



**OAK RIDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 7, 2022 - 7:00 P.M.
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Members Present

Ann Schneider, Mayor
Jim Kinneman, Mayor Pro Tem
George McClellan
Martha Pittman
Spencer Sullivan

Staff Present

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

A. Invocation/Moment of Silence.

Patti Dmuchowski offered the invocation.

B. Pledge of Allegiance.

2. 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).

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Councilman George McClellan moved that the minutes of the June 2, 2022, regular meeting be approved, and Councilman Spencer Sullivan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

4. RESOLUTIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

On behalf of the Canine Capers Committee, Annette Joyce presented checks to five animal rescue groups.

5. REPORT FROM GUILFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Detective Sgt. R.D. Seals reported that there were 192 calls for the month of June that resulted in 15 formal reports. He said that there continued to be an increase in

thefts from vehicles in area parks. He reminded residents not to leave valuables in sight in their vehicles. Seals said that security cameras would be beneficial to have in the park especially if they could capture car license plate numbers.

6. REPORT FROM OAK RIDGE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Firefighter Chris Golds reported that there were 51 calls in June, including 48 medical-related calls. Golds said that personnel had received 417 hours of training during the month of June. He reminded residents to stay hydrated when outside in the hot weather.

7. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

A. Consideration/Approval to move \$20,000 to restricted fund for Conservation Easements/CORE Grants.

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to move \$20,000 to the restricted fund for Conservation Easements/CORE Grants, and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

B. Consideration/Approval of moving funds raised by Special Events Committee to the Veterans Honor Green Restricted Fund.

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to move funds raised by the Special Events Committee to the Veterans Honor Green Restricted Fund. Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

C. Consideration/Approval of moving funds from the Town's Veterans Honor Green Donations matching fund (Acct. 3370) to the Veterans Honor Green Restricted Fund.

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to move funds from the Town's Veterans Honor Green matching Donations matching fund (Acct. 3370) to the Veterans Honor Green Restricted Fund and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

D. Consideration/Approval to un-restrict \$2,900.00 in Historic Heritage Grant Fund and move to General Fund.

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to un-restrict \$2,900.00 in the Historic Heritage Grant Fund and move it to the General Fund and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

E. Consideration/Approval of acceptance of deed of conservation easement on Bandera Farms property.

Councilman George McClellan made a motion to accept the deed of conservation easement on the Bandera Farms property and Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

F. Consideration/Reappointment of John Browning and Mike Kimel to Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.

Councilman Spencer Sullivan made a motion to reappoint John Browning and Mike Kimel to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

G. Consideration/Approval of unsealing closed session minutes of July 1, 2021 and July 21, 2021.

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman made a motion to unseal closed session minutes of July 1, 2021 and July 21, 2021, and Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

H. Update on Code Enforcement at property located at 8364 West Harrell Road and 8346 West Harrell Road.

Town Attorney Michael Thomas updated Council on legal efforts requiring property owner, Ricky Wayne Jones, to bring his property at 8346 and 8364 West Harrell Road into compliance with town ordinances. He said that in October of 2021, Council authorized him to start legal proceedings against Jones for storing unlicensed vehicles on his two parcels totaling nearly 30 acres. Thomas said that penalties began accumulating in August of 2021 and were now over \$300,000. He said that civil penalties were intended to get people's attention and to get into compliance. Thomas said that if Jones were required to pay the civil penalties that 90% would go to the Guilford County Board of Education, with the Town keeping 10% to cover legal and administrative costs.

Council discussion:

Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman said that Council was trying to make it very clear that imposing civil penalties was not a way for the Town to generate revenue.

Mayor Schneider said this case was difficult because of the amount of time that staff had been involved. She said that the real cost to the town simply because we want to uphold our ordinances is huge.

I. Update on Water for Fire Protection Study.

Town Manager Bill Bruce reviewed a final report by consultant The Wooten Co. that proposed ways for Oak Ridge to run water lines to aid firefighters and eventually supply homeowners with drinking water. Bruce said that one option was to rely upon ground water to fill above-ground tanks in various locations around town. The study indicated that lines from the tanks would connect to fire hydrants. The second option would be to bring water to Oak Ridge from Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Utilities. The study indicated that a line would run along N.C. 150 from Kernersville to an elevated water tank behind the Oak Ridge Fire Department on Linville Road. Water then would be distributed along primary corridors in town. Bruce said that costs for erecting a 250,000-gallon tank behind the fire station would approach \$2.8 million, while extending a line to the elevated tank from Kernersville would cost \$5.2 million. Additionally, laying water lines to strategic locations around Oak Ridge would cost \$10.8 million according to the report. He said installing above-ground tanks at 11 locations around town would total \$500,000 - \$600,000 per tank. Bruce noted that that the town had a \$1.1 million water appropriation from the state and a request into Guilford County for \$2.765 million of ARP funding to spend on water

projects. He said that the Water Advisory Committee would be discussing this report at their July meeting with recommendations to Council to follow.

