

Zebulon Board of Commissioners
Work Session
Minutes
September 21, 2023

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

Mayor York called the meeting to order at 5:10pm.

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.

Commissioner Bater asked for the clerk position to be added to the next work session. Mayor York stated he would send information for the Board's input then could move forward with the job description.

FY '24 QUARTERLY REPORT: POLICE

Jacqui Boykin spoke about the department's calls for service. There was a 10% increase in calls for service since 2020. Details about the Town's crime rate was given stating violent crimes had decreased since FY '20. The number of cases investigated increased 38% and crimes were being solved at a rate above the state and national averages.

Details about minimum staffing, response times and community outreach hours were detailed. Some program updates included a new Police Planner, Governor's Highway Safety Program Statewide Traffic Enforcement Program Reporting System, flock cameras, career development, and the need for a new Police K9. There was discussion about budgeting for K9 expenses.

Personnel updates from the department were given. Dustin Dobson was promoted to Sergeant; Tivon Howard was promoted to Special Operations Sergeant and Jason Bridges was promoted to Detective Sergeant. Chief Boykin shared information about department vacancies, how those positions were advertised and the low number of applications. Ideas for attracting applicants included raising the hiring salary and residency incentives.

There was discussion about the types of crime the department was seeing, the use of flock cameras to help reduce crime and efforts to diversify the department.

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FY '24 QUARTERLY REPORT: PARKS AND RECREATION

Sheila Long spoke about the vision goals for the department. The focus was to maximize resources and impacts by implementing the Master Plan and expanding those who are served.

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board raised funds for a financial aid program distributing \$710 in FY '23. The collected recreation impact fees totaled \$4,097,000. There would be future discussions about how those funds would be spent.

The department currently managed 165.12 acres of park land and open space and six acres were added in FY '23. There were details given about the possible addition of parcels in FY '24. Ms. Long spoke about the trends in sports since 2019 showing there was a rapid growth in soccer. There was discussion about the increased numbers in summer camps, fitness programs, event attendance and general program registration.

Ms. Long reviewed the change in staffing needs from FY '10 to FY '24. The future staff needs were also shown and how the department planned to serve a growing community.

Examples of community engagement for How We Play and the Gill Street playground project were discussed. Commissioner Baxter asked about the opportunity for the public to make comments on the need for a bathroom at Gill Street Park. There was conversation about getting public feedback on amenities at the parks.

Other community engagement resources the department was utilizing included the Youth Service Provider Network, HAS Zebulon, Community Coalition, Eastern Wake Food Family, Eastern Wake Business Alliance, and Eastern Wake Community Connections Team.

Sheila Long stated a tree fell on the bridge at the Community Park. There were plans to replace the bridge and staff would come back to the Board with more information.

Mayor York stated there would be a 10-minute recess.

The meeting was reconvened at 7:08pm.

FY '24 QUARTERLY REPORT: PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Michael Clark gave an overview of the Planning division and Economic Development division. The increase in numbers for residential permitting from FY '18 was detailed. Current planning included day to day developer led projects, public hearings, rezonings, annexation, special use permits and variances. The current numbers for each of those were given as well as the current projects.

Long Range Planning was explained. The regional partners included the City of Raleigh Public Utility Department, Wake County Building Services, Wake County Environmental Services, NCDOT, CAMPO Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC), Wake County Planning and City of Raleigh Utility Advisory Board.

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The code enforcement numbers were reviewed. The Town had one staff member who handled 169 notices of violation last year with a 93% closure rate. The violation process was explained and there was information given about how a process worked without a seated Board of Adjustment.

The new Planning staff in FY '23 included Adam Culpepper as the Senior Planning and Shannon Johnson as the Economic Development Specialist. Cate Farrell was promoted to Planner II.

The goals for the department in FY '24 included:

- Continue to provide exceptional customer service
- Hiring two Planner I positions and second Code Enforcement Officer
- Revisit Code Enforcement tracking
- Update Land Use and Transportation Plans
- Update UDO
- Revisit Utility Allocation Policy calculation

There was a question about what Planning was doing to address the Spanish speaking community. Mr. Clark stated they were looking at hiring someone who was bilingual and looking at opportunities on how to translate their documents.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Shannon Johnson spoke about the work she was doing on program development. Staff attended 55 meetings and three conferences. The 2022 development opportunities request for information from Wake EDC was detailed and how the requests were handled.

Ms. Johnson explained what a community and economic development strategic plan was and spoke about the next steps in the development of the plan.

There was a comment about the Town needing more grocery stores and restaurants. Shannon Johnson spoke about how rooftops were necessary to qualify for businesses. The strategic plan would assist in getting the data and pushing the information out to businesses.

Commissioner Miles asked about the timeframe for Economic Development to be its own department. Joe Moore explained it would be driven by workload.

MIGHTY CON SPONSORSHIP

Joe Moore explained staff was bringing back a request for sponsorship that the Board asked to be put on the agenda. The fee schedule, cost recovery policy and special event standard were discussed. It was stated that fees could not be waived for a for-profit business holding a special event.

Details about the Wake Forest Comic Con event were given. The available options for the Mighty Con event included: no change, have a non-profit resubmit the application, amend the policies or a private sponsorship.

Commissioner Loucks had questions about the event and thought it would be great to have it downtown but wanted events to pay for themselves.

Commissioner Baxter said she did a public records request on this matter and found it to be incomplete. It was also stated Comic World had been in the community for a long time and needed a better understanding of what their options were to hold the Mighty Con event. Sheila Long spoke about how Comic World could have a non-profit resubmit the application to have the fees waived. Ms. Long gave details about her meeting with Comic World explaining as the event was submitted there was nothing she could do about a fee waiver under the Town's policy.

There was discussion about the rental cost for the community center and what the rental cost would be for a 501(c)3. Commissioner Loucks suggested Comic World having a non-profit sponsor the event.

Mayor York stated there would be a 5-minute recess.

The meeting was called back into session at 8:51pm.

GOVERNING BOARD PROCEDURE MANUAL

A. Remote Meetings

Joe Moore stated Commissioner Miles added remote meetings to the agenda to have a discussion among the Board.

Commissioner Miles stated 11 days' notice for remote participation was too long and needed to be shortened. There was consensus among the Board to change the notification for a planned absence to seven days.

There was discussion about communication to the Mayor being in writing. If a Board member were absent for a meeting, an email or text message would be sufficient.

Commissioner Miles asked about a policy if someone cannot attend a meeting that had already begun. There was consensus that the Board member could join the meeting remotely but could not participate. A member would need to let others know six hours prior to the meeting.

Joe Moore reviewed the quote from Sound Advice to add video and audio-conferencing capabilities to the Council Chambers. The quote to add video content was \$9,000 and audio was \$5,300. Commissioner Baxter stated she would rather spend the \$9,000 now than to have to do it years later. There was agreement from Commissioners Harrison and Clark.

B. Travel and Training

Joe Moore explained each Commissioner and the Mayor had a budget for travel and training and there was no policy on how that money could be spent. Staff was gathering feedback on whether the Board wanted staff to create a policy on travel and training in the procedure manual.

Commissioner Loucks suggested the Mayor make the call on who attends conferences and how money was spent.

Commissioner Harrison thought each individual had budgeted funds and when it ran out that was all the funds available for that person.

There was discussion about a Board member using another Board member's budgeted funds. There was consensus that a procedure manual was not needed, and the Board would manage their own budget.

GOVERNING BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

Joe Moore stated the Mayor had a conflict with the mini retreat date.

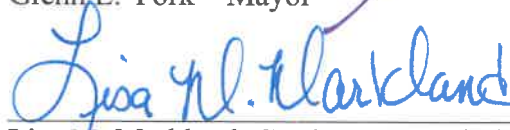
Commissioner Harrison made a motion, second by Commissioner Miles to begin the mini retreat on September 28, 2023 at 1:00pm. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

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

Adopted this the 6th day of November 2023.




Glenn L. York—Mayor


Lisa M. Markland, CMC—Town Clerk