TOWN OF AYDEN
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
MINUTES

November 9, 2015 – 7:00 pm
Ayden Town Hall – Second Floor Boardroom

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Call to Order
Mayor Tripp called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

B. Roll Call
Present:
Mayor Tripp
Commissioners Davenport, Harris, Mewborn, Ross and Skinner

Absent:
None

Also Present:
Brandon Holland – Town Manager
Sherri Scharf – Town Clerk
Phillip R. Dixon – Town Attorney
J. Scott Dixon – Associate Town Attorney

C. Approval of the Agenda

Mayor Tripp called on a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion: Commissioner Skinner
Second: Commissioner Harris
Discussion: None
Approved: 5-0
The motion to approve the agenda passed.

II. PRESENTATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

A. Chamber of Commerce Events: Laura Todd, Executive Director of the Ayden Chamber, gave an update on the Christmas Parade and Marketplace event which will be held on Thursday, December 3rd from 4 to 8 p.m. in downtown Ayden. In addition to the annual parade, restaurants will be open late with dinner specials, businesses will be open late, more than 20 vendors will be on Lee St, Christmas Carolers along the parade route, and a Christmas Village at the West Ave Stage with Santa.

B. Ayden Main Street Update: Tony Peterson, Chair of the Ayden Main Street Committee, presented an official proposal for the first annual "Kings of Q" BBQ Cook-off Festival May 20-21st, 2016. He presented a color map of the downtown area which will turn into a "BBQ Village" during the event. The Kansas City Barbecue Society, the world's largest BBQ organization with over 19,000 members, requires the Governing Board to officially license and endorse the event by executing the contest sanctioning application which includes a (letter) guarantee to award all prize monies, and a Certificate of Insurance with KCBS as holder for a minimum of $1 to 2 million. Mayor Tripp, who has been attending the Committee meetings, stated that he thought $10,000 in prizes would be reasonable. Mr. Peterson stated that the event will bring 100 to 200 competitors/judges/teams and about 7,000 to 10,000 spectators. After discussion and Board comments, including need for Town support staff, Mayor Tripp called for an official vote:

Motion: Commissioner Davenport
Second: Commissioner Mewborn
Discussion: None
Approved: 5-0
The motion to complete and execute the Contest Sanctioning Application with supporting documents was approved as presented.

C. Public Comments
Mr. Jay Saunders, 3305 Langston Boulevard in Winterville, stated his intention to run for retiring Judge Leech's seat (District Court 3-A for Pitt County) in 2016. He informed the Board and citizens that there will be a non-partisan primary in March, and asked everyone for their support. Mayor Tripp thanked him for coming to the meeting.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Open Session Minutes of September 29, 2015
B. Open Session Minutes of October 6, 2015
C. Budget Amendment to Accept $275,000 Trillium Health grant funds for new all-inclusive playground at Veterans' Park

Mayor Tripp called for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Motion: Commissioner Skinner
Second: Commissioner Harris
Discussion: None
Approved: 5-0
The motion to approve the consent agenda passed.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Resolution to Award Contract for Littlefield Road Solar Farm

Town Manager Brandon Holland stated that PowerServices Project Engineer Mike Taylor was present to discuss the final phase of the solar farm project. Mr. Taylor stated that the contract before the Governing Board was for labor to construct the distribution facilities for interconnecting the Littlefield Road Solar Farm. It will be the final step in the project. Mr. Taylor explained that the total project cost of $297,000 was paid up front by the Solar Generator Company (Coronal Development Services, formerly known as HelioSage), so the Governing Board will not be "spending money" but merely awarding the contract. He added that since this bid for labor amounted to only $71,986, and the interconnection work is highly specialized, there are not many contractors who are interested in bidding. T&D Solutions (Kinston, NC) is the only contractor who wants to do the work. Mr. Taylor expects the interconnection work to begin the first week of December and be complete by year end.

Mayor Tripp called on the Board for a motion.

Motion: Commissioner Skinner
Second: Commissioner Harris
Discussion: None
Approved: 5-0
The motion to adopt Resolution No. 15-16-05 to award a contract for $71,986 to T&D Solutions LLC for construction of distribution facilities for interconnection at the Littlefield Rd. Solar Farm was approved as presented.

B. Appointment to Library Board

Town Manager Holland explained that with Rachelle Mondovich having stepped down from the Library Board to accept the position of Ayden's Librarian, there is now a vacant seat to fill on the Board. The Town of Ayden advertised this vacancy in the newspaper and on the front page of the Town's website. Current Library Board member Martha Stancil has applied seeking to serve her second term. Since Ms. Stancil has served only one three-year term, and she is the only applicant seeking this vacancy, staff recommends reappointing her for another term.

Mayor Tripp called for a motion.

Motion: Commissioner Mewborn
Second: Commissioner Harris
Discussion: None
Approved: 5-0
The motion to reappoint Ms. Martha Stancil to a second term on the Library Board passed.

C. Appointments to Arts & Recreation Commission

Town Manager Holland explained that current Commission members Cherry Stokes and Annette Harris have terms that have expired on the Ayden Arts & Recreation Commission. Cherry Stokes was appointed in September 2012 and has applied to seek another term. Annette Harris was appointed in October 2012 and has applied to seek another term.

The Town of Ayden advertised this vacancy in the newspaper and on the front page of the Town's website. In response to the advertising, Mr. Paul Hill (601 Second Street) and Ms. Heather Clayton (630 NC 102-W) have applied hoping to serve.

Since they are eligible to serve another term and are requesting that they be able to do so, it is recommended that Cherry Stokes and Annette Harris be reappointed to serve another term. Also, Ms. Clayton lives outside the Town's corporate limits and, thus, would technically not qualify for a full member position, but may be reconsidered if or when the current ETJ position occupied by Ashley Watkins becomes vacant.

Mayor Tripp called for a motion.

Motion: Commissioner Mewborn
Second: Commissioner Skinner
Discussion: None
Approved: 5-0
The motion to reappoint Cherry Stokes and Annette Harris to the Arts & Recreation Commission passed.

D. Social Media Policy for Staff

Manager Holland stated that the Town had been considering a Social Media Policy to provide guidance for the Town's use of social media outlets for communications. Social Media accounts provide for real time updates and communication of Town activities and promotion of Town related events. He added that Administration, Arts & Recreation, Police and Ayden Main Street all currently have Facebook pages. The proposed policy addresses usage, benefits, personal social media accounts, and areas of concern that are associated with social media pages established by local government organizations.

With the Board's approval, it would be incorporated as a change into the Town's current personnel manual.

Mayor Tripp called for a motion.

Motion: Commissioner Mewborn
Second: Commissioner Ross
Discussion: None
Approved: 5-0
The motion to approve the Social Media Communications Policy and incorporate it into the Town's current personnel manual passed.

E. Grievance Procedures/Whistleblower Policy

Manager Holland explained that, like the Social Media Policy, the Grievance Procedure and Whistleblower Policy is one of several that will be considered and incorporated as updates in the Town's Personnel Manual.

He stated that staff has worked with UNC School of Government personnel practitioners and consulted other resources to provide a user friendly policy that details grievance and whistle-blowing procedures for employees. The proposed policy provides a modern necessary approach that is common among municipalities and organizations of comparable size. It is the

intent to provide employee training as policy updates occur to set an appropriate level of expectation and knowledge of Town policies.

Commissioner Mewborn initiated a conversation regarding the length of time allowed for each step stating that he felt when it comes to employee concerns "in the world we live in," they should be addressed more quickly. He stated he felt that these matters should be heard and resolution started much more quickly than 5 to 10 to 30 working days. A lengthy conversation continued amongst Board members with opinions given by Town Attorney Dixon. Attorney Dixon stated that employee grievance investigations are more complex and need time to resolve. In response to Commissioner Mewborn's question about Section 5: Grievance and Appeals for Discrimination, regarding the 30 day timeline, he stated that Federal Equal Employment Opportunity law sets the standard for the appeals process.

Mayor Tripp called for a motion.

Motion: Commissioner Skinner
Second: Commissioner Harris
Discussion: None
Approved: 5-0
The motion to table the table a decision on the proposed Grievance and Whistleblower Policy until the next Governing Board meeting passed.

F. Holiday Gift Cards for Employees/Reserve Officers

Manager Holland stated it has been customary in years past to give gift cards to all Town employees as a holiday bonus. No cost-of-living pay increases were allocated to Town employees in the current fiscal year's budget. Last year the Governing Board approved the following gift card purchases: $500 gift cards for all employees and $75 for reserve officers for a total appropriation of $36,450. Manager Holland is proposing this year that the Board approve $250 for each employee and $75 for reserve officers for a total appropriation of $17,375. Currently the Town has 74 employees (Housing Authority Included) and 5 reserve officers that would receive this contribution should the board approve the proposal.

After a discussion initiated by Commissioner Mewborn related to police reserve officers being offering "too little" in the proposal, Commissioner Skinner made a motion to offer $300 to each employee and $125 to each reserve officer. The motion failed due to lack of a second vote.

Mayor Tripp called for a final motion on the matter.

Motion: Commissioner Skinner
Second: Commissioner Ross
Discussion: None
Approved: 5-0
The motion to approve a holiday bonus in the amount of $300 for all Town employees and Police Reserve Officers passed.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Sewer Infrastructure Study and Project Update

Project Engineer Rich Moore, McDvid Associates, explained that the Town has previously been awarded (and accepted) a $1,000,000 Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan at 0% interest. CWSRF project scope targets several existing sewer collection lines and proposes to rehabilitate three (3) existing sewer pump stations (Pump Stations 8, 9, and 10). Sewer line replacement/rehabilitation is proposed to be addressed on a "find and fix" method of performing a more intensive review of assets and repairing areas as discovered during the review process.

The Town authorized the development of a funding application to USDA – Rural Development (USDA) using the CWSRF as a matching fund source in an effort to maximize a USDA grant. As part of developing a USDA project scope, Town labor forces have evaluated existing sanitary sewer collection lines and identified areas of problems. Based on CWSRF scoping, Mr. Moore provided the following exhibits for Board review and information:

1. Map of the Town's primary sewer collection system (mainly oldest sections of the Town's sewer system).
2. Map of the Town's primary sewer collection system showing which sewer lines have been replaced/rehabilitated since 1999.
3. Map of the Town's primary sewer collection system showing CWSRF scoping (shown in blue highlight) and proposed USDA scoping (shown in green highlight) that is based on Town labor force evaluation and documentation of problems.
4. Preliminary cost estimate that shows projected costs of USDA scoping ($1,742,000) and CWSRF scoping ($1,000,000).

Mr. Moore pointed out that CWSRF scoping appears to be greater than USDA scope based on the maps. However, based on cost estimates, CWSRF funds are proposed to rehabilitate only about 2,500 linear feet of sewer lines as compared to 6,400 LF in the USDA scope.

Concerning next steps, Mr. Moore stated that based on defined scoping, a State Clearinghouse submittal is being processed that represents a first step to the USDA process. An engineering report will be submitted to USDA within the next 30 days that will confirm funding availability to address sewer infrastructure needs beyond the obligated CWSRF project scope. USDA scope will be reviewed and modified as needed based on ongoing evaluation of sewer collection assets in an effort to best address inflow/infiltration problems.

Mr. Moore added that USDA will determine the eligibility for the project. He proposes 45% of the $2,742,000 total project cost which would include the target area plus 3 pump stations.

Commissioner Davenport asked if all the Town's sewer lines had be scoped and smoke tested, and Mr. Moore replied "yes" and that the service laterals had been repaired and other areas and catch basins. She asked about South Edge Road, and Mr. Moore replied that it had already been repaired and some lines replaced. Related to the target area, Mayor Tripp inquired if there were areas of infiltration or if it was just aging infrastructure that needed to be replaced. Mr. Moore replied that it was aging infrastructure, reminding the Board that the first map depicted a 1930's era sanitary sewer collection system.

VII. INFORMATION

Staff Departmental Reports

VIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

The Governing Board members thanked the citizens for coming out on a rainy night to attend the meeting, and Commissioner Harris reminded them of the upcoming Veterans' Day ceremony, free flu shot clinic, and the Smiles & Frowns Children's Theater production.

IX. CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Tripp called upon Town Attorney Phil Dixon who recommended that the Board enter Closed Session that evening pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) – to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney/client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged and NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (6) – to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee.

Mayor Tripp called for a motion to enter closed session.

Motion: Commissioner Harris
Second: Commissioner Skinner
Discussion: None
Approved: 5-0
The motion to enter closed session at 8:18 p.m. was approved.

X. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Mayor Tripp called for a motion to return to open session.

Motion: Commissioner Ross
Second: Commissioner Harris
Discussion: None
Approved: 5-0
The motion to return to open session at 9:58 p.m. was approved

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Having completed the business before them, Mayor Tripp announced that without objection the Governing Board would stand adjourned at 9:58 pm.

CERTIFICATION

Minutes from November 9th, 2015 meeting were adopted and certified this 14th day of December 2015 in Ayden, North Carolina.

THE TOWN OF AYDEN
INCORPORATED
SEAL
1891
PITT COUNTY, NC

AYDEN, NORTH CAROLINA

Stephen W. Tripp, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sherri Scharf, Town Clerk