



**OAK RIDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 1, 2021 – 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.

Ken Gordon offered the invocation.

B. Pledge of Allegiance.

2. MAYOR'S STATEMENT CONCERNING THE EMERGENCY

Mayor Schneider asked that members of the public who were unvaccinated wear their masks during the meeting. She said the public had been invited to join either in person or by viewing the livestream, and instructions had been widely publicized. Schneider said agendas were available in the meeting room, and agendas and meeting materials had been posted on the Town website. She said the Town is meeting all statutory requirements while complying with the Governor's Emergency Order. Mayor Schneider asked Council members to speak up at any time if they could not hear what was being said so that adjustments could be made as soon as possible.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to approve the amended agenda after removing item 9.A. Discussion/approval of contract with Envirolink and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Councilman George McClellan moved that the June 3, 2021, regular meeting minutes be approved, and Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

5. RESOLUTIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

6. REPORT FROM GUILFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

None

7. REPORT FROM OAK RIDGE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Captain Cole Wyatt reported that the department had received 58 calls in June. Of those, he said 27 were medical calls, two motor vehicle collisions, two building fires and one outside fire. Wyatt said paid and volunteer department members received 1,040 hours of training in the previous month.

Captain Wyatt said that he and Chief Gibson had recently traveled to South Carolina to look at a training facility. He said that a similar training tower would be built behind that fire station on Linville Road. Wyatt said that he anticipated that the tower would be complete by early next year.

Captain Wyatt announced that the department had recently been certified in North Carolina as a medium rescue provider.

The fire safety tip for the month was concerning fireworks. Captain Wyatt encouraged residents to let the professionals do fireworks. He said that if residents set off fireworks at home that he encouraged them to have fire suppression in place and to keep them away from children and animals.

8. PUBLIC HEARING

Text Amendment. Mayor Schneider said that the technical amendments to the existing Development Ordinance are mandated by the North Carolina Legislature to bring all development jurisdictions into compliance with new NCGS 160D. She said that the current zoning of property in Oak Ridge would not be changed by the proposed amendments.

Town Planner Sean Taylor said that there were no substantive changes; however, ordinances were now in line with other counties and municipalities within the state. He said that the Planning & Zoning Board had voted unanimously to approve the changes.

Mayor Schneider opened the public hearing.

Proponents:

None

Opponents:

None

Mayor Schneider closed the public hearing.

George McClellan made a motion to approve the technical amendments to the existing Development Ordinance mandated by the North Carolina Legislature to bring all development jurisdictions into compliance with new North Carolina General Statute 160D, and Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded the motion.

Council discussion:

Kinneman asked if something is approved and is inconsistent with the Land Use Plan, does it become a part of the Land Use Plan.

Councilwoman Pittman said that the verbiage that she found was regarding the future land use map. Pittman said that if the zoning map amendment was adopted and the action was deemed inconsistent with the adopted plan that the zoning amendment shall have the effect of amending any future land use map within the approved plan. She said that she wanted to make sure that she understood this language and asked if we inconsistently allow someone outside the commercial core we change the map but not the entire area.

Town Attorney Michael Thomas said that that was the legislature said.

Mayor Schneider thanked Planning Director Sean Taylor and Town Attorney Michael Thomas for preparing the amendments, along with Piedmont Regional Council for their technical support.

The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

9. NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Discussion/approval of contract with Envirolink.** This agenda item was removed from the agenda.
- B. **Discussion/approval of contract with Carolina Mulching Co. for tree work at Union Cemetery.** Town Manager Bill Bruce told Council that every year we lose several trees in the Union Cemetery due to the ice and weather. He said that so far none of the downed trees had disturbed any gravesites. Bruce said that the Town was taking proactive measures and cleaning out 32 pine trees. He said that it would be a very difficult job to remove the trees and not disturb the gravesites. Bruce said that Carolina Mulching had worked with the Town for six years and would be using a crane to remove the trees to minimize possible damage to the cemetery grounds. He said that \$30,000 had been budgeted and that the proposal was for \$35,000.

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman made a motion to approve the contract with Carolina Mulching fir tree work at Union Cemetery for \$35,000, and Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded the motion.

Council discussion:

McClellan asked if grass would be planted once the trees were removed, and Bruce replied that that decision would be up to Parks & Recreation Director Terry Lannon.

