

SPENCER BOARD OF ALDERMEN PLANNING RETREAT  
SATURDAY, JANUARY 29, 2011  
SPENCER FIRE DEPARTMENT  
8:30 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Jody Everhart  
Mayor Pro-Tem Scott Benfield  
Aldermen: Tracy Aitken  
Delaine Fowler  
Jeff Morris  
David Smith  
Reid Walters

Also present were Town Manager Larry Smith and Town Clerk Lisa Perdue. Mayor Everhart welcomed everyone and introduced facilitator Bill Duston, from Centralina Council of Governments. Duston reviewed the agenda which will establish five areas of concentration and also reviewed the ground rules for the meeting. **MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN AITKEN TO ESTABLISH CONSENSUS AS BEING THE MAJORITY (DOESN'T HAVE TO BE UNANIMOUS). MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN MORRIS AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN BENFIELD TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED GROUND RULES. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN FOWLER AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Town Board Issues for Consideration

Some Board members had submitted issues prior to the meeting. The Board was given time to list additional items, which were then grouped by category, and categories were ranked according to priority. The categories and their rankings were: 1) Economic Development, 2) Environmental / Solid Waste, 3) Voting / Administrative, 4) Departmental Needs, 5) Planning & Communication, 6) Library, 7) Recreation, and 8) ABC.

**Economic Development**

Board members brainstormed on items concerning economic development and listed the following:

- Extend façade grants to residential uses throughout the Town (limited to structural improvements)
- Eliminate matching requirements for façade grants
- Extend grants to signs
- Money to replace roofs
- Extend façade grants to all businesses
- Provide tax incentives for new home ownership
- Create brochure for getting potential buyers of distressed properties the information needed for downward adjustment of tax valuation
- Small Town Main Street program
- Explore urban redevelopment options

- Invite EDC director to report to Board of Aldermen on a regular basis (in advance of the joint meeting with the Planning Board) and make recommendations on what the Town can do to make properties more marketable
- Partner with non-profits (ex. Salisbury Historic Foundation) to assist with revitalization of the Historic District
- Seek an interlocal agreement with East Spencer about future growth and potential future extraterritorial jurisdiction (would need approval from Rowan County)

The Board chose the most important from the aforementioned items and discussed an implementation schedule of the major items (ranked in order of the most votes):

- 1) Partner with non-profits for downtown revitalization – Discuss Small Town Main Street, Urban Redevelopment, and Historic Salisbury Foundation at the April meeting
- 2) Extend façade grants to residential – Discuss in budget meetings
- 3) Invite EDC Director on a regular basis – May and November meetings
- 4) Interlocal agreement concerning ETJ – Mayor Everhart will discuss with East Spencer Mayor and report back at the March meeting
- 5) Extend façade grants to all businesses
- 6) Brochure for downward adjustment of tax valuation

#### **Environmental / Solid Waste**

- Explore recycling options and bring cost benefit analysis possibly to April Board meeting
- Sanitation – Cost benefit analysis over a 10-year period of going from backyard to curbside for residential pickup and RFP for privatization by the November Board meeting
- Sidewalks – Apply for CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality) funds, expand network from schools to downtown and connect neighborhoods
- Maintain funding for sidewalks
- Extend pedestrian facility to Wilcox bridge (no equestrian use) as part of CMAQ grant if it qualifies
- Stormwater – Fund whatever is required for compliance (develop minimal compliance costs for starting the program)
- Form a stormwater committee
- Compare solid waste costs with other Phase II cities
- Gather materials to educate the public on stormwater runoff
- Explore costs for getting financial assistance in removing fecal matter from Grants Creek (identify source, PW Director speak with other entities and report back)
- Explore costs for appeal vs. costs of implementation of minimal compliance –  
**MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN MORRIS TO BEGIN THE APPEAL PROCESS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IF THE APPEAL DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 14. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN FOWLER AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Board chose the most important from Environmental / Solid Waste:

- 1) Sidewalks – maintain funding, explore grants, explore expansion to river
- 2) Cost analysis from backyard to curbside pickup
- 3) Be ready for stormwater mandate
- 4) Explore recycling options

### **Voting / Administrative**

Mayor Everhart explained that to change the terms for Aldermen from two years to staggered four year terms could be decided upon by the Aldermen themselves or put on the ballot for the voters to decide. To implement if approved, the Mayor and the top three vote getters would take four year terms, and the bottom three vote getters would take two year terms. Aldermen Fowler and Walters would like to retain the current procedure of two year terms. The consensus was to let the voters make the decision.

Action items:

- Have the vote by Aldermen on whether to place staggered voting on the ballot no later than the end of July
- Ask the Board of Elections the time table for implementation to get on the November ballot – have that information by the March Board meeting
- Find out the costs to have the issue placed on the ballot (regular election vs. special election)

### **Departmental Needs**

A. Facilities Needs Study – Put RFP on Board of Aldermen agenda for March

1. Town Hall and Police Department are in bad shape
2. Could it be done in-house?
3. Probably not, and if it can't be done in-house, then it needs to be budgeted.
4. Look at costs of renovating vs. rebuilding
5. Think “out of the box”, such as moving Town offices to Park Plaza

B. Capital Investment in Infrastructure and Equipment

1. Fire Department brush truck – gently used
2. One police vehicle
3. Police Department “wish list” – digital cameras, in-car camera, tasers, Glock service pistols, and GPS locators
4. Public Works vehicle – F-550 diesel with 12 ft. dump bed – gently used
5. Take home police cars – Aitken proposed to allow officers to take the cars

home and pay mileage. Morris would be more in favor if the cars had GPS systems. Smith favors the take-home cars. Everhart would like mileage charged. Fowler would like to see officers eligible for a merit raise. **MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN AITKEN TO ISSUE TAKE HOME CARS TO OFFICERS WHO LIVE WITHIN FIVE MILES; IF OVER FIVE MILES AWAY, OFFICER MAY TAKE CAR HOME BUT WOULD PAY IRS MILEAGE RATE FOR COMMUTING ONLY (NO PERSONAL USE) AND THAT MONEY GETS DEDICATED TO POLICE**

**CAR MAINTENANCE AND EQUIPMENT. IF CALLED IN OUTSIDE WORKING HOURS AND COURT (IN EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY), THEY DO NOT PAY MILEAGE. NEW POLICY WOULD BE EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 2011. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN MORRIS AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. Send resolution to the school Board ref: communication at the schools for the police and fire departments – February Board meeting

**7. MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN MORRIS TO AUTHORIZE THE IMMEDIATE PURCHASE OF EIGHT DIGITAL CAMERAS AT A MAXIMUM COST OF \$130 EACH. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN SMITH AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Planning and Communication**

- Planning Board and Board of Aldermen meet jointly two times per year (March and September) so Aldermen can provide direction to Planning Board
- HPC establish objective criteria for signs in downtown that staff could approve without HPC approval. If outside criteria, applicant would seek a variance from HPC. Recommendation from HPC should go to Planning Board by June 1, in order to have a recommendation to present to the Aldermen in August.
- Remove “character” requirement in ordinance for applicants for a new business.
- Allow more than one principle use for businesses, with precautions. Certain combined uses should be okay. Develop text and have a recommendation from the Planning Board by the June Board of Aldermen meeting.
- Planning Board come to the joint meeting in March with potential change to make land use regulations less cumbersome for businesses.
- **MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN WALTERS TO REFER TO THE PLANNING BOARD THE STUDY OF REQUIRING POOLS TO BE COVERED AT UNOCCUPIED HOMES AND BRING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE ALDERMEN BY SEPTEMBER. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN MORRIS AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Library**

- Develop the cost for the budget meeting for cataloging software and handrails on the inside on Rowan Avenue side.
- Alderman Walters distributed information about a potential Rail Days and Bluegrass in the Park event. **MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN AITKEN TO FORM A COMMITTEE TO START THE PROCESS FOR PLANNING THE EVENT. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN BENFIELD AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- Bricks could be sold to raise funds for the Library.
- Walters would like to have a called meeting to discuss the use of the Library for events and plan how to market those uses. Morris would like to see a reception

for alumni and discuss second floor renovations. The consensus was to discuss use of the Library following the regular agenda at the Board meeting in April.

**Recreation**

- Tile floors in the bathrooms at the ballpark – get costs for budget workshop
- Create a master plan for Eighth Street ballpark. Apply for Norfolk Southern grant (September deadline) if master plan is completed in time.

**ABC**

Resolution to keep the system as is failed four to one. Some towns are looking at creating a separate ABC Board in place of the County Board. Walters stated that Spencer doesn't get a fair share of the profits. **MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN MORRIS TO INVESTIGATE WITH OTHER SMALL TOWNS THE POTENTIAL OF MAKING A SEPARATE ABC BOARD. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN WALTERS AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.** Alderman Morris was chosen to be the liaison to meet with the other towns.

**What Did We Learn Today?**

Aldermen felt they are working better as a team and respect each other's thoughts and opinions.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa B. Perdue, CMC  
Clerk to the Board