

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF GASTON  
TOWN OF CRAMERTON**

**January 5, 2017**

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met in regular session on Thursday, January 5, 2017 at 7:00 p.m., in the G.M. Michael Room at the Cramerton Town Hall.

**Board Members present:** Mayor Will Cauthen, Mayor Pro Tempore Demetrios Koutsoupas, Commissioners Houston Helms, Donald Rice, and Susan Neeley.

**Staff Present:** David Pugh, Town Manager; Bill Brown, Town Attorney; Chief Greg Ratchford; Dave Pettine, Planning Director; Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk.

**Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:** Mayor Cauthen called the meeting to order and determined a quorum was present.

**Adoption of Agenda for this meeting:** A motion was made by Commissioner Helms to adopt the proposed agenda. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas and passed by unanimous vote.

**Public Comment:** No one signed up to speak.

**Agenda Items Not Requiring a Public Hearing:**

**BOC Meeting Minutes:** **Consider Approval of the proposed November 17, 2016 and December 6, 2016 BOC meeting minutes.** Commissioner Rice asked that page two of the December meeting minutes be amended to read “a motion was made by Commissioner Rice to appoint Commissioner Koutsoupas as Mayor Pro Tempore and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley”. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas requested a correction be made on page four of the proposed November 17, 2016 meeting minutes for Jeff Smith to read Jeff Smithers. Commissioner Neeley asked that a correction be made on page five of the December 6, 2016 meeting minutes to read that she won two turkeys at the Turkey Shoot and the turkeys were donated to the Parks and Recreation Department to be given to a needy family. A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas to approve the amended November 17, 2016 and December 6, 2016 Board of Commissioners meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Helms and passed by unanimous vote.

**Cramerton Board of Commissioners:**

**Discuss a possible procedure for filling Cramerton Mayoral Vacancy and/or consider appointment to fill Mayoral Vacancy per N.C.G.S. 160A-63:** “A vacancy that occurs in an elective office of a city shall be filled by appointment of the City Council.” Mayor Cauthen stated that he was impressed with the number of applications received and the variety of experience and backgrounds of these individuals. Commissioner Helms stated the applicant that will be chosen for this vacancy should be interested in serving longer than just for this vacancy opening and it would be helpful if they had some background in law enforcement in order to assist with the selection of a police chief. He also stated a strong financial background would be helpful. Mayor Cauthen asked if everyone on the Board received information regarding all of the applicants. The Board members stated yes. Attorney Brown reminded the Board that they could also choose someone outside of the applicants. Commissioner Neeley stated the applicant chosen will need to be honest, fair, a good communicator and listener, arrive prepared for the meetings, have a servant heart, and be able to see the big picture regarding the community.

Commissioner Rice stated the applicant to be considered would need to be interested in serving additional terms. He stated they should have some law enforcement background and possibly be

chosen from a different geographical area of the town. Commissioners Neeley and Helms agreed. Commissioner Rice recommended the Board members select three or four out of the eight candidates for interviews.

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas stated he agreed with Commissioner Rice and the chosen applicant should be possibly chosen from a different geographical area. Discussion was held regarding Board members meeting to discuss possible candidates. Attorney Brown stated the Mayor and two Board members can meet, or two Board members can meet, and this will not be considered a quorum. Discussion was held by the Board regarding the importance of the new member being involved in the upcoming goals and objectives meeting to be held on Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup>. The Board members agreed that interviews would be more productive if they were held by a small group as opposed to the full Board.

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas asked if the interviews could be documented in writing or by an audio recording. Attorney Brown stated a summary or recording could be utilized. Commissioner Helms asked if the proposed candidates could be scheduled to be interviewed on one day using the Town Hall and have the elected board members in different areas. Attorney Brown stated this would be questionable as all of the commissioners would be in the same physical location conducting the town's business. He did not recommend the Board consider that as an option. The Board discussed ranking each of the applications with a score from 1 to 8. Eight would be the highest score. Attorney Brown stated the scores would need to be announced and would become part of the public record. Commissioner Koutsoupas asked what neighborhoods each of the candidates lived in. Mayor Cauthen stated the applicants were from South Fork Village Apartments, Cramerton Village, Timberlake, Lakewood, Eighth Avenue, and Cramer Mountain. The Board discussed and agreed that the candidates would be scored from 8 to 1 with eight being the highest score. Chief Ratchford stated he would go to his office and create the form to be used for scoring. Attorney Brown stated the voting document showing the compilation of scores would be kept as part of the town's official recordkeeping. The Mayor indicated the Board would move on with agenda items while the form was being prepared.

