

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

**May 4, 2017**

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met in workshop session on Thursday, May 4, 2017 at 6:00 p.m., in the G.M. Michael Room at the Cramerton Town Hall.

**Call to Order:** Mayor Cauthen called the 6:00 p.m. workshop meeting to order.

The Board congratulated the Town Manager regarding the recent birth of his daughter.

**6:00 p.m. Workshop Meeting:**

**Board Members present:** Mayor Will Cauthen, Mayor Pro Tem Demetrios Koutsoupas, Commissioners Houston Helms, Susan Neeley, and Donald Rice. Commissioner Dixie Abernathy was absent (arrived later at 7:50 p.m.).

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

**Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Budget Work Session:**

Mayor Cauthen thanked everyone for their hard work regarding preparation of the Fiscal Year 2017-2018 budget. The Town Manager stated the Finance Director did a great job and was able to present the unabridged budget to the Board early. A five year projection was prepared by the Finance Director and he will continue to build on this information.

The Finance Director stated that there was no amount provided in the line item for grant funding for the fire department at this time. Information regarding receipt of any grant funding will be received sometime in mid-May and if any funds are received they can be added at a later date. Mr. Lineberger stated that \$15,000.00 has been removed from Capital Outlay for the purchase of a vehicle. The Wildlife Commission grant of \$42,000.00 is not anticipated to be received prior to year-end. A recreation grant has been budgeted in this current year for \$100,000.00. The Finance Director stated property taxes collected through NCDMV has a strong collection rate and the county is collecting ad valorem taxes at 98 to 99 percent rate. The City of Gastonia has three years remaining on the lease of the Public Works facility off of Eagle Road with the option to renew or purchase the facility in two years. Police vehicles will be paid for from the operating fund this year.

The Finance Director stated that the Governing Board has an increase due to this year's election. The Police Department is scheduled to add an investigator. The Fire Department will add two part-time staff members on Saturdays. The Public Works Department increased proposed street repair costs from \$50,000.00 to \$60,000.00. Commissioner Helms stated he had met with the Finance Director to discuss the Fund Balance projections for the next five years. Proposed staff salary increases are budgeted at 2.5 percent. Health insurance has remained steady but may have a major increase soon.

The Town Manager stated that the Cramer Mountain Sidewalk Project and the 29/74 Greenway Project are fully funded for their projects costs and they do not affect the budget. The Finance Director stated that the Villages at Cramerton Mills project is five years into the fifteen year reimbursement agreement.

Commissioner Rice asked about stormwater revenue. The Finance Director stated the Stormwater Fund will be incorporated into the budget as an ordinance authorizing funding. Commissioner Neeley asked about the formula regarding the Powell Bill. The Finance Director stated the formula is based on 75 percent on the town's population and 25 percent roadways. The sales tax revenue is based on the town's percentage of ad valorem tax value to the total ad valorem tax value in the

county. A possible property revaluation may occur in the next four years. The average assessment value of vehicles is about \$11,000.00.

The Finance Director stated that technology costs increased as a new server was purchased and some changes were made regarding security software. Mr. Lineberger stated that consideration of using a different accounting software may need to be discussed next year.

Discussion was held regarding scheduling of the public hearing on June 1<sup>st</sup> for the proposed budget. The Board agreed to set the public hearing for June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mayor Cauthen called for a five minute recess.

### **7:00 p.m. Workshop Meeting:**

**Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:** Mayor Cauthen called the 7:00 p.m. workshop meeting to order and determined there was a quorum.

**Invocation:** Given by Attorney Brown

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Given by all.

**Adoption of Agenda for this meeting:** A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas to approve the proposed agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all.

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

**Proclamation in Recognition of Municipal Clerk Week 2017:** Mayor Cauthen read the Municipal Clerk Week Proclamation.

**Proclamation in Recognition of Peace Officers Memorial Week:** Mayor Cauthen read the Peace Officers Memorial Week Proclamation and stated that he and Commissioner Neeley attended the memorial. Gaston County was the host for the State event. Sergeant Debbold was one of the ushers for the fallen.

### **Agenda Items Requiring a Public Hearing:**

- **Reconvene public hearing from April 20, 2017 regarding a public hearing to consider approval for Conditional Rezoning of Gaston County Parcel Number 202233 consisting of approximately 2.27 acres at the corner of South Main Street and Seventh Street Extension.**

**Open Public Hearing:** Attorney Brown stated no motion was needed as the public hearing is being reconvened from the prior meeting.

**Staff Comments/BOC Questions and Answers:** Mr. Pettine stated the Board of Commissioners requested that he follow up with the applicant regarding several questions. The developer has a presentation prepared.

