

Zebulon Board of Commissioners
Work Session
Minutes
April 17, 2013

Present: Robert S. Matheny-Mayor, Curtis Strickland, Beverly Clark, Roy Collins, Dale Beck, Don Bumgarner, Rick Hardin-Town Manager, Lisa Markland-Town Clerk, Mark Hetrick-Planning, Bobby Fitts-Finance, Tim Hayworth-Police, Chris Ray-Public Works, Sidney Perry-Fire, Greg Johnson-Parks and Recreation, Eric Vernon-Attorney

Mayor Matheny called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Strickland made a motion, second by Commissioner Clark to approve the agenda. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Planning

Overlay District Ordinance

Julie Spriggs presented the requested changes from the previous meeting. The changes were recessed entranceways would be allowed, powder or vinyl chain link fencing would be allowed in areas like playgrounds and those not highly visible such as in back alley's or behind buildings, security bars on the outside of windows would be grandfathered in. The ordinance would only apply to commercial businesses in the downtown overlay district; it would not apply in any way to residences.

Mayor Matheny asked what percentage of a fence being repaired would cause the ordinance to kick in and require replace of the fencing. Julie explained that it would only be the percent of the fence that was being repaired would have to meet the standard of the overlay ordinance; the rest of the existing fence would be allowed to remain. Mark stated that 50% was the normal for most nonconforming ordinances, but that was not part of the proposed ordinance.

Next, Mayor Matheny asked about who decided if a sign was architecturally compatible with other signage in the area. Julie stated that would be the land use administrator, staff or the Technical Review Committee. The Mayor asked if there was an appeal would that go to the Board of Adjustment. Julie said that was correct.

There was discussion about the requirement that sloped roofs be concealed by a parapet or false front and the fact that the Mayor thought there would be a problem meeting that requirement. He also wanted to know when it would be required to change the roof structure. Julie said that it would only be required if the roof were damaged, she continued by saying that nothing in the ordinance would require property owners to make changes to their buildings unless there were upgrades or repairs made to the buildings. Commissioner Beck asked what the purpose was with that requirement since a sloped roof was much easier to deal with than a flat one especially when

Board of Commissioners

Minutes

April 17, 2013

it came to leaks. Julie explained that the ordinance was not prohibiting a sloped roof only that they be screened just like mechanical screens. It was strictly for aesthetic purposes. Commissioner Beck thought that requiring property owners to do something like that would not be a good idea. Julie said that part of the proposed ordinance could be stricken or rewritten. Mayor Matheny said that maybe they could add the wording of where possible or practical so that it wasn't such a hard and fast requirement.

Commissioner Beck asked about bars on the windows and what the requirement was for that. Julie stated that bars would have to be on the inside and not the outside and should be decorative in nature.

Finally, Commissioner Beck said that he had issues with the map boundaries and that they should not go past Church Street or Popular Street. After discussion by the Board it was decided that the boundaries would be pulled back to those streets going east and west since it would be easy for the Board to make the change if needed.

The changes recommended would be put into place and then be brought back to the public hearing in May.

B. Facility Use

Policy and License Agreement

Eric Vernon reviewed the policy with the application process and the agreement required for use of the facility.

There was discussion about the nights available that could be used and the Mayor did not want to make it so that groups would be prohibited from using it for events on a week night. It was decided that they could use the facility on Friday night, all day Saturday and Sunday.

The Board stated that a fee and a security deposit would be charged to all organizations who wanted to use the facility. The Board also said that they did not have a problem with attaching signage to the front fence with the approval of the Town Manager.

There was discussion about insurance requirements, signage, access to the 911 phone and the ability to close the front gates.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Finance

2013-2014 Budget Proposal

Rick Hardin stated that the year ahead was potentially a very tough financial year with many factors coming together that had to be dealt with. The things that were affecting the budget would be the potential loss of the hold harmless funding, \$60k in the fire department from Wake County that would help fund the three firefighter salaries previously funded by a grant, tax reform could hurt the Town and several other areas. Rick explained that one cent on the tax rate was equivalent to approximately \$75,000.

Board of Commissioners

Minutes

April 17, 2013

Bobby Fitts presented the first proposal of the 2013-2014 budget. The current positions that were vacant would remain unfilled, possible continuation of funding for the bus service at a reduced rate of \$12,500 (this was still being discussed), one percent of the taxable income had to be in reserve for unemployment which would mean approximately \$214 per employee.

The overall total budget being proposed would be approximately \$6,900,000 which would be a two percent decrease over the previous budget. The Town had lost approximately \$80 million in assessed property value over the last few years which was a great deal for Zebulon. The current tax rate was 51¼¢ which would generate \$3,790,000 and staff was recommending the tax rate be increased by three cents to 54¼¢. Cuts were made across the board for all departments as well as the board including travel and training, maintenance, personnel, operations and so on.

Bobby reviewed the items that would be bundled together for financing and explained that it would be cheaper to bundle and finance them than it would be to try to handle paying for them when they failed.

The current fund balance percentage was 66% and if all that was being proposed for the next fiscal year were to be used it would bring fund balance down to 62%.

Based on the merger agreement water and sewer rates would increase 5.5% in the next budget which reflected an increase of \$5.32 per month for an average account.

Rick Hardin clarified several things. The demolition of the old police building was something staff thought would be a good thing to do if the building could not be sold at a reduced rate. Mayor Matheny said that he had a problem with paying to tear it down and he thought that it would be better to sell it at a depreciated rate.

There was a question from the Mayor on using federal funds for things other than for a position. He wanted to know what all it could be used for so that the Board could make a decision. The Mayor stated that he wanted to establish a sustainable budget and not dip into fund balance each year or borrow to do things.

Rick Hardin said that he was freezing position that became vacant and would reevaluate filling them periodically throughout the year. Commissioner Beck said that he thought that they needed to review all the services provided and prioritize them and then either cut back or eliminate them. Mayor Matheny said that he wanted to see an analysis of what it was costing to provide those services. Commissioner Beck said that he was not in favor of raising taxes again but knew that it was a problem trying to provide services without it.

Commissioner Strickland asked about the bus service and what Wendell wanted or intended to do. Based on the discussions it was hoped that the towns would partner and either both would be in or both were out. The cost was roughly \$12,500 for bus service. Mayor Matheny stated that they had met with Wendell representatives and TTA to discuss what could and could not be done.

Board of Commissioners

Minutes

April 17, 2013

Nonprofit Funding

Bobby Fitts presented that there were seven groups that had requested funding for a total of \$21,000. Those groups were East Wake Education Foundation for \$1,000, Martin Luther King Breakfast Committee for \$1,000, Kindred Spirits Farms for \$1,000, Zebulon Chamber of Commerce for \$1,000, TRACS for \$15,000, Interact for \$1,000 and Shepherds Care with no specific amount.

The Board thought that they would have to wait to see what the budget was going to look like before they could decide on what if anything that would be awarded to the groups.

MANAGERS REPORT

Rick Hardin reminded the Board of the Market on the Lawn event that would be held on April 26, 2013.

Commissioner Beck made a motion, second by Commissioner Clark to adjourn. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Date

Robert S. Matheny—Mayor

SEAL

Lisa M. Markland, CMC—Town Clerk