



**OAK RIDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
JANUARY 4, 2024 - 7:00 P.M.  
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present**

Jim Kinneman, Mayor  
Mike Stone, Mayor Pro Tem  
Michael Greeson  
Jim Harton  
Ann Schneider

**Staff Present**

Bill Bruce, Town Manager  
Ashley Royal, Deputy Town Clerk  
Sean Taylor, Planning Director  
Sam Anders, Finance Officer  
Terry Lannon, Parks & Recreation Director

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Jim Kinneman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**A. Invocation.**

Kinneman requested remembrance of Linda Yanusz, wife of former council member Danny Yanusz, and Greensboro Police Officer Philip Dale Nix. Spencer Sullivan offered the invocation.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance.**

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*Councilman Mike Stone made a motion to approve the agenda with an amendment to move the Oak Ridge Military Academy report from the Community Organization Reports section to an earlier time just after the report from the Oak Ridge Fire Department. Councilwoman Ann Schneider seconded, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*Councilwoman Schneider made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2023, regular meeting. Councilman Harton seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

**4. RESOLUTIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**5. REPORT FROM GUILFORD COUNTY SHERRIFF'S OFFICE**

No representative was in attendance, but copies of the month's report were available for review.

**6. REPORT FROM OAK RIDGE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Deputy Chief Sam Anders reported that the department responded to 104 calls for service last month, including 45 miscellaneous calls, 13 false calls, one brush fire, three hazardous response calls and one structure fire. He stated that a total of 261.5 hours were spent in training. Anders noted that a total of 1,012 calls were responded to during the 2023 calendar year marking the first time that the department breached more than 1,000 calls in a calendar year. Anders encouraged caution on icy road conditions and with downed power lines.

Mayor Kinneman inquired into the status of the fire training tower and Anders indicated that grading for the site had been completed, gravel had been laid, and components for the tower had been received and awaited assembly.

**7. OAK RIDGE MILITARY ACADEMY REPORT**

Dr. Steve Wilson reported that, as the oldest military boarding academy, Oak Ridge Military Academy (ORMA) was thriving while 13 academies nationwide had closed in the last few years. He noted that 100 students were enrolled in the academy, 95 of whom lived on campus, and 12 more had been recruited while 70 applicants had been turned down. Wilson expressed the academy's effort to dispel the notion of being a reform school by elevating their exposure to the community. He anticipated 18 students to graduate this year with five of them already having been awarded scholarships. He pointed out that ORMA had agreements with Virginia Military Institute, the Citadel, Norwich University, and Georgia Military College to offer scholarships to graduating students who have maintained a specified grade point average. He reported that ORMA's basketball program was ranked 45<sup>th</sup> in the state with several players ranking as Divisions I and II players. Wilson reported that three players had been given the opportunity to attend ORMA from the Ivory Coast. He expressed appreciation to Oak Ridge Youth Association, Oak Ridge Merchants, and to the Daughters of the American Revolution for their support of the academy. He concluded with a request to re-examine the allocation of funds from the Farmhouse Community Center to Maple Glade.

**8. PUBLIC HEARING**

**CASE # RZ-23-02: AG (Agricultural) to CS-LB (Conditional Zoning-Limited Business).**

The property is at 8458 Haw River Road and is Guilford County Tax Parcel #166414 (approximately 1.27 acres), located in Oak Ridge Township in the NPDES Watershed. The property is owned by Zunaira Investment LLC.

Planning Director Sean Taylor read the property description and presented the staff report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the record.

Taylor noted that the applicant's request was to continue using the existing business structure as a convenience store with gasoline pumps, which would be the only allowed use. He explained that the convenience store had formerly operated as a legally nonconforming business. Taylor reported that additional development conditions included adherence to the Town's Village Core design guidelines, the hours of operation would be limited to 5:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m., the planting yard rates would be doubled along Haw River Road, any future expansion of the structure would be limited to 25 percent of the structure's original footprint, and signs would not be allowed on any island canopy. Taylor reported that the Planning & Zoning Board held a public hearing on this case at its meeting on December 14, 2023, and that the Board as well as staff recommended approval of the application.