**Developer Comments:** Dennis Terry stated this he is a landscape artist and he has prepared a presentation regarding some of the items that were discussed at the last Board meeting. He stated the proposed project was designed to fit into the current neighborhood. Eleven single-family homes are being proposed for this site. Four of the homes will face Seventh Street and seven homes will face South Main Street. The homes are proposed to be slab-on-grade and no sidewalks are being proposed to remain consistent with the current neighborhood.

Mayor Cauthen stated that the Board questioned at the previous meeting new construction guidelines and how much vinyl siding would be installed. Mr. Pettine stated the residential design standards allows for mixed materials using vinyl and brick. Commissioner Helms stated he was not in attendance at the last Board meeting and he was curious how this proposed project fits into

the broad plan that has been previously discussed regarding the development of the downtown area. Commissioner Rice asked about the retaining wall construction due to the topography. He also asked whether the proposed homes and price points were consistent with the homes in the area. Mr. Terry stated the homes can range from 1,800 to 3,200 square foot. Commissioner Rice asked about the lot that will require a retaining wall to be constructed. Mr. Terry stated this lot will need additional engineering due to the topography. The developer stated the homes were designed to be built on grade due to cost and durability and a crawlspace could add \$5,000.00 to \$8,000.00 to the cost of construction. Mayor Cauthen asked about the monolithic grade entrances. Mr. Terry stated the grades were reviewed and they wanted to stay within the same design as the current neighborhood. Commissioner Helms stated he appreciated the ambition of the developer in planning this project but he wanted to continue to enhance the Riverside neighborhood and also the downtown area. Commissioner Rice stated he feels the Board wants to see a quality product built in this area.

Mr. Pettine stated that the current neighborhood has no sidewalks and payment in lieu of constructing a sidewalk could be considered. Attorney Brown stated there is an ordinance imposing requirements on developers regarding sidewalks and it is based on the proximity of the sidewalk to areas near parks. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked if the parking could be increased at the Riverside Park. Mr. Terry stated most of the homes will have a single-car garage with off street parking along with a few of the homes constructed with a two-car garage. Mr. Pettine stated that the traffic volume for this area should not be a problem.

Mayor Cauthen asked about the use of mixed materials on all facades as the current listed condition allows homeowners to choose from the use of brick, stone, vinyl and other siding components as options. John Bailey, the property owner, stated that this style of home is being geared towards purchase by younger families with children that want a large backyard. He stated that a sewer line will need to put in place and this is an added cost to be considered for development of this project. Mr. Bailey stated he would like for the Board to consider allowing the homes to be constructed as slab-on-grade in order to control construction costs. The cost of adding a crawlspace would be around \$5,000.00 to \$8,000.00. Mr. Bailey stated he would agree to the use of mixed materials and he would like the Board's consideration regarding allowing slab on grade construction due to cost. Commissioner Rice asked about the existing town's code regarding slab on grade and sidewalks for new developments. Attorney Brown asked Mr. Bailey his position regarding payment in lieu regarding construction of sidewalks. Mr. Bailey stated he would prefer not to construct sidewalks and the cost would be an added expense to the construction costs.

Mr. Pettine stated this is an in-fill project requiring the front entrances to be raised from the finished grade one and one-half feet above the front grade. Mayor Cauthen asked about the grading of the lots. Mr. Terry stated that the lots would be graded to a flat surface. Discussion was held by the Board regarding the importance of maintaining the investment in the downtown area along with uplifting the Riverside area by providing a quality product.

Commissioner Abernathy arrived at 7:50 p.m.

Chief Ratchford stated there is a sidewalk on South Main Street. The developer stated that the current parcel does not have sewer laterals. Attorney Brown stated this property was originally an industrial site and there was no sewer connection. The Board asked staff to follow up with the developer regarding use of slab on grade construction, possible payment in lieu for sidewalks, and a determination of how much vinyl material is being considered. A motion was made by Commissioner Helms to continue the public hearing until the next scheduled Board of Commissioners meeting scheduled for May 18<sup>th</sup>. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas and approved by all.

**Public Comments:** Will be continued until the next meeting.

**Close Public Hearing:** Public hearing is continued until the next Board meeting scheduled for May 18, 2017.

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

**BOC Meeting Minutes: Consider approval of the proposed March 16, 2017 meeting minutes:** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to approve the proposed March 16, 2017 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas and approved by all.

