

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

**December 5, 2017**

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met in regular session on Tuesday, December 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 Tem Demetrios Koutsoupas, Commissioners Dixie Abernathy; Houston Helms; Susan Neeley; and Donald Rice.

**Staff Present:** David Pugh, Town Manager; Anthony Fox, Attorney (Parker Poe Adams and Bernstein LLP); Brad Adams, Deputy Police Chief; Joel Lineberger, Finance Director; Dave Pettine, Planning Director; and Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk.

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

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance:** The invocation was offered by Attorney Fox and the pledge of allegiance was given by all.

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

**Old Business for the Outgoing Board of Commissioners:**

**Old Business from the November 16, 2017 Public Hearing: Consider approval to amend the Land Development Code sections 9.9(7) to amend the current sign regulations to allow LED message boards under certain conditions. (This action was tabled by the BOC at the November 16, 2017 meeting.)** Mr. Pettine stated that at the last Board meeting he was asked to collect additional data regarding impact of an LED ground sign near a residential neighborhood. He stated the LED signs would not exceed 500 nits from dawn to dusk and not greater than 5,000 nits during the daylight hours. A cell phone emits about 400 nits which would be similar to watching television. Ground signs with an electronic message area that are adjacent to a residential use, or residentially zoned property, shall be turned off during the hours of 9:00 pm. to 7:00 a.m. and automatic timers are required. Mr. Pettine stated that vacant residential properties would also be protected under this section. He stated any complaints would be handled through his office. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas stated that the word “be” was missing in the sentence that reads “no ground sign with an electronic message area shall placed within 1,000 feet of another sign with an electronic message area on the same side of the highway”. Mr. Pettine stated he would correct this sentence. A motion was made by Commissioner Helms to approve the Land Development Code sections 9.9(7) for the current sign regulations to allow LED message boards under certain conditions. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas and approved by all.

**Minutes for outgoing BOC: Consider approval of August 17, 2017 minutes.** Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas suggested a change to the minutes under the Cramerton Projects Monthly Update regarding the Cramer Mountain Sidewalk Project plan review to include the fixed date of 2018. He asked that the word “Street” be added to Market. Commissioner Abernathy asked that her name be removed from the sentence that reads “Dr. Abernathy and Mr. Booker gave a presentation about back-to-school”. Commissioner Neeley that the sentence which reads “Town Manager Pugh stated the town does not put “slow children at play” signs out because the town does not want to encourage children to play in the street” be amended to read “the town does not want to encourage children to play in the streets but to play in their front yards” as some parents have stated the children do not always feel safe playing in their front yards. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to approve the amended minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy and approved by all.

**Traffic Calming Policy: Cimarron Boulevard. Updated presentation by staff on traffic calming results and BOC consideration of further action.** A speed study was conducted on Cimarron Boulevard in two phases in July and August of 2017. Chief Adams stated there has

been increased enforcement through both stationary and moving patrols. Officers have issued one written uniform state citation as well as four warning citations. Mr. Pugh stated this information was posted on the Town's website and Facebook. No one signed up for public comment on this subject. Commissioner Abernathy asked if this item would be revisited in sixty days. Chief Adams stated the speed unit will be placed on Cimarron and Armstrong. Commissioner Neeley stated that she and Commissioner Abernathy recently visited this neighborhood and vehicles seemed to be traveling fast. The Board discussed involvement by citizens such as having a meet and greet prior to Board meetings to receive input. Discussion was held offering a reception style gathering at the January 18, 2018 Board meeting for the Lakewood residents. Commissioner Helms recommended a message be sent to the Lakewood residents regarding this event. The Town Manager stated signage will be placed prior to the gathering in the Lakewood neighborhood. Mr. Pugh stated the gathering will be at Town Hall from 6:15 to 7:00 p.m. and then residents would be able to sign up to speak at the scheduled Board meeting.

**Swearing into Office for Incoming Mayor and Commissioners by the Honorable Judge Jesse Caldwell, Senior Resident Judge, Superior Court:** Judge Caldwell stated that his father was born in Cramerton and his grandparents lived on Sixteenth Street. He thanked the Board and staff for the invitation to provide the swearing into office for the recently re-elected officials. Judge Caldwell gave the oath to office to Mayor Cauthen, Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas, and Commissioner Abernathy. Copies of the oaths of office will be placed into the minutes book.

