

BOARD OF ALDERMAN

May 04, 2020

The Board of Aldermen of the Town of Connelly Springs met at 7:00 pm at the Town Hall Board Room in Connelly Springs, North Carolina. The following board members were present: Mayor Johnny E. Berry, Alderman Terry Childers, Alderman Josh Phillips, Alderman Steve Smart, Alderman Ramona Duncan, Alderman Carroll Turner, and Alderman Kimberly Sigmon. Also, in attendance were: Attorney Redmond Dill, Town Administrator Tamara Brooks, Deputy Brian Sigmon, and Planning Board members Joe Dempsey, Debbie Pelick, Bobby Tomlinson and residents Joseph and Joyanne Downing. The Board meeting was recorded in accordance with North Carolina General Statute 160A-72, 171.

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME: Mayor Berry called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and welcomed all in attendance.

INVOCATION: Alderman Childers offered an invocation and Mayor Berry asked those in attendance to rise and give the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Alderman Duncan made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Alderman Smart seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES: Alderman Duncan requested a change to the minutes from March 03, 2020, stating that she was in attendance instead of absent excused. Alderman Phillips made a motion to approve the minutes from the Board of Aldermen's regular meeting on March 03, 2020, with the correction as noted. Alderman Sigmon seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

PUBLIC AND BOARD COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

PROPOSAL TO PURCHASE BUFFER / EXTENSION OF PROPERTY LINES: Residents Joseph and Joyanne Downing of 1082 Tomlinson Loop, made a request to purchase a portion of the property at 1170 Tomlinson Loop allowing them to extend their property lines and providing a buffer in the event the town decided to develop the property at a later time. They also made the same request on behalf of their neighbors Joseph Hammock, as well as Terry and Wanda Church. Mr. Downing said that he wished to purchase approximately seven (7) to eight (8) acres. Mr. Hammock and Mr. Church have asked to purchase smaller portions.

Mayor Berry said the Board of Aldermen would take their request into consideration and let them know when a decision had been reached.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Administrator Brooks said due to COV-19 there was nothing on the calendar to report.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

TOMLINSON PROPERTY: Attorney Dill said he had spoken with Baron Kuritzski who is interesting in purchasing the Tomlinson property with the intention of cleaning it up and using the garage portion as a business. Mr. Kuritzski has inquired about the cost of demolition for the unusable buildings and up fitting the block building for future use. Attorney Dill asked if the town wanted to pursue the purchase of the property from the county if Mr. Kuritzski is interested. Alderman Smart made a motion to postpone the purchase of the Tomlinson property from Burke County for six (6) months to allow action from Mr. Kuritzski. Alderman Turner seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

ANNEXATION OF PROPERTIES – SOPHIA AVENUE: Mayor Berry asked if Attorney Dill had an update on the annexation of the two properties on Sophia Avenue. Attorney Dill said the title searches were ready but he felt that the public hearings needed to be postponed until after the COVID-19 crisis. Until that time, he would continue to work on the applications and letters to the property owners.

ATTORNEY SAUNDERS: Attorney Dill said he had sent a letter to Attorney Saunders but had not received any response. Alderman Smart said he felt that she has had adequate time to respond and if she has not submitted a bill for services by June 30th, the town should not be obligated to pay.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Berry reported that he and Administrator Brooks attended a meeting with Burke County Emergency Management and other county leaders regarding the COVID-19 crisis. He also attended several meetings via ZOOM and teleconference: the WPCOG Policy Board Meeting on March 24th, the VEDIC Committee Meeting on April 23rd, WPCOG Executive Committee Meeting on April 28th and Burke County Chamber Leaders Meeting on May 4th.

FINANCE: Alderman Smart presented the financial statements for review. He said there were three (3) CDs that reached maturity that were moved into one (1) money market account as previously discussed. He asked to schedule a brief budget workshop for Tuesday, May 19th at 6:30 pm. This is to discuss an additional decrease of possibly fifteen (15%) to twenty (20%) percent in certain areas of the budget in anticipation of reduced sales tax revenue.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES:

POLICE: Alderman Childers asked Deputy Sigmon to give his report for March and April.

MARCH:

Breaking and Entering – 1 Fraud – 2 Missing Person -- 1
Warrant for Arrest – 4 Order for Arrest – 2

TOTAL CALLS FOR SERVICE: 104

APRIL

Larceny – 1 Warrant for Arrest – 1

TOTAL CALLS FOR SERVICE: 86

Deputy Sigmon said that there had been a slight uptick in criminal activity within the last month.

WATER/SEWER: None.

PARKS AND RECREATION: Alderman Duncan said we would continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and change the summer concert schedule as necessary.

PERSONNEL: None.

PROPERTY:

STAGE PROJECT: Alderman Smart and Alderman Phillips gave an update on the stage project.

1170 TOMLINSON LOOP: Alderman Phillips said Tyler Watts had completed the forestry mulching at 1170 Tomlinson Loop

TRANSPORTATION: Alderman Turner reported the repaving of Oak Laurel had been completed.

CLOSED SESSION: Alderman Turner made a motion to go in to closed session for the purpose of discussing the possible sale or development of land at 1170 Tomlinson Loop. Alderman Childers seconded the motion.

OPEN SESSION: Alderman Smart made a motion to return to open session. Alderman Turner seconded the motion.

ACTION TAKEN: No action was taken as a result of closed session.

OLD BUSINESS: Alderman Smart made a motion to approve the contract for audit services from Boggs, Crump & Brown, LLC for the fiscal year 2020-2021. Alderman Duncan seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business before the Board of Aldermen, Mayor Berry called for a motion to adjourn. Alderman Turner made a motion to adjourn with Alderman Phillips seconding the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Johnny E. Berry, Mayor

Tamara Brooks, Town Administrator/Clerk