**Finance: Consider Approval of the Proposed Budget Amendments #1 to #12:** The Finance Director stated the proposed budget amendments contained information regarding a change order by Rowboat due to recent damage to one of the proposed water amenities. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked for a timeline regarding the services being provided by Rowboat. The Finance Director stated paving services were added for the Baltimore launch amenity and connection to the pier from the C.B. Huss parking lot for ADA compliance. Attorney Brown stated Rowboat has been notified of the tree damage that occurred. Mayor Cauthen asked what happens if Rowboat does not make the repairs. Attorney Brown stated the town has common law rights and if the repair work is not completed or is not acceptable then Rowboat will not receive final payment.

Budget amendment #1 is to provide funds for Rowboat Dock and Dredge change orders on water amenities construction costs expended (\$102,408) and encumbered (\$32,520); budget amendment #2 is to provide funds for Mason Brothers paving projects at Baltimore and Tenth Street water amenities for \$7,060 and \$3,500 respectively; budget amendment #3 is to provide funds for survey for \$8,200 and N-Focus fees for interim planning position net of anticipated salary savings from temporary vacancy for \$42,200; budget amendment #4 is to provide additional funding for excess costs of public restroom project for \$16,000; budget amendment #5 is to reflect EMC Insurance proceeds received 12/6/16 (\$2,850) reimbursing town for vehicle damage and 3/27/17 (\$500) for reimbursement of deductible withheld from initial proceeds; budget amendment #6 is to provide operating funds for purchase of bike rack (\$1,200) and bi-level water fountain (\$3,450) from funds donated by two citizens; budget amendment #7 is to transfer funds budgeted as capital outlay to operating department account for non-capital repairs to pool deck; amendment #8 is to establish accounts for Capital Project Ordinance #2017-01 approved by Board on 2/16/17 for Street Repair and Resurfacing capital Project for \$1,000,000; budget amendment #9 is to authorize transfer of funds from Stormwater Fund to Street Repair Project for \$150,000; budget amendment #10 is to transfer budgeted street repair funds between departments to cover General Fund transfer to the Street Repair Capital Project as approved by the capital project ordinance for \$200,000; budget amendment #11 is to establish account for Capital Project Ordinance #2017-05 approved by Board on 4/20/17 for Town Hall Building Repair Capital Project for \$149,500; and budget amendment #12 is to transfer budgeted building repair funds between departments to cover General Fund transfer to the Town Hall Repair Capital Project as approved by the capital project ordinance for \$149,500. A motion was made by Commissioner Rice to approve the proposed budget amendments #1 through #12. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all. The original budget amendment document will become part of the minutes of this meeting.

**Legal Counsel: Two Rivers Utilities - Approve Quit Claim and Release of Easement for abandoned Hamrick Road Sewer Plant line on Mayworth Development Corporation property.** Attorney Brown stated the town received a Deed of Conveyance and this area needs to be released to Two Rivers Utilities and is allowable by statutory authority. A motion was made by Commissioner Helms to approve the Quit Claim Deed for the abandoned Hamrick Road Sewer Plant line on Mayworth Development Corporation property. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy and approved by all.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas to approve the deed of Newport Landing Pump Station property to TRU (City of Gastonia). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all.

Mr. Bynum stated Two Rivers Utilities will have these documents properly recorded.

**Cramerton Board of Commissioners: Clerk Job Duties Update:** A motion was by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas to approve Resolution #2017-03 to change the Cramerton Personnel Policy regarding the Town Clerk's job duties and job description to add social media duties. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all.

**Manager's Report: Update of Road Paving Project:** Mr. Pugh stated the South Fork Lane paving project and been slightly delayed due to inclement weather but paving should be completed early next week. The next paving project areas will be Front Street and then Center Street. The Town Manager stated that Rodney Baker, Public Works Director, is doing a great job with working with residents and ensuring that the construction zone is safe especially for the school children.

**Architectural RFP Update:** The Town Manager stated he contacted multiple architectural firms in both Charlotte and Gastonia regarding possible interest in receiving the request for proposal for

architectural services regarding the proposed veterans' memorial. Several firms indicated the time frame would be an issue as they are currently busy with other projects. Two of the firms that were contacted stated they would definitely be interested in returning a proposal. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked about the FERC permit. The Town Manager stated the elevation for the proposed area has not been confirmed at this time

**Update from Two Rivers Utilities:** Mike Bynum with Two Rivers Utilities stated TRU completed twenty-six weekly lift station checks, responded to twenty water meter related service requests, repaired one water leak, and installed one irrigation tap. TRU collected and tested water samples at four locations and all were in compliance with State Drinking Water Quality Standards. Cleaning of the sewer line easement on Cramer Mountain has started and the contractor is working as the weather permits. Land application of bio solids from the Eagle Road Wastewater Treatment Plant is scheduled to begin in July.

