

Town of Spring Lake
Regular Meeting of the Board of Aldermen
Municipal Building
300 Ruth Street
Spring Lake, NC 28390

February 4, 2015

MINUTES

6:30 p.m.

A majority of the Spring Lake Board of Aldermen was present at the Spring Lake Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors Meeting which constituted a special meeting of the Spring Lake Board of Aldermen.

Board Members Present: Mayor Chris Rey
Mayor Pro Tem James O'Garra
Alderman James Christian
Alderman Richard Higgins
Alderwoman Densie Lucas
Alderwoman Fredricka Sutherland

(A copy of the Public Notice is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes – see attachment one.)

Members of Spring Lake Economic Development Corporation (EDC) discussed the concerns with competing with growth in Western Harnett County. They stated that while driving around in Harnett County on Highway 87 connecting to Manchester Road there is a lot of traffic that is constantly streaming through that area. The EDC members believe that this is great location to start placing business and in doing so will help with growth of Town of Spring Lake. The EDC expressed the need to find ways to improve the environment so we can get faster growth here in Spring Lake. One idea that mentioned was offering incentives to help attract businesses in this area.

The EDC expressed concern about the Board of Alderman helping them promote the community. They stated they need help and that they have come up with different ideas to attract business such as marketing and improving the image of the Town but it has not produced any results. They believe remarketing the Town of Spring Lake is vital and that we need a more aggressive plan to get this moving forward.

The Board of Aldermen stated the Town needs to identify who we are and what type businesses we want to attract to this area.

One of the biggest challenges identified for our community is the fact that we are landlocked. Mayor Rey stated the Board has invested in infrastructure such as improving the streets and the wastewater treatment plant. Also the Police department has worked very hard to improve their image to the public and the community. The Fire Department has also worked really hard to improve safety measures for citizens in the Town. The Town has implemented a Town App that allows citizens go online and get answers to most of their concerns. The Public Works Department is looking at the possibility of installing smart meters to help read customer's water meters more accurately. Mayor Rey stated the EDC should come to the Board with ideas and strategies and let the Board of Aldermen give support. The Board of Aldermen's sole function is to keep the city running. He believes the business minds need to sit around the table and pitch ideas they think are going to bring in growth.

The Board expressed a desire for open dialog with the EDC to discuss ideas like bringing a Movie Theater and other business to table.

The EDC stated the Town (Board Members and Manager) needs to send letters to the County Commissioners for more money for the EDC to make the Town of Spring Lake a better place. They said that as a group we have more impact as far as getting the funds they need build a project. The EDC stated they need a representative from the Town of Spring Lake to voice our concerns and our needs and have someone to speak for the Town.

It was also stated that the Town needs to apply for tourism development money. The best way to get all of the money we ask for is to make sure we follow provisions outlined in grant. We need to have a good marketing presentation that will bring people from outside the region. Mr. Wellons suggested using the State Park and which could be marketed for a one day trip. He stated last year they had over seventy-five thousand visitors at the park.

The Board stated we need a plan. What are we marketing? We need a single focus.

The EDC stated they need help raising money and lobbying for what we need. The EDC stated we need to reestablish ourselves. Money is the issue. Progress is very slow. They want to get away from what the common practice has been and do something different. They need help establishing the infrastructure which has to come first.

Mayor Rey stated the Board is waiting for the EDC to empower the Board with the knowledge to go fight for what we need. He encouraged them to tell the Board where we need to go so they can shake the trees.

Some of the business owners expressed concern that we need better architecture design plans with new or renovated buildings. The example given was the Morning Jump coffee shop on Bragg Blvd being run from a double wide trailer on our main thoroughfare. The building designs on Bragg Blvd are outdated. Main Street needs more lights outside at night. The Town's appearance needs to change.

Concern was expressed that Third Street is developing only to Lake Avenue and not to Spring Avenue. Spring Lake needs natural gas to draw corporate America in.

The Main Street Master Plan will provide more lights. Mr. Wellons expressed concern that the Town allowed Lillian Black Elementary School to designated as an historical school and that has kept 3rd Street from being completed all the way through to Spring Avenue. He stated the Town should have never let that happen. He said the Town needs to take over the streets, not DOT.

There was no action taken by the Spring Lake Board of Aldermen and the meeting ended at 8:40 p.m.


Rhonda D. Webb, MMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk

ATTEST:


Chris V. Rey
Mayor