

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL
February 10, 2009
Whitsett Town Hall Building

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

The regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council was held at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 10, 2009 at the Whitsett Town Hall. The following members of the Town Council were present: Mayor Richard Fennell, Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown, Council members Jerry Rice, Ken Jacobs, and Cindy Wheeler. Also present were Town Administrator Gary Deal, Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia, Captain Lawrence Straughn of the Sheriff's Department, members of the media, and seven other citizens.

Mayor Fennell called the Council meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and noted that a quorum was present. Council member Rice offered the invocation.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Mayor Fennell asked for any speakers from the floor; and Terry Call, introduced himself as this year's President of the Greater Whitsett Community Ruritan Club, and took the floor. Mr. Call first expressed his thanks for the funds that the Town Council had granted the Ruritan last year to renovate, repair and brighten the Town Hall building cafeteria, which the Ruritan uses for its clubhouse. Mayor Fennell, in turn, expressed the Council's appreciation for the cafeteria's overhaul.

Further, Mr. Call listed several upcoming activities in the works: (1) the organization would uncover and reclaim the sign out front to serve as their bulletin board to publicize civic functions and events, (2) on Saturday, February 21, several Ruritan volunteers would hold a workday to clean up the storage room and adjoining closets in the Town Hall with Town Hall staffers also helping, and (3) on Saturday, March 14, there would be a benefit breakfast from 7:30 to 10:00 to support Loaves and Fishes of Burlington and also to aid a local citizen in dire times.

Along with handing out the reprinted Ruritan pamphlet with current information, Terry Call stated that the Ruritan members are energetic and are committed to serving the community; and to please contact him if anyone knows of or becomes aware of a need in the area so the Ruritan can potentially meet its service goals for this year. Additionally, Mr. Call provided the names of the 2009 officers to the clerk for posting on the Whitsett website.

On another issue, Mr. Call explained to the Council that the Ruritan would like to put up and illuminate an oversized Ruritan seal to either replace or simply cover the BSA [Troop] 265 stone-imbedded display to the left of the cafeteria main door. The objective would be to promote the Ruritan's existence in the Whitsett community. The consensus of the Council members was that they would like to see a rendering with dimensions of the sign before they could grant that permission. Also, the seal would need to comply with the Town ordinance specifications on signs.

Mayor Fennell moved this request for further consideration and/or action by the Town Council under "new business."

OLD BUSINESS

1. Adoption of the Minutes

Mayor Fennell asked for any changes to the January 13, 2009 minutes for the regular monthly meeting; and there were none. Motion made by Council member Jerry Rice to adopt the minutes as written; motion seconded by Council member Ken Jacobs. Adoption carried by unanimous vote.

2. Discuss and Approve Ball Field Contract

With regard to the ball field, a complaint had been registered concerning the ball field lights in use for earlier-than-usual practices. The Council in general felt that Town liability was more the issue; but even so, perhaps lights in use for practices rather than scheduled league play should be limited to more restricted hours, e.g., 9:00 p.m. Another primary concern, however, was that authority had been granted to parties—unbeknown to the Town—to use the field for practices (even with lights ending at 7:30) outside of the effective dates for the contract. The Mayor asked the clerk to contact the ball league director to convey the issue and problems.

With all the concerns and legalities having been aired relative to lights use/expense, and especially liabilities and authority, a motion to approve the ball field contract as written was made by Council member Ken Jacobs; motion seconded by Council member Jerry Rice. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

3. Any Other Old Business

Mayor Fennell asked for any other old business; and there was none.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Planning Board

Board Chairman Bob Maccia reported that at the February meeting, the Board elected officers; and both he as Chairman and Joe Wheeler as Vice Chairman would be returning in those capacities for 2009. In addition, Maccia reported that the Board supported and

welcomed new Board member Lee Greeson to serve a three-year term ending December 2011; and recommended that the Town Council approve this appointment.

Motion made by Council member Ken Jacobs to accept the elections of Planning Board Chairman and Vice Chairman for 2009 and to appoint Lee Greeson to the Planning Board; motion seconded by Council member Jerry Rice. Motion passed unanimously.

Board Chairman Maccia also reported that the Board had resurrected the task of developing a future land-use plan for Whitsett; and a committee of so-far four volunteers would be working with Guilford County to formulate the map designating preferred zoning of certain areas and corridors. Along with the map, the committee would also document detailed specifications for any commercial development in conjunction with requirements already set forth in the Town ordinances, e.g., architectural standards, lighting, signs, buffers, etc. Guidelines for residential development may also be included.

In addition, Chairman Maccia understood that the Sedalia Planning Board was nearing completion of its land-use plan and would hope to attend one or so of its town's Planning Board meetings where that work would be wrapped up.

2. Enforcement Committee

Enforcement Officer Gary Deal stated there had been no committee activity this month.

3. Enforcement Officer

Enforcement Officer Gary Deal reported that two clearance permit certificates had been issued since the last Council meeting: (1) to Crown Castle Communications (Sprint) to add a generator to the communications facility on Gusenbury Road, and (2) a renewal permit to Jim Griggs to do general repairs and upkeep, e.g., replace roof, fix and paint porch and dwelling at 723 NC Hwy 61.

4. Town Administrator

Town Administrator Gary Deal reported that with regard to the three-year Guilford County Solid Waste Plan, a March public hearing would be scheduled in Greensboro which he would plan to attend. Then, by April the plan will come before all municipal boards and councils and the County Commissioners for review with eventual adoption targeted for May.

Next, Town Administrator Deal reported that Summerfield had shared, with all County municipalities, its adopted ordinance on prohibiting sex offenders from municipal parks and recreational facilities in order to achieve consistency throughout Guilford County in the program's enforcement, which would be handled by the Sheriff's Department. The ordinance had been forwarded to town attorney Bill Trevor for review, which would subsequently come before the Planning Board and then Town Council for action. If accepted at this stage, it would be placed on the public hearing docket, likely in June along with the Town's proposed budget and any other ordinances or amendments being proposed.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Any Items from Council Members

Mayor Fennell raised, for further discussion, the Ruritan's request to display a large round sign depicting the club's logo on the outside wall of the cafeteria over the Boy Scouts stone work. The Council, across the board, decided to table the matter until each member could take a look at the existing display to better size up what was being asked.

Mayor Fennell then stated that he understood that the Wades, who had been the Town's concession stand operators for almost a decade, had decided to not contract with the Town this year; and asked for a brief update from Council member Cindy Wheeler, who had been the Council representative to meet with the Wades on two occasions.

Council member Wheeler reported that Town Administrator Gary Deal and she had, in fact, met with Ricky and Brenda Wade in December, and again with Ricky Wade in January to discuss overall aspects of the contract itself with a focus on options for reducing utility costs subsidized by Town public funds. Council member Wheeler explained that between the meetings the Wades had also taken stock of their household economics and had done some legwork on pricing concession supplies and perishables, with those costs having increased significantly. To this end, the Wades had decided to not renew the contract for the 2009 ball season.

Hearing this, Ruritan President Terry Call interjected that the Ruritan may be interested in operating the concession; and requested a copy of the contract for review. Council member Ken Jacobs added that he would be more amenable to a non-profit group (vs. a for-profit party) running the stand.

Finally, when asked about the condition of the concession, Town Administrator Gary Deal replied that the Wades had attended to normal winterizing of the building and had done an excellent job of clean up.

4. Announcements

Mayor Fennell asked for any announcements; and there were none.

5. Speakers from the Floor

Mayor Fennell asked for speakers from the floor; and no one came forward.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Council, Mayor Fennell invited a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Council member Jerry Rice for adjournment; motion seconded by

Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown. Motion passed unanimously; and the February 10 Town Council meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Town Council will be at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 10, 2009 at the Whitsett Town Hall.

/s/

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

Richard Fennell, Mayor

APPROVED: March 10, 2009