

CALL TO ORDER Mayor Cook called the Regular Meeting of the Town Council to order at 7:04 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT The following members of the Board were present: Mayor Virginia Cook, Council Members Brenda Banks, Wendell Hildebrand, Jamie Hollowell, Barbara Lowman and Lee Lowman.

STAFF PRESENT The following staff members were present: Attorney Redmond Dill, Finance Officer Fredrick Rankins, Town Clerk Alice Sanders and Town Planner Laurie LoCicero.

CITIZENS PRESENT See attached list for other citizens.

MEDIA No one from the media was in attendance.

INVOCATION Mayor Cook called for a moment of silence.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE The Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag was led by Council Member Hildebrand.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA Council Member B. Lowman made a motion to adopt the agenda. All voted in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Council Member B. Lowman made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes – August 25, 2014. All voted in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT Natalie Lowman, a senior at East Burke High School, requested from Council to allow her to hold a benefit walk around the Town as her senior project. The walk would be held the second or third week in October. Mayor Cook instructed Ms. Lowman to work with Deputy Towery to determine a safe walking route.

Jim Pitts spoke with passion in support of the senior center project.

Attorney Dill addressed Mr. Pitts and the citizens and stated that the Town takes very seriously its duty to the seniors and that during the Council’s planning meeting, the Town decided to form a committee to work with the County to examine options and opportunities to develop a senior center in the eastern part of the County. He stated that the plans are in a very formative state and that the County has put back some money but still has a long way to go. The Town feels like it will be more successful working Government to Government than in any other way. The seniors were asked to be patient and he emphasized that the Town takes the seniors’ requests very seriously. The Town will meet with the County Manager and other individuals

to try to start design and other issues. The County is very flexible and has made some decisions on what they want to do, and the Town has to take a very logical and professional approach to get it done. Sometimes some of the efforts, although well intended of the seniors, might not be received in the spirit in which they were intended. In order to avoid any misunderstandings, the Town has appointed two members to act as a liaison with the County to start discussions. The senior citizen group will be advised and informed and will be asked for input and the Town feