



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

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MINUTES

Members Present

Ray Combs, Mayor  
George McClellan  
Jim Kinneman  
Mike Stone

Staff Present

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

Members Absent

Spencer Sullivan, Mayor Pro Tem

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ray Combs called the meeting to order at 6:59 p.m.

A. Invocation

B. Pledge of Allegiance

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Councilman Jim Kinneman made a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Councilman Mike Stone seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (4-0).

3. APPROVE MINUTES OF JULY 10, 2014, MEETING AND CLOSED SESSION

Councilman George McClellan made a motion to approve the two sets of minutes. Councilman Kinneman seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (4-0).

4. RESOLUTIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Mayor Combs announced that Mayor Pro Tem Spencer Sullivan was not at the meeting because he was recovering from surgery.
- Mayor Combs asked Patti Paslaru, who had served as the Town's representative on the Triad Municipal ABC Board until recently, to come forward. He presented Paslaru with a plaque from the ABC Board, and thanked her for her service.
- Councilman Kinneman announced the Oak Ridge Lions Club's annual golf tournament will be held on September 27 at Pleasant Ridge Golf Course. He said this is the primary fundraiser, and players and sponsors are needed. All money raised is used locally,

primarily to help people with eye exams, eyeglasses and hearing aids, but also to any local resident who needs help.

## 5. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- A. **Board member reappointment.** Oakley recommended Ron Simpson be reappointed to the Historic Preservation Commission.

**Councilman McClellan** made a **motion** to reappoint Ron Simpson to the Historic Preservation Commission. **Councilman Kinneman** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (4-0).

- B. **USGS well contract.** Oakley said USGS had asked the Town to continue to help fund the groundwater monitoring well that is located on Town Hall property. He said USGS had recorded record groundwater levels in the spring, and had requested the Town at least match their \$5,000 annual contribution for measuring groundwater at the site. Oakley recommended a payment of \$5,000, and said if approved, payment would not be made until next fiscal year.

**Councilman Kinneman** made a **motion** to approve funding of \$5,000 for the USGS groundwater monitoring well. **Councilman Stone** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (4-0).

- C. **School traffic concerns.** Oakley reminded Council that it had agreed to help with traffic issues at Oak Ridge Elementary School the first two weeks of school by approving money in the budget to hire deputies to direct traffic. Two off-duty officers have been secured for morning and afternoon for the first two weeks of the new school year, which should hopefully make the transition into the new school year smoother than it had been in the past.

Regarding the groundwater monitoring well, Mayor Combs said although USGS says the area is doing well, that simply means there is a fragmentation pocket underneath Town Hall and the water situation is not necessarily the same all over Town. He added that the USGS report does not mean residents should go out and use all the water they want.

## 6. NEW BUSINESS

**Proposed Land Use Plan update.** Planning Director Bill Bruce outlined a timeline for updating the Land Use Plan, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes. He said a steering committee would be appointed that includes three members of the Planning & Zoning Board, one member from each of the other Town boards/commissions, a representative of the business community, a representative of the farming/agricultural community, a representative of the building/real estate industry, and three Council-appointed citizens. The process would begin with an open house to gather citizen opinions and would include approximately 6-8 months of discussion and reviewing the existing plan. A draft plan would then be produced and another citizen open house would be held to gather citizen input again. Public hearings would then be conducted at both Planning & Zoning Board and Town Council meetings before the plan is adopted. The entire process should take approximately a year to complete.

Council members agreed with the proposal and timeline by consensus, and will plan to appoint committee members at the September meeting. Councilman Stone said he thought citizen input was vital, and that the more input that is gathered, the better the plan will be.

**7. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

- Steve Holmes said he had requested a private meeting with the Town Council and hoped Council members would listen. Instead, he said he found that Council members had dug their heels in and refused to listen to their constituents. He said citizens had been told that a through street was safer than a cul-de-sac, and he contended that was inaccurate. He added that he had found inconsistencies in the Town's ordinances and Land Use Plan, and he would still like to have a private conversation with Council members to create a solution for his subdivision and others in the future. He said he thought the clustered development approved in Knights Landing was against the current ordinance. If a speed table is put in to slow traffic, residents of his development would have to pay for it; Holmes said he didn't know why a decision to develop adjoining land should cost residents of his subdivision. As the new Land Use Plan is developed, Holmes said he hoped the Council will keep in mind ways to protect the current residents.

**8. MONTHLY FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Finance Officer Sam Anders presented the monthly financial report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes. He reported:

- The Town maintains its strong financial position, with \$2.668 million in total assets and liabilities of just over \$1 million.
- Property taxes, sales taxes, interest on park revenue, and ABC revenue sharing had been received in the previous month.
- Because of a posting error, Guilford County paid the Town twice what was owed on motor vehicle taxes and tags. The error should be reversed in the next month.
- His office is continuing to work with Black Mountain Software with payroll converted to the new program, accounting and cash receipting up and running, and training on fixed assets was scheduled for the following week.
- The annual audit is scheduled for the week of September 15.
- July collateralization reports were filed on time and confirmation has been received.
- Annual property taxes will be billed in August, and the Town's cash flow should improve in September.

**Councilman McClellan** made a **motion** to approve the financial report as presented. **Councilman Kinneman** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (4-0).

**9. COMMUNITY UPDATES**

**A. Historic Preservation Commission**

Chair Ann Schneider said she was pleased to hear about the Land Use Plan update, which will have important ramifications for the Historic District. She thanked HPC member Mac McAtee and Town Clerk Sandra Smith for the display in the new

display case in the Town Hall lobby, and said displays will rotate. The HPC was scheduled to meet the following week to discuss a Certificate of Appropriateness application from Lowes Foods. Three new historic markers have been received, and dates for installation and dedications will be planned.

**B. Parks and Recreation Commission**

Chairman Bill Edwards reported:

- There was a Music in the Park event on July 26 featuring the band Sidetrip. The event was well attended and a lot of good feedback was received. Other music events scheduled for this year will be held August 16 (featuring Glory Street Quartet) and September 20 (featuring Tyler Millard Band).
- The deadline for RFQs for Phase II of park construction is August 15, and an aggressive time line for completion has been proposed.
- The Bark Park subcommittee met on August 4 to discuss improvements to the dog park.

Councilman Stone asked in what order would items in Phase II would be built, and Edwards said work on the amphitheater might begin first, but that construction on all items (amphitheater, additional restroom and trail improvements) will likely be done concurrently with the goal of being completed in time for next year's RidgeFest celebration.

Mayor Combs commended Edwards for his answers to a question in the Northwest Observer about a swimming pool in the Town park, adding that the Town had tried to work with the YMCA several years ago on a facility in this area.

**C. Fire Department**

Chief Steve Simmons said in July, the department responded to 45 calls (21 medical and 24 fire/service-related), obtained 272 hours of training, installed three car seats, and maintained an average response time of 4.5 minutes. Simmons commented on the amount of road construction going on in the area, and urged drivers to slow down, use caution and exercise patience in work zones.

**D. Planning and Zoning Board**

Chairman Doug Nodine said the Board met in July for a training session on the Guilford County GIS program conducted by Planning Director Bill Bruce.

**E. Finance Committee**

No meeting, no report

**F. Board of Adjustment**

A meeting was scheduled for August 14.

**10. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

- Bill Edwards said he had seen a YouTube video in the past about a fire chief who lost his home due to a fire caused by dryer lint. He said the same thing happened at a house where he was working at Camp GuilRock recently. Although there was no major damage, Edwards reminded those in attendance of the danger.

## 11. COUNCIL COMMENTS

- **Councilman McClellan** said he was excited about upcoming park construction, proud of the work of HPC, and proud to serve the citizens of Oak Ridge.
- **Councilman Kinneman** also said he was excited about the amphitheater at the park, which would take advantage of the topography and add another element to RidgeFest.
- **Councilman Stone** said he wanted to respond to Steve Holmes, who had spoken during Citizen Comments. Stone said if citizens feel there are options still available, he thought it would be to Council's advantage to give them full consideration. If the majority of Council agreed, Stone asked how they would go about doing that, or should they direct staff to meet with citizens to discuss what options might be available. He said Council members were still receiving feedback on this issue and he wondered if they had done everything they could, should or ought to have done, and that he was open to discussing the matter.

Mayor Combs responded to Councilman Stone, saying Holmes would only be satisfied when the stub road between his subdivision and the one next door was not connected. Combs said there was no compromise available, because either the road connection would be made or it would not. He added that the decision was made in 2003 when the Land Use Plan was adopted, and that based on opinions from staff and the Town attorney, the issue could not be reconsidered by Council. He added that the only opportunity he was aware of for the Council to address the matter again would be if the developer requests a waiver on the road connection. He said he knew Stone had a different opinion, but the Council is compelled in such instances to listen to its attorney. He said the only suggestion he had was for those living in Holmes' neighborhood who are against the road connection to contact the developer; even though he might request a waiver, that does not mean it will be granted.

Combs asked Town Attorney Michael Thomas for his opinion. Thomas said the mayor was correct, and the developer would need to request a subdivision waiver, which would be considered by the Planning & Zoning Board; if a unanimous decision was not reached by the Board, the case would be heard by the Town Council. Thomas said the other option that he was aware of would be for a qualified person to request a legislative action to rezone the property.

Combs asked Oakley for an update on Big Boyz Toyz. Oakley said Bill Bruce had been working on the enforcement issue, and Oakley had been told by the property owner that the house next door, which he also owns, will be cleaned up by September. Oakley said the Big Boyz Toyz property has been foreclosed on and the bank has talked to someone about cleaning up the property. That source told Oakley some environmental work had been done by the bank and no contamination was found. Oakley said the Town is still working on the solid waste issue and the violation of scenic corridor guidelines. Councilman McClellan asked about gas tanks at Big Boyz Toyz, and Oakley said his understanding was that they had been removed a long time ago. McClellan asked that documentation on those gas tanks be requested.

Combs announced that the Council is looking for someone to serve as the Town's representative on the ABC board. He said he appreciated both Carl Salyer and Patti Paslaru's service in that capacity in the past.

12. **ADJOURNMENT**

**Councilman Kinneman** made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m. **Councilman McClellan** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (4-0).

Respectfully Submitted:



Sandra B. Smith, Town Clerk



C. Spencer Sullivan, Mayor Pro Tem