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

**New Business Agenda Items not requiring a public hearing:**

- **Town Hall Renovation Study: Presentation by Talley & Smith (architects) of their Town Hall Study.** Bob Smith with Talley & Smith stated there are no budget estimates included as other firms are involved as part of the process. He stated the main issue is the repair of the exterior walls. The roof is in good shape and most of the windows are in good condition. Mr. Smith advised that some of the mortar is missing from the exterior walls and the joints are deep which creates an easy path for water to enter into the building. A concave joint is recommended to encourage proper water runoff away from the building. The worst damage is at the rear of the building. Weather sealing is recommended and should be done every seven years. The front porch has issues with the clay tile and flashing do not join and water is entering at those areas. This area needs a new roof. The original clay tiles could be used along with placement of new flashing. Mr. Smith advised the Board that the basement area tends to collect moisture. Clean up of the basement is recommended as deterioration from water is causing problems with the foundation. Mr. Smith stated digging down to the original footers along with a concrete apron several feet away from the building to direct water away could be utilized.

Mr. Smith stated there were two doors in the building that open into the closet space that need correction. The wooden front door of the building has some damage and hinges need to be replaced with a continuous hinge. The glass blocks in the hallway have a white powder residue which Mr. Smith stated was cosmetic in nature and they just need to be cleaned. One glass block is cracked and should be replaced. Commissioner Helms asked if mortar for the entire building would need to be done and Mr. Smith stated yes.

Mr. Smith stated the first item that needs to be repaired is the exterior walls. Windows would need to be replaced. He recommended that all of the windows upstairs be replaced. The water band around the building needs to be repaired where broken. Commissioner Helms asked if there were any health issues regarding the condition of the basement and Mr. Smith said there is some biological growth. Commissioner Abernathy asked about other problem areas. Mr. Smith stated they did not inspect the crawl space.

Commissioner Rice asked about the integrity of digging regarding footers. Mr. Smith stated there was a modification years ago to the building where the footings were dug out as office space was added as part of the basement. He stated digging down more than several feet would not be recommended. Commissioner Rice asked if the building needed additional support installed and Mr. Smith stated no. He recommended installation of exhaust fans and louvers

to pull the moisture from the walls. Commissioner Helms asked if the basement could be filled in. Mr. Lineberger advised there is a mechanical room downstairs. Mr. Smith stated he could provide additional information in January regarding costs. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupias asked if there were any type of grants to help fund any of these repairs. Mr. Pettine stated he would check and see if there were any available grants that could offset the windows as part of an energy efficient building.

- **Consider approval of 2018 Calendar Year Meeting Schedule:** The Board discussed the first December meeting due to a conflict with the Town's annual parade. Attorney Fox advised the Board that adoption of the 2018 calendar year meeting schedule establishes regular meetings and any meetings held outside of the ones listed on the meeting schedule would be considered "special meetings". Notification would need to be given to the news media stating what the purpose is for the "special meeting" and only the item listed on that agenda could be discussed. Commissioner Rice asked about the 6:00 p.m. work sessions. The Town Manager said the 6:00 p.m. work sessions are held usually related to one specific topic listed on the agenda. The Town Clerk stated notice is given prior to 48 hours to the news media stating a meeting is being held at 6:00 p.m. and the topic that will be discussed. Commissioner Helms recommended the first December meeting be moved to the 13<sup>th</sup>. A motion was made to adopt the amended 2018 Calendar Year Meeting Schedule. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.
- **Appointment of Mayor Pro Tempore:** A motion was made by Commissioner Rice to appoint Commissioner Koutsoupias as Mayor Pro Tempore. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all.
- **Appointment of Representative to Montcross Chamber:** A motion was made by Susan Neeley to appoint the Town Manager as the Town's representative to Montcross Chamber. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and approved by all.
- **Appointment of Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln MPO-TAC rep and alternate rep:** The Town Manager stated that currently Commissioner Rice was serving as the alternate and Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupias was serving as the primary member. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley for Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupias to continue to serve as the Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln MPO-TAC representative and Commissioner Rice as the alternate. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all.
- **Appointment of Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln MPO-TCC rep and alternate rep:** The Town Manager stated that he and Dave Pettine are currently serving. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley for the Town Manager to serve as the Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln MPO-TCC rep and Dave Pettine to serve as the alternate. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupias and approved by all.
- **Appointment of BOC representative and alternate to the Centralina Council of Government:** The Town Manager stated that Mayor Cauthen has been serving in this role. Mayor Cauthen stated he would be willing to continue to serve. A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley for Mayor Cauthen to continue to serve as the BOC representative to the Centralina Council of Government and Commissioner Helms to serve as an alternate. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy and approved by all.
- **Liaison Appointments:**
  - Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Liaison:** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley for Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupias to continue to serve as the Board liaison to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy and approved by all.
  - Community Committee Liaison:** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley for Commissioner Rice to continue to serve as the Board liaison to the Community Committee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy and approved by all.

- **Bringewatt & Snover Town Attorney Engagement Letter: Consider approval of the Bringewatt & Snover Town Attorney Engagement Letter.** A motion was made by Commissioner Rice to approve the engagement letter for town attorney services to be provided by Bringewatt & Snover effective January 1, 2018. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy and approved by all.
- **Date and Location for 2018 Goals and Objectives Work Session:** The Town Manager recommended the goals and objectives meeting be scheduled sometime at the end of January. He stated Darren Rhodes has been the facilitator and he would contact him to see if he is available. The meeting would start at 8:00 a.m. and end at noon. A motion was made by Commissioner Rice to schedule the goals and objectives meeting for Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 8:30 a.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy and approved by all.
- **Big Board Review: Included is the quarterly discussion on “items of interest”.** Commissioner Abernathy stated she was absent at the last Board meeting and asked to be updated regarding the Veterans Memorial. The Town Manager advised that Gary Fankhauser should have a 3D rendering for review soon. Commissioner Rice asked what future actions does this Board need to take prior to fundraising. Mr. Pugh stated that once a three dimension plan is prepared then the ad hoc committee should be able to set a budget for this project. Commissioner Rice asked if the Town would handle this as a budget item or will the project be completely financed through fundraising. He asked if Mr. Fankhauser could attend the January meeting to discuss fundraising opportunities. Commissioner Helms said that the ad hoc committee should review the 3D rendering and then have Mr. Fankhauser attend a later Board meeting to discuss fundraising. Mayor Cauthen advised the Board that private and commercial donors will need to be contacted and a separate 501(c)3 non-profit organization may need to be utilized such as the Cramerton Historical Society. Commissioner Helms recommended that the ad hoc committee meet next week with Mr. Fankhauser in attendance. Mayor Cauthen stated public funds may need to be used to start this project. Commissioner Helms commented that additional thoughts need to be considered regarding whether or not the project will be fully or partially funded by the Town while fundraising is occurring, or if the project needs to be fully funded by fundraising.

Commissioner Abernathy asked what the next step is regarding the small Lakewood Bridge. The Town Manager stated NCDOT has the authority of right of way regarding placement of a bridge. Mr. Pettine advised the Board that a pedestrian crossing could be considered as an addition to the 2018 State Transportation Improvements Program and CMAC as part of an already active project north of Eagle Park Road up to Lake Drive. This project would close the gap from the Eagle Road railroad tracks to the Lake Road Bridge. Some type of pedestrian amenity would need to be added to cross the bridge as part of the CMAC Grant and part of the approval through the state. Mr. Pettine stated notification should be received in January. The Town Manager stated he would add these additional comments as part of the steps being followed. Mr. Pettine stated he would provide a map to the Board showing possible connections and crossings. Commissioner Abernathy asked that these steps be added to update the Big Board information. The Town Manager stated this additional information was just received today by the Planning Director. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked if Mr. Pettine could provide a map or some type of visual showing this project along with connectivity to Timberlake. Mr. Pettine stated the City of Belmont is planning to install sidewalks on Eagle Road to the railroad tracks inside their jurisdiction.

Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked for an update about the piers, firing range, and ordinances. The Town Manager stated Odom Engineering completed their pier study on November 28<sup>th</sup> with recommendations including tightening of bolts and reinforcing structures. A complete report will be available at the end of the year. Mr. Smallwood stated that the structure at Riverside is showing signs of aging and will need some replacement boards. A capital plan along with a yearly inspection plan is being prepared by Odom Engineering for the future. He advised the Board that the Town is now owners of the portages and have obtained certificates of occupancy. Commissioner Helms asked if an underwater inspection was completed. Mr. Smallwood stated no as there did not seem to be any justification to get into the water based on the inspection process per the blow counts on the footers and this was acceptable to the county. The Town Manager stated insurance for underwater inspection can be quite expensive. A baseline inspection may be completed in the spring when the weather is warmer.