**Town Attorney:** Nothing to report.

**Town Clerk:** Nothing to report.

**Police Department:** Nothing to report.

**Fire Department:** Chief Foulk was absent.

**Planning:** Mr. Pettine stated the Centennial Center bike project is being discussed regarding how to get the most functional space for that area. Discussions have been held regarding the Market Street corridor with two of the four parcels at the corner of Market Street and Eighth Avenue Extension have been sold. Potential submittals have been received for the True Homes project on Peach Orchard Road. Progress continues regarding discussion with the engineer about easements and drawing up plans for the proposed single-family active adult project located off of Armstrong Ford Road. Mr. Pettine stated a kick off meeting is scheduled at the end of the month regarding the steering committee for the bike plan. A meeting is schedule with NCDOT this week regarding the Cramer Mountain sidewalk retaining wall. Commissioner Helms stated the workers performing the road bores on Cramer Mountain are close to the edge of the road. Mr. Pettine stated he would speak to the engineer regarding this matter. An update regarding the traffic calming policy will be given at the next scheduled Board meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked about the signage at the New Style Communities project as there is still a Coldwell Banker "for sale" sign on the property that needs to be removed.

**Finance:** Mr. Lineberger stated the Square credit/debit card system has been set up and is working. He stated the source of water infiltration for Town Hall was discovered. The water is entering through the gutter at the corner of the building. MV Momentum indicated a request for proposal for window replacements will need to be provided to them. The Finance Director stated Richard Atkinson has offered to visit Town Hall on Tuesday morning to discuss what request for proposals need to include and offer suggestions of possible architects that could help.

**Parks and Recreation:** Mr. Smallwood stated there is a fallen tree at the South Fork kayak launch. Upcoming Parks and Recreation events will include the youth fishing tournament, movie in the park, and an opportunity to attend a Grizzlies game for \$15.00 which includes admission and all you can eat or drink. The Goat Island trailhead restrooms are scheduled to arrive on May 27<sup>th</sup>. Fencing for the goats should be installed in the next few weeks and the goats will arrive at the end of May or the first of June.

#### **Committee Reports:**

- **Community Committee:** Commissioner Rice stated a work party is scheduled to be held on Saturday and he expects there will be a good turnout. The committee members are putting together welcome packets. Mr. Smallwood stated if it rains on Saturday the lumber for the picnic tables will be stored under the shelter. The committee plans to begin work at 9:00 a.m.

- **Cramerton Merchants Association:** Mayor Cauthen stated he did not have an update at this time. He stated he would not be able to attend the upcoming COG meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Neeley stated she would attend in his absence. Commissioner Helms stated he would also try to attend.
- **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board:** Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas stated the next meeting is scheduled for June 5<sup>th</sup> and they are continuing to look for applicants to fill the two alternate member vacancies.
- **Community Committee:** Commissioner Rice stated over thirty volunteers turned out for the cleanup day at Central Park. Lunch was provided by Mayworth's and coffee was provided by Floyd and Blackie's. He thanked Parks and Recreation for providing the paint and brushes. Ten picnic tables were put together and the shelter was painted.

**Topics of Discussion for Each Commissioner:**

Commissioner Neeley stated she attended the NC Peace Officers Day ceremony. She stated the event was excellent and was well attended. She stated she volunteered with the Community Committee at the Central Park clean up. She also attended the Lakewood block party and the Arbor Day/Earth Day celebration held at Loftin Park in Belmont.

Commissioner Rice thanked the Abernathy family for hosting the Lakewood neighborhood's block party. He thanked the public safety staff for their help with this event.

Commissioner Abernathy thanked everyone that helped make the Lakewood block party successful. She thanked the Mayor and Commissioners who attended. She offered her gratitude to the fire and police department for their assistance.

Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked about the status of the McAdenville Bridge replacement. Mike Bynum stated a pre-construction conference call is scheduled for tomorrow morning.

Commissioner Helms asked to be kept update regarding the Gaston County Airport Planning meetings. The Town Manager stated he recently spoke with Mark Cramer and he spoke to him about being an alternate member whenever Commissioner Helms is unable to attend.

Mayor Cauthen commented about change of ownership for the Market Street Plaza parcel. He stated he and Dave Pettine met with this owner's representative. Mayor Cauthen stated he gave this property owner a tour of the town.

A motion was made to enter into closed session by Commissioner Neeley. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy 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 Abernathy to adjourn at 9:10 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