

February 23, 2015

Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes

The Wendell Town Board of Commissioners held their regularly scheduled meeting Monday, February 23, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Meeting Room with Mayor Pro Tem Parham presiding. Present at the meeting were Commissioners Sam Laughery; Jon Lutz; John Boyette; and Virginia Gray; Manager Teresa Piner, Town Clerk Jonnie Driver; IT Administrator Tamah Hughes; Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Polaski; Finance Director Butch Kay; and Police Chief Bill Carter. Mayor Hinnant was out of town on Business and unable to attend the meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Parham called the meeting at 7:00 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chief Bill Carter and invocation was given by Mr. Bruce Tarnaski of St. Eugene's Catholic Church.

Adjustment and approval of the agenda

No adjustments were made and Commissioner Laughery made a motion to adopt the agenda. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of 4-0.

Item 1 – Public Comment Period

No one wished to make a public comment.

Item 2 – Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of the Minutes from Monday February 9, 2015 Board of Commissioners' meeting.
- b. Approval of the minutes from the January 31, 2015 Board Retreat

Commissioner Boyette made a motion to approve the consent agenda as written. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of 4-0.

Item 3 – Acceptance of Brighton Subdivision's street and infrastructure improvements.

Planner Patrick Reidy stated that an initial walkthrough was performed by staff and town engineers in 2008 for final inspection of curb, gutter, stormwater and street infrastructure. He said a punch list was created to address all outstanding items prior to final acceptance by the Town of Wendell. Since that time, the property was foreclosed upon and purchased by NC WEH Associates, LP, who assumed the role as the site's developer. A completion bond had been on file and renewed several times since the approval of the final plat.

Patrick stated on December 3, 2014, Planning, Public Works, and Wake County Environmental Services staff met with the developer to do a final walkthrough to identify all issues that needed repairs in order to release the bond that the Town of Wendell holds. He said the developer completed the required work, and on January 30, 2015, the Public Works Director confirmed with the Planning Department that all outstanding issues were found to be satisfactory. Patrick said upon acceptance of the streets and stormwater improvements, the bond shall be released.

Patrick stated staff recommends approval and acceptance for maintenance of the street and stormwater improvements by the Town of Wendell.

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Commissioner Boyette asked if the subdivision included the pond that it abuts. Patrick said yes it does. Commissioner Boyette asked if that made the Town responsible for maintenance and upkeep of the pond or the dam. Patrick said that the Town will not be responsible for the maintenance of the pond.

Commissioner Boyette made a motion to approve and accept the street and stormwater improvements for Brighton Subdivision in the Town of Wendell. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of 4-0.

Item 4 – Discussion and action on Downtown Wi-Fi

IT Administrator Tamah Hughes, stated at the February 9, 2015 meeting, the Board received an update on the Wi-Fi project. If approved, the project will take 3-4 months to complete. The total cost of the project will be \$22,591.37 with an increase in operational cost of \$1188.20 per month for the increase in fiber. If approved, the construction would be funded this fiscal year.

Staff recommends approval of the Downtown Wi-Fi Project if it is a priority of the Board. The estimated time for completion for this project is 3-4 months, with no outside entity delays. Staff is looking for direction from the board.

Commissioner Laughery asked Tamah if she would explain about security of the Wi-Fi that is available to the public and how it is connected into the Town's server. Tamah said the security would be with the equipment that we have chosen that allows segregation between public and private use. The equipment would allow Tamah to separate the channels and control the available bandwidth between the public and Town offices. She said on the weekends, when more events are taking place downtown or at the park, most of the 50 megabytes to the Wi-Fi could go for public use.

Commissioner Laughery said like any service we would have certain perimeters for providing Wi-Fi service. At some point someone just on the other side of that line was going to come along and want coverage in another area. Can you talk about the incremental cost of expansion? If we install additional devices were you talking about ½ mile or ¼ mile? Tamah said it would depend on the direction and the access to mount the equipment on poles or structures. Electric poles have to meet certain requirements by Duke Energy and that would cost us a little bit, but other than that the equipment we would purchase and the up fitting of the poles that would be the extent of the cost.

Commissioner Laughery said he knew that testing was not conducted inside the various buildings, but could you tell us about the possibilities there. Tamah stated that some buildings, if they have glass on the front, would have access inside the front part of the building, but if you go to the back of the building your access would be limited. She said we were really shooting for street use.

Commissioner Boyette said how much expanding could occur before we would need to do more than 50 megabytes. Are we closer to being limited geographically or by the amount of data? Tamah said it depends on the usage. She said Lexington had 23 access points and Wendell is planned for 7 or 8 access points and Lexington is running 50 megabytes. She said 50 megabytes should be sufficient for several years.