Mayor Kinneman opened the public hearing.

*Proponents:*

Bill Greco of Land Solutions, PO Box 347 in Oak Ridge, spoke on behalf of the applicant. Greco confirmed that the application is for an existing legally nonconforming use seeking limited business zoning to modernize its facilities and continue to provide services to the area as a convenience store with gas pumps. He stressed adherence to Village Core Design Guidelines. He stated that the hours of operation were revised in response to the concerns voiced by the community. Greco affirmed that expansion of the existing structure would be limited to 25 percent of the original footprint and that signage would be prohibited on the canopy. He further confirmed that landscape buffers would be generous and would pay attention to mitigating headlight sweeps and light seeping into neighboring residences.

*Opponents:*

Tim Shields, 8450 Haw River Road, Kernersville, noted that he was neither for nor against the application, but that as owner of the home at 8454 Haw River Road, which is located behind the convenience store, he had concerns regarding the application. Shields explained that his front yard was a mere 45 to 50 feet behind the north end of the applicant's property line. He understood that the application listed two gasoline pumps would be installed at the convenience store, but there was no mention of limiting the number of the gas pumps. He said he did not see the need for more than two pumps to service the area. He also commented on the possibility of aboveground tanks being located at the north end of the property and expressed concern over the landscape buffer to both shield the tanks as well as to prevent light spillage into neighboring properties. While he appreciated the applicant's offer to double the landscape buffer and include evergreens into the plantings, he requested the addition of 50 percent more understory trees in the Type 4 landscape requirements to the north end of the property line, suggesting that the current proposal would still be inadequate in buffering against light spills and shielding the tanks. Shields recommended further reducing the proposed hours of operation and requested specification of actual business operating hours. He did not

believe that the area would sustain such late hours of service and encouraged the business to close at 8:00 p.m. rather than 11:00 p.m.

*Rebuttal – Proponents:*

Greco clarified that the concerns voiced in opposition to the application were not applicable to the rezoning process but would instead apply during the development of the site plan. He pointed out that as a conditional application, the applicant may add or amend conditions to the request. On the owner’s behalf, Greco revised and doubled the understory planting along the north side of the property. He stated that there would be no reduction in landscape buffer, even if applicable due to square footage of the property.

Town Manager Bill Bruce pointed out that the amended Type 4 buffer planting proposed by Greco would not be enforceable unless the proposal were made by the owner in person. Bruce advised that the adjustment to the plantings could be considered during the development stage of the site plan.

*Rebuttal - Opponents:*

Shields acknowledged the offer to double the understory plantings along the north side of the property line. He emphasized the need for the owners to explicitly define the store’s business hours as opposed to its hours of operation and asked that any decision on the application be postponed until the owners appear in person to discuss the application.

Mayor Kinneman closed the public hearing.

*Council discussion:*

Councilwoman Schneider commented on the mention of “pulling in investments” and asked if the owners would be operating the store themselves. Greco responded that the owners placed the business in an LLC as an investment, but that they intended to operate the store themselves with a staff.

Mayor Pro Tem Stone asked Greco to clarify information on the aboveground tanks. Greco answered that the aboveground tank would be like the propane tanks operating at the Village Store and that aboveground tanks had additional safety benefits over underground tanks and that the tank would be installed with the appropriate buffers and bollards in place. He explained that the existing underground tanks were slated to be abandoned in accordance with the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality regulations.

Stone asked how many existing fuel pumps were on the property and if there would be a maximum number of pumps specified in future planning. Greco replied that a limit of two fuel dispensers was planned.

*Councilwoman Schneider made a motion to approve the proposed zoning amendment based on*

- *the proposed zoning amendment is consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan of the Town of Oak Ridge, and*
- *the proposed zoning amendment is reasonable, and*
- *the proposed zoning amendment is in the public interest.*

*Mayor Pro Tem Stone seconded the motion.*

Councilwoman Schneider noted the numerous accommodations made by the applicant. She expressed her understanding of the concerns voiced about the hours of operation and commented on the possibility of a resolution being reached with the owners. She pointed out that the wide landscape buffer would be effective.

Mayor Pro Tem Stone stated his assumption that “hours of operation” were defined as the time that a business would be open to the time that it would be closed, and that the terminology was clearly defined in the application. He asked if the owners were required to sign off on the change in hours on the application and if they would simultaneously sign off on the proposed landscape amendment. Town Manager Bruce explained that the owner’s signature would be required on any changes made to the application, but that the proposed landscape amendment was not a foregone conclusion. Planning & Zoning Director Taylor added that the site’s development was subject to the stringent Village Core Design Guidelines which would mean that the site plan would undergo review by the Planning & Zoning Board.

Councilman Harton expressed confidence in moving forward with the application having noted the concerns raised and the applicant’s willingness to make concessions.

Mayor Kinneman noted his favor of small retail operations distributed throughout the Town, which made it easier for the community and relieved traffic congestion in the Town’s core. He believed that the hours of operation would self-regulate as the store experienced consumer trends.

*The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).*

## **9. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- Bill Goebel, 1402 Westridge Road in Greensboro, having served for five months on the School Board spoke on the Guilford County Schools system from the perspective of a business. He cited several statistics regarding the school system.
- Phyllis Anders, 1837 Oak Ridge Road, encouraged the continuation of work on the Farmhouse Community Center, pointing out that much money had already been invested in the project and that discontinuation of the project would risk the loss of sizeable grant money already allocated to it. She further encouraged the approval of the proposed increase of the nonresident fee charged to the Oak Ridge Youth Association for use of the Park’s fields and facilities. She explained that residents’ tax money should not have to subsidize nonresident use of the Town’s facilities and that the nonresident fee would help to support the maintenance and development of the Town’s parks for use by both residents and nonresidents.

## **10. TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT**

### **A. Consideration / Approval of Board / Committee appointments**

*Mayor Pro Tem Stone made a motion to approve the appointment of Martha Pittman as a regular member on the Mountains-to-Sea Trail (MST) Committee. Councilman Jim Harton seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).*

*Councilwoman Schneider made a motion to approve the appointment of Paul Kress as a member of the Board of Adjustment. Councilman Harton seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

**B. Consideration / Approval to Surplus Oak Ridge Town Park Bleachers**

Town Manager Bill Bruce requested approval to surplus the bleachers on athletic field #3 at Oak Ridge Town Park and donate the bleachers to Oak Ridge Youth Association. He pointed out that the bleachers would be replaced with new bleachers during the current budget year.

*Mayor Pro Tem Stone made a motion to declare the Oak Ridge Town Park bleachers as surplus property, and Councilman Greeson seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).*

**C. Other business**

- **Consideration/Approval to amend the budget for Veterans Honor Green to include a 10 percent contingency**

Bruce explained that it was typical to include contingencies as part of capital project ordinances when adopting an annual budget. He reminded Council of vote at the previous meeting to approve a contract with ASJ Wilson Construction for \$255,000. He noted that 10 percent of the contract price would total \$25,500 and bring the revised contract price to \$280,500. Bruce further explained that the contingency would authorize staff to approve minor change orders and avoid budget amendment requests to Council with each minor change, thus minimizing construction delays.

Mayor Kinneman added that the continuing fundraising efforts on the project's behalf could offset the Town's expenses and that most adjustments made to projects occur with advance notice.

*Councilman Harton made a motion to approve to amend the Veteran's Honor Green budget to include a 10 percent contingency fund, and Councilwoman Schneider seconded the motion.*

Councilman Harton supported the continued progression of the project and commented on the second phase of the project to which he has donated additional funds.

Mayor Pro Tem Stone pointed out that the initial vote to approve the contract for the construction of the VHG reflected a 5 percent increase in the originally budgeted amount. He asked if the request for the 10 percent contingency would be in addition to the 5 percent increase thereby constituting a 15 percent total addition to the budget. Bruce answered that the request was 10 percent over what was approved in the previous month, which was 5 percent over the budget. Stone asked why the

request was not made for 10 percent over the original budget, and Bruce responded that 10 percent over the original budget would equate to a request for 5 percent contingency and that 10 percent instead was proposed according to standard practice. Bruce explained that it was Council's pleasure to approve the percentage level of the contingency.

Councilwoman Schneider voiced her belief that the project was straightforward with low anticipation for changes. She noted her comfort with requesting the standard contingency percentage.

Mayor Kinneman agreed with the uncomplicated nature of the project. He asked to clarify if the 10 percent contingency would be above the original budget, and Bruce answered that the 10 percent contingency would be over the project bid.

*Councilman Harton amended his motion to reflect approval of a budget amendment to include a 10 percent contingency at \$25,500 to the Veteran's Honor Green fund. Councilwoman Schneider seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

- **Reminder of the annual Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) session scheduled for February 14, 2024, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.**

Mayor Kinneman requested consideration of extending the CIP session to include a work session for general issues, or to schedule the work session on a separate date. Discussion ensued.

Bruce agreed to schedule a separate work session upon receipt of agenda items.

## 11. OLD BUSINESS

### Review of Farmhouse Community Center Project

With prior study of the project and examination of the notes from the cost savings meeting with Mayor Kinneman, Councilman Greeson and Bar Construction, Councilman Harton shared the following data:

- \$18,500 was spent on architectural designs by Hill Studios, \$2,500 was spent on changes to power and HVAC implementation, \$17,500 was spent on bidding and negotiations by Hill Studios, and \$135,000-\$160,000 had already been spent on the project. In addition, \$100,000 would be spent to break the contract with Bar Construction plus an unknown penalty fee with Hill Studios. Harton concluded that walking away from the project would cost \$175,000-\$200,000 and the loss of \$380,000 in grant money due to the cessation of the project.

As an alternative solution, Harton estimated the above quoted costs and \$400,000 to simply stabilize the building. He noted, however, that the building would not be usable once stabilized. He estimated a financial impact on the community of \$200,000-\$220,000 if this option were to be pursued. Harton calculated a cost of \$289,000 to continue the project after \$380,000 in grant funds were used. Due to these factors, Harton said he supported continuing the project as scheduled.

Councilman Greeson noted his support of continuing the project unless the money allocated to the project could be transferred to a different project.

Mayor Pro Tem Stone noted that \$500,000 in taxpayers' dollars would be saved by walking away from the project, while \$250,000 would be saved by stabilizing the house. However, he opined that \$400,000 to pour and stabilize the foundation, address termite infestation, and to remediate windows and the roof for weather protection on the structure was too costly. He reflected that the project was initially estimated at \$250,000, then increased to \$450,000, and finally ended at the current cost of \$620,000. Stone expressed grave concern with the rising costs of the project.

Councilwoman Schneider said she viewed the project as an investment in the town park and in the Town's rural Historic District. She pointed out that the decision to pursue the project was borne out of over four years of careful study and deliberation. She noted that budgets do not remain stagnant. Schneider pointed out that the contract had been signed and construction was underway and stressed that efforts to change the project were largely emotional and unfounded. She spoke on wasteful spending, emphasizing that the best way to preserve a historic structure would be to give it a new use. Schneider explained that the house would be renovated to an indoor rental facility and community center that would generate revenue to support its maintenance and contribute to the general budget. She stated that demolishing the home or preserving it without a use would be wasteful and would communicate a sense of disinterest in preserving the Town's rural history. She stated that the net cost of preserving the house without a use would be \$440,000 which could be offset by the \$75,000 state grant. Schneider believed that the \$305,000 county grant would be withdrawn because of the project's departure from the intended purpose of the grant which was to fund projects that would serve the broader county. In contrast, Schneider stated that the net cost of preserving the house with a use and including costs for septic, furnishings, and an onsite parking lot, which is part of a separate bid, would be \$339,000 with no additional loss of money already invested.