Council discussion:

Councilman McClellan asked if would cost \$5 million to bring water line down NC 150 to connect to the storage tank, and Bruce replied yes.

Councilman McClellan asked how large the lots would need to be for the storage tanks, and Bruce replied that they would need to be around a quarter of an acre to hold a 30,000-gallon storage tank.

Councilman McClellan said that the costs were high and encouraged that the project be done in phases.

Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman said that he was enthusiastic about the water system. He said that he was concerned that if the town received the money for the system that the town may rush too quickly to bring something in that would get minimal use. He said that even if the water was used for fire suppression that the water may not get used and that he was concerned about getting burdened with cost.

Councilwoman Pittman said that there were options for the town to put together a package that would serve the fire department that also might be beneficial for some potable water. She said that she was waiting with great anticipation for a final recommendation from the Water Advisory Committee and to listening to input from the Oak Ridge Fire Department.

Councilman Sullivan said that the Water Advisory Committee had taken a strategic approach and would be considering options that were available. He said that he felt confident that whatever the recommendation was that it would be strategic in terms of what would be best for the town and its long-term needs.

Mayor Schneider said that meeting the goals of the Oak Ridge Fire Department and meeting the long-term goals of the very small water department was a strategic approach. She said that after receiving final recommendations that the town would need to consider what it can afford.

J. Update on Heritage Farm Park/PARTF grant.

Bruce reported to Council that after earlier drilling for a sufficient source of water proved unsuccessful that a contractor had located water at Heritage Farm Park that would probably be adequate to supply bathrooms and irrigation for athletic fields. He said that a 24-hour water drawdown test would determine whether the groundwater at the park site would produce a sustainable flow and did not negatively impact neighboring wells. Bruce said that if the town was cleared to use the well that staff would proceed to finalize park construction drawings.

K. Any other business.

- Bruce asked Council to declare as surplus a Gravely 472 zero-turn mower and a Toro Sand Pro 3040 field groomer. He said that these two pieces of

equipment were scheduled to be replaced by the Parks & Recreation Department.

Councilman Spencer Sullivan made a motion to surplus a Gravely 472 zero-turn mower and a Toro Sand Pro 3040 field groomer, and Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

- Town Clerk Sandra Smith unveiled the town's upgraded website saying that the aim of the new design was to make information more logical and easier to find. She urged users to contact town staff to report any glitches and to provide feedback about the new website.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion/Approval of Alcohol Policy at Music in the Park events.

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board's Co-chair John Browning presented the subcommittee's recommendations for an alcohol policy for four 2023 Music in the Park dates, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes.

Councilman McClellan asked if the town would be paying for the off-duty deputy, and Town Manager Bill Bruce replied that yes, but said that vendors would be paying fees that would offset the cost.

Councilman Sullivan asked if alcohol vendors would have special cups that would be identifiable so off-duty deputies could enforce keeping alcohol in the restricted area, and Town Clerk Sandra Smith replied yes.

Councilman McClellan said that he thought that alcohol consumption should be restricted to the amphitheater area and that the space should be roped off.

Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman made a motion to approve the Alcohol Policy for four 2023 Music in the Park events to include the addition of changing paragraph three of the policy presented to include the ability to purchase and consume an alcoholic beverage and that alcoholic beverages be dispensed in a uniquely identifiable cup, and Councilman George McClellan seconded.

Council discussion:

Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman said that he had concerns about the Town not being able to hire Guilford County off-duty deputies to work events and wondered if the town could hire non-Guilford County off-duty law enforcement officers, and Mayor Schneider replied that the Town had never not been able to hire an off-duty deputy when needed, but that it might require the Town to compensate them with a higher tier of pay.

Councilwomen Pittman thanked the subcommittee for their work, and said she thought that having guidelines in place would ensure that the events would continue to be family oriented.

Council's vote on the motion was unanimous (5-0).

