



**OAK RIDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 6, 2022 – 7:00 P.M.
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Members Present

Ann Schneider, Mayor
Jim Kinneman, Mayor Pro Tem
George McClellan
Doug Nodine
Martha Pittman

Staff Present

Bill Bruce, Town Manager
Sandra Smith, Town Clerk
Sean Taylor, Planning Director
Michael Thomas, Town Attorney
Sam Anders, Finance Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ann Schneider called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

A. Invocation/Moment of Silence.

Maggie Muelker, president of the Kernersville auxiliary of Holy Cross Columbiettes, a Catholic women's organization, offered the invocation.

B. Pledge of Allegiance.

2. MAYOR'S STATEMENT CONCERNING THE EMERGENCY

Mayor Schneider said the Town encourages people to wear masks in town hall. She said meeting agendas were available for those attending the meeting in person, and all meeting materials had been posted on the Town website. The public had been invited to join either in person or by viewing the livestream, and instructions had been widely publicized. By doing this, she said the Town was meeting all statutory requirements.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, and Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Councilwoman Martha Pittman moved that the minutes of the December 2, 2021, regular meeting be approved, and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

5. RESOLUTIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

Maggie Muelke made a presentation of two boxes of snacks that had been collected by the Holy Cross Columbiettes to be donated to the District 1 Office of the Guilford County Sheriff's Department in honor of Law Enforcement Appreciation Day on January 9, 2022.

6. REPORT FROM GUILFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

No report

7. REPORT FROM OAK RIDGE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Firefighter Ryan Karpik reported that there were 812 calls in Oak Ridge in 2021 with fire damage totaling \$527,000 and property value damage estimated at \$3.5 million. He said that for the month of December that 81 calls were received, of which eight were fire-related and 36 were medical-related. Karpik said that personnel had received 655 hours of training during the month of December.

8. PUBLIC HEARING

Proposal to finance the construction of Heritage Farm Park by means of an installment financing agreement, and consideration/approval of Resolution R-2022-03 authorizing the filing of an application for approval of the installment agreement.

Mayor Schneider opened the public hearing.

Proponents:

None

Opponents:

None

Mayor Schneider closed the public hearing.

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to approve R-2022-03 authorizing the filing of an application for approval of a financing agreement using an installment agreement and authorizing Town Manager Bill Bruce to act on behalf of the Town of Oak Ridge in filing an application with the North Carolina Local Government Commission for approval of the project and the proposed financing contract. Councilman George McClellan seconded.

Council discussion:

Councilman Nodine asked Finance Officer Sam Anders where the Town was financially and how this potential loan would affect our position, and Anders replied that the Town should remain on solid financial footing.

Councilwoman Pittman thanked the Finance Committee and Finance Officer Anders for their work on this proposal. She said that she thought that the financing terms discussed were reasonable but also fiscally responsible.

Mayor Schneider reminded Council that the Town does not have the financing rate yet. She said that she thought that the plan was completely solid financially and thanked the Finance Committee and Town Manager Bill Bruce for their work with this project.

Councilman McClellan asked when Council would have a price tag, and Town Manager Bruce replied that the project would be put out for bid soon with a possible springtime start date for construction.

Councilman McClellan asked if the loan amount would be up to \$2.7 million, and Bruce replied that Council had authorized that the loan amount could go up to \$2.75 million.

The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

9. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

A. Board/Committee Appointments/Reappointments.

Councilman George McClellan moved to approve the reappointment of John Jenkins, Stuart Mease and Jim Harton to regular members of the Finance Committee. Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

Mayor Schneider thanked Paul Benz, who recently resigned from his position on the Finance Committee due to a relocation of his job, for his service.

B. Consideration/approval of authorization to purchase new Park equipment.

Bruce asked Council to refer to the memo in their packet regarding the purchase of new Park equipment which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes.

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman moved to approve the purchase of a Gravely Pro Turn 672 and Sand Pro 3040. Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

C. Discussion/approval of addition of R-2022-01 Addition of Red Fox Drive to N.C. State Maintenance System.

Councilman George McClellan made a motion to approve R-2022-01 for the addition of Red Fox Drive to the N.C. State Maintenance System. Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

D. Consideration/approval of addition of R-2022-02 Addition of Red Fox Court to N.C. State Maintenance System.

Councilman George McClellan made a motion to approve R-2022-02 for the addition of Red Fox Court to the N.C. State Maintenance System. Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

E. Consideration/approval of moving funds raised by Special Events Committee to the Veterans Memorial Restricted Fund.

Town Clerk Sandra Smith said that contributions to the Veterans Honor Green are to be matched by the Town quarterly, up to \$34,000 in fiscal year 2021-22, with a verbal commitment to match up to an additional \$34,000 next fiscal year for a total \$68,000 contribution from the Town and moved into the restricted fund.

