

**February 22, 2016  
Board Meeting Minutes**

The Wendell Town Board of Commissioners held the regularly scheduled board meeting on Monday, February 22, 2016 with Mayor Virginia Gray presiding. Present at the meeting were Commissioner's Jon Lutz; John Boyette; Ben Carroll; Jason Joyner; and David Myrick; Manager Teresa Piner; Sherry Scoggins-Special Assistant to the Manager; Jonnie Driver-Town Clerk; Jim Cauley-Town Attorney; Butch Kay-Finance Director; Alton Bryant-Public Works Director; Jeff Polaski-Parks and Recreation Director; David Bergmark-Planning Director; Patrick Reidy-Planner; Tamah Hughes-IT Administrator; Bill Carter-Police Chief; and Chris Drew-Intern with Parks and Recreation.

Mayor Gray called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and welcomed and thanked everyone for attending.

Chief Bill Carter led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Mr. Robert Josie of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church delivered the Invocation.

**Adjustment and approval of the agenda**

Mayor Gray stated that Item #8 was placed on the agenda erroneously and should be removed. Commissioner Lutz made a motion to approve the removal of Item #8 from the agenda. The vote was unanimous. Commissioner Joyner made a motion to approve the agenda with the removal of Item #8. The vote was unanimous.

**Item – 1 Public Comment Period**

Mayor Gray stated there were several people signed up under Public Comment and she suspected that many of them were present to speak on Agenda Item #5. She said the Public Hearing for item # 5 was held two weeks ago and in fairness to all parties, if that was what you wished to speak about, it should have been done two weeks ago. She said if anyone had something to comment on rather than Item #5 they may step forward.

Mr. Clint Ferrell-1121 Golden Grain Road, Garner said he was looking to purchase a 15 acre piece of property located off Wendell Boulevard behind a trash truck repair center and a fitness center. He said the business they would like to bring to town was AAA Louvers and Millwork which had been in business since 1988. We would divide the property into smaller tracts, and there was a potential of \$5 million dollars in tax base.

Mr. Ferrell said they met with the Planning Department and were updated on the UDO requirements for Wendell. He said they found that the property would need to be annexed to get utilities, and the UDO requirements stated that the road would need to be rebuilt to a new standard with a double sidewalk, curb and gutter, landscaping boxes every 40 feet, lighting and trees. He said they would have over 1800 linear feet of road. He said overcoming the UDO challenges was a financial impediment for the project and they would like to have some dialog on that. He said he understood there was an annexation available that allowed for some give and take on the UDO requirements. He said he looked at the UDO and listed some of the things that were challenges to the development of this piece of property. He said the requirement to add sidewalks and curb and gutter to an industrial site between two other businesses was more residential in nature than with an industrial site.

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Lucius Jones said that he was familiar with the company that was looking to relocate in Wendell, and that he had even done business with the company and they were a reputable company.

Mayor Gray thanked Mr. Ferrell for his interest in Wendell.

**Item – 2 Consent Agenda**

- a. Approval of the Minutes from Monday, February 8, 2016 Board of Commissioners' meeting.
- b. Approval of the Wake County Tax report for November 2015.

Commissioner Lutz made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as written. The motion passed unanimously.

**Item – 3 Update by Chris Drew, intern with the Wendell Parks and Recreation Department, on projects and work assignments during his time with the department.**

Chris stated he was completing his Recreation degree from the University of North Carolina Central and was currently serving as an intern with the Wendell Parks and Recreation Department. He said he would be attending Law School in the fall.

Chris gave his course goal and objective requirements to the board which included Programming, Research, Financial Management and Administration. He said he would also be working with Matt Driver on maintenance and equipment to keep the park looking good.

Mayor Gray said the Board was happy to have him serving his internship with the Town. Mayor Gray wished him good luck.

**Item 4 – Introduction and update by Public Works Director Alton Bryant on activities by the Public Works Department.**

Alton Bryant-Public Works Director stated some successful accomplishments by the Town had taken place since he began work with the town. They included a multi-year street resurfacing project, railroad crossing upgrades, three phases of Downtown Enhancement projects (USDA Rural Business Economic Development Grants), Wendell Falls Parkway drainage and sidewalk improvement project (Federal Stimulus Funding), Anderson Street drainage and road improvement, and the Lake Drive storm water improvement project.

Alton said that public works was staffed by seven employees, led by myself. He said the department was responsible for a large number of duties. He said their hours of operation were (Monday-Thursday 7:00 am to 5:00 pm and Friday 7:00 am to 11:00 am) but each member of the team knew that they could be called in 24/7 for when the Town was being impacted. He said it was a very diverse group of individuals with prior experience in varied fields including engineering, construction and maintenance, U.S. Army Infantry, U.S. Army Signals, police, and prior public works experience from other municipalities. The average age of the staff was 49.

Alton said Public Works had recently obtained new equipment, thanks to the Boards support, that helped them complete their duties and projects that they had undertaken. Alton said bulk salt was now kept on hand to be used with the truck mounted spreader to better maintain the streets. He said in January 2016 approximately 10 tons of salt was applied to the streets. He said snow and ice removal services could be improved to include residential streets with an investment in a brining system. Alton stated a new utility loader was now in service to augment the ability to clean sidewalks and parking

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spaces in the event of a snowfall. A mini-excavator was now being used and had proven itself invaluable in the stockpiling of yard waste debris. He said the excavator would be used to work on drainage ditches that were scheduled to be cleaned and regraded to improve storm water flows.

Alton stated the weekly pick-up of bulky waste ended in December 2015. He said this had allowed the department more time to better maintain the knuckle boom truck, and extend its useful life. He said ending the bulky waste collection had not created any major problems and minimal notices were sent out after the pick-up stopped.

Alton said maintenance continued at the East Wake Senior Center. He said fewer work orders with severe maintenance issues were being generated. He said improvement and repairs included new siding installed around nearly ½ of the building due to rotting of the support boards, a roof patch to stop leaks, lines were unclogged to all the HVAC system to drain, ceiling tiles replaced, ceiling fan issues repaired, men's restroom water pressure issue corrected, toilets and sinks rebuilt and many other repairs had occurred over the past year.

Public works had also partnered with the IT Department in the installation and maintenance of the Wi-Fi equipment. The Lake Drive Drainage project had been completed with the installation of the 48" diameter pipe.

Alton said a bucket truck (borrowed) proved to be very useful with tree trimming and removing a significant portion of the trees that were blocking downtown lights, striking school buses and the large Public Works vehicles while performing daily work activities. He said it was also helpful with hanging decorations and maintenance of the pole mounted banners.

Alton said new projects on the horizon included a new building at public works. The additional capacity would be a tremendous help while improving operating capacity. He said staff would man a booth during the Harvest Festival and its parade to showcase equipment, personnel, and their dedication to the Town. He said staff had partnered with the police department and would participate in the annual Public Safety Day in May by displaying equipment used by the department. He said staff would also participate in the East Wake High School Career Fair on February 23<sup>rd</sup> to showcase a career in public works. He said the 2015-2016 Street Resurfacing Project had been advertised for bids and were due Thursday February 25<sup>th</sup>. He said there would be about 35 streets affected.

Mayor Gray said she was excited when she saw you were partnering with the police department on Public Safety Day and she was thrilled that the department was participating in the East Wake High School Career Fair.

**Item 5 – Discussion and action on a request to create an R-3 Conditional District for property along West Academy Street (Addressed as 245 Short Street) to be developed as 'Housing Services for the Elderly'.**

Patrick Reidy said this project was introduced on January 11, 2016 for information purposes. At the January 19<sup>th</sup> Planning Board meeting, the Planning Board voted 6-1 in favor of the project. He said the Public Hearing was held on February 8<sup>th</sup> and the project was advertised in the paper, site was posted and notice was mailed to joint property owners as mandated.

Patrick said the Board of Commissioners was asked to take action on the creation of a Conditional District for Wendell Haven Senior Living.

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Mayor Gray asked if anyone had questions for Mr. Reidy. No one had any questions.

Commissioner Boyette said this property had ignited something in town. He said he liked the project, with higher density. Building toward downtown was what we need to strive toward. He said he had a problem with the use of tax credits to help pay for the project. He said Wendell had the highest percentage of affordable housing in the county and this policy was put into place to distribute affordable housing in areas of the county that did not have a sufficient amount of affordable housing. He said Wendell was not one of those places. He said while he supported the project, his opposition was the use of tax credits.

Commissioner Boyette said he realized it was the Mayor's prerogative to run the meeting, but as a town, we had to be open, no matter how late the comments came in, no matter how many times we had heard it, we have to listen to our citizens, and if the citizens came to the next meeting and wanted to speak about this project after the vote was over, that was their right. He said state law stated that we had to provide for public comment once per month. He said he did not think it set a good precedence to take a list of people who had taken their time to come out and speak and not allow them to speak.

Mayor Gray stated that by letting everyone speak, the Board would be holding a second public hearing without providing proper notice and without notifying the applicant. She said not allowing individuals to speak after the public hearing had been closed was to keep things above board and to best serve all citizens.

Commissioner Lutz said he agreed with what Commissioner Boyette said. He was not against senior housing and the project looked good, but the numbers were out of proportion for this area of town.

Commissioner Lutz made a motion to deny the application by Lucius Jones to create an R-3 Conditional District for property located off West Academy Street. Mayor Gray said she agreed this had been a hot topic and she had received a lot of comments and phone calls concerning the project. She would like to let everyone know that this request was given the same fair and thoughtful consideration that every project that came before the board. She said the request was about apartments, not about the elderly, this is about apartments. The qualifications that applicants would make to live here are that they have income requirements and above the age of 55. There is no nursing facility, no nurse there, it is not assisted living, not a nursing home, not a place to put your elderly family member when they need help with day to day activities in life, it is an apartment. She said that Wendell had lots of apartments in Wendell. There is not presence there by Resources for Seniors. There was no further discussion, and the motion to deny the application passed with a 5-0 vote.

**Item 6 – Update by Manager Piner of planned Town Hall improvements**

Manager Piner said the second phase of Town Hall improvements would soon be underway. She said improvements were scheduled to begin near the first of March. She said the most significant scheduling challenges would involve PSNC Gas and their ability to extend lines to Town Hall for connections to the HVAC units.

Mrs. Piner said the boardroom would receive improvements which would allow staff to use the room for larger groups and allow for rearranging the room for training classes. We hope that this renovation would better serve citizens needing assistance through ADA upgrades to the building. She said there would be some asbestos abatement as well. She said Tony Johnson was the architect for the project.

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There were no questions or comments for Mrs. Piner.

**Item 7 – Update by Mayor Gray on the CAMPO Meeting February 17<sup>th</sup>.**

Mayor Gray said we read the draft FY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program, reviewed the FY 2015-16 Transportation Improvement Program, reviewed the FY 2017 LAPP Project, discussed the RDU Master Plan Update and discussed the complete I-540 Update. She said at this time what we discussed does not affect Wendell, but it was interesting to know what was going on in other parts of the county. She hoped Wendell would a project on the list in the future.

**Item 8 – Commissioners’ Comments**

Commissioner Carroll said he wanted to thank everyone who attended the Board Retreat on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. He said it was a good experience. He also encouraged everyone to check out Wine 101. It is a very nice facility and a good addition to the town.

Commissioner Lutz said the Board Retreat on Saturday was very productive, and Wendell Falls was such a nice facility. He said it was nice to spend time and talk with the commissioners, mayor and staff as we plan for the year. He said he would also like to say that Mayor Gray attended the last Rotary Club Meeting and delivered the State of the Town Address, and it was very good. He said we hoped to make this an annual event for the Rotary Club, and open it to our citizens and other towns.

Commissioner Boyette said “How about that Wolfpack”.

Commissioners’ Myrick and Joyner had no comments.

**Item 10 - Mayor’s Comments**

Mayor Gray said she met with Andi Curtis from WakeMed and discussed Wendell and opportunities and programs for citizens and employees. She said she also went to the Eastern Wake Senior Center to talk with them about their needs, and they expressed their need for volunteers.

Mayor Gray said the Board’s annual retreat was last weekend and she wanted to thank Wendell Falls for allowing the Board to use their facility at no charge. She said it was a great day with a lot of collaboration and excitement and she was very proud of the direction the board was taking. She said Wendell had a bright future and she looked forward to seeing what would take place.

Mayor Gray said that in regard to agenda item #5, the Public Hearing was held two weeks ago. When the Public Hearing was closed that ended further discussions without proper notification. She knew that some of those present wanted to voice their opinions and she knew that they were hurt that they would not be allowed to speak, but it would not have been fair, or equitable to the applicant or anyone else for the Board to go on and reopen it. She said the effect of that would have been an additional Public Hearing, and she was a staunch rule follower, and she was going to do it procedurally and after speaking with the attorney that was the determination she made.

Mayor Gray said she was invited by Prime Barbecue to attend a class that Christopher Prieto gave every month for the wounded warrior project which was held at the Wendell Woman’s Club. She said if you had never been to an event like that, you should attend. It was tremendously humbling. Those in attendance had made a lot of sacrifices and to talk with them, and hear their experiences was very humbling.

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**Item 10 – Adjourn**

Commissioner Lutz made a motion to adjourn. The vote was unanimous and the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

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Virginia Gray, Mayor

Attest:

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Jonnie S. Driver, Town Clerk