

SPENCER BOARD OF ALDERMEN PLANNING RETREAT
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2008
SPENCER WOMEN'S CLUB
8:00 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Jody Everhart
Mayor Pro-Tem Jeff Morris
Aldermen: Nick Bishop
Donnie Hinson
C. E. Spear
Ken Womble

MEMBERS ABSENT: Alderman: Scott Benfield

Also present were Town Manager Larry Smith and Town Clerk Lisa Perdue. Department heads, Barry Pruett, Dustin Wilson, Robert Bennett, and Assistant Fire Chief Terry Smith were present for portions of the meeting.

Citizen Concerns

Forrest Clanton addressed the Board concerning quality of life, citing problems with animal control. Jim Ferree informed the Board that the majority of residents in Dorsett Town are opposed to any annexation of that area. Toots Sparger raised several concerns, including reporting of crimes that occur, code enforcement, police presence at ball games, and grant applications. Jim Gobbel distributed brochures about tree pruning, and expressed concerns about taxes, economic development, and public perception.

Board Expectations

Mayor Everhart introduced Al Sharp, facilitator from Centralina Council of Governments, who reviewed the ground rules for the meeting. Board members expressed the level of participation they expect from the Town Manager. Board members then gave reasons they ran for public office. Goals they wish to accomplish this term include: new business at the old Park Plaza, reach out to visitors, be business friendly, get industry on the north end, start programs for youth, work with the Business Association to promote and market the Town, continue the streetscape program, review ordinances, evaluate and rewrite as necessary, keep taxes as low as possible, keep a well managed budget, find and promote core values, and integrate the schools into the community. Goals they wish to accomplish today include: establish a unified game plan, set vision and prioritize, seek a consensus on what core leadership values are, answer citizen concerns, identify individual goals and pull them into team goals, and work with the NC Transportation Museum.

Police Department

Capital request for next fiscal year is one new vehicle, approximate cost \$26,000. The Department is working to address rental properties and problem citizens. Equipment replacement will become an issue in the next several years. Grants can buy new equipment the department doesn't have, but can not replace existing equipment.

Fire Department

Assistant Fire Chief Terry Smith reviewed the 2007 alarms, mutual aid statistics, response zones, and training. He reviewed personnel, recognitions, and the department's organizational chart. The Junior Firefighter program will begin in the fall of 2008. He reviewed the current budget, and also the five year projection for capital requests.

Public Works Department

Capital requests are a small bucket truck, and a new chassis and cab for a dump truck. Public Works Director Barry Pruett reviewed the priority list for sidewalk and street repairs. He presented two quotes for insulation of the walls at the public works shop.

Land Management Department

Land Management Director Dustin Wilson explained the yearly statistics from 2007 and the mission for the department. He reviewed the statistics for zoning permits, code enforcement, ordinance amendments, certificates of appropriateness, and conditional use permits. The Land Use Plan will be complete in June, 2008. Benchmark will do a market analysis for economic development. The department has no major budget requests. There was discussion of the need to study the setbacks on outlying property (Long Ferry Road area) for the future when Jake Alexander will extend around the north end of Spencer.

Town Manager / Administration

Town Manager Larry Smith reviewed the Goals for 2008 from the Spencer Business Association. The Board needs to agree on what type tree needs to remain in the downtown planters. Only a very small percentage of Spencer citizens utilize the services at Spencer Library. Carpet there has been replaced, and the next step in renovations would be the windows. A 501(c)3 designation is needed to raise funds for renovations. There was discussion about the possibility of using the Library building for Town Hall offices. The Town Manager and the Finance Committee will research the feasibility.

North Carolina Transportation Museum

NCTM Director Elizabeth Smith would like a press release on the Town lot being officially turned over to the Museum. The first phase of the boiler repair has begun; completion is scheduled for 2010. Donation of the 1949 Mack fire truck will soon be officially complete. New directional signs and informational signs are being planned. The Museum will be receiving funds from the State for power shop repairs. The water tanks will be painted in the spring. Maintenance on the bank on the south end of the property is an ongoing problem.

Town Board Issues for Consideration

Facilitator Al Sharp explained that the Board needs to set goals, prioritize, and then develop an Action Plan based on Board consensus. Major directions the Board discussed included: assist the Business Association, and consider annexation on the north end and

the east end. There was unanimous consensus to investigate the feasibility and cost of the potential annexation petitions by a week prior to the March Board meeting. A calendar for annexation needs to be established. The Board needs to define their relationship with Salisbury-Rowan EDC and also inventory the motor sports initiatives. Ordinances need to be reviewed that relate to economic development and conditional use (ex. cluster development). During a discussion of economic development, the quality of life issue was raised. Housing alternatives can include: cluster development, a walkable community, and trails (apply for grant with Carolina Thread Trail.) Consensus of the Board was to ask the Planning Board to study a Cluster Development Ordinance. City of Salisbury staff members need to meet with the Water/Sewer Committee to discuss water and sewer in the annexed areas. Full disclosure of any involvement by Board members is crucial.

Promotion of Image / Appearance

No funds are currently in the budget for streetscape plans. Keeping the town clean and tidy and keeping talk proud and positive would require no funds but can be very important. The Board needs to decide what they consider the “front door” entrance to Town and how it can be improved. There was a consensus among Board members to draft an ordinance regarding cars in the front yard.

Youth activities did not receive Board consensus as a high priority, but the Recreation Committee could study any low cost programs for youth using resources we already have.

Powell Bill funds can be used for sidewalk replacement. Volunteers need to be recruited to work on the Safe Routes to School grant application.

Schools

Perhaps a Town representative could attend PTA meetings at the schools. The newsletter needs to include information from the schools if it can be obtained. There was discussion of implementing a program to recognize a student of the month at Board meetings.

Evaluate Budget

The Town needs to seek supplemental revenues and expand the tax base. Centralina COG can help with a study concerning Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances. The Town may want to consider a capital budget to budget large items over time in increments.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa B. Perdue, Clerk to the Board