



**TOWN OF WADESBORO
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WADESBORO TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING ROOM
205 EAST MORGAN STREET, WADESBORO, NC 28170**

Monday

February 3, 2025,

5:00 P.M.

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor Fred Davis called the meeting to order at 5pm and presided.

Councilmembers in attendance are as follows: Jo Ann Bennett, Lawrence Parsons, Ida Cason, Garrett Snuggs, Chipper Long and Town Attorney Aaron Bates.

Department Heads in attendance are as follows: Fire Chief Scott Martain, Finance Officer Maureen Mason, and Lt. Jason Escheat and Town Attorney Aaron Bates. Absent was Public Works Director Hugh James.

INVOCATION

Councilmember Lawrence Parsons

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Town Clerk Debbie Cox administered the Oath of Office to Interim Police Chief Jason Eschert.

Councilmember Lawrence Parsons made a motion and Councilmember Jo Ann Bennett seconded to amend the agenda to include closed session. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 for 0 against.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Chipper Long made a motion and Councilmember Lawrence Parsons seconded the approval of the agenda. Motion approved by a vote of 5 for 0 against.

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Chipper Long made a motion and Councilmember Jo Ann Bennett seconded the approval of minutes from January 6, 2025, approval to Amend Audit Contract to Modify Due Date and approval of Street Closure Resolution for Hampton B. Allen Library Spring Cleaning Community Yard Sale on 04/26/2025. Motion approved by a vote 5 for 0 against.

OLD BUSINESS

James Luster Community Economic Development Administrator from Centralia thanked the Town along with the selection committee for their support and updated councilmembers on the CBDG Neighborhood Revitalization Program which included the Grant agreement being signed, selecting of Grant Administrator, conditions being met, and the releasing of funds to start the project. Mr. Luster also said that with the pause in federal funding the CBDG grant should not be affected by those decisions.

Councilmember Chipper Long made a motion and Councilmember Lawrence Parsons seconded the approval of Updated Resolution Designing a Finance Officer and a Deputy Finance Officer. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 for 0 against.

Councilmember Lawrence Parsons made a motion and Councilmember Jo Ann Bennett seconded approval of Authorizing Resolution to Update Bank and Financial Institution Accounts Signatory Authorization. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 for 0 against.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tami Newell and Susan Hallman from 303 East View St. gave councilmembers a monthly update of activities concerning Uptown Wadesboro with their first monthly meeting being February 27 at 4pm. Ms. Newell said that the biggest focus right now is raising money for this year's July 4 fireworks event. Ms. Newell along with Ms. Hallman would like the council to consider adding a budget line for fireworks to help cover cost which would be 10 to 12 thousand dollars with the Town contributing 5 thousand dollars along with the County. Ms. Newell said that they will be seeking sponsorships along with fundraisers.

Mitchell Huntley from 214 Park Avenue inquired to councilmembers what programs are offered for the youth in the city and said that there are no activities that he is aware of and would like to know what is offered so that Mr. Huntley will know what to target. Huntley also said that 4H is getting 100 thousand a year for at risk kids, and his question to councilmembers is where the kids are and with Anson County being a Tier 1 getting grants there is no fruit of that money.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilmember Lawrence Parsons made a motion and Councilmember Chipper Long seconded the approval for Stormwater Planning Grant Funding Offer (SRP-SW-0006). Motion approved by a vote of 5 for 0 against.

Councilmember Chipper Long made a motion and Councilmember Jo Ann Bennett seconded the approval of 2024-25 Annual Operating Budget Amendment. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 for 0 against.

Councilmember Chipper Long made a motion and Councilmember Jo Ann Bennett seconded the Appointment of Maureen Mason being Deputy Tax Collector. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 for 0 against.

TOWN STAFF REPORT

FIRE CHIEF SCOTT MARTIN – No Comment

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR HUGH JAMES – In Mr. James absent, Town Manager Wiley Ross stated that we are going to start to look at with the weather breaking start to look at filling potholes and repairing some of our streets with Powell Bill money to initiate some of those street projects.

INTERIM POLICE CHIEF JASON ESCHERT- Updated councilmembers on the two shooting that occurred this week and said that within 12 hours, an arrest was made in one of the cases due to the police officers that are present and the assistance of the ACSO and SBI. The second case is being worked on and hoping to be closing soon. Interim Chief Eschert also stated that that himself along with officers that they will do everything they can with reducing gun violence in the community and stated that in the next 6 weeks a K9 that has been acquired will be certified and on the road with the K9 being dual purpose. Also, Interim Chief Eschert recognized Officer Jacob Sikes as officer of the month for January.

FINANCE OFFICER MAUREEN MASON – Stated to councilmembers that a good part of January she has been working on the budget. The budget amendment that council members just approved was a lot of reworking the entire budget and working on the upcoming budget. Mrs. Mason said that December financials were not available and apologized for that and there is a problem with the company who processes our credit cards. A meeting was held with invoice cloud the other day and they have found the problem, but it is an extremely difficult time-consuming process. Accounting Supervisor Ashley Little spent the entire month of December dealing with that. I have told her and invoice cloud that that is not going to happen this month and invoice cloud is going to reconcile credit card charges so you're not going to have that problem moving forward in that respect. The problem has been found that they are closing out at the wrong time, and everything is getting all mixed together and charges cannot be identified. The budget retreat, as everyone knows, happened on Saturday and as Mrs. Mason stated we are well into the development process the department heads, Mrs. Mason also stated how shocked and pleasantly surprised they did an amazing job due to the changing of the whole process of how they were used to doing their budget. and the forms that I gave them are something they have never seen before, and they did fantastic just so appreciative.

Mrs. Mason said that Mayor Davis asked at the budget retreat to set aside two dates for more budget workshops because we do have a lot to do. Mrs. Mason recommended a date and if it doesn't work if you could just work it out and asked councilmembers is there any way that we could meet next Monday and her reasoning for that date was to have a couple of weeks after the meeting to finish putting together the budget so councilmembers can receive it the week before the next meeting and if it's questions they can be discuss. Councilmembers agreed on February 10 at 5pm. Mrs. Mason suggested a date in March that may or may not be need that second meeting but would like to set it aside and put it on the budget calendar with the date being the 24th of March that would give councilmembers more time to review what was given and to get back on any changes or recommendations that councilmembers want to put into the budget.

TOWN MANAGER WILEY ROSS JR. – Centralina has requested for an elected official to serve on its delegate board. Mr. Ross said that due to the need for an elected official, he would not be able to serve. Mayor Fred Davis volunteered to be the delegate with Mayor Pro Tem Garrett Snuggs being the alternate to serve on Centralina Board.

Mr. Ross gave an update on a speeding concern on Morgan Street. Interim Chief Jason Eschert said that enforcement action has been taken.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS- No comment

CLOSED SESSION – Councilmember Chipper Long made a motion and Councilmember Jo Ann Bennett seconded to go into closed session to discuss the following - NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, condition of appointment of a public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee. Motion approved by a vote 5 for 0 against.

Councilmember Jo Ann Bennett made a motion and Councilmember Ida Cason second to come out of closed session. Motion approved by a vote of 4 for 0 against. (Councilmember Chipper Long left at 5:57pm)

ADJOURNMENT – Councilmember Jo Ann Bennett made a motion and Councilmember Lawrence Parsons seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:01pm. Motion approved by a vote 4 for 0 against.

Debbie A. Cox
Clerk to the Council
Town of Wadesboro