Mayor Kinneman reflected on his disfavor of the project from its onset. He expressed his support for preserving the building's structure first and following up with fundraising efforts to support future use of the building. He was clear in stating that he was not in favor of demolishing the structure. However, Kinneman admitted that despite his disfavor of the project, he thought it financially prudent to continue the project given its progress.

Councilman Greeson stated his belief that demolition of the building had not been considered.

Mayor Pro Tem Stone stated that the status of the county grant would be handled between the Town's and County's attorneys and that assuming it would be withdrawn if the project were halted was unfounded. Stone stated that neither past nor present Council members had committed to a maximum spending level on the project. He stressed that the project was no longer aimed at preservation or restoration but was instead a construction project.



Councilwoman Schneider stressed that the double roof line, the double chimney, and the 1930s era Craftsman style porch would all be preserved in the project. She focused on the house being preserved as a part of the Town's historic rural landscape and on its potential to be renovated and reused to preserve its significance.

Councilman Greeson asked why asphalt was chosen for the roof material over the standard tin roof of the 1930s era. Mayor Kinneman explained that former councilman Spencer Sullivan had investigated the cost of a metal roof and concluded that it would be cost prohibitive. Greeson asked for this cost and Planning & Zoning Director Sean Taylor noted that the cost of the roof would be quadrupled, or \$30,000 to \$40,000 more than the quoted cost for an asphalt roof. Councilwoman Schneider added that their study revealed that the roof would have authentically been a flat, tin roof and Taylor stated that the roof would have been a 5-V crimp metal roof and that the present cost for material alone was prohibitive.

Mayor Pro Tem Stone stated his intention to gather all costs incurred on the construction of the house to calculate the actual cost of the project at its completion. He expressed his firm belief that the house would cost four times more than the most luxurious home in Oak Ridge, that cost being \$420 per square foot. He committed himself to questioning the legitimacy of the project and spotlighting it as not a fiscally conservative venture during its development.

## 12. NEW BUSINESS

### A. Consideration / Approval of Oak Ridge Youth Association Usage Agreement

Town Manager Bruce presented the updated ORYA Usage Agreement and explained that it represented the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board's recommendation for approval. He noted three updates to the agreement:

- an inclusion of Heritage Farm Park with two multipurpose fields for ORYA use,
- a simplification of promotional and marketing material requirements, and
- a restructured nonresident user fee calculation.

*Mayor Pro Tem Stone made a motion to accept the 2024 ORYA Usage Agreement with the condition to remove line item 4b which outlined the nonresident user fee from the agreement. Councilman Greeson seconded the motion.*

Mayor Pro Tem Stone pointed out that ORYA provided recreational opportunities for youth and supported local businesses. He argued that \$12,000 was not a relevant figure to impact the Town's finances.

Councilman Greeson agreed with Stone's viewpoint. He pointed out that the nonresident fee was suggested to be deducted from the stipend afforded to ORYA by the Town which had not been increased.

Councilman Harton noted that without documentation such as player rosters to substantiate the nonresident user fee calculation, he had concerns with understanding the \$12,000 rate as well as the proposed notion of abandoning the

\$12,000 rate altogether. He pointed out that the Town was offering two additional fields for ORYA.

Councilwoman Schneider explained that charging a nonresident fee for facility usage was a long-standing practice for many towns. She pointed out that until the present, this rate had not been changed since its inception over 15 years ago when it was set at \$8.00 per player. Schneider remarked that outside of grants, Heritage Farm Park was not yet paid for and that it would be a financial burden to place solely on residents. She stressed that as Council members, their primary allegiance was to their residents and that \$12,000 was significant revenue. She noted that the Town had not received the last two year's financial statements from ORYA per the requirement of the agreement and that the information along with data regarding nonresident usage was important for future planning efforts for the parks. She suggested that approval of the Usage Agreement not be given until financial statements were provided for review.

Mayor Kinneman emphasized that there would not be any financial impact on ORYA if a nonresident fee was collected as the fee would be passed through ORYA to the Town. Kinneman stressed that he was open to alternative methods to calculate the rate, but that he was not in favor of removing the nonresident fee from the Usage Agreement.

Councilman Greeson asked if a delay in vote were appropriate. Greeson inquired into the validity of the enrollment count obtained for the nonresident players in 2023 and pressed if it were clear that these players used the Town Park fields as opposed to the fields at Oak Ridge Elementary School. Councilwoman Schneider affirmed the enrollment count stating that it was the figure given to the Parks & Recreation Director along with an enrollment count of 1,100 nonresident players in 2021 and 900 nonresident players in 2022 who used the Town Park fields. She pointed out that the current Usage Agreement did not require ORYA to track such numbers. Mayor Kinneman said that it would be appropriate to ask ORYA to provide headcount numbers annually of their resident and nonresident players without making the tracking of such figures a requirement in the Agreement. Councilman Harton countered that if the requirement were not made in the agreement, then the data would not be obligated. He stressed the importance of adding back the verbiage stricken off page 9 of the agreement which outlined the requirement to annually provide supporting documentation on resident and nonresident player counts.

A short discussion ensued regarding the proper procedure of managing the motion on the floor and amending the motion with a substitute motion.

*Councilwoman Schneider amended the motion to approve the ORYA Usage Agreement with the condition of adding the stricken text on page 9 of the Agreement requiring supporting documentation to account for numbers of resident and nonresident players using Town Park fields and a provision to provide a \$12.00 per nonresident player surcharge or remit the full \$12,000 nonresident surcharge with supporting documentation of roster players. She added that payment for either option could be drawn from the credit for field usage seasonally afforded to ORYA by the Town.*

Town Manager Bruce interjected to state that the conditions of the current Usage Agreement had expired on December 31, 2023, and that there would be some urgency to adopt a Usage Agreement for application in the current year.

*Councilman Harton seconded the amended motion.*

*After additional discussion, the motion was passed with a 3-2 vote, with Mayor Pro Tem Stone and Councilman Greenson voting against the motion.*

Mayor Kinneman called for a 5-minute break at 9:11 p.m.

The meeting was resumed at 9:14 p.m.

**B. Presentation of Interlocal Agreement with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Utilities**

Town Manager Bruce presented details of the Interlocal Agreement with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Utilities as information prior to requesting approval for the agreement, which would be scheduled in the following month's Council meeting. He noted that multiple drafts of the agreement had been reviewed by the Water Advisory Committee over the past six months. He explained that the agreement authorized the sale of up to 350,000 gallons of water per day for the Town's distribution and use. He said that the Town would be subject to the Utility Commission's wholesale rate of \$517 per month and \$3.60 per 1,000 gallons of water used. He pointed out that meters would be installed by the commission at NC 150 at the Guilford/Forsyth County line and that the Town would access the water through a 12-inch water main to deliver to its customers along NC 150 and to the elevated water tank located behind Town Hall. Bruce mentioned the one-time payment of a water reserve capacity fee of \$217,000 to reserve a capacity of water for the Town for a period of 30 years, currently being negotiated to be payable upon completion of the Town's water delivery system.

**C. Consideration/Approval of Resolution R-2024-01 to Hold Public Hearing to Close a Public Trail Easement.**

Mayor Kinneman stated that the resolution was a formality in order to add a developer's request to release an easement previously dedicated onto the Council's agenda for the next month. He noted that the Planning & Zoning Board would hold a public hearing to discuss and make a recommendation to Council, who would then hold a public hearing at its next meeting to vote on the request. He clarified that the resolution would not be an indication of a vote.