Councilwoman Pittman said that this work was very necessary. She said that she generally did not like to cut down trees but that she had recently visited the cemetery with Lannon and definitely agreed that the trees needed to come out carefully and safely to protect the integrity of the cemetery.

Mayor Schneider said that she was glad that the Town would be preserving an historic site.

The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

C. Discussion/approval of Resolution R-2021-06 to establish a Filing Fee for Municipal Elections.

Mayor Schneider said that the Resolution recommends leaving the filing fee unchanged at \$5.00. She said that this fee would be paid by residents who file to run for two council seats in the Nov. 2 election.

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to approve Resolution R-2021-06 to establish a filing fee for municipal elections at \$5.00 and Councilman George McClellan seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

10. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Consideration/approval of ORYA lease for portion of maintenance building. Bruce asked Council members to consider approving the facility lease agreement for ORYA for a portion of the Town Park's maintenance building. He said that the lease renews a 10-year-agreement that had expired. The new agreement allows ORYA to store equipment and supplies for its youth recreation programs in the building. ORYA will pay rent of \$1 in each of the three years, starting in July. Bruce said that the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board had unanimously approved the lease, and that the ORYA Board was ready to sign the lease.

Councilman George McClellan made a motion to approve the ORYA lease agreement, and Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Michelle Bardsley, 3 Wildrose Court in Greensboro, said that she was excited about the Veterans Honor Green and the new park. She announced the Guilford County Teenage Republicans were sponsoring a Back the Blue program this summer and said that there were several ways to contribute.

12. MONTHLY FINACIAL UPDATE

Finance Officer Sam Anders said that the Town closed out the fiscal year yesterday at midnight. Anders said that he anticipated that Town auditors would begin work during the week of July 12, 2021, with final field work being in late August through early September.

Councilman George McClellan made a motion to approve the financial report as submitted by the Finance Officer, and Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

13. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Mountains-to-Sea Trail.

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

B. Conservation Easement Committee.

No meeting

C. Special Events Committee.

Patti Dmuchowski said that the committee was finalizing fundraising documents for Veterans Honor Green. She said that plans for this year's Light up the Night were being made.

D. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

Co-Chair John Browning reported that the board had met in person and via Zoom on June 17 and had voted to approve the ORYA building lease agreement. He said that the next Music in the Park event would be held on July 10, featuring The Tyler Millard Band and Barefoot Modern.

E. Finance Committee.

No meeting

F. Water Advisory Board.

No meeting

G. Historic Preservation Commission.

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

H. Planning & Zoning Board

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

Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman asked if traffic was discussed during the consideration of the Starbucks site plan, and Town Planner Sean Taylor responded that it is a use by right and had already been reviewed within the zoning itself.

Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman said that he understood that the Board could not deny the site plan based on potential traffic issues but wondered if traffic was discussed, and Taylor responded that the applicant is well aware of the future work on HWY 68.

Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman asked if there would be any efforts to minimize the traffic issues as best as they can, and Taylor replied that this issue was up to the Department of Transportation.

Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman said that he felt like we missed an opportunity not to push the applicant a little on the traffic issue, and Taylor replied that the applicant is not creating any new entrances onto HYW 68 but is making adjustments to limit traffic in and out of the new restaurant. He said that there will be one access from Quiet Place and discussed stop signs being used on the property with the applicant.

Councilman McClellan said that traffic is not relevant on a site plan review.

Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman said that he understood that the site plan review had nothing to do with traffic but felt like we missed an opportunity to address future traffic issues.

Mayor Schneider said that she understood what Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman was saying. She said that she felt the same way regarding the building's architecture.

14. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION REPORTS

A. Oak Ridge Elementary School.

Smith read a report from Penny Loschin, school principal, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes.

B. Oak Ridge Youth Association.

No report

C. Oak Ridge Military Academy

No report

15. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

16. COUNCIL COMMENTS

17. CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Schneider announced that Council would go into closed session to establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5) and to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman made a motion to go into closed session to consider negotiating a contract and to discuss a personnel matter at 8:03 p.m., and Councilman George McClellan seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman made a motion to return to open session at 8:31 p.m., and Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman made a motion to retain Tom Roberts, a consultant, to assist the Town with water endeavors with payment not to exceed \$4,000, and Councilman George McClellan seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to compensate Town Manager Bill Bruce's salary with a 6% increase, and Councilman George McClellan seconded the motion.

Council members shared their appreciation with Bruce regarding his excellent job performance over the past year.

The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

18. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m. and Councilman George McClellan seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