**Community Committee Appointment:** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to appoint Sunny Severance and Jeanne Valliere to the Community Committee. The Town Manager stated one of these applicants would need to serve as the alternate member. Commissioner Neeley amended her motion to appoint Sunny Severance to serve as the full board member and Jeanne Valliere to serve as the alternate. Commissioner Rice stated that Ms. Valliere has been in attendance at the Community Committee meetings. Commissioner Rice made a substitute motion to appoint Jeanne Valliere as the full board member with Sunny Severance serving as the alternate member. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all.

**Manager's Report:** The Town Manager stated a winter storm advisory has been issued by Duke Energy. A possible accumulation of several inches of snow is being forecasted beginning on Friday evening. Duke Energy is not expecting any widespread power outages at this time. The Public Works Department is brining the roadways today and will be in communication with the City of Belmont regarding the use of their salt truck if needed. Town Hall will be open weather permitting.

There have been no applications received regarding the proposed 2017 Municipal Government Academy. A memo was presented to the Board offering three possible options. Option one would be an increase of communication to encourage citizens to sign up for the academy. Suggested cut-off date would be the beginning of February with the first session being held at the end of February. Option two would be to hold a "Citizens Seminar" which would be a one night course which would involve all department heads. Option three would be to hold a "Cramerton Day" style event that could be catered to possibly work with the Stuart W. Cramer High School civics class. The Board discussed a "youth citizen's academy" for the high school students possibly in the fall. Discussion was held regarding the importance of continuing some form of the municipal government academy. Mayor Cauthen stated that the academy session could be tailored for the business community. Commissioner Neeley said the upcoming Cramerton Merchant's Association meeting will be held at Carillon Assisted Living Center. Consensus was to do a one night session in the

spring for existing committee members and invitees and to work with schools on another student session.

A commercial production shoot was done previously regarding the Madden Game tournament finalist, Brian Armstrong. This shoot was done at the Cramerton Parks and Recreation department. A second commercial shoot was at Doffer's Canteen for a Caromont Health ad. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas stated some of the Caromont Health commercial was filmed at Stuart W. Cramer High School's football field.

**Two Rivers Utilities:** Mike Bynum stated TRU responded to thirty-seventy water meter related service requests, repaired four water leaks, and responded to three sewer related calls. One fire hydrant was repaired. Twelve locations were sampled and five fire hydrants were flushed and sampled. All samples were in compliance with state drinking water quality standards. Forty-five preventive maintenance service requests were completed at the pump stations. A slug load was received at the Eagle Road Wastewater treatment plant and it had to be reseeded with "bugs". The plant is back into full operation. Commissioner Helms asked what a slug load was. Mr. Bynum stated a slug load occurs when someone dumps an unknown substance into the system. He stated the plant operators caught this problem promptly. Several loads of wastewater had to be brought in from the Long Creek plant to correct this issue. The cost was approximately several thousand dollars. This event was reported to the state.

**Town Attorney:** Nothing to report.

**Town Clerk:** The Town Clerk stated an additional application has been received for the Community Committee. An update was given of the available Goat in the Boat inventory.

**Police Department:** Chief Ratchford stated he had nothing to report.

**Planning:** Mr. Pettine stated the Duke Energy letter has been sent to NCDOT for the Lakewood greenway project. No response has been received from NCDOT at this time. The contract has been executed for the Cramer Mountain sidewalk project for design work and this part of the project will be coordinated with the proposed road improvements. Engineering drawings have been received for the True Homes project on Peach Orchard Road. Commissioner Helms asked about the timeline for the apartments being constructed on Wilkson Boulevard. Mr. Pettine stated the site plan has not been received and there has been some discussion regarding issues with stormwater retention on Wilkinson Boulevard. Mr. Bynum stated TRU is working with the developer regarding water and sewer utilities. Commissioner Helms asked if data could be gathered and shared with the Board regarding rate of growth for the town. Mr. Pettine stated he would compile this data. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked for an update regarding traffic calming devices. The Planning Director stated clarification is needed regarding determination of neighbor's support and traffic counts to be required. An update will be given at the upcoming goals and objectives meeting.