Commissioner Neeley asked for an update on the Cramer Mountain Sidewalk Project. The Town Manager advised that a staff meeting is being scheduled to discuss budget estimates and that some additional clarification from NCDOT is being requested.

The Town Manager stated he spoke with Gary Spangler and was advised that someone from NCDOT would be following up on the painting of a fog line on North Main Street. The Board was advised that the code of ordinance change will be effective as of January 2018 as there had been some conversation as to the correct language regarding the use of the word “objects” and how it was defined. A meeting will be scheduled with the Town of McAdenville regarding Market Street improvements and sidewalk. Commissioner Helms recommended that all items that have been placed on the “Big Board” be archived for reference by future Board members.

### **Manager’s Report:**

- **Connect CTY contract:** The Town Manager stated that due to an increase in the number of participants that are now being contacted using Blackboard Connect they have requested a change in their contract. The Board discussed the importance of this type of communication. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas commented that the citizens need to be advised that this system is also used for various messages not just Town events. Commissioner Helms asked that the staff check with other vendors for pricing and other options. Commissioner Abernathy asked when will the next increase happen and is based on an increase of users. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked if text messaging is part of the service as an option. The Town Manager stated texting is available but is based on how citizens are signed up. Discussion was held regarding when the next possible increase might occur and if other options could be considered such as increased usage of e-mails without using Connect CTY.
- **Wilkinson Boulevard Property:** County Commissioner Worley and Donnie Hicks notified the Town Manager that the property located off of Wilkinson Boulevard that is owned by the school system is going to be sold as surplus. The Town Manager stated that he and Dave Pettine met with Donnie Hicks with the EDC and reviewed the Town’s Wilkinson Small Area Plan that was passed in February. Discussion will need to be held with Two Rivers Utilities regarding water and sewer infrastructure. The Board recommended that signage be placed on this property indicating what has been approved for development and the Town’s Wilkinson Small Area Plan and to collaborate with the county to have a larger and/or taller sign. Discussion was held regarding the piece of property located on Old Lakewood Road that had been considered for possible placement of the Veterans Memorial. The Board asked that this item be placed on the “Big Board”. The property will be placed up for surplus sale possibly in spring of 2018. Staff will update the Board with planning concepts as one parcel is currently zoned R4. Mr. Pettine stated the small area plan can be used as an overlay and it would be passed on the policy of the Land Use Plan. Attorney Fox recommended placement of conditional zoning as the overlay will not provide specificity. Mr. Pettine stated he will be reviewing this area this week in order to provide information to the EDC regarding an overlay. He stated he will also be reviewing the Market Street area.

**Update from Two Rivers Utilities:** Mike Bynum reported that TRU completed twenty-five water meter related calls, repaired two water leaks, responded to three sewer related calls, and completed twenty-nine preventative pump station inspections. Seven water quality samples were taken and all were in compliance with NC Drinking Water Quality Standards. Mr. Bynum stated that the construction contract was awarded to Sanders Utility Construction Company on November 6<sup>th</sup> for the South Fork Phase II Regional Sewer Project. The construction should take about a year to complete. A study was commissioned with HDR Engineering for a study of the options for sewer service to the southeast area. This project includes the construction of two pump stations. One will be off of New Hope Road and the other will be located off of Armstrong Ford Road. Design plans for this project are currently under review. Mayor Cauthen asked Mr. Bynum about tap fee costs for the Riverside area. Mr. Bynum stated to please have the interested party to call him to discuss.

**Town Attorney:** Attorney Fox stated the agreement has been received to close out the contract with B&N Grading and he has only one comment that he will add. Attorney Fox thanked the Board for his time to work with the Town as the interim attorney. Mayor Cauthen and the Board thanked him for the great job he did and his professionalism.

**Town Clerk:** A reminder was provided to the Board regarding the Ethics Training that will be provided in Hickory in January. The Board stated they would prefer to do the ethics training webinar. A staff luncheon is scheduled for Friday at noon at the Community Center. The Christmas parade is on Thursday. An appreciation dinner for the boards and committees will be held at Amberjack's. Chief Foulk asked that anyone attending the Fire Department dinner to please confirm attendance. She stated she will be attending clerk school the week of January 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Police Department:** Chief Adams reported there was some suspicious activity that occurred today on Hoke Trail involving firearms. Trey Helms, property manager for Cramer Mountain, was contacted and will be issuing information to the homeowners regarding this incident. Chief Adams stated there is a possibility that a firearm is missing from a breaking and entering that occurred. The firearm is an antique muzzleloader and if anyone has any information to please contact the police department. The breaking and entering did not occur on Cramer Mountain but the suspects were on foot and possibly dropped one of the firearms while fleeing. Chief Adams stated the Christmas lights have been turned on in the Town of McAdenville and only a few minor incidents which have occurred.

