



OAK RIDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
NOVEMBER 6, 2014 - 7:00 P.M.  
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

**Members Present**

Ray Combs, Mayor  
Spencer Sullivan, Mayor Pro Tem  
George McClellan  
Jim Kinneman  
Mike Stone

**Staff Present**

Bruce Oakley, Town Manager  
Sandra Smith, Town Clerk  
J. Michael Thomas, Town Attorney  
Bill Bruce, Planning Director

**Staff Absent**

Sam Anders, Finance Officer

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Ray Combs called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**A. Invocation**

**B. Pledge of Allegiance**

**2. APPROVE AGENDA**

**Councilman George McClellan** made a **motion** to approve the meeting agenda. **Councilman Jim Kinneman** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**3. APPROVE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 2, 2014, REGULAR MEETING AND OCTOBER 17, 2014, SPECIAL MEETING**

**Mayor Pro Tem Spencer Sullivan** made a **motion** to approve the two sets of meeting minutes as written. **Councilman McClellan** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**4. RESOLUTIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

**5. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

**A. N.C. Department of Transportation request.** Town Manager Bruce Oakley reported that N.C. DOT had requested the Council approve that Rymack Drive be added to the secondary state maintenance system.

**Councilman Kinneman** made a **motion** to approve the request. **Mayor Pro Tem Sullivan** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**B. Board member appointment.** Oakley recommended Jasmine O'Connell be appointed to the Parks & Recreation Commission.

**Councilman McClellan** made a **motion** to appoint Jasmine O'Connell as a Parks & Recreation Commission alternate. **Councilman Mike Stone** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

## 6. NEW BUSINESS

**Presentation of Auditor's Report.** John Frank of the firm of Dixon Hughes Goodman introduced himself and presented bound copies of the Town's annual financial audit and a summary sheet. Frank reported the firm had made no significant adjustments, had issued a clean audit opinion, and had found no significant internal control weaknesses. He said the summary sheet showed cash, investments and the general fund had increased by about \$400,000 each, primarily because of a decrease in expenditures and a modest increase in revenues. He pointed out that in 2013, the Town had made a very large principal debt paydown on the park property. Frank said general revenues were up overall by a modest amount of about \$75,000 or 5 percent, and that property taxes were up about \$38,000 and the tax rate had stayed the same. Permits and fees were up by about \$36,000. Expenditures by category showed the very large principal payment on the Town's debt that Frank had mentioned earlier in his report; if that payment had not occurred, expenditures would be very close to the same for the previous two years. He pointed out that the Town has 259.44 percent of expenditures in the available fund balance, but that much of that had been set aside for capital projects. The property tax collection rate was 99.45 percent, which was above the state average. Frank said the Town's financial picture looked very strong as of the end of the 2013-14 fiscal year.

### *Council questions:*

Councilman Kinneman asked if the Town's fund balance was in line with other towns of similar size. Frank said the fund balance was very large right now; the average town the size of Oak Ridge has a fund balance of about 75 to 80 percent of expenditures on hand, but currently Oak Ridge's fund balance is two to three times larger than a typical small municipality.

Mayor Combs asked if part of that fund balance is required by law, and Frank said yes; the state suggests municipalities have at least 8 to 10 percent of expenditures set aside in the fund balance, although most small municipalities maintain quite a bit more in their fund balances than that.

**Councilman Kinneman** made a **motion** to accept the audit report as presented. **Councilman McClellan** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

Combs said the audit report is public record and can be viewed by anyone interested.

## 7. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

**8. MONTHLY FINANCIAL UPDATE**

In the absence of Finance Officer Sam Anders, Oakley presented the monthly financial report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes.

**Councilman McClellan** made a **motion** to approve the financial report. **Mayor Pro Tem Sullivan** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

**9. COMMUNITY UPDATES**

**A. Fire Department**

Chief Steve Simmons reported that in October, the department responded to 69 calls (29 medical, 40 fire/service-related), obtained 246 hours of training, installed two car seats, attended five public education events, and maintained an average response time of 4 minutes. With colder weather approaching, he reminded residents to have someone inspect their fireplaces to ensure that they have not developed cracks, and to be sure to open their flues before starting a fire.

