

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

July 11, 2011

MINUTES

7:00 p.m.

The Spring Lake Board of Aldermen held a regular scheduled meeting in the Grady Howard Conference Room of the Spring Lake Municipal Building with Mayor Ethel T. Clark presiding.

Board Members Present: Mayor Pro Tem James O'Garra
Alderman James Christian
Alderman Richard Higgins
Alderwoman Debora Hudson
Alderwoman Fredricka Sutherland

Others Present:

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| Tommy Burns, Town Manager | John Jackson, Town Attorney |
| Byron Blumenfeld, Water Resource Manager | Allen Coats, Finance Director |
| Paul Hoover, Public Works Director | Troy McDuffie, Police Chief |
| Ken Metcalf, Recreation Director | Steve Rosser, Interim Fire Chief |
| Tina West, HR Director | Rhonda Webb, Town Clerk |

2. Invocation.

Alderwoman Hudson gave the invocation.

3. Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Clark led the meeting in the pledge of allegiance.

4. Additions or Deletions to Agenda

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

5. Approval of Agenda.

The Board approved the agenda.

Action: The Board approved a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion by: Alderwoman Sutherland

Second by: Alderman Higgins

Vote: Unanimous

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

6. Public Forum

No one spoke at the Public Forum.

7. Presentation

a. U-4444 Project Overpass Update

Mr. Gregg Burns presented the Board with a map of the proposed overpass project. The final details have not been ironed out yet. The overpass is being proposed to keep the cross town access for emergency response, improved access to the schools, business and pedestrian access. He requested that the Board consider the proposal and report back to NC DOT.

Alderwoman Sutherland asked if sidewalks are a part of the proposal. Mr. Burns advised that sidewalks and pedestrian traffic is part of this project.

Alderman Christian inquired about other ideas that are being considered. Mr. Burns advised that Prosperity Parkway is still being considered as well as the Odell Road relief valve. There will be some improvements on Third Street, such as turn lanes and minor widening. In response to Alderwoman Hudson's concern about the school, Mr. Burns advised that the changes should provide better access to the school.

Alderman Higgins questioned what immediate provisions are being proposed to alleviate some of the traffic congestion when Fort Bragg closes before this proposal is completed. He also questioned how much green space will be left. Mr. Burns advised that monolithic islands will be in place for emergency vehicles and the proposal allows for some green plantable areas. Alderman Higgins expressed concerns about keeping the project as aesthetically pleasing as possible while maintaining pedestrian safety along the overpass.

The Bragg Boulevard project is proposed to begin in 2012. NC DOT's goal is to include this proposal in that time frame. Alderwoman Sutherland questioned round-a-bouts. It was determined during the planning phase that they are not warranted. Spring Avenue will be a right in and right out only. The general public will not be allowed to cross the intersection. Only emergency vehicles will be allowed to cross from one side of town to the other on Spring Avenue.

Mayor Clark requested that DOT investigate sidewalks on Third Street.

(A copy of the map provided by DOT is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes – see attachment two.)

8. New Business

a. Resolution, Community Appearance Commission Charter

Ms. Webb advised the Board that changing the Community Appearance Commission's Charter will allow faithful members to continue to serve. This Committee does not have many members and allowing indefinite terms will help them keep members who are dedicated to serving the Town in this volunteer capacity.

Action: The Board approved a motion to approve Resolution (2011) 10.

Motion by: Alderman Higgins

Second by: Alderwoman Hudson

Vote: Unanimous

(A copy of the agenda memo, Community Appearance Charter and Resolution (2011) 10 is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes – see attachment three.)

b. Appointments, Community Appearance Commission

Ms. Webb advised that Ms. Dorothy Brown and Ms. Sheila Vannoy submitted applications for re-appointment to serve on the Spring Lake Community Appearance Commission. She requested that the Board appoint Ms. Brown and Ms. Vannoy to the Spring Lake Community Appearance Commission for a three-year term expiring on July 31, 2014.

Action: The Board approved a motion to appoint Dorothy Brown and Sheila Vannoy to the Spring Lake Community Appearance Commission for a three-year term expiring July 31, 2014.

Motion by: Alderwoman Sutherland

Second by: Alderman Christian

Vote: Unanimous

(A copy of the agenda memo and applications from Ms. Brown and Ms. Vannoy is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes – see attachment four.)

c. Budget Ordinance Amendment, Authorized Positions, Fire

Ms. West advised that the Town Manager and Interim Fire Chief requested to add a Firefighter I position to the Fire Department's authorized positions. This will help improve the staffing levels for each shift. Funding will be taken out of the part-time salary line to fund this position and no additional funding will be needed.

Alderman Higgins clarified that this will ensure that we have four firefighters on duty at all times and it was confirmed.

Action: The Board approved a motion to approve Budget Ordinance Amendment (2011) 9.

Motion by: Alderman Higgins

Second by: Mayor Pro Tem O'Garra

Vote: Unanimous

(A copy of the agenda memo, Budget Ordinance Amendment (2011) 9, Authorized Positions is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes – see attachment five.)

d. Policy Amendment, Take Home Vehicles

Ms. West presented a personnel policy amendment to amend the Take Home Vehicle Policy to allow the Fire Chief to pay the monthly fee and take the Town owned vehicle home.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Garra stated, "I don't think it is to the best of our advantage to approve this. We are looking at police that take cars home and bring them in; we are looking at a Fire Department, the Chief and our people who are also quick reactionary people in case we have an emergency. I think we are kind of shooting ourselves in the foot. I don't know of too many other places that have something like this going and I just want you to know that I am going to say no".

Alderman Christian expressed concern about the reality of gas prices stating, "ever since Nixon, every Administration has been talking about fixing problems with the gas prices, fixing prices with oil and our dependency on oil. Every Administration since Nixon and every Administration has done nothing but pay it lip service, in my opinion, and I think we will be in the same position 10 years from

now. I don't know if anybody noticed but the State Legislators raised the price of gas 2 ½ cents per gallon on gasoline, in light of what the costs of gas is now. In some places (gas prices) have gone back up to \$3.50 per gallon and plus, it is just a reality. I understand people's concerns and I understand officer's concerns but what it really breaks down to is \$6.25 per week in gasoline is what they are being charged for the privilege of being able to take the vehicle home. Some people pay more than that for lunch every day. As far as what other departments do, I understand the Sheriff's Department has a policy like this; the Fayetteville Police Department has a policy like this; other departments in the region have a policy like this. We pay quite a bit of money for gas to run these vehicles and it is paid out of tax payer money, which is your money, it is resident's money and that is money I work for, I work every day and I like to know where my taxpayer money is going to, I think it is really important. But, I do appreciate other people's concerns and I respect their view, I really do. But, I think this is just a necessary reality of where we are. They say the recession ended two years ago, it didn't, not in light of what the unemployment rate is now and what the price of gas is now".

Mayor Pro Tem O'Garra stated, "The Sheriff's Department does not pay to take their cars home, along with the Fayetteville Police. They do not pay to take the cars home; take that for what it's worth. I was actually going to sit here and not say any more but you all need to understand where it's coming from. We are paying, I think, the total for the year is going to be around about \$7,000. That is not going to break this Town. We utilized that as one of the things to encourage police to come here. Those vehicles in the community and different locations they help to, how do you say, let the bad guys know that the police are here. These officers now come in here at, I guess say 7 o'clock. I remember back a ways when we didn't have the opportunity to take these cars home. People over in Holly Hills would have to wait about 45 minutes while we did a police change over or a shift change. In the event that these police decide that they are not going to go along with this \$25 that puts us right back where we were and I wouldn't blame them. Thank you".

Alderwoman Sutherland stated, "I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Chief during the time when we discussed this because there are other municipalities that do charge or either they don't take the vehicle home at all because I did get that information and it is factual. But, thank you Chief and you spoke with your police officers and you said they have no problem with that and I think it is a privilege to utilize the vehicles to take them home. We originally started off with \$50, then \$40, then \$25 and you stood up because the Board couldn't come up with just saying ok. We are going to do this and you stood up so, I thank you and your officers for agreeing as well as to say that this is feasible, thank you".