**Fire Department:** Chief Foulk absent.

**Planning:** Mr. Pettine reported that renderings for the bike plan have been reviewed and a possible draft of this plan should be available at the first of the year. Two new permits have been issued for independent single-family home construction in the Timberlake neighborhood. One permit has been issued for Old Course and ten permits for Stuarts Landing. There are seven pending permits for the Timberlake homes being built by American Homes for Rent and should be released at the end of this week. Gaston County is monitoring the silt fencing for this project. Mr. Pettine updated the Board regarding the invitation to bid for the greenway project and NCDOT should post this information in about a week. Bids for construction should be issued in January. An additional inquiry has been received from another builder for the Villages at Cramerton Mills.

**Finance:** The Town Manager presented information as the Finance Director left the meeting earlier due to being sick. A check for \$105,000.00 was received and deposited from VCM for the extension agreement. Collection from tax revenues has been solid.

**Parks and Recreation:** Mr. Smallwood stated there will be free pictures with Santa and horse and carriage rides provided by the Cramerton Merchants Association following the parade on Thursday. A copy of the annual events mailer was presented to the Board. Mr. Smallwood advised that the Turkey Shoot was moved to a new date and the Destiny Lives On event is now grouped with other town events. The Breakfast with Santa and Christmas Bazaar will occur each year on the first Saturday of December. The fourth Float the Fork event will be held on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Smallwood stated several strings of ambient lighting was placed in the Centennial Center area. This should help in providing additional lighting during the follow up events to the parade in that area. Commissioner Abernathy commented that she recently participated in the 5K run in McAdenville. She stated that we have a beautiful town and that funds could be generated for the Veterans Memorial with some type of run. Mr. Smallwood stated that a 5K run is planned as part of this upcoming year's Goat Island Games. He stated the course will be certified by Run For Your Life.

Mr. Smallwood presented a comprehensive map of the trails showing the greenways and blue ways and stated that we are only ten miles away the Whitewater Center. Commissioner Rice asked if this information would be included as part of the wayfinding signage. Mr. Smallwood stated this is part of the bike plan discussion and will also be incorporated into a kiosk at the proposed bike station repair area on Center Street.

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

Commissioner Neeley stated she attended the Christmas Bazaar and thanked Mr. Smallwood and his staff for how well it was set up. She thanked Attorney Fox for his services to the Town as the interim attorney.

Commissioner Rice congratulated all the recently elected Board members and thanked everyone for continuing to serve on the board and also committee liaisons. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Abernathy commended the police department for their services at the recent 5K run and the Christmas lights in McAdenville. She said all of the officers were very friendly and did a great job at both events. She thanked the staff for the reception tonight and stated she was honored to be elected to serve the citizens for the next four years.

Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas thanked the staff for the reception and congratulated everyone who was elected. He thanked the Board for his appointment to continue to serve as Mayor Pro Tempore. He asked about the TIGER Grant that was submitted by the City of Belmont. The Town Manager stated he would provide an update as soon as he receives any information. Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas asked if NCDOT would be returning to paint the lines on Wilkinson Boulevard soon along with the crosswalk. Mr. Pettine said yes but he did not know the timeline. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Helms stated this is a highly functioning Board and members offer a diverse background. He asked if staff would follow up on the lighting of the Lakewood Greenway. Mr. Pettine stated he would follow up. Mayor Cauthen also asked that the use of ironwood for the decking be followed up. Commissioner Helms wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Mayor Pro Tem Koutsoupas added that eighteen students from Stuart W. Cramer High School were part of the Community Committee cleanup of Central Park. He stated the cleanup filled up a dump truck and there was a lot of good fellowship with the neighborhood and residents.

Mayor Cauthen stated he was looking forward to working with the Board and staff for another four years and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

**Adjournment:** A motion was made by Commissioner Abernathy to adjourn at 9:55 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rice and passed by unanimous vote.

---

Mayor Will Cauthen

**ATTEST:**

---

Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk