

**Zebulon Board of Commissioners**  
**Work Session**  
**Minutes**  
**December 15, 2022**

Present: Glenn York, Beverly Clark, Quentin Miles, Shannon Baxter, Jessica Harrison, Larry Loucks, Joe Moore-Town Manager, Lisa Markland-Town Clerk, Bobby Fitts-Finance, Chris Perry-Fire, Chris Ray-Public Works, Sheila Long-Parks and Recreation, Jacqui Boykin-Police, Michael Clark-Planning, Eric Vernon-Attorney

Mayor York called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**FISCAL YEAR 2022 AUDIT**

Joe Moore spoke about the topics to be presented at the meeting.

Bobby Fitts introduced Leann Bagasala from Mauldin & Jenkins. Ms. Bagasala introduced their engagement team and gave an overview of the audit opinion, financial trends and compliance report. The required communications were detailed including significant accounting policies, management judgment/accounting estimates, relationship with management and management representation. It was stated there were no unrecorded or past audit adjustments.

The new accounting pronouncements were reviewed, and Ms. Bagasala stated Mauldin Jenkins would be working with the Town to implement the new standards.

Ms. Bagasala stated the Board could reach out to her with any questions. Joe Moore explained the Board would review the audit in more detail at their January monthly meetings and January retreat and could also ask any additional questions at that time.

Commissioner Loucks inquired about the inventory checks. Ms. Bagasala stated the inventory balance was not large enough to be audited but could be incorporated into the planning for the following year.

Bobby Fitts gave more detail about certain items for the Board's review. The total debt was decreased by \$146,000, the Town was upgraded to an AA with Standards and Poor and was available for a possible rating upgrade through Moody's Investor Services.

The Town's assessed value growth was \$1.5 billion in FY 22 and a shift was made to 60% industrial and 40% residential.

The total assessed value of all the buildings in town was given by Joe Moore and he stated a one cent increase in property taxes would raise approximately \$152,000.

**NORTHEASTERN WAKE COUNTY – RURAL MICROTRANSIT SERVICE  
("GOWAKE SMARTRIDE NE")**

Michael Clark introduced Anita Davis, the Transportation Manager for Wake County and Amber Scott, a transit analyst. Ms. Davis gave a project overview and spoke about the demographic estimate of those in the proposed microtransit zone. It was explained microtransit was on-demand, real-time and free for users.

The microtransit goals included quicker and easier trip scheduling, more convenient and shorter trips, connections to regional commuter routes, real time arrival updates and to expand ridership beyond the current 148 riders.

Ms. Davis spoke about the importance of communication and feedback for those using the service through presentations, stakeholder interviews, focus groups and online surveys. GoWake partnered with the Kramden Institute to provide education and computer skills to seniors.

The trip data was given. Ms. Davis stated from July 2018 to June 2019 there were 25,074 GoWake access trips. The geofence zone was shown on a map.

The GoWake SmartRide NE launched on March 21, 2022 with an average of 40 trips per week and now average 225 trips per week. The fares are free Monday through Friday 6:00am to 7:00pm. The project would remain free to users until March 2023 and was GoWake's goal to keep the fares at no cost to its users.

The data for rides was given by Ms. Davis. Zebulon represented almost half of all the rides in Wendell, Rolesville and Zebulon with 2,822 riders. The SmartRide trip projections were shown. Zebulon accounted for 53% of the trips provided.

The year one projected cost of service was \$314,606.25 and Ms. Davis spoke in detail about the costs associated with the program. Information about continued project funding was discussed including the Community Funding Areas Program that the Town could apply for in partnership with Wake County.

Ms. Scott offered detail about the main destinations and locations the riders went to and from. It was stated additional vehicles would need to be added to accommodate WakeTech's opening in Wendell. There was discussion about the decrease in drivers, expanding the services into the evening and information about funding options.

**TOWN HALL TREE REPLACEMENT**

Chris Ray gave a presentation on the Town Hall tree replacement. The trees on the front lawn of Town Hall were experiencing health and structural issues. The Board was shown options on replacing those trees. The options shown included Yoshino Cherry and Main Street Maple trees and the Board could install eight trees or 16 trees. Details of the trees and benefits of installing eight trees vs. 16 were given. Staff recommended approving Ordinance 2023-20 to install eight Yoshino Cherry trees.

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Commissioner Baxter asked if both trees were native, and staff confirmed they were both native and pollinators.

Commissioners Harrison, Miles and Clark liked the eight cherry trees.

Commissioner Baxter wanted to see eight maples installed.

Commissioner Harrison made a motion, second by Commissioner Clark to approve Ordinance 2023-20 to install eight Yoshino Cherry trees.

Commissioner Baxter wanted the maple trees installed since they were native to North Carolina. Chris Ray stated the landscape architect recommended the cherry trees and would give nice color in the springtime.

There was no further discussion and the motion passed with a vote 4 to 1 with Commissioners Harrison, Clark, Loucks and Miles voting in favor and Commissioner Baxter voting in opposition.

#### **FY '23 FIRST QUARTER REPORT: PARKS AND RECREATION**

Sheila Long gave departmental updates from the first quarter. The department's focus was to maximize resources and impact, implement the Master Plan and expand people served. A capital project update was given with some completed items including Community Park basketball court, tennis court resurfacing, Gill Street shade structures and Town Hall soccer field. Some of the capital projects in progress included the Little River Phase 1 construction and drawings, park amenities and signs, ADA transition plan and alley activation.

Some examples of items to be added to the west alley in the 100 block of Arendell were shown. The Rotary Club liked the Town's vision and wanted to help with the funding. ZDAC was also interested in being a part of the community-based project.

The recreation impact fee has collected \$2,138,000 since January 2022. The funds were to be used on new amenities/not renovation and to be used to acquire land to serve growth.

Sheila Long stated there was a national trend where traditional recreation leagues were averaging a 50% decline, but the Town was growing and so was the demand in league sports. Ms. Long spoke about the limited field availability and lights and increased field wear. Staff was looking at transitioning the fields to accommodate different age groups and leagues and hiring an athletic coordinator in the future.

There was discussion about how the RecDesk software was being used and how it could be improved.

Staff created a matrix to determine where there were service gaps. Partnerships were important for expanding programs and Ms. Long spoke about some of the partnerships with the Town and the services they provided.

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Examples of how the Town was adapting services through youth services, fitness programs, outreach programs and events were shown. The 2023 proposed event schedule was shown. The proposed schedule shifted the spring market schedule series to a spring concert series with artisan vendors, added a Juneteenth celebration and a winter celebration at Town Hall.

Commissioner Baxter was disappointed the artisan market was being proposed to be replaced with the spring concert series. Sheila Long stated the market experienced challenges in being supported on a weekly basis and gave examples.

Commissioner Harrison asked to see data on the artisan market before she could make a decision about transitioning away from the market.

There was discussion about the market's past locations and lack of participation. Commissioners Miles and Clark stated having a concert series once a month may bring out more people to a market.

Commissioner Miles stated he was looking forward to the downtown event for Juneteenth and appreciated staff's work on that partnership.

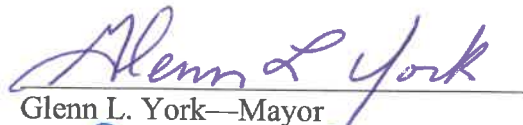
There was conversation about artificial turf fields, portable lights, pickle ball courts and supporting a football program.

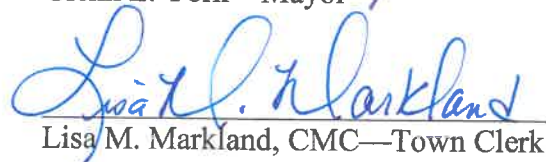
Sheila Long spoke about the Little River bid proposal process.

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

Adopted this the 9<sup>th</sup> day of January 2023.



  
Glenn L. York—Mayor

  
Lisa M. Markland, CMC—Town Clerk