

TOWN OF NEWLAND
10/03/2023
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING



ATTENDING:

MAYOR: Derek Roberts

ALDERMAN: Gail Haller, James Johnson, Lauren Turbyfill, Christie Hughes, Kenny Caraway

GUEST: Teresa Foxx, Kenan Foxx, Christy Ray, Nathan Gittner, Beverly Hoyle, Faith Lacey, Susan Rash, Larry Hoyle, Maria Roberts, Vicki Caraway, Junior Sluder

STAFF: Town Administrator Bill Bailey, Town Clerk Mackenzie Tipton, Finance Officer Jessica Buchanan, Police Chief Byron Clawson, Police Captain Michael Fields, Public Works Director Gary Lewis, Town Attorney Gerald McKinney

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., reminded everyone of ethics awareness, and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. Jamey made a motion to approve the September minutes; Gail seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

Jamey made a motion to move closed-session personnel to the top of the agenda.

CLOSED SESSION

MOTION: Gail made a motion to adopt the agenda. Jamey seconded the motion, and all agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

PLANNING BOARD

Bill elaborated that establishing a planning board was the second step to defining the planning board. He then pointed out that to allow for processing time in between, N focus would like to transfer all planning board meetings to the second Thursday of each month rather than the first. Bill stated that it is currently critical to assemble a board of five to seven individuals. Christie asked if everyone who showed interest could be on the board. Bill stated that the ordinance for five to seven individuals had already been adopted. Gail noted that they were asked in an email sent by Mackenzie to vote to expedite this process. Bill acknowledged that he merely wished to formalize the matter during the meeting. Jamey declared his non-voting stance and requested that

attendees raise their hands if they were interested in the planning board position. Jamey announced that he was acquainted with all individuals except Susan Rash. Derek said Susan was on everyone's list. Gail reported that Susan expressed her interest via email. Bill stated that a motion for five to seven individuals was necessary.

MOTION: Gail made a motion that her picks were Susan Rash, Casey Turbyfill, Martha Hill, Erica McKinney, and Vickey Caraway were her choices. Lauren seconded the motion. Gail, Christie, Lauren, and Kenny all agreed by a show of hands and stating aye. James chose not to vote but wanted to recommend the four people who were present because they showed interest.

Derek said there was no discussion about potential candidates for the planning board and he was under the impression that Christie Ray and Theresa Foxx were already on the board since they volunteered at the last meeting. Gail explained that they didn't agree to anything and both Christy and Theresa only volunteered to be on the list of candidates for the planning board. Derek asked whether Christy Ray had the impression that she had been selected for the board at the previous meeting. Christy Ray stated yes. Theresa explained that it was her understanding that night that Christy and she would be the first two members on that board and then it would be put on Facebook. Bill noted that he and the clerk listened to the audio and there was no decision made. Jamey stated that he would have no trouble amending the motion and increasing the number of members on the planning board committee from five to seven, since providing volunteers with work to do would be beneficial. Kenny stated that the meeting would not always have seven members in attendance and that the town should allow individuals to volunteer to serve on the board. Bill explained he needs a board set regardless of the number and it's a once-a-month commitment. Christie stated anyone who volunteered should be able to be on board. Jamey proposed allowing the five and the remaining two to attend the initial planning meeting, where voting for the planning board would be based on attendance. Bill stated that would be okay. Christie inquired about the possibility of amending the ordinance to include Newland business proprietors. Bill stated that N-Focus is talking with every single business. Lauren detailed each member's reappointment and stated that the documentation does specify that only five members are permitted, with two serving as backups. Lauren said that the candidates will possess considerable influence. Bill stated that the board will have the final say on all matters.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

Bill disclosed that, in anticipation of winter, he has formulated an inclement weather policy. Jamey stated that he believed employees should report to work if they are able to do so; however, if they are unable to do so, they may utilize their authorized leave. Bill articulated the policy of the state. Christie stated Jessica and the clerk could accrue hours by attending meetings or working through lunch. Jamey requested that Bill draft the policy and present it at the following meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bill explained that Mr. Sluder possessed a bill from Linville River Electric for the creation of the park in the downtown area. According to Bill's recollection, the town assured him that it would supply the water and conduit necessary to distribute the electricity. According to Mr. Sluder, he

no doubt that the town would be responsible for performing all electrical work and would be responsible for the monthly electrical service. Jamey thanked Mr. Sluder and reassured him that the town would pay the bill.

MOTION: Jamey made a motion to take this over and pay the light bill for the park. Christie seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

Christy Ray asked about planting flowers by the signs coming into town. Lauren stated that Gary works on them routinely. Gary disclosed that he had been working with Theresa to replace the plants. Alderman Christie Hughes informed Christy Ray that she could plant flowers at the locations if she so desired. Larry Hoyle questioned the ordering of street signs. Jamey stated that the county does that. Bill reported that issues were arising with their contractor. Christie stated that about the replacement of handicapped signs at Puerto. Bill stated he would get started on that. Larry asked who is responsible for potholes in the town. Bill responded that it is road-specific and that they are working to repair it; however, he is having trouble obtaining asphalt.

PUBLIC WORKS

Gary reported that the rate of mowing was slowing down and that a leak had been discovered between the street and the well at Sokassa, requiring repair. He also explained that well four was inactive for approximately two to three weeks due to a malfunctioning pump that stopped one weekend. The pump technicians were sent out on Monday and identified the issue with the pump; it took at least a week and a half to receive replacement parts, but the problem has been resolved. Gary reported that two lines at the end of the road at the high school experienced pressure loss due to a puncture; consequently, the brass line was repaired. They repaired the Dodge and did maintenance on the F250 and the Toyota. Gary reported that leak letters were also distributed.

FINANCE REPORT

Jessica disclosed that she has been completing the audit for 2021–2022 and generating monthly reports. Jamey asked Jessica the anticipated time of withdrawal for the CD funds. Jessica stated in December.

POLICE REPORT

Chief explained that they've been busy, and all officers completed hazmat and bloodborne pathogen training this month. Jamey told the chief they were making a resolution to give him his badge and duty weapon upon his retirement. Lauren expressed appreciation to everyone for working diligently to make the fall festival a success.

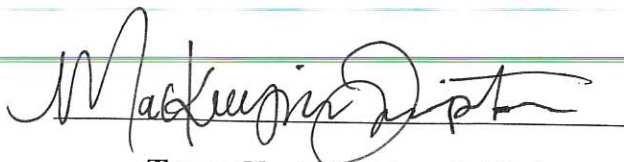
ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Bill stated that Shomaker Park was a stormwater facility designed by NC State fifteen years ago and it has done its job. Bill said had become clogged with sediment, but they were able to dig down to the clay bottom so it's now functioning. Additionally, Bill elaborated that the state

pected it and found it satisfactory. He stated that matting is placed down, and seeds are planted to promote growth. He also mentioned there are plants in the pond that will come back in the spring. Bill also stated that during their budget discussion, they had addressed the issue of shoreline clearance and mentioned that Derek had Mountain Electric replace the light in the middle of the park so if people go there now, they can see all the way through the park. Bill reported that the new streetlights have been ordered and that the old streetlights will be attempted to be refurbished and reinstalled throughout the park as a continuation of the trail. Bill further stated that he is developing a program to define the costs associated with each department for the upcoming budget, which will ensure transparency regarding the allocation of funds. Bill clarified that this next budget will soon present a revenue challenge; therefore, this program will be advantageous. Jamey asked how much the streetlights were. Jessica stated 226,000. Jamey asked if the streetlights could be canceled. Bill stated that it must be done quickly. Jamey explained that the average age of the town's residents is 57 years old, and most people live on a fixed income; therefore, he proposed allocating the funds to the roads or water tanks and inquired whether there would be a penalty for installing the lights in phases. Bill stated he could look into it. Christy Ray emphasized the importance of preventive maintenance, noting that the light at her residence is soft and in dire need of replacement. Maria Roberts said that she believed it to be a safety concern as well, noting that when she would walk in the mornings five or six years ago, the lights were just beginning to go out. Derek clarified that he had no idea as to why the board wished to resend the lights. Jamey explained he wanted to move the lights back to phases. Gail stated she agreed with Maria, and she walks a lot in town so she would like to get the lights. Christie also stated she wanted the lights. Lauren stated that if the lights were bought taxes would have to go up in the following years. Bill pointed out that under the current plan, the town is expanding its lighting by refurbishing the lights that are salvageable. Jamey stated the number one complaint he gets from citizens is potholes and that the pumps are also going out so the town will need money for that. Derek asked if they could move forward. Christie Ray asked about the warranty on the lights. Bill stated that they have a ten to fifteen-year warranty and are powder-coated on the inside. Jamey asked about getting benches from the dog park. Bill stated they are looking into it. Lauren reported that Ruth Shirley has requested that there be no mulch in the dog park and a restricted selection of items due to skateboarders. Vicki Caraway asked about waste pickup at the dog park. Bill stated that a waste collection station is located there. Christie mentioned that Ruth Shirley stated that everyone is using the waste station and picking up after themselves. Beverly Hoyle commented that the lights were an excellent investment in her eyes and would make the town more appealing.

MOTION: Christie made a motion to adjourn. Gail seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm



Town Clerk, Mackenzie Tipton



Mayor, Derek Roberts