



OAK RIDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 2, 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
Ashley Royal, Deputy 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.

Scoutmaster Mike Matzinger offered the invocation.

B. Pledge of Allegiance.

2. MAYOR'S STATEMENT CONCERNING THE EMERGENCY

Mayor Schneider asked members of the public to wear their masks during the entire meeting in accordance with the Guilford County mask mandate. She said the public had been invited to join either in person or by viewing the livestream, and instructions had been widely publicized. She said the Town is meeting all statutory requirements while complying with the Governor's Emergency Order.

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 July 1, 2021, closed session, the July 22, 2021 special meeting, the July 22, 2021 closed session and the August 5, 2021 regular meeting be approved, and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

5. RESOLUTIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

6. REPORT FROM GUILFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

No report.

7. REPORT FROM OAK RIDGE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Lt. Caleb Eller reported there had been 64 calls during the month of August and zero fires. Eller said personnel had received 632 hours of training. He said that the safety tip was for residents to wash their hands and to wear their masks.

8. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

A. Consideration/approval of appointment of Aleksandra Gill to Conservation Easement Committee and Denise Sacks as an alternate to Historic Preservation Commission.

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to approve the appointment of Aleksandra Gill to the Conservation Easement Committee and Denise Sacks as an alternate to the Historic Preservation Commission, and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

B. Other business.

- Bruce asked Council to refer to Resolution R-2021-07 in their packets that grants the Town Attorney and Town Manager authority to institute condemnation proceedings. Bruce said that over the past several years the Town had undertaken several sidewalk projects and may undertake additional sidewalk projects as well as other utility infrastructure projects in the future. He said that when easements or rights of ways are required for projects it has been the Town's policy to offer ample opportunity to negotiate good faith offers and reasonable mitigations to offset property impacts. Bruce said that condemnation proceedings would only take place as a last resort option when all other efforts had been unsuccessful.

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to approve Resolution R-2021-07 Granting the Town Manager and Town Attorney Authority to Institute Condemnation Proceedings, and Councilman Doug Nodine seconded.

Council discussion:

Councilman McClellan asked if this issue was pertaining to the properties on Pepper Road, and Bruce responded that this Resolution was broad in that it would give general authority but that the Town did currently have a

sidewalk/side path project in which the Town was still negotiating with property owners to receive the necessary voluntary easements.

Councilman McClellan asked how long the Town had been in negotiations with residents pertaining to the current project, and Bruce responded approximately 12 months. McClellan asked if residents were paid a fair market value price even when their property went through condemnation, and Bruce responded yes.

Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman said that since this was a broad policy, he wanted to ensure that Council would be made aware of any condemnation processes and Bruce said that as a matter of policy and practice that he would consult with Council before the Town Attorney would take any steps toward condemnation.

Mayor Schneider reiterated that condemnation proceedings would always be a last resort option. She asked if the majority of the properties in the current project were in the public right of way, and Bruce replied yes. Mayor Schneider complimented Bruce on the good communication that he has had with all of the residents involved with the Pepper Road/Haw River Road project.

The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

- Bruce asked Courtenay Benbow Harton, Historic Preservation Commission member, to present two requests to Council. Harton, 5901 Pepper Road, Oak Ridge, requested approval to award an out of cycle Historic Heritage Grant to Ralph & Joyce Biggs in order for them to repair a central beam and floor joists at their property located at 2204 Oak Ridge Road. She said that the total repair cost would be \$17,356.50 minus the matching grant award of \$2,000. Secondly, Harton requested that Council approve HPC's use of \$2,000 from the Historic Heritage Grant restricted fund to pay for the Biggs' out of cycle grant.

Councilman George McClellan made a motion to approve the Historic Preservation Commission's request to approve an out of cycle Historic Heritage Grant and the approval to use \$2,000 out of restricted funds to fund the grant, and Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

10. MONTHLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

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

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman made a motion to accept the financial report as presented, and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Special Events Committee.

Patti Dmuchowski said that Veterans Honor Green fundraising efforts were going very well and that \$16,925 had been collected that included a \$5,000 donation from Rio Grande Kitchen & Cantina-Oak Ridge. Dmuchowski said the committee would be hosting a Veterans Day Ceremony at the Park on November 11, 2021. She said that the committee would be working the concession trailer at Ridgefest where all profits would be contributed to the Veterans site fund. Dmuchowski said that a ceremony would be held on September 11, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. at the amphitheater to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the event. She said that committee would also host a homemade cookie contest at Heritage Day on September 25, 2021.

B. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

Co-Chair John Browning reported the P&R Advisory Board held a special meeting on August 9, 2021, to discuss the construction and design elements for Heritage Farm Park. He said that the Board agreed by consensus to maintain the same look and feel at Heritage Farm Park that was currently at the existing Oak Ridge Town Park. He said that the Board held its regular meeting on August 19, 2021 where the Board approved the Special Events Committee's September 11th ceremony and a Scout led July 4, 2022, parade to be held at the Park.

C. Finance Committee.

No meeting

D. Water Advisory Board.

No meeting

E. Historic Preservation Commission.

Barbara Engel reported that the HPC met for its regular meeting on August 18, 2021 where a COA for the Oak Ridge Plantation HOA was approved for installation of landscaping along Oak Ridge Drive near Tarleton Drive. She said that work was continuing on the historic book project with photographer Bill Edwards. Engel said that the HPC would be participating in Heritage Day.

F. Planning & Zoning Board

Deputy Clerk Ashley Royal read the report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes.

G. Mountains-to-Sea Trail.

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

H. Conservation Easement Committee

No meeting

15. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION REPORTS

A. Oak Ridge Elementary School.

Royal read a report submitted by 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 School.

No report

16. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Mike Stone, 8112 Hunting Cog Road, Oak Ridge, thanked the Special Events Committee for planning the upcoming September 11th ceremony.

17. COUNCIL COMMENTS

18. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 p.m., and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