B. Consideration/Approval of contract with Audio & Light for new audio-visual system.

Bruce told Council that Audio & Lights had submitted a \$17,000 quote to update the current sound system in the council chambers. He said that the quote included the replacement of existing technical equipment that was installed within the council chamber's equipment room and for the installation of four small speakers on the council dais. Bruce said that existing microphones would be reused and that two new microphones for staff would be installed. He said that once the tax was returned, the final cost of the project would be \$16,809.

Councilman George McClellan made a motion to approve the quote from Audio & Light for a \$16,809 upgrade of the council chamber sound system, and Councilwoman Martha Pittman seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Andy Michaels, 8216 Hunting Cog Drive, asked whether the town would be legally liable if a Music in the Park concert goer who drank too much was later was involved in a traffic accident. He also said that he was not in favor of the town spending any more than \$200,000 on the Redmon House restoration project.

10. MONTHLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

Finance Officer Sam Anders asked Council for their consideration and approval of the annual audit contract that was included in their packets. He requested that Council approve the draft contract pending all requested changes had been made.

Mayor Ann Schneider made a motion to approve the proposed audit contract pending approval by Town Attorney Michael Thomas, and Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to approve a \$1,948 budget amendment in order to bring the town's 2021-2022 budget into balance as of June 30, 2022, and Councilman Spencer Sullivan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

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 Councilman Spencer Sullivan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Finance Committee

No meeting

B. Water Advisory Board

No meeting

C. Historic Preservation Commission

No meeting

D. Planning & Zoning Board

No meeting

E. Mountains-to-Sea Trail Committee

Councilwoman Pittman said that there was a workday scheduled for Saturday, July 16, 2022, from 9 a.m. to noon. She encouraged anyone interested to sign up via the Oak Ridge MST Facebook event post. She said that members of the committee had recently toured the trail easements at Carriage Cove and Pemberly Estates. Pittman reported that funding had been received to pay for new informational signage at the Linville Road and Goodwill Church Road parking lots, as well as the directional signs along the MST from Bill & Pam Lemmons.

F. Conservation Easement Committee

Chair Stephanie Ferrell reported that the committee had met on June 15, 2022. She said that a targeted mailing would be sent out soon to homeowners of historic structures and to open space landowners to inform them about the CORE Initiative.

G. Special Events Committee

Chair Patti Dmuchowski reported that the engraved brick paver sale was going well. She announced that Light Up the Night would take place on Saturday, December 3, 2022, and that the committee had been working on arranging vendors and food trucks for the event. Dmuchowski said that the committee would have a booth at this year's Heritage Day and that they would soon begin planning for Oak Ridge's 25th anniversary next year.

H. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

Co-chair John Browning reported that the Board met on Thursday, June 16, 2022. He said that extended hours for the temporary pickle ball courts had been approved for the summer. He announced that the next Music in the Park event would be held on Saturday, July 9, 2022, featuring the Ghosts of Liberty from 6-7:30 p.m. and Barefoot Modern from 8-9:30 p.m.

12. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION REPORTS

A. Oak Ridge Youth Association

Randy Collins said that ORYA would like to thank the town for their support for the first half of the year. He said that a self-defense class for high school girls was being offered on Sundays during the month of July. Collins said that ORYA would be launching a new website soon.

B. Oak Ridge Military Academy

No report

C. Oak Ridge Elementary School

No report

13. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Randy Collins, 4514 Peeples Road, said that he was impressed with the town's new website and that viewing it made him proud to a citizen of Oak Ridge.
- Sam Anders, 1829 Oak Ridge Road, announced that he was the managing member of SKA Properties and had closed on three historic properties in Oak Ridge on June 24, 2022. He said that his new office building would be on some of the new property grounds. Anders said that he had purchased 2101 Oak Ridge Road (Moore House), 2103 Oak Ridge Road (old gas station) and 2105 Oak Ridge Road (old grocery store). He said that the purchases would be a major project, but that they had a good location and a storied career in commerce in Oak Ridge.
- John Browning, 8024 Linville Road, announced that the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board had a vacancy for their Teen Advisor position. He said that applications could be found on the town's website and would be accepted through July 13, 2022.

14. COUNCIL COMMENTS

15. CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman made a motion to go into closed session to consider raising the town manager's salary at 8:45 p.m., and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman made a motion to return to open session at 9:05 p.m., and Councilman Spencer Sullivan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

Councilwoman Martha Pittman made a motion to increase Town Manager Bill Bruce's annual salary to \$98,000 in recognition of a job well done, and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

16. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Kinneman moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 p.m., and Councilman George McClellan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (5-0).

Respectfully Submitted:

Sandra B. Smith, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk

Ann K. Schneider
Mayor