

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL
March 8, 2011
Whitsett Town Hall Building

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

The regular meeting of the Whitsett Town Council was held at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 8, 2011 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, Cindy Wheeler, and Lee Greeson. Also present were Town Administrator Gary Deal, two members of the media, and two area citizens. Absent was Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia.

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

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Mayor Fennell asked for any speakers from the floor; and there were none.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Adoption of the Minutes

Mayor Fennell asked for any changes to the minutes from the February 8, 2011 regular meeting. With no changes made, a motion was made by Council member Jerry Rice to accept the minutes as written; motion seconded by Council member Lee Greeson. Minutes approved by unanimous vote.

2. Any Other Old Business

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

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Planning Board

In the absence of Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia and the March Board meeting having been cancelled, Town Administrator Gary Deal reported that there was no report.

2. Enforcement Committee

Town Administrator Gary Deal reported that no committee activity had taken place.

3. Enforcement Officer

Enforcement Officer Deal reported that no development clearance permits had been issued since last month's meeting.

4. Town Administrator

Town Administrator Gary Deal had announced at February's Council meeting that two county-wide clean-up events were planned for the spring; and he now had the specifics on those efforts, which are also posted on the town's website.

On Saturday, March 26, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. the Pleasant Garden Town Hall will be accepting e-waste items only, such as televisions, computers, cell phones, electronic games. On Saturday, April 16, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. county residents may drop off, at the Guilford County Ag Center, e-waste items as listed above as well as white goods, tires, and household hazardous waste, including antifreeze, motor oil, paint, batteries, pesticides and other chemicals.

Town Administrator Deal then reported that the recycle bins had been filled to capacity when he checked early this past weekend, and hoped there would not be a mess for Tuesday's emptying. All in all, Deal felt the drop-off site had been going well; yet, still had concerns about the occasional overflowing bins.

Deal also briefly mentioned that the town's contract for household garbage collection will soon be due for renewal; and this year, services to continue the recycling drop-off site on Town Hall grounds will be included in the proposal at a cost to the town.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Presentation and Adoption of Documents for PTCOG/NWPCOG Merger

Prior to tonight's meeting, Council members had received in their mailed packets two proposed documents that would effect a merger of the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments, of which the town is a member government, and the Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments. Three news articles from April 2010 forward were also included to offer background on the latest effort for the two councils to reunite.

Council member Cindy Wheeler, who is the town's PTCOG delegate, explained that originally in 1968 the two COGs were a regional council comprised of 12 counties, but that by 1978 political differences became so great that the 5 counties farthest northwest in the Triad initiated a split causing a 7-county Piedmont Triad COG and a 5-county Northwest Piedmont COG. The PTCOG, the more populated membership with 46 local governments, had several times broached the idea of reuniting, but each time met with resistance from the smaller NWPCOG with a membership of 27.

Some 32 years later, this latest attempt, first introduced to the two COGs in April 2010, seemed to be the strongest to date; and all 73 member governments were being asked to take action on the two resolutions—one to dissolve their respective COG, and one to form the Piedmont Triad Regional Council—by the end of March so the process can swiftly move to complete the merger by the new budget year in July.

Council member Wheeler stated that at the PTCOG meetings where the proposed merger had been discussed, many member governments were at first skeptical; but that lately, it seemed the tide had turned more favorably towards the merger, due primarily to a better understanding of the merger's benefits.

The formation of a single lead regional organization would create better regional cooperation and coordination across 12 counties and, thereby, strengthen the ability to compete for state and federal grant funds. In addition, financial stability and shared overhead would likely reduce fees for services and would reduce annual dues for member governments. Whitsett's membership dues, which have been \$650 for years, will drop to \$550.

Town Administrator Gary Deal added that the PTCOG had been an invaluable resource to the town since Whitsett's incorporation and most recently with some interpretations of confusing town development ordinances; and he would recommend that the town not lose that resource.

Although some Council members still held reservations about the worth of the merger, the resultant consensus was that the town should, for now, continue to be represented in a regional association.

The resolution to first dissolve the PTCOG and provide for distribution of its assets and obligations was again reviewed by Council members; and a motion was made by Mayor Richard Fennell to adopt the resolution. Motion was seconded by Council member Cindy Wheeler; and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Next, the resolution of formation and membership in the new Piedmont Triad Regional Council was considered; and a motion was made by Council member Cindy Wheeler to adopt the resolution. Motion was simultaneously seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown and Council member Lee Greeson. Motion was approved unanimously.

2. Any Items from Council Members

Mayor Fennell asked for any items from Council members; and Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown stated that the Whitsett Ruritan had asked him to explore the feasibility of holding a car wash fundraiser on the grounds of the Town Hall.

Town Administrator Deal made the point that the only outside spigot available is on the concession building; and that the well water is very “hard” and not recommended for use on vehicles unless they could be cloth dried soon after washing.

Mayor Pro Tem Brown said he would feed back the comments to the Ruritan; and if the club then still wanted to pursue having this event, he would come back to the Council for final concurrence.

3. Announcements

Mayor Fennell asked for any announcements; none heard.

4. Speakers from the Floor

Mayor Fennell asked if there were any speakers from the floor; and no one asked to be recognized.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Council, Mayor Fennell invited a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Council member Jerry Rice to adjourn; motion simultaneously seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown and Council member Cindy Wheeler. Motion passed unanimously; and the March 8 Town Council meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Town Council will be at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 12, 2011, at the Whitsett Town Hall.

/s/

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

Richard Fennell, Mayor

APPROVED: April 12, 2011