Action: The Board approved a motion to approve Resolution (2011) 11.

Motion by: Alderwoman Sutherland

Second by: Alderman Christian

Vote: 4-1

Yes

No

Alderman Christian

Mayor Pro Tem O'Garra

Alderman Higgins

Alderwoman Hudson

Alderwoman Sutherland

(A copy of the agenda memo and Resolution (2011) 11 is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes – see attachment six.)

e. Policy Amendment, Hours Worked and Overtime

Ms. West advised that this amendment is needed to provide a more equitable way to process pay and leave for police and fire personnel. There are two sections of the personnel policy that need to be amended. They are Article X "Leave of Absence" to increase the accrual rate for annual and sick leave for those employees and Article V "Hours of Work and Overtime" to move fire personnel from a 28 day cycle to a 21 day cycle. Other updates include clearer guidelines outlining how employees can use leave and updates that will maintain the Town's compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Alderman Higgins clarified for the public that the Fair Labor and Standards Act requires employers to handle Police and Fire personnel a little differently than regular 40 hour employees.

Action: The Board approved a motion to approve the policy amendment with Resolution (2011) 12.

Motion by: Alderman Higgins

Second by: Alderman Christian

Vote: Unanimous

(A copy of the agenda memo and Hours Worked and Overtime Policy is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes – see attachment seven.)

10. Board and Staff Comments:

Mayor Clark

- It is good to see so many interested business owners and citizens in the audience.

Alderwoman Sutherland

- Thanked the Board members as well as citizens for their concern about the U-4444 project and for fighting to make the Great Town of Spring Lake the best that it can be.
- Thanked Ms. Brown and Ms. Vannoy for being so dedicated to serving on the Appearance Commission. I still would like to get something, possibly greenery, put in the pots. The landscaping around town is beautiful.
- Thanked the citizens for coming out and for their support.
- I will be absent from the next two Board meetings. I will be in Hawaii on a well needed vacation but I will be available by conference call should the Board need me.

Alderman Higgins

- Thanked everyone for coming out, it is good to see you all.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Garra

- Glad to see everyone out this evening.
- The Fire Chief is working on getting the pot holes fixed in Southwinds Plaza.
- On the U-4444 project, I thank you.
- Dr. Aziz is in the process of trying to set up a free clinic for blood pressure, diabetes and cholesterol checks. She hopes to be fully operational next month.
- I do not feel like we are supporting the Police Department the way we should.

Alderwoman Hudson

- Glad to see everyone tonight and I wish everyone a good evening.

- Kudos to Rhonda for being here tonight after going through the events with her grandmother.

Alderman Christian

- I would like to echo what Ms. Hudson said and my condolences to Ms. West.
- The Recreation Department is having a youth dance on the 22nd from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. for age 14 and under.
- Senior Dance on the 29th with a Motown theme, it should be a lot of fun.
- I appreciate everyone coming out.
- The gas thing is just a reality; it's where we are at right now and it is not going to get any better. I know it is not popular but we sometimes have to make tough decisions. I do appreciate all that the Police Department has done for us as well as everyone else who works for the Town.
- Don't forget to visit the flea market and the farmers market is open on Saturdays.

Mr. Burns

- I appreciate the opportunity to be here.
- I have a memo from the Finance Director that I would like to get to the Board tonight.
- Mayor Clark and I have a meeting on August 3, 2011 with General Anderson and Colonel Sicinski. If any of you have concerns or anything that you would like us to relay, please let us know.

Mr. Jackson

- Proud to be here.
- I appreciate the vacation. It is good to be back.

Mrs. Webb

- Thanked everyone for their thoughts and prayers.

11. Adjournment.

Action: There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Motion: Alderwoman Sutherland

Second by: Alderman Higgins

Vote: Unanimous



Rhonda D. Webb
Rhonda D. Webb, MMC
Town Clerk

ATTEST:

Ethel T. Clark

Ethel T. Clark
Mayor