to be under \$40,000 approximately and would require a budget amendment to move funds from NCCMT to central checking.

Mr. Lassiter stated that there was a DEQ permit fee of \$500 due and is for the erosion control permit. Mr. Lassiter presented the quote for the bucket truck. The new truck would be \$198,495.65 and that is with the state discount. It could be financed or paid straight out while budgeting over two budget cycles. If the order is placed, the truck is still approximately 1.5 to 2 years before receipt of the vehicle.

Commissioner Taylor stated that at the training session he attended it was mentioned that voting done with a tie-breaking member only present via phone was not valid. He asked if we had a policy regarding voting via phone and if not, it would be a good idea to develop a policy.

Commissioner Taylor also mentioned the fire tax and mentioned that maybe the board could up the donation amount to cover the difference needed instead of putting it all on the citizens. He would like to discuss options at the budget workshops.

Commissioner Braxton asked if any planning had been done for the Easter Egg Hunt. Mrs. Stanley and Mrs. Etheridge will be attending a planning meeting with Webbs Chapel on February 19th.

Commissioner Taylor asked if there had been any other citizens having their internet cut by the contractor that was working on the poles. It was reported that the town has not had any more complaints.

Mayor Speight asked about replacing the poles throughout town as some are very old and needing replacement. Mr. Lassiter will contact Osmose to get information on having the poles tested.

It was agreed that the board would meet at 3:00 pm on board meeting days in order to have time to make progress on the upcoming budget and updating the ordinances.

Commissioner Braxton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lewis seconded the motion and with none opposed, the meeting adjourned at 6:44 pm.