



**OAK RIDGE TOWN COUNCIL/WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JOINT SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
JUNE 27, 2024 - 2:00 P.M.
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Council Members Present

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

Council Members Absent

Michael Greeson

Staff Present

Bill Bruce, Town Manager
Sandra Smith, Asst. Town Manager/Town Clerk

Water Advisory Committee Absent

Spencer Sullivan, Chair
Brian Hall
Erin English
Francis Disney
Phil McNamara
Todd Hall, Alternate

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jim Kinneman called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Water Advisory Committee Chair Spencer Sullivan was unable to attend the meeting, so Mayor Kinneman suggested removing New Business Item A. from the agenda. Water Advisory Committee members had been alerted prior to the meeting.

Councilwoman Ann Schneider made a motion to approve the amended agenda after removing New Business Item A., and Mayor Pro Tem Mike Stone seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (4-0).

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Current and Future Water Initiatives

Removed from the agenda

B. Consideration/Approval of request to NC Legislature for State Capital and Infrastructure Fund (SCIF) grant

Mayor Kinneman said that since the Park Entrance Master Plan bids had come in over budget, one avenue would be to seek additional funding from the state.

For background, Councilwoman Schneider said that she had contacted Rep. John Faircloth's office because she had heard through the NC League of Municipalities (NCLM) about a possible large state budget surplus. Rep. Faircloth's office said much of the surplus would now be used for teacher salaries, but smaller grants of around \$50,000 to \$60,000 were available. She said she had mentioned several Oak Ridge projects to Faircloth's policy adviser, and he seemed to like the Park Entrance Master Plan and the engineering for the town core water loop. Schneider said although the state budget would not be approved for a few months, she was advised that the town could apply for the grant now. Although the town might need to spend the money from its coffers, it would be reimbursed by the state, even if the project was already complete. While there was a small amount of risk involved should the state grant not be approved, Schneider said she was told the risk was minimal. She added that request should be submitted to Rep. Faircloth's office by July 8.

Councilman Jim Harton said he understood time was of the essence and suggested Council move forward with the request as quickly as possible.

Council discussed the amount of the request, and reached consensus to ask for \$75,000 with the hope that Rep. Faircloth's office would adjust the amount downward if it felt the request was too high. Specific projects, including the ones Schneider had mentioned to Faircloth's office, and how many to include in the request were discussed. Council's consensus was to list two projects in the grant request.

Councilman Stone suggested placing the projects in priority order, with engineering for the town core water loop being first on the list. Stone said the water system would prove to state legislators that Oak Ridge was not merely a "paper town" by providing a service.

Schneider agreed, saying that what Oak Ridge has in its favor is that it has momentum on a municipal water system.

Councilwoman Schneider moved to request \$75,000 from the state through Rep. John Faircloth's office for the following projects in priority order:

- 1) Engineering for town core water loop*
- 2) Park Entrance Master Plan*

Councilman Jim Harton seconded the motion, which passed unanimously (4-0).

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- None

5. ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Jim Harton moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:21 p.m., and Mayor Pro Tem Mike Stone seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (4-0).

Respectfully Submitted:

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

Jim A. Kinneman
Mayor