She said that the Special Events Committee had raised \$14,291.00 during the quarter ending December 31, 2021.

Smith said that Council had previously matched \$21,161.87 this fiscal year. The amount to be matched to reach the \$34,000 Town commitment is \$12,838.13.

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to approve moving \$14,291 raised by the Special Events Committee to the Veterans Memorial Restricted Fund and Councilman George McClellan seconded.

Council discussion:

Councilman Kinneman asked if the Town would make another matching donation in July because Council had already reached the maximum amount for the current budget year, and Town Manager Bruce replied yes. Bruce said that Council had agreed to budget matching donations in next year's budget.

The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

F. Consideration/approval of moving funds from the Town's Veterans Memorial Donations matching fund (Acct. 3370) to the Veterans Memorial Restricted Fund.

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to approve moving matching funds of \$12,838.13 to the Veterans Memorial Restricted Fund and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

G. Discussion/approval of additional park staffing.

Bruce referred Council to the memo in their packet regarding the request for a part-time Parks & Recreation Night Custodian position. Bruce also said that a job

description was included in their packets as well. He said that the position would be classified as the same pay grade as a Groundskeeper I and would be advertised that the pay would be \$13 per hour for up to 25 hours per week. Bruce said that the budget impact would be minimal in this fiscal year due to unfilled positions in the Parks & Recreation Department for several months and that it would be fully funded in next year's budget.

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman made a motion to approve the creation of a part-time Parks & Recreation Night Custodian position and Councilwoman Pittman seconded.

Council discussion:

Councilman McClellan clarified that the position would pay \$13 per hour, and Bruce responded yes. Bruce said that the Groundskeeper I salary range was \$13-\$15 per hour.

Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman asked if Council should give Parks & Recreation Director Lannon latitude with the starting salary, and Bruce replied that would be up to Council's discretion. Bruce said that offering more money would create more interest, but encouraged Council to also consider the equity issues that might arise if a new employee were hired at a higher salary than current employees.

Councilman Nodine asked if there had been a difficulty with hiring people, and Bruce replied that the last time there was an open position at the Park that the Town did not receive a lot of responses.

Councilwoman Pittman said that there was a little concern because of the trouble in staffing so the Town had excess in the budget. She said that this position is just on the weeknights and when this position was not busy with custodial issues that she hoped that other maintenance work could be added onto this position. Pittman said that she was aware of the challenges that the Park faces in the evenings and felt that this position would benefit everyone.

The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

H. Discussion/authorization to record Whitaker property combination deed.

Town Manager Bruce referred Council to a memo in their packets regarding combining the two properties that comprise Heritage Farm Park into a new parcel. He said that the combination was needed to ensure compliance with setbacks and other zoning requirements of the Oak Ridge Code of Ordinances.

Councilman George McClellan made a motion to approve an Instrument of Combination for Heritage Farm Park recordation at the Guilford County Register of Deeds. Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

I. Any other business.

Bruce gave an update on the NC 68/150 intersection project which is supposed to begin in fall of 2022.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

11. MONTHLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

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

Councilman George McClellan made a motion to accept the financial report as presented, and Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Historic Preservation Commission.

Commission member Brian Hall reported that the Commission met on December 15, 2021, and approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for a fence located at 5919 Billet Road.

B. Planning & Zoning Board.

Town Clerk Smith read the report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes.

C. Mountains-to-Sea Trail.

Council liaison Martha Pittman reported that the Committee met in December to discuss continuing to move forward on the kiosk design for the parking lot and working with the County on the Cascades kiosk. She said that 11 trees had fallen down due to inclement weather on the Headwaters Trail and thanked MST volunteers and Park staff for clearing them.

D. Conservation Easement Committee.

No report

E. Special Events Committee.

Town Clerk Smith read the report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes.

F. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.

Town Clerk Smith read the report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes.

G. Finance Committee.

No report

H. Water Advisory Board.

No report

13. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION REPORTS

A. Oak Ridge Youth Association.

ORYA Community Relations Director Randy Collins introduced Nick Gervasi, who is the chair of the Youth Teen Leadership. Collins said that Nick was responsible for leading events such as two 5Ks, 2 video game tournaments, the annual Terror Trail, flag football, and caroling in nursing homes.

B. Oak Ridge Military Academy.

No report

C. Oak Ridge Elementary School.

Town Clerk Smith read the report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes.

14. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

15. COUNCIL COMMENTS

16. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m., and Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