*Councilman Harton made a motion to approve Resolution R-2024-01 and Mayor Pro Tem Stone seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).*

**13. MONTHLY FINANCIAL UPDATE**

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

*Councilwoman Schneider made a motion to approve the financial report as presented by the Finance Officer, and Councilman Harton seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).*

Mayor Kinneman commented that he had attended the work session with the County Commissioners and noted the possibility of an increase in the tax collection rate from .62 to .75.

#### **14. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **A. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**

Co-Chair John Browning reported on the Board's last meeting on December 14, 2023. The Board approved the scope of work for a security system at Oak Ridge Town Park and Heritage Farm Park that would be funded by a Guilford County grant. He reported that the system would include a security camera at each of the four park entrances/exits and would be expandable. He mentioned that planning for the 2024 Music in the Park series was already underway with four of six bands already booked to perform, and groundwork being laid for sponsorships.

##### **B. Finance Committee**

Will begin meeting in March

##### **C. Water Advisory Committee**

Chair Spencer Sullivan reported that the committee met on December 20, 2023, to review the Interlocal Agreement and to elect the chair and co-chair. He noted that the plans for the elevated water tank were complete and that the water engineering plans were 30 percent complete. He stated that an application for the water tank design was being submitted to the State for approval prior to bidding the project out. Sullivan explained that a booster station would be required to promote water flow along NC 150 and that Bruce would be reaching out to property owners to ascertain viability for the station's location.

##### **D. Historic Preservation Commission**

Barbara Engel reported that the commission met on December 13, 2023, and approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for a single-family home being constructed on Williard Road. She noted that proofing of the Oak Ridge Historic Book was ongoing.

##### **E. Planning & Zoning**

No additional information

**F. Mountains-to-Sea Trail Committee**

No report

**G. Conservation Easement Committee**

No meeting

**H. Special Events Committee**

Chair Patti Dmuchowski reported over \$250,000 had been raised for the Veterans Honor Green and acknowledged Councilman Harton's donation of his salary as Councilman to the fund. She stated that storage area had been allocated to the committee for Light Up the Night and other event materials. She noted that invitations to the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner had been e-mailed and that the schedule of special events for 2024 had been confirmed.

**I. Tree Committee**

No meeting

**15. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION REPORTS**

**A. Oak Ridge Elementary School**

No report

**B. Oak Ridge Youth Association**

Randy Collins voiced his discontent with the return of Item #9 of the ORYA User Agreement regarding nonresident fees and roster documentation. He noted the extreme difficulty for coaches to maintain rosters. He asked to reflect on how many coaches were nonresidents who volunteer to coach Oak Ridge residents.

**C. Oak Ridge Military Academy**

No report

**16. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- Bill Goebel, 1402 Westridge Road in Greensboro, announced that he is running unaffiliated for a seat on the Guilford County School Board. To qualify, he is required to collect 2,132 signatures in support of his run by March 5.
- George McClellan, 2806 Oak Ridge Road, expressed his support of the continuation of the Farmhouse Community Center and of the ORYA User Agreement as amended.

- Randy Collins, 4514 Peeples Road, reflected on his 30 years as a volunteer coach for youth sports and elaborated on the level of personal commitment often experienced as a volunteer coach. He lamented what he deemed as a lack of negotiation between the Town and ORYA in the ORYA Agreement.
- Frank Carroll, 1389 Forsyth Road in Kernersville, pointed out that the park security was being funded by a grant from Guilford County and juxtaposed this situation with a resident from McLeansville using the park's facilities. He stressed the importance of securing data from rosters obtained from ORYA.
- Phyllis Anders, 1837 Oak Ridge Road, spoke on the lack of appreciation for the facilities offered to ORYA to use and stressed the need for reciprocity.

**17. COUNCIL COMMENTS**

**18. ADJOURNMENT**

*Councilwoman Schneider moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:53 p.m., and Councilman Greeson seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).*

Respectfully Submitted:

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Sandra B. Smith, CMC, NCCMC  
Asst. Town Manager/ Town Clerk

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Jim Kinneman  
Mayor