Commissioner Laughery made a motion to approve the recommendation as presented by the staff for the Downtown Wi-Fi Project. The motion passed unanimously with a 4-0 vote.

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Commissioner Laughery said this was a project that we really need to advertise and he was not sure what the board's options were for advertising, but this was a big plus for the businesses in the downtown core. He said the Wi-Fi, along with the potential for fiber connection which is located at the along the railroad track about 200 yards from Town Hall, was something we really need to push from an Economic Development standpoint. He said it was a huge plus for a company to know that kind of bandwidth was right here in Wendell. He said we need staff to come up with some sort of plan to get the word out that Wendell was entering into the 21st Century. Manager Piner said staff had discussed this, not only how to get the information out through Social Media, website or message boards, but key places along Main Street would have signage on the pole where people would be able to see them coming down Main Street, and we would offer stickers for businesses that would say free Wi-Fi for them to display in their windows. We are going to make sure that people were aware we have Wi-Fi.

Commissioner Laughery said we had a brainstorm session and one thing we thought about was some sort of paragraph that we can put in various documents and possibly something the board can approve to announce this formerly like a resolution or something along that line.

Item 5 – Presentation, discussion and action to approve the scope and authorize the preparation of a Town of Wendell Transportation Plan.

David Bergmark stated this was something that we started looking at in the preparation of the FY 14-15 budget and Mike Surasky of AMT developed a proposal for updating the Town's various transportation plans. David said the scope of work created by Mr. Surasky included changes and updates to the Town's Collector Street Plan, Thoroughfare Plan, and Unified Development Ordinance.

David stated due to budgetary constraints, the transportation plan update was not included in the FY 14-15 budget. However, at the recent Board Retreat the transportation plan update was identified as a top priority of the Town. Following the retreat, town staff requested that Mike Surasky provide an updated scope and fee schedule.

Mike Surasky stated that he asked David why you want to do a plan. The basis of the plan was to focus not only on current projects, but future projects and development opportunities as the town grows. Some of the elements on the plan would be roadway classifications and what was important was that we want to set a system of collector streets, thoroughfare plan, arterials. With each of those would come cross-sections. It would include a priority list of projects that gave the town their idea of future projects and set parameters to them using both benefits and cost. He said there would be a project that everyone thinks was needed, but was very expensive, and there may be a project that would help a little but was less expensive. He said we would focus on the Wendell Falls Parkway.

Mr. Surasky stated that if you had a collector street plan and everyone could see it, it was better for the future of planning. He said when a developer comes in and wants to develop on Wendell Boulevard they could be shown what was happening along Wendell Boulevard and let them know what was needed. He said it would take away some of that guess work so when development and land acquisitions were occurring they could do their due diligence have a better idea of what was expected and the costs. He said the key for this was to create clear standards and expectations. If you have clear expectations for the developers coming in they would keep coming back.

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Mr. Surasky said we were going to create some clear concise mapping using GIS as part of those standards. He said we want to create agreement among staff and elected officials, and citizens and we want to create that with classifications. He said we want to look at future connections. He said you have Wendell Falls outside of town and there is a lot of space in between and we want to look at spaces like that and where we think connection is logical, but will be dependent on activity. We want this to be a go by plan that was easy for people to understand what the town wanted. He said the plan would look into the future to make sure it would be usable in the future.

Commissioner Laughery said right now we had nothing on the DOT TIP and we were looking for some ammunition for a plan like this so that we can highlight how we see our development. He said we have also missed out on the LAPP projects. Mr. Surasky said we would include grant opportunities for matching funds.

Commissioner Gray said she was happy to see us looking at this again; she fought for this last year, and wanted to make sure that everybody understands what the plan is about. We get criticized for making plans that were set aside. This plan would be a tool for our Planning Department that would be used every day. The plan gives them guidance as to what was going to happen and developers as to what was happening around them. It would not just sit on the shelf.

Commissioner Gray made a motion to approve the authorization the preparation of a Town of Wendell Transportation Plan. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of 4-0.

Item 6 – Discussion and action to approve bathroom improvements to the Wendell Community Center.

Jeff Polaski stated with the recent discussion of the need for more restroom facilities as we try to provide more tournaments and activities at the Community Center.

Jeff said option A would be to install a doorway at the northwest corner of the Community Center for outdoor events and provide additional restroom facilities. He said the quote for that would be \$7500 and would include (1) extra stall and (3) urinals for the men and 5 stalls for the women. This quote does not include and ADA restrooms. The quote would include installation of new doors and the removal of floor tiles so they would be accessible for cleats and something would have to be done to the ramp, because it is just wood. Jeff said the downside to doing Options A would be that you would not get the ADA restroom and you would have to poor sidewalk to that side of the building and you also allow people to come into the facility without any supervision, not knowing who is coming in and who is going out.

Jeff said Option B would improve customer service, staff had received a quote to design a reception area just inside the lobby to better assist and direct visitors while at the community center. He said to define the offices and activity rooms, a door would be added between the director's office and the current office used as a reception area. He said this would allow for the lobby and bathrooms to be opened during large outdoor events. He said the door to the offices and gym could be locked during tournament events, providing access to bathroom facilities only. He said the reception area would house a staff member to supervise the building and also help people with questions. This option would add 3 stalls and 4 urinals for the men and 7 stalls for the women. He said the existing entrance into the community center and bathrooms are handicap accessible. He said by staffing the lobby, those entering

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the facility would be monitored, providing a safer environment for those inside the community center. Jeff said this option has a quote that is being refined through the assistance of an architect and does provide ADA restrooms as well as a place for people to get out of the heat while waiting for family members participating in an outdoor program. He said this option would also provide a permanent welcome area in the gym to be used during regular business hours.

Jeff said because of the concern for the safety of visitors to the community center, and because of the additional bathroom facilities that would be accessible, staff recommends approving Option B with a not to exceed the amount of \$15,000.

Commissioner Gray said she was excited about this; this was two things in a row that she really wanted. She had been trying for the longest time to get access to those bathrooms and every time it came up and we discuss how we were going to make improvements, the needs for bathrooms comes up and with stalls inside that do not get used like they should, she felt like before we spend a lot more money, which eventually we would have to, we need to make use of what we have. She said she had discussed both of these options and appreciated you taking it to heart and listening to me. Commissioner Gray said she felt that we should go with option B, because it served an additional purpose because it sent a message that the Community Center was open for business. She said right now you go in there and you were not sure where the offices are. You were not really sure where the restrooms were and she liked the idea of it being welcoming and a place to retreat from the heat in the summer if you were out there with your children and wanted the citizens to use the building, it belongs to them.

Commissioner Boyette said last year we had some discussions about events being held in the gym and if you were having alcohol events in the park there could not be any other events in the park. We talked about ways to allow this, would changes to the building help, hinder, have no impact whatsoever on the ability to have two events at one time. Jeff said we had not talked about that so much. He said we were looking at closing and locking the side door and it would be employee only access and visitors would have to come in the front door and we could keep track of who was coming in and out. He said Tamah suggested that we install a camera that would help monitor who was coming in and out also. He said for events in the gym, it could impact that.

Commissioner Lutz said just to be clear you were speaking about the space that now serves as Matt's office next to the gym. Jeff said this would be as you walk in the front door on the left, behind where the drink machine now sits, there was already an office there but the drink machine covers it up. Commissioner Lutz said he agreed that it was Option B or nothing.

Commissioner Gray made a motion to approve modification to the Community Center and go with Option B with a \$15,000 maximum. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of 4-0.

Item 7 – Discussion and action to appoint a representative and alternate to work with Knightdale and Newland Communities on an Eastern Wake education initiative for 2015.

Manager Piner stated that elected officials and businesses had expressed the desired to meet and discuss an education initiative in Eastern Wake County.

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Mayor Pro-Tem Parham said he would like to volunteer to be the representative to work on an Eastern Wake Education Initiative. Commissioner Gray said they she would like to serve also. Commissioner Parham would be the Representative and Commissioner Gray would be the alternate.

Item 8 – Discussion and action on a request for a fee-in-lieu request for sidewalk in Olde Wendell Phase 3.

Planner Patrick Reidy stated on December 8, 2014, the Board of Commissioners approved an open space fee-in-lieu request for the Olde Wendell Phase III project (formally called the Wendell Gardens project). This project includes a total of 10 new houses.

At the January 8, 2015 Technical Review Committee meeting, staff informed the developer that the UDO requires the installation of a six foot wide sidewalk along the eastern side of Wendell Boulevard. The total linear footage of sidewalk required is 627 feet. There is an existing sidewalk on the western side of Wendell Boulevard that runs the entirety of the subject property.

Patrick said at the meeting, the applicant asked if sidewalks had to be installed or if a fee-in-lieu could be paid due to the steep topography of that section of Wendell Boulevard. Section 9.3 of the UDO states that:

“New development or redevelopment with frontages on existing publicly-maintained streets
Streets shall be required to upgrade all street frontages to meet the standards of this Ordinance including sidewalks, street trees, curb and gutter, and right-of-way reservations. Payment in lieu of physical improvements may be permitted by the Board of Commissioners”.

Patrick said the applicant’s justification for the request states that “installing a sidewalk adjacent to US64 (Wendell Boulevard) in front of the subdivision is impractical. The following items reference the unconventional circumstances that would have to be overcome [to install the sidewalks]:

- There is an approximately 15’ wide existing drainage ditch adjacent to US 64 [business] on the north side of Garden Club Way which is in conflict with the proposed sidewalk.
- There is an approximately 9” high existing berm adjacent to US64 [business] on the south side of Garden Club Way which is in conflict with the proposed sidewalk. This existing berm is covered with mature trees and serves well as a buffer from the highway.”

Patrick said in addition there are existing utility poles that would be required to be relocated. The applicant has agreed to provide a crosswalk across Wendell Boulevard and install a culvert in the existing ditch to connect to the existing sidewalk.

Patrick said typically, staff would not recommend a fee-in-lieu in place of sidewalks, especially along Wendell Boulevard. However, due to the issues presented, staff believes that collection of the fee with delayed installation of the sidewalk is in the best interest of the Town.

Patrick said the UDO does allow for sidewalk fee-in-lieu request but does not address the calculation used to determine the fee amount. The town’s engineer has recommended that Wendell use the fee calculation set forth by the City of Raleigh which is \$15.81 per linear foot for a 6 foot wide sidewalk. Patrick said using the above calculation, the fee-in-lieu amount for this project would be \$9,912.87.

Patrick said staff recommends approval of the fee-in-lieu request.

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Commissioner Gray asked if the amount of \$9,912.87 was enough to install the sidewalk if the Town needed to install the sidewalk later. Commissioner Gray said she did not like the delay installation; it was likely that a sidewalk would never be installed. Patrick said sidewalk would probably be installed once the road is widened.

Commissioner Boyette said he agreed with Commissioner Gray that we were trying to be consistent in saying developers were required to put in sidewalks, however knowing the berm we were talking about, if you widen the road the berm gets taller because you were cutting into the hill. He said he would like to table this until we could look at it and see if there was a flat part that could have a section of sidewalk. He would like to see more information on this before the board made a decision. The calculation is based on a semi-ideal conditions and this was not what this is.

Commissioner Laughery said he lived in Olde Wendell and it would be extremely difficult and expensive to install a sidewalk, but he agreed with Commissioner Boyette, it was a good idea to table this until we can look at it and take it up at our next meeting.

Commissioner Laughery made a motion to table this item until the March 9th meeting. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of 4-0.

Item 9 – Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Laughery said he was excited about a couple of good things taking place tonight. We were moving in the right direction. He said we had a couple of new businesses moving in shortly that will bring some foot traffic in Wendell at night.

Commissioner Lutz had no comments.

Commissioner Boyette said 2 weeks ago he had expressed his displeasure with the lack of snowfall we had received in Wendell and this week he would like to express his displeasure that he had not won the power ball. We can see if that works the same way. He said he thought the Town crews cleared the street as fast as possible with the amount of ice coming down. He said we had very few incidents on the road, but we had more winter weather on the way, and once again he wanted to pat the staff on the back for a job well done.

Commissioner Gray said that last week really got turned upside down with all the cancellations. She wanted to remind everyone that the Historical Society meeting had been rescheduled for Thursday, February 26th and it should be an exciting and interesting meeting about Wendell. She said Friday night there was an Art Exhibition at the Woman's Club call Art from the Heart on Cypress Street. She said she would be attending the Farmers Market Planning meeting on Tuesday, February 24th and that was coming along and they were looking forward to opening that in the spring.

Item 10 – Mayor Pro-Tem Parham's comments.

Mayor Pro Tem Parham said he was glad that the board had moved forward with the Transportation Plan and the Community Center improvements. He said when activities were going on at the Community Center it seemed that the businesses downtown were busier and that was a good thing.

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Mayor Pro Tem Parham said we were going to have to start pushing education a little harder. He said education was at the top of the list for positive economic development. He said if we have good schools, families will come and buy those homes that were being built. We just have to get our schools in order. He said he was happy to report our ABC's for our schools are not as bad as a many people had anticipated. He said that Wendell has two elementary schools that indicated a year's worth of growth and one that did not and the grades are C's and that was not bad. He said with Commissioner Gray and Mr. Benton, who plans to speak to the board on March 23rd this, was a positive step. He would have a video that goes beyond effective school literature.

Item 11 - Adjourn

Commissioner Laughery made a motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously with a 4-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

James Parham, Mayor Pro Tempore

Attest:

Jonnie S. Driver, Town Clerk