

**TOWN OF WENDELL
BOARD OF COMMISSIONER MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 22, 2020**

The Wendell Town Board of Commissioners held their virtual, regularly-scheduled meeting on Monday, June 22, 2020, in the Town Board Room, Wendell Town Hall, 15 East Fourth Street.

PRESENT: Mayor Virginia Gray; Mayor Pro Tem John Boyette (virtually);
Commissioners: Jon Lutz, Jason Joyner, Joe DeLoach, and Philip Tarnaski

ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Town Manager Marc Collins, Town Clerk Megan Howard, Town Attorney Jim Cauley (virtually), Assistant to the Manager Stephanie Smith, Assistant Planning Director Bryan Coates, and Police Chief Bill Carter.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Due to the Declared State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 Virus, the Town of Wendell has altered the traditional meeting process to accommodate and encourage positive public health practices. The Town is incorporating virtual meeting practices to continue the work of the Board of Commissioners while taking proactive measures to maintain transparency and provide for public comment.

The public is encouraged to remain home and watch the business meeting on Facebook Live, or after it is posted to the Town website, or by calling (919) 375-6880 and listening to the meeting. No direct access to Town Hall will be allowed.

Public Comment period for the June 22, 2020 Board of Commissioners meeting shall be organized in advance. The public can submit their public comment to the Town Clerk via email to mhoward@townofwendell.com or submit a request to call in and teleconference during the Board of Commissioners meeting by emailing their name, address, and phone number to the clerk via email by Friday, June 19th at 5 p.m.

Mayor Gray called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Police Chief Bill Carter led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Jason Joyner provided the invocation, as George Fuller of the Wendell Christian Church did not call into the Uber Conference line.

1. ADJUSTMENT AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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ACTION

Mover: Commissioner Jason Joyner made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of item 6b, on Wendell's Early Voting Site's Discussion.

Ayes: Commissioners Joyner, DeLoach, Lutz, Tarnaski, and Boyette.

Nays: None.

Vote: 5-0

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

- The Public Comment period for the June 22, 2020 Board of Commissioners meeting shall be organized in advance. The public can submit their public comment to the Town Clerk via email to mhoward@townofwendell.com by Friday, June 19th at 5 p.m.

or

- Submit a request to speak over the phone during the Board of Commissioners meeting by emailing their name, address, and phone number to the clerk via email by Friday, June 19th at 5 p.m. The Clerk will provide the call-in phone number and provide three (3) minutes to speak on any non-public hearing item or topic.
- Questions or comments regarding specific agenda items may be directed to the contact person provided for the individual items on the agenda below for additional information before or after the meeting.

The following people signed up to speak via the Uber Conference line during public comment period:

1. Brandon Strickland: 4428 Rolesville Road, Wendell (919) 669-9489
Mr. Strickland said he was having a hard time hearing the Board. He said the reason he signed up to speak is regarding the agenda item setting the meeting to have the public hearing on the Rolesville Road property. He said as the Board all well knows, this public hearing and this plan has been going on for over a year now. Mr. Strickland said that, as the Board is aware, they've been to 3 or 4 Planning Board Meetings where the community at Town Hall has been a standing room only and they've also had a meeting with the Town Board where the room is packed. He said that he knows that town business must continue, but with the lack of him being able to hear at the Planning Board Meeting, he felt like they were at a severe disadvantage of not being able to hear the thoughts or comments of the builder. He

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said that they asked questions during that meeting that were not answered and they were unable to follow up because they were muted. Mr. Strickland said that they didn't want to be rude and unmute themselves and be kicked off the call, but there's not a good forum on this online system for something of such importance. He said that this is probably one of the most contentious subjects that he can recall in the town and he's lived here his entire life. Mr. Strickland said that normally these meetings are not that well-attended and he thinks that they've been respectful, organized, and have educated themselves on the topic, and that they've been reasonable in their asks. He said that he did not think it's fair that something this important that's going to affect all of them would be handled virtually where he feels like it puts them at a disadvantage. Mr. Strickland said it's a whole lot easier when you're distanced from someone to be rude or to be less attached to your vote because no one's there to look you in the eye when you vote. He said that he thinks something that's going to affect everyone and that has brought so much contention should be held in a forum where they can be looking at the Board face to face and can actually hear what they're saying and make sure the Board can hear what they're saying because body language means a lot and having to look someone in the eye when you vote means a lot. Mr. Strickland said that he hopes that the Board would reconsider and he knows that they can't put all town business on hold, but he doubts they'll have other agenda items in the future that pack the town hall to where there's 30 people outside. He said if they do, then there's probably some pretty crazy stuff going on in the plan so he would just ask that they consider outdoor options, maybe the community center, and especially like tonight they can't even hear the Board and so he doesn't think the technology's there right now, unfortunately, for them to have a good virtual meeting. Mr. Strickland again asked the Board to consider that as they put so much time and effort into this that it wouldn't end this way. He said he didn't think it's fair for anybody. Mr. Strickland yielded the rest of his time and thanked the Board.

Mayor Gray asked if a member of town staff could call into the Uber Conference line to listen to the quality of the call. Police Chief Bill Carter stepped out to call the conference line from his cell phone.

2. Frank Braswell: 4116 Rolesville Road, (919) 215-1615

Mr. Braswell said that this is a follow-up on what Brandon has had to talk about. He said that in all likelihood tonight, the Board will make the decision of whether or not to consider the Weathers Property for annexation at their July meeting. Mr. Braswell said that if the Board decides to put the property on its July Agenda, he's asking that the Board stipulate that their July Town Meeting cannot be virtual for some reasons that Brandon just discussed and others. He said there are some powerful reasons why, reasons that this annexation discussion and likely that all votes should and must be in person. Mr. Braswell said that first, he's guessing that not a single person on tonight's virtual hookup heard anything positive about the clarity of the audio and communications during the Planning

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Board Meeting on May 18th. He said that on a scale of 1 to 10, this case it was a 3 or a 4. He said that only two people in their time during the meeting that spoke through the mic at the podium could be clearly understood. He said when the vote was taken at the end of the meeting, calling attendees could not hear the reasons for the members' vote, nor the actual vote itself. He said at the end of the vote, the Planning Board had to be asked what the final vote actually was. Mr. Braswell asked shouldn't attendees of the meeting be able to hear the reasons for the members' vote, be it a yes or a no. He said sadly, the people of Wendell elected five Commissioners and a Mayor to represent them. He asked if the town of Wendell deserves to see and hear their elected representatives and be able to understand the reasons for their decisions. He said that this will not be possible during a wireless hookup. Mr. Braswell said that he personally communicated with a person in town leadership the day after the Planning Board Meeting to voice his concerns about the quality of the meeting. He said that the response he got was to go tell the Mayor. He said that third, there is no logical reason why virtual discussion and vote must occur in July. He said that the developer is now in the 14th month of this desired annexation. He said that the initial plan was submitted to Wendell in April of 2019, there have been five to seven revisions and changes, not to even mention that two requests that the developer made to have Wendell approve their request that were against statutes and the Wake County Planning and Zoning Requirements. In closing, Mr. Braswell said as leaders of their town community, the Board should not try to settle for a solution without regard to the quality of the work product that each of them swore to perform.

3. Ben Weathers: Address and phone number not given.

Mr. Weathers did not give his name or address. Town Clerk Megan Howard asked callers on the Uber Conference line that if Mr. Weathers was on the line, he could hit the star button on his phone twice to unmute himself and provide his public comment. None of the callers responded as Mr. Weathers. Mayor Gray moved on to the next caller, David Cozart.

4. David Cozart: 6324 Weathers Road, Wendell (919) 414-2442

Mr. Cozart said that he has lived in this area for his entire life. He said that he would like to echo the thoughts of the previous speakers and request that the Board arrange a public hearing in a face-to-face content and not a virtual format. He said it's very, very difficult to hear anything that's said on this call so far tonight. Mr. Cozart said that, as stated earlier, this project is very controversial and has been controversial from the inception and he believes the residents in this area deserve to be heard face-to-face. He said that he appreciates the Board's help and thanked them.

Mayor Gray asked Town Clerk Megan Howard to try speaking to Mr. Weathers, again, to see if he's on the call.

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Town Clerk Megan Howard asked Mr. Weathers to hit the star on his phone twice as it was his turn to speak. No one on the call claimed to be Mr. Weathers.

****Note:** Mr. Ben Weathers unmuted himself 33 minutes into the Town Board meeting, before adjournment, saying that he didn't get a turn to speak and that it was difficult for him to hear. The Mayor told him he had been announced but did not give his phone number as instructed so that the town could call him if he wasn't on the Uber Conference line. The opportunity to speak for three minutes after the public comment period had passed was provided.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

The Board of Commissioners uses a Consent Agenda to act on non-controversial items unanimously recommended for approval or have been discussed at previous meetings. The Consent Agenda is acted upon by one motion and vote of the Board. Any individual board member may pull items from the Consent Agenda for further discussion. Items pulled will be handled with the "OTHER BUSINESS" agenda topic.

3a. Budget ordinance amendment for the FY 2019-2020 budget.

Staff Contact: Finance Director Butch Kay
bkay@townofwendell.com

3b. Resolution setting public hearing date for non-contiguous annexation petition A-19-04 for 151.81 acres of property located at:
4501 Rolesville Road (12.28 acres) and identified by PIN Number 1765-85-2501; 0 Davistown Road (50.16 acres) and identified by PIN Number 1765-96-2276; 1401 Davistown Road (57.16 acres) and identified by PIN Number 1765-85-6251; and 6021 Yancey Drive (32.21 acres) and identified by PIN Number 1775-04-2139.

Staff Contact: Town Clerk Megan Howard
mhoward@townofwendell.com

3c. Certificate of Sufficiency and Resolution setting public hearing date for contiguous annexation petition A-19-08 for 7.45 acres located at 1425 S. Hollybrook Road and identified by PIN number 1793-03-4587

Staff Contact: Town Clerk Megan Howard
mhoward@townofwendell.com

ACTION

Mover: Commissioner Jon Lutz moved to approve the consent agenda, as presented.

Ayes: Commissioners Joyner, DeLoach, Lutz, Tarnaski, and Boyette.

Nays: None.

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Vote: 5-0

4. RECOGNITIONS, REPORTS, AND PRESENTATIONS

No recognitions, reports and presentations scheduled.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the current State of Emergency and in the interest of public health, the following accommodations will be made to allow public participation in public hearings, but no public attendance at Town Hall will be permitted. No Board action on public hearing items will occur if a virtual meeting is used to conduct the public hearing. The item will be continued and the public will have 24 hours from the end of the meeting to provide comments on the public hearing item.

- Public participation for public hearing items on the agenda for the June 22nd, 2020 Board of Commissioners meeting shall be organized in advance. The public can submit their public hearing comments to the Town Clerk via email to mhoward@townofwendell.com by Wednesday, June 23rd at 10 p.m. Please provide your name, address, and the agenda item number with your comments. Copies of the written comments received by Friday, June 19th at 5pm will be provided to the Board of Commissioners at the meeting, read at the meeting, and included in the minutes of the meeting. Comments will be received for 24 hours after the meeting and provided to the Board prior to action.

Or

- Submit a request to speak over the phone during the Board of Commissioners meeting by emailing their name, address, phone number, and item number they wish to speak on to the clerk via email by Friday, June 19th at 5 p.m. The Clerk will provide the call-in phone number and provide five (5) minutes to speak on any non-public hearing item or topic. Comments made by phone will be recorded and transcribed to maintain the public record.
- If you have questions regarding an agenda item, please email the staff contact directly in advance of the meeting. If preferred, you may call Town Hall at (919) 365-4450 to be directed to speak with the staff contact for the agenda item(s) of interest. Communications of this type will not be included in the meeting minutes.

No Public Hearings Scheduled.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

- 6a. Appointments to the Town of Wendell Parks and Rec Commission and Tree Board

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Staff Contact: Town Clerk Megan Howard
mhoward@townofwendell.com

Town Clerk Megan Howard presented the following staff report, below in italics:

Item Summary:

Recruitment for the Town of Wendell's Citizen Advisory Boards began in February 2020 and closed at the end of April. Communication efforts included the following:

- *Advertising posted on the Town's website's calendar, News Feed, Events, and Citizen Advisory Board Pages.*
- *An E-Board Post on Wendell Blvd.*
- *Social Media Marketing launched throughout the months on Facebook and Instagram.*
- *A PSA video posted on the Town's Social Media pages.*
- *Advertising posted in When in the Dell*

The Citizen Advisory Board recruitment process was adjusted to provide safe social distancing at Town Hall during COVID-19. Staff requested on Tuesday, May 12, 2020 that the Board of Commissioners review the applications sent via email for the Parks and Rec Commission and the Tree Board and follow up with applicants on any questions concerning their application.

The Tree Board has five (5) vacancies with terms lasting for three years. The Parks and Recreation Commission has two (2) vacancies with terms lasting for 3 years for adults, 1 year for youth.

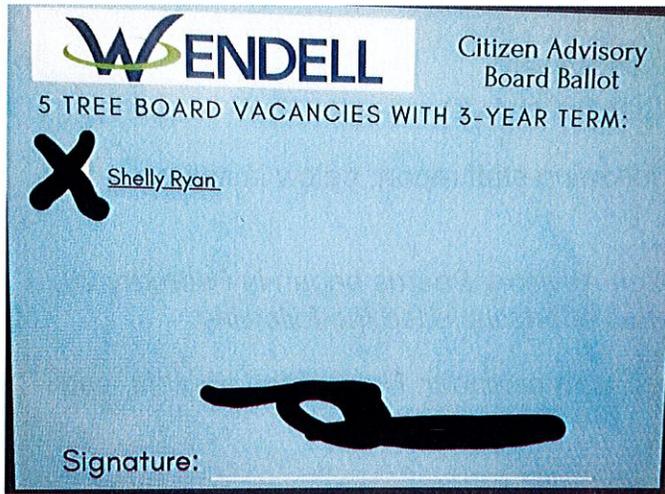
Due to the results of the previous Citizen Advisory Board recruitment, the Town now has zero applications to be considered for the Parks and Recreation Commission and one application to consider for the Tree Board.

Ms. Howard tallied up the following ballot votes:

Tree Board:

Shelly Ryan: 5 votes

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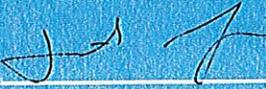
WENDELL Citizen Advisory Board Ballot
5 TREE BOARD VACANCIES WITH 3-YEAR TERM:
 Shelly.Ryan

Signature: 

WENDELL Citizen Advisory Board Ballot
5 TREE BOARD VACANCIES WITH 3-YEAR TERM:
 Shelly.Ryan

Signature: 

WENDELL Citizen Advisory Board Ballot
5 TREE BOARD VACANCIES WITH 3-YEAR TERM:
 Shelly.Ryan

Signature: 

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WENDELL Citizen Advisory Board Ballot

5 TREE BOARD VACANCIES WITH 3-YEAR TERM:

Shelly Ryan

Signature: 

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6b. Discussion on an Early Voting Site for the Town of Wendell. 17:32

Commissioner Joyner said that the Wake County Board of Elections asked about using the Community Center for an early voting site. He said he thought the Town should reach out to the Wake County Board of Elections and express that the Town is open to allowing them to use the Community Center. He said that he understands that things are in flux, and schools are going to be opening in a different way. He said he thought the Community Center is different in that it is not a school and has an open space to be used continually. Mr. Joyner said that, in the past when the Town has not fully supported it, he feels as though the Board of Elections doesn't consider the Town and he would hate for residents to have to drive to other communities. He said he understands that Parks and Rec operates there and would love for staff to come up with another solution. He said that he hopes the Board of Elections has a much better site that is within Wendell's corporate limits that can be easily used, but he'd like for them to realize that they're not telling them "no," but telling them to make the best decision based on all of the available sites, including the community center.

Commissioner Lutz said he thought that was a good idea during a time in which they don't know what things will look like in November and to at least leave things open to allow town citizens an access point would be good. He said he thought it would be foolish for the Town to not at least consider that at this point.

Commissioner DeLoach said that he supports it and he thinks it's important that the Board doesn't not consider the option. In the past, he said he's received questions about where residents can vote locally. Mr. DeLoach said that if they can have a local spot with it being 2020 and a general election will occur, not just a municipal election, he certainly thinks it will be helpful.

Mayor Gray asked that, when Town staff was contacted, which part of the Community Center was the Board of Elections interested in.

Town Manager Marc Collins said given the expected turnout and current health conditions, they wanted to use the gym instead of the large back room as they've requested in the past. He said that it would basically close the Community Center for use at this point, where the town's indoor classes are being offered right now because it allows for social distancing. He said that the outdoor amenities would still be available. Mr. Collins said that it is a value judgment for the Board and staff reported the prior policy and is open to whatever direction the Board has. He said that voting participation and the electoral process is extremely important for the community, as well.

Commissioner Joyner said that he appreciates Town staff for responding in the way that they did and he said that recent events brought schools and the elderly to mind, making it a good consideration to have.

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Mayor Gray said it would be her preference if they use the large activity room, as it has its own entrance on the side to allow for social distancing within the community center. She said she understands where Commissioner Joyner is coming from, as well.

7. OTHER BUSINESS (any item pulled from the CONSENT AGENDA [item 3 on this agenda] will be discussed during this portion of the agenda)

7a. Update on board committee(s) by Town board members:



CAMPO – Mayor Virginia Gray

Mayor Gray said she had a virtual CAMPO meeting that held a public hearing on an update to the public participation plan for electronic meetings for CAMPO. She said that all groups are struggling through what the Board is struggling through with virtual meetings. She said that they had a report on the natural gas pipeline under the American Tobacco Trail, heard a NCDOT Revenue Overview and Update on Operations due to the decrease in funding dropping below the statutory floor with the result of services having been declined at this time. CAMPO also endorsed a resolution to encourage DOT to continue support of the Triangle Travel Demand Management Program, heard a presentation on the LAPP Fiscal Year 2020 Proposed Changes which is adapting procedures and policies about LAPP funding to assist those applying and decrease the numbers of hurdles in meeting goals for LAPP funding. She said that they heard a presentation about the Northeast Area Study, which includes Wendell. It's starting off with the discovery of the conditions in Wendell and the northeast area leading to policy recommendations and then a final document. Mayor Gray said that there would also be public outreach and hotspots and conceptual design of those. For those interested, visit NEASUpdate.com. She said there's a survey and encouraged residents to participate. She said that the last thing CAMPO did was the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update process discussion.



Technical Review Committee – Mayor Pro Tempore John Boyette

Mayor Pro Tempore John Boyette said that he was unable to attend the TRC Meeting this month but was informed it was concerning some right-of-way issues. He said that the July meeting is expected to be more substantive. He said he had a good meeting with the Town Manager last week to begin the process of reviewing the architectural and engineering proposals that the Town received. He said that there were 14 engineering and 18 architectural proposals for the new town hall. He said a lot of them were very well done and there is a lot of interest from firms that have worked with the town before and ones that the town hasn't

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mask when they're out in public or inside somewhere where they can't socially distance safely from others.

9. MAYOR'S REPORTS / COMMENTS

Mayor Gray said that the farmer's market is going strong on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Campen Street. She said that there were 9 or 10 vendors this past week and it's a lot of fun and encouraged residents to check it out. She said there's going to be a modified July 4th celebration this year with a reverse parade—where the town brings the parade to residents' neighborhood. She said those interested in getting on the parade route should contact Assistant to the Manager Stephanie Smith at ssmith@townofwendell.com Mayor Gray said the parade is going to be Saturday, July 4th at 2 p.m. after the farmer's market. She encouraged people to decorate their homes and businesses and to be ready to wave when the parade goes by. On July 3rd and 4th, there's going to be a drive-in movie at the Wendell Community Park. She said the movie will start at 8:30 p.m. and encouraged people to contact Parks and Recreation for tickets on the town's website under the Departments page. Mayor Gray said the town is monitoring the Coronavirus every day and it hasn't gone away. She said she's had a lot of senior citizens call her afraid. She said she didn't want people to be afraid but to rather make smart and sensible decisions to protect yourself and others. She said to be vigilant and enjoy your summer, wear a mask if you choose, wash your hands, don't get close to other people, and wipe things down constantly. She said she believed the town's number has gone up by one in the city limits since yesterday. She said it is growing in this part of the county.

10. CLOSED SESSION

Closed session will be called if necessary.

11. ADJOURN

ACTION:

Mover: Commissioner Lutz moved to adjourn at 7:36 p.m.

Vote: 5-0

Duly adopted this ^{modd 27th} day of July 2020, while in regular session.

ATTEST:



Virginia R. Gray

Virginia R. Gray,
Mayor

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worked with. He said that he looks forward to carrying on that work and moving forward with town hall.

8. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS / COMMENTS

Commissioner Joyner thanked staff as he was able to swing by a socially-distanced farmer's market this past weekend and picked up some local honey. He said it's cool to see adaptability in the way that the farmers and farmer's market visitors are coming up with creative ways for this new time period the town is in. He thanked staff for their Saturdays and coming up with creative ideas. He said he's received many emails about wearing a mask and said that he covers his mouth when he coughs as he was raised to do so. Mr. Joyner said that he appreciates all the varieties of viewpoints and said for the record, he said the town can do some things to help prevent things. He said he wears a mask as a courtesy of others and asked people to be safe and considerate. Mr. Joyner said that he thinks the town has the ability to do that uniquely in Wendell, as it is a small community of safe and considerate people who are going to do the right thing and he appreciates that.

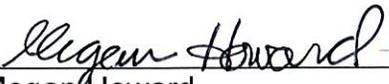
Commissioner DeLoach said he spoke last week with Shelly Lesniewicz of the Wendell Chamber of Commerce. He said that town staff reached out to Shelly and the Chamber President and he wanted to let people know that there would be an upcoming meeting regarding the Harvest Festival. He said to stay tuned for more information on that. Mr. DeLoach said he's okay with supporting and encouraging all the things including hand washing, social distancing, virtual meetings as needed, and wearing a mask. He said he wants the towns local schools, churches and businesses to be open and be as safe as possible. He said he prefers Wendell being a part of the solution and not a part of the problem. He said it was standard courtesy and encouraged others to be respectful and diligent in doing your part.

Commissioner Lutz said he will not be in attendance at the July 13th Town Board Meeting. He said if citizens had anything they would like to speak to him face-to-face about, or via phone and email to reach out to him. He said it was a vacation he planned a while ago.

Commissioner Tarnaski said good evening to everyone and said that he's glad they're leaving it optional for masks because it's their choice and their freedom to choose.

Commissioner Boyette said he'll lay in on the mask debate, too. He said he supports wearing a mask in public and indoors. He said he can assure people that community cases are on the rise and that this disease is around and is spreading and becoming more prevalent out and about, day to day. He said it is going to be with us for a while until we all learn how to not spread it amongst each other or a vaccine. Mr. Boyette said that right now, the best thing to keep yourself and others safe is to wear a mask when you're in public and socially distance correctly. He encouraged people to please wear a

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Megan Howard,
Town Clerk