In response to a question from Councilman McClellan, Chief Simmons said the annual Golden Harvest Dinner for older people in the community would be held November 15 beginning at 4:30 p.m.

**B. Finance Committee**

No meeting, no report

**C. Board of Adjustment**

No report

**D. Historic Preservation Commission**

HPC member Ron Simpson reported that two Certificate of Appropriateness cases had been heard in October. The first was from JPC Monroe representing Lowes Foods, who asked permission to renovate the front elevation of the building; that case was approved. The other case was from Oak Ridge Foundation, who proposed to remodel the front and make foundation repairs to Linville Chapel on the campus of Oak Ridge Military Academy. After conversation, the changes to the front of the chapel produced many questions, so the applicant will reapply.

**E. Planning & Zoning Board**

Chairman Doug Nodine said the Board approved the Barrow Place subdivision on Linville Road, which will have seven houses on 8 acres, although there was some conversation about the number of driveways being considered. The Board also received an update on the Land Use Plan Update committee and had an informal

discussion of some things P&Z members might like the Land Use Plan Update committee to discuss.

**F. Parks & Recreation Commission**

Chairman Bill Edwards said the Commission was working on plans for the performance stage/amphitheater and new restroom behind Shelter 1, and would present its plan before the Historic Preservation Commission and the Planning & Zoning Board before coming before the Town Council in December. In addition, two Eagle Scout projects in the park are pending. Edwards thanked the Council for appointing Jasmine O'Connell to the Commission. He also reported on the status of the park usage agreement with Oak Ridge Youth Association; although the approval process is behind schedule, Edwards said he hoped to have the agreement ready to be approved by the Council in December.

**G. Land Use Plan Update Committee**

Committee member Ron Simpson said the committee heard a presentation by Planning Director Bill Bruce about the purpose of the plan. On November 5, an open house was held and more than 50 citizens attended. The process is expected to take 9-12 months, and the committee seems to be enthusiastic and understands how important the plan will be to the future of the town.

Mayor Combs thanked all those who had volunteered to serve on the Land Use Plan Update Committee.

**10. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

None

**11. COUNCIL COMMENTS**

**Councilman McClellan** agreed with Simpson about the Land Use Plan Update, and said it was wonderful to see citizens taking part in discussions about it. He encouraged all citizens to fill out the survey regarding how Oak Ridge will develop in the future, either online or by filling out a paper copy.

**Mayor Pro Tem Sullivan** agreed with McClellan's comments on the Land Use Plan Update committee, adding that it was exciting to see the amount of interest from the community. He was he was encouraged to hear about progress on the annual park usage agreement with Oak Ridge Youth Association, which some years seems to be delayed or dragged out. Sullivan said the Town had always tried to maintain a cordial relationship with the youth sports organization, and that the Council wants youth and all citizens to use the park.

**Councilman Kinneman** also agreed with earlier comments about the Land Use Plan Update, and said he was also looking forward to seeing site plans for Phase II of construction at the park. He added that the recent Oak Ridge Lions Club golf tournament was one of the most successful from a monetary standpoint, and said all money raised will be used locally.

**Councilman Stone** said he had participated in a town hall meeting and voted in an election previously that week. He said Veterans Day is approaching, and veterans are the reason we are allowed to experience such freedoms. He encouraged attendees to thank our military veterans.

**Mayor Combs** thanked Sullivan for sitting in for him while Combs was out of town for the last couple of months, and he added that it was good to be home.

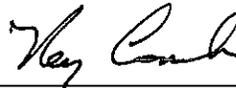
12. **ADJOURNMENT**

**Councilman Kinneman** made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 p.m. **Mayor Pro Tem Sullivan** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).

Respectfully Submitted:



Sandra B. Smith, CMC, Town Clerk



Ray Combs, Mayor