**Finance Director:** Mr. Lineberger stated all documents have been submitted to the Department of Environment Quality regarding the stormwater trust fund. Eighty percent of ad valorem taxes was collected through December. The December financial reports have been placed in the Board member's mailboxes for review.

### **Committee Reports:**

- **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board:** Commissioner Koutsoupas stated there are approximately 350 children registered in the sports program and basketball games which begin tonight. Mr. Smallwood is working on several potential 5K routes. Information regarding Central Park and other items will be discussed at the upcoming goals and objectives meeting. The next meeting will be held on Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

- **Cramerton Historical Society:** The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Memberships are still begin accepted.
- **Community Committee:** Commissioner Rice stated this committee met last night. Discussion was held regarding the use of possible door hangers for surveys. Agenda items discussed included neighbors helping neighbors project, citizen of the year award, and lifetime service award.
- **Cramerton Merchants Association:** Mayor Cauthen stated the committee recently met at Floyd and Blackie's Coffee Shop. The next meeting is scheduled at Carillon Assisted Living Center. Mayor Cauthen stated he liked the idea of the municipal citizen's academy being geared towards the businesses.

### **Topics of Discussion for Each Commissioner:**

Commissioner Neeley had nothing to report.

Commissioner Rice asked if any feedback had been received regarding the signage for the veterans memorial been received. The Town Clerk stated she received a phone call from someone asking about placement of his father's name on the memorial. No additional feedback has been received. Commissioner Rice asked for an update regarding the Goat Island bathroom project. The Town Manager stated the Parks and Recreation Director would provide information at the next Board meeting regarding the rebid. Commissioner Rice stated that he and his wife had seen a Christmas card design that municipalities could place on cards and thought this would be a low expense item that would add personality to holiday cards.

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas stated he was pleased with the turnout of applications for the Board vacancy. He asked if any information had been received regarding the speed limit being changed on Armstrong Ford Road. The Town Manager stated NCDOT has not provided any updates at this time.

Commissioner Helms had nothing to report.

Mayor Cauthen called a ten minute process so the Board members could fill out the Board candidate ranking form and the Town Manager can compile the results. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to recess for ten minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.

Upon return from recess, information regarding the voting for the Board vacancy candidates was announced. The top five candidates were Dixie Abernathy, Jeff Boyle, Jeff Smithers, Wil Neumann, and David Young. Commissioner Helms recommended interviewing seven of the eight candidates or possibly only the top two candidates. Commissioners Rice and Neeley recommended interviewing the top five candidates. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas stated the next Board meeting is January 19<sup>th</sup> and the goals and objectives meeting is scheduled for January 28<sup>th</sup>. He recommended the goals and objectives from last year's meeting be distributed to the candidates that are chosen to be interviewed. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas made a motion to recommend the Board interview the top four candidates for the Board member vacancy. The motion died due to a lack of a second. A motion was made by Commissioner Rice to recommend the Board interview the top five candidates. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Helms and passed by unanimous vote. Discussion was held regarding the interview process. Interviews will be held with two different commissioners at two different sessions with a ten minute recess between each candidate. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked if the interviews could be held on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as many people are off that day due to the holiday. If an alternate date will be needed then the date will need to be prior to January 16<sup>th</sup>. The Board set an alternate date of January 14<sup>th</sup> if needed. Commissioners Rice and Neeley will do interviews in the morning of January 16<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas and Commissioner Helms will do interviews in the afternoon from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Mayor Cauthen stated he would plan on attending at least one of the sessions, if not both. The Board discussed the style of questioning. Commissioner Rice

recommended that it be conversational and to possibly begin with goals and objectives. The Board discussed the process regarding the communication to the applicants. All applicants will be contacted and given the same information regarding the process. Applicants that are not being currently interviewed will be contacted and informed that they were not chosen for the first interviews but still remain part of the process. The Town Clerk will be contacting the applicants tomorrow.

**Closed Session N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(A)(4) To discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of business in the area served by this body.** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to enter into closed session to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of business in the area served by this body. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Helms and approved by all.

**Adjournment:** Upon return to open session, with no further action being taken and no further business to be discussed, a motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to adjourn at 10:17 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and passed by unanimous vote.

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Mayor Will Cauthen

**ATTEST:**

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Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk