

SPENCER BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING
MAY 10, 2011
7:00 P.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 Attorney Rivers Lawther. Mayor Everhart opened the meeting with prayer and the pledge of allegiance.

RECOGNITION – None

STUDENT APPRECIATION AWARDS – Monthly awards went to Kunius Pruitt, North Rowan Elementary School; and Joshua Cozart, North Rowan High School.

1. ADDITIONS / DELETIONS AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN MORRIS TO ADD DISCUSSION OF A BROADBAND REFERENDUM AS #19 ON THE AGENDA AND MOVE BUDGET WORKSHOP TO ITEM #20. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN FOWLER AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN BENFIELD TO ADOPT THE AGENDA AS AMENDED. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN WALTERS AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN FOWLER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING ON APRIL 12, 2011 AND THE CALLED MEETING ON APRIL 18, 2011. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN MORRIS AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. PUBLIC HEARING – ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 11-02 – SIGNAGE

The proposed ordinance amendment addresses criteria for administrative approval of signage within the historic district. Mayor Everhart opened the public hearing. No one spoke and the public hearing was closed.

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN MORRIS TO SEND THE ORDINANCE BACK TO THE PLANNING BOARD FOR MORE OBJECTIVE CRITERIA.

MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN FOWLER AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS were given by Police Chief Mike James, Fire Captain Jason Cooper, Public Works Director Jeff Bumgarner, Land Management Director Dustin Wilson, and Town Clerk Lisa Perdue. Land Management was given Board consensus to look into the possibility of working with the City of Salisbury water department to insure that minimum housing standards are being met before water is turned on for a new resident.

5. TOWN MANAGER LARRY SMITH reported on major town projects.

6. MAYORAL & COMMITTEE REPORTS – Mayor Everhart reported on his activities since the last Board meeting.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT – Bob Oswald, 410 7th Street, encouraged the Board to pass the Small Town Main Street resolution. Robert Bennett, 506 Oakwood, expressed concern about the Town budget.

NEW BUSINESS

8. ROWAN WORKS – STAKEHOLDERS REPORT

Robert Van Geons, Rowan Works Economic Development, gave an overview of recent projects and development and marketing strategies for the future.

9. FAÇADE GRANT REQUEST – 111 FIFTH STREET

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN MORRIS TO APPROVE A FAÇADE GRANT OF \$500 TO THE LUNCH BOX, 111 FIFTH STREET. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN SMITH AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

10. SENIOR SERVICES OVERVIEW

Rev. Richard Gross, exercise instructor Betty Titus, and Rick Eldridge from Rufty Holmes Senior Center reported on the services provided by their respective senior citizen programs and the approximate number of Spencer residents who participate.

11. FAÇADE GRANT POLICY

The Board voted at the budget workshop that if any façade grant funds are still available in April, the program would be opened to accept applications for residential improvements.

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN BENFIELD TO APPROVE THE ATTACHED FAÇADE GRANT POLICY, AS AMENDED.

12. DISCUSSION – SOLID WASTE COLLECTION

The Board reviewed the curb-side collection proposal from the public works department.

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN WALTERS TO HOLD A COURTESY HEARING FOR CURBSIDE PICKUP AT THE NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN FOWLER AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

13. RESOLUTION – SMALL TOWN MAIN STREET PROGRAM

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN FOWLER TO ADOPT THE RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE NC SMALL TOWN MAIN STREET PROGRAM. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN WALTERS AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

14. SURPLUS PROPERTY RESOLUTION – BODY ARMOR

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN MORRIS TO APPROVE THE ATTACHED SURPLUS PROPERTY RESOLUTION CONCERNING BODY ARMOR. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN SMITH AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

15. ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 11-04 – LEAF & BRUSH COLLECTION

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN MORRIS TO ADOPT ORDINANCE AMENDMENT 11-04, CONCERNING LEAF AND BRUSH COLLECTION. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN BENFIELD AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

16. SET DATE FOR PUBLIC HEARING – FY 2011/12 BUDGET

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN FOWLER TO SET JUNE 14 AS THE DATE FOR THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET AT THE END OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN SMITH AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

17. BUDGET AMENDMENTS

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN MORRIS TO APPROVE BUDGET AMENDMENTS 2011-04 THROUGH 2011-07. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN AITKEN AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

18. PROPERTY LIENS

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN BENFIELD TO APPROVE A LIEN AGAINST 700 S YADKIN FOR \$481.00, AND 301 N SALISBURY AVENUE FOR \$906.00. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN SMITH AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

19. DISCUSSION – BROADBAND REFERENDUM

Alderman Morris would like for staff to explore adding the issue of broadband to the ballot in the November election. Issues to be determined would include: cost of election, cable franchise fees, lost revenue? Competition would be good, but the voters should decide. It would be a non-binding referendum. Spencer could allow (or not allow) Fibrant to extend services to Spencer.

MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN FOWLER TO ASK STAFF TO EXPLORE WHAT FIBRANT WOULD LIKE TO BRING TO SPENCER. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN WALTERS AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

20. BUDGET WORKSHOP

Town Manager Smith presented a preliminary budget showing several scenarios: revenue neutral without curbside, revenue neutral with curbside, 5.6 cent decrease from revenue neutral without curbside, and 5.6 cent decrease from revenue neutral with curbside. An overview of land management services was provided. Rowan County is not interested in taking over Spencer's land management services. The sanitation study estimates savings of \$33,736 if curbside pickup is done in-house. The new leaf and brush pickup ordinance will provide an estimated savings of \$13,514.

Board members discussed the tax rate. Alderman Morris does not want Spencer to have the highest tax rate in the county. He feels that if fund balance is used, the tough decisions are being deferred to future Boards. Alderman Aitken is in favor of a revenue neutral tax rate.

Town Manager Smith stated that privatization of solid waste could potentially be a big savings. **MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN FOWLER TO HAVE AN RFP FOR PRIVATIZATION AT THE JUNE BOARD MEETING. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN MORRIS AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MOTION WAS MADE BY ALDERMAN MORRIS TO GET INFORMATION FROM CENTRALINA COG, INFOCUS, AND BENCHMARK, CONCERNING PROVIDING LAND MANAGEMENT SERVICES. MOTION SECONDED BY ALDERMAN FOWLER AND CARRIED BY A VOTE OF FIVE:
AYES: BENFIELD, FOWLER, MORRIS, SMITH, WALTERS
NAYS: AITKEN**

The new health insurance saved approximately \$81,000 this year. However, other factors have increased, and next fiscal year is expected to incur about a 20% increase. The Town Manager recommends keeping the same plan next year, with the possibility of adding a Health Savings Account program.

Alderman Morris asked staff to get the proposed tax rates from the other municipalities.

Town Manager Smith needs to prepare his budget message by June 1. He asked for the Board's direction on the tax rate and authorization to use fund balance. Following discussion, the consensus of the Board was to plan the budget using a 62.8 cent tax rate and no planned deficit spending, by any means (cuts) necessary.

With no further business, Mayor Everhart adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa B. Perdue, CMC
Clerk to the Board