

**ERWIN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 29, 2012
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
ERWIN, NORTH CAROLINA**

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Erwin with Mayor Patsy Carson presiding, held its Special Called Meeting in the Town Hall on Monday, March 29, 2012 at 7:00 P. M. in Erwin, North Carolina.

Board Members present were: Commissioners Frank Taylor, Frankie Ballard, Randy Baker, Norma Ennis, William Turnage and Ricky Blackmon.

Town Manager Bryan Thompson, Finance Officer Debbie Chestnut and Town Clerk Cynthia Patterson were present.

Mayor Patsy Carson called the meeting to order at 7:00 P. M.

Commissioner Taylor gave the invocation.

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT ITEMS

Commissioner Baker made a motion to approve the Budget Retreat Minutes on January 2, 2012 and was seconded by Commissioner Turnage. The Board voted 5 for and 1 absent (Commissioner Blackmon).

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Taylor made a motion to go into Closed Session at 7:01pm for discussion of Personnel Matters Pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a) (6) and was seconded by Commissioner Turnage. The Board voted 5 for and 1 absent (Commissioner Blackmon).

Commissioner Blackmon came in at 7:05pm

RECONVENE

Commissioner Baker made a motion to reconvene at 7:37pm and was seconded by Commissioner Taylor. The Board voted unanimously.

CONTINUED OF MINUTES MARCH 29, 2012

Mayor Carson informed the Board that Nancy Jackson, Erwin Chamber President, would like to update the Board on Funding Request from the Erwin Chamber. With no objection, Mayor Carson introduced Mrs. Nancy Jackson.

Nancy Jackson, Erwin Chamber President came forward and addressed the Board. Mrs. Jackson stated that she would like to update the Board on a few of the current and past activities of the Chamber. The Chamber has become more active in the last few months and has grown just over 15% increase in new membership. To promote our Community efficiently and the businesses as well to help bring more business and families to the Town, the Chamber cannot operate as a part time business. With the plan changes and additional events planned for this coming year the Chamber is taking steps to make the Chamber of Commerce a full time position. With the support of our additional membership and assistance with many volunteers the Chamber office is now open Monday thru Friday from 9am - 3pm. Mrs. Jackson then stated that she was here tonight to request that the Town of Erwin consider budgeting for the coming year a \$1,000 per month to help the Chamber to not only carry out these events but help us and assisting us with these resources. Mrs. Jackson presented the Board with the Chamber's proposed budget for the coming year. This is not a completed budget however the Chamber Board should be voting on this in April.

There was no discussion from the Board of Commissioners.

REVIEW AND UPDATE ON BUDGET ITEMS**REPUBLIC SERVICE CONTRACT**

The question was asked at the Retreat about what is the ability of the Town to get out of this contract. In looking over it there is no very easy way to do that. The Town would be in this contract until 2015 however the Town Attorney has not be notified on this issue.

Commissioner Blackmon stated that the Town could do this a lot cheaper and also provide a better service to the citizens instead of what we have now. In order to provide a better service to the citizens, we need to at least let the Town Attorney look at this.

Commissioner Turnage agreed however was not sure if we could get out of the contract without paying a penalty. If the Town could provide a better service to the citizens and have a better rate then we need to pursue this.

COST OF SOLID WASTE SERVICE

Projecting to the end of the current fiscal year it appears that this expense department will close the year at about \$323,485.23, which is about \$10,000 under budget for the year.

CONTINUED OF MINUTES MARCH 29, 2012**TEXTILE MUSEUM FUND**

In speaking with Mac Hunter, there have been no new developments in this case. From the last correspondence offered by the attorney assigned to this case on behalf of the Town, the document offered to the court by the court appointed referee did not appear to be in favor of the Town.

HISTORY ROOM /DEPOT

Members of the History Room and other parties met with a State Official to determine what, if any, grant funds are available to assist in the planning and implementation of this project. It is anticipated that more information will be forthcoming in the near future.

ADDITIONAL POLICE OFFICER

In review of rough estimates for potential expenses and revenues for the coming year and in consideration of potential cost reductions to the operating budget by retiring debt early, it is possible to fund this position in the event the grant is not awarded.

PLANNER/CODE ENFORCEMENT/BUILDING INSPECTOR

At the Retreat the Board expressed interest in exploring this proposal. Staff has identified what the personnel cost would be for each of these positions. This will give the Board an idea what to anticipate for if we did move forward and incorporate this into the budget.

The Board was in agreement to move forward with this in the budget.

RETIRING EXISTING DEBT

There is debt service which is funded by Operational Revenues and Capital Reserve Funds. By retiring debt service in Operational Revenues \$68,986.92 would be available to help balance the coming year's budget. By retiring debt service in the Capital Reserve Funds which is \$73,673.04 you would save on interest due to decrease in interest paid.

The Board was in agreement to move forward with this.

LIGHTING ON 421

The Board indicated at the Retreat that this item should stay on the agenda for consideration to see where it falls on the prioritized list of projects, programs, and purchases. In an effort to reduce the overall cost of this project, an alternative approach to phase three has been explored. Instead of lighting the remainder of 421, make an effort to at least light the main intersection of 421/55/13th.

CONTINUED OF MINUTES MARCH 29, 2012

Commissioner Taylor stated that he would like to see this at the bottom of the list. We have other projects that need attention right now however this would be good in the future but just not right now.

Commissioner Baker agreed that this would definitely be something the Town could invest in but there are some other qualities of life issues that we need to address for the citizens before we address this.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS EXTENSION

The Board indicated that this should be incorporated in to the coming year's budget. Approximately 20 lights would be added and we can anticipate the project cost around \$4,000.

Staff recommends the following:

- Placing 3 lights at the intersection of Masonic Road and Denim Drive
- Placing 4 lights at the intersection of Old Post/Moulton Springs and 13th Street
- Placing 13 lights along Old Post Road

The Board was in agreement since this would be a one-time cost to do the entrance corridor's identified such as (421, 217, Dunn Erwin Road).

TRAFFIC LIGHTS AT INTERSECTION OF 13TH AND MOULTON SPRINGS/BRYANT ROAD

The Board directed Staff to request DOT to place traffic lights at this intersection. Staff has done so, and DOT has this request on file.

DRAINAGE AND STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

Staff is currently working on this item. Staff should have this plan available to the Board prior to the budget approval.

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT

Commissioner Blackmon advised the Board to use Capital Reserve Fund for projects not Community Enhancement.

CONTINUED OF MINUTES MARCH 29, 2012**REMOVING 421 BRIDGE TO GRADE LEVEL**

Mr. Thompson informed the Board that he met with DOT on March 27th and the bridge was built in 1957 with life expectancy of 64 years. Based on that, the bridge has 16 more years of potential life left. At that time, DOT would consider a recommendation on what to do with that bridge replace the bridge or lower the bridge to ground level. DOT stated that it was a good idea to lower the bridge to ground level however not something to do right of way.

The question to the Board is how you want to proceed. The Board felt like it would be appropriate to have this placed on the Improvement Plan and have Staff to move forward getting the process started.

INSURANCE BENEFITS FOR RETIRED EMPLOYEES

Since the adoption of this policy, certain insurance standards have changed with insurance providers. In the event the Town desired to change insurance providers, these standards now prevent the Town from doing so on account of retired individuals being included in the Town's group plan. This current year's budget reflects a 36% increase from Blue Cross Blue Shield. The Town has not yet received the renewal from BCBS, but Staff anticipates continued increases. The Town would be best served if the Town were able to shop out the group plan to other providers, but is unable to do so. In addition, if the Town were to leave BCBS and then return to BCBS, the retired individuals could not be made part of the group plan. However, the Town would be able to change providers if the retired individuals were on individual plans and not within the Town's group plan.

Commissioner Baker stated that we have retired employees that are invested in this Town and those benefits are owed to them. As long as there is no decrease in any type of benefit from what those employees have now would say go for it.

Mr. Thompson also informed the Board that we will notify the retirees before we begin.

SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS FROM W.N. PORTER PARK TO US POST OFFICE LOCATED ON SOUTH 13TH STREET

The Board directed Staff to develop a phased approach to installing these improvements and present the phased plan to the Board with estimated costs for each phase. The five phases range from 710' to 1,280' of sidewalk installation per phase. As these are merely representative and conceptual at this time as an effort to project potential costs the Board reserves discretion to alter any and all phases based on public need, budget considerations, and other variables that may be relevant. Total project cost including contract administration, geotechnical investigation, and bid administration is \$476,896.

CONTINUED OF MINUTES MARCH 29, 2012

Commissioner Turnage asked was there any way we could look at grant money. Mr. Thompson stated that there are enhancement grants 80/20 however we would not be considered until we put something in. If this is something the Board is interested in doing than we can submit the master plan or overall plan to DOT so they can put it on file.

PRIORITIZATION OF BUDGET ITEMS

The following is a list provided by the Board as a way to prioritize these items which will offer Staff the ability to work as many of these items into the budget as they fall along the prioritization.

W .N. Porter Park Improvements

Removing Stone Bridge and Tiling/Fill in Smaller Ditch---\$14,600

Extend Christmas Lights----\$4,000

Hiring Planner----\$60,628

Hiring Building Inspector-----\$61,406

Hiring Police Officer-----\$43,246

Drainage Improvements**Codification of Ordinance and Code**

Commissioner Baker would also like to see a Monthly Maintenance Schedule on drainage ditches. We take care of the ones on the Town's property first. Then have the Town to look at others on a case by case basis.

It was also suggested in getting prices for cleaning Town Hall, Library and Community Building.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Turnage made a motion to adjourn at 9:05pm and was seconded by Commissioner Taylor. The Board voted unanimously.

**MINUTES RECORDED AND TYPED BY
CYNTHIA B PATTERSON TOWN CLERK**

Patsy M . Carson,
Mayor

Cynthia B. Patterson, C M C
Town Clerk