



**OAK RIDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 7, 2023 - 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, Asst. Town Mgr./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.**

Dorothy Clement offered the invocation.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance.**

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*Councilwoman Pittman made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2023, regular meeting, and the August 10, 2023, special meeting. Councilman Spencer Sullivan seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

**4. RESOLUTIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**A. Arbor Day Proclamation**

Mayor Schneider proclaimed Saturday, September 30, 2023, as Arbor Day in the Town of Oak Ridge.

**B. Constitution Week Proclamation**

Councilman Sullivan proclaimed the week of September 17- 23, 2023, as Constitution Week.

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

No report.

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

Firefighter James Moretz reported that a total of 83 calls and 21 other responses were made in August. Of these calls, 12 were false alarms, two were vehicle fires, one was a rubbish fire, five were calls for hazardous materials, four were calls for other hazards, 32 were medical responses and one was a structure fire. Moritz stated that a total of 741 hours were spent in training.

**7. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

**A. Consideration/Approval of Finance Officer's Annual Engagement Letter**

Town Manager Bill Bruce presented for Council's approval the annual engagement letter with Samuel K. Anders' CPA firm to continue providing financial services to the Town. He noted that the firm's services have remained the same over its twenty years of engagement with the Town and that its rates remain unchanged from the previous year.

*Councilman McClellan made a motion to approve the engagement letter with Samuel K. Anders' CPA firm. Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

**B. Consideration/Approval of moving \$20,000 to the Conservation Easement restricted fund**

Bruce requested that the unspent \$20,000 budgeted in FY2023 for land and building preservation efforts be redirected from the general fund to the Conservation Easement Restricted fund.

*Councilwoman Pittman made a motion to move \$20,000 from the general fund to the CORE (Conserving Oak Ridge through Easements) Grant Restricted fund. Councilman McClellan seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

**8. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- Mary Elizabeth Beal, 3408 Edgefield Road, Chair of the Historic Preservation Committee of the NC Daughters of the American Revolution, Guilford Battle Chapter, announced a fundraising initiative to restore and repair the Historic

Maple Glade house on the Oak Ridge Military Academy (ORMA) campus. She stated that the fundraiser would occur on September 23, 2023 at the ORMA Bridge to the Ridge Homecoming event and on September 30, 2023 at the Oak Ridge Heritage Day event.

- Chuck Salmon, 8505 Merriman Farm Road, urged Council, the Tree Committee, and the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board to take more proactive steps to preserve existing trees in the Town.
- Maria Adams, 5999 Morganshire Drive in Summerfield, said that she owned a business located in Oak Ridge and stated that she was an appointed parent advocate for public school families in North Carolina. She expressed her concerns over the seating of Bill Goebel on the Guilford County Board of Education for District 3 over Michael Logan, the legally appointed nominee for that seat.
- Mike Stone, 8112 Hunting Cog Road, recounted the origin and progression of the historic Ai Church at the intersection of Alcorn Road and NC Hwy 68. He noted that the building's restoration was one of several projects supported by the non-profit organization Preservation Oak Ridge. He encouraged the public to consider joining the organization with a \$50 per person, or \$100 per family/organization annual membership fee.
- Bill Goebel, 1402 Westridge Road in Greensboro, provided his professional and personal contact information should there be any need to contact him regarding issues concerning schools.

## 9. MONTHLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

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

Anders added that the first payment of less than \$750,000 had been made to Bar Construction for the Heritage Farm Park project, and that a second payment of approximately \$610,000 covering the period of July 26, 2023 through August 25, 2023 was pending.

*Councilman Sullivan made a motion to approve the Financial Report as presented by the Finance Officer. Councilman McClellan seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously (5-0).*

## 10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### A. Mountains-to-Sea Trail Committee

Chair Anne Steele reported that the committee met remotely on August 29, 2023. She noted that a European hornet nest on the Headwaters Trail had been safely eliminated, damage due to a storm to the bridge on the trail had been repaired, progress was being made in the Carriage Cove area, and the birthday of the Friends of the MST would be celebrated with a guided hike on September 21, 2023.

**B. Conservation Easement Committee**

Did not meet in August.

**C. Special Events Committee**

Chair Patti Dmuchowski reported on the Veterans Honor Green, Heritage Day, Light Up the Night, and Charles Benbow House 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary lawn party. She spotlighted the sale of the Town's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary t-shirts and ornaments.

**D. Tree Committee**

Did not meet in August.

**E. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**

Co-Chair John Garrett reported on the progress of the playground at Heritage Farm Park and noted that attendance at the recent Music in the Park and Movie in the Park events were good. He shared information about the upcoming RidgeFest event.

**F. Finance Committee**

Did not meet in August.

**G. Water Advisory Committee**

Chair Jim Harton reported that the committee did not meet in August; however, a progress review meeting was held with Wooten Company. He revealed that designs for the line to the tank from the well and the tank construction were complete while work on the electrical design and the line connecting the tank to the fire department continued. He noted that Wooten submitted the tank's permit to the Town for its signature and revised the landscape plan around the tower. Harton mentioned that the 30% draft of the water line remained under review with Wooten after completing the water line survey. He indicated that a possible site for a booster pump had been identified and recommended for future construction. He reported that the Interlocal Agreement continued to be reviewed by Winston-Salem/Forsyth County and that the 5,000-gallon hydro-storage tank had passed inspection by the North Carolina Department of Labor.

**H. Historic Preservation Commission**

Commission member Courtenay Harton reported that the Commission last met on July 19, 2023 during which time they elected Denise Sacks as Vice Chair to replace retiring member Caroline Ruch. She spoke on the progress of the Oak Ridge Historic Book and on the walking tours of the Historic district which would begin at Oak Ridge Military Academy's Bridge to the Ridge event on September 23, 2023, and were anticipated to occur twice a year annually thereafter.

**I. Planning & Zoning Board**

Did not meet in August.

**11. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION REPORTS**

**A. Oak Ridge Youth Association**

No report

**B. Oak Ridge Military Academy**

No report.

**C. Oak Ridge Elementary School**

No report.

**12. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- Michael Logan, 5202 Rambling Road in Greensboro, stated his role as the Guilford County School Board's appointed representative for District 3 by the Guilford County Republican Party. He listed several items in the NC legislature that would affect public schools starting with the Charter School Omnibus Bill, the Fairness in Women's Sports Act, the installation of the Charter School Review Board, and the Parents' Bill of Rights.
- Barbara Engel, 8524 Rosedale Drive, promoted the Oak Ridge Military Academy's Bridge to the Ridge event on September 23, 2023.
- Chris Meadows, 2903 Roundhill Road in Greensboro, stated his position as the Chair of the Guilford County Republican Party and spoke on the illegal representation of District 3 on the Guilford County School Board currently occupied by Bill Goebel.
- Nancy Stoudemire, 8003 Eastridge Road, urged that attention be focused on supporting the public schools in Guilford County Schools over initiatives to install new charter schools. She called for the elimination of political partisanship from school board representation.
- Mike Stone, 8112 Hunting Cog Road, reiterated support for Bridge to the Ridge and promoted Preservation Oak Ridge's involvement with Summerfield Theater Group's production of Ichabod at the Ai Church on October 13 - 15, 2023.
- Bill Goebel expressed that his intent for serving on the Guilford County School Board was for the kids.

- Maria Adams spoke in support of Michael Logan for election to the Guilford County School Board citing several of his accomplishments during his 26-year tenure as a public-school teacher in Guilford County.
- Chuck Salmon advocated for proper and legal appointment of representatives to the Guilford County School Board.

**13. COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilman Sullivan commented on the number of ongoing projects that are expected to be completed next year within the Town. He encouraged donations of clothing to an upcoming mission trip to Guatemala sponsored by Oak Ridge United Methodist Church.

Councilwoman Pittman elaborated on the various opportunities for the community to engage in and learn about the Town's history and heritage. She stressed the importance of the CORE grant program.

Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman clarified that the decision to remove the mature oak tree at Heritage Farm Park was carefully studied. He promoted the activities of the Lion's Club.

Councilman McClellan took note of the spirit of volunteerism in the Town.

Mayor Schneider offered concern for *Northwest Observer* employee Yvonne Truhon's health issue. She elaborated on the careful considerations made by the Town to preserve and promote the health of existing and future trees.

**14. ADJOURNMENT**

*Councilman McClellan moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m., and Mayor Pro Tem Kinneman 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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Ann K. Schneider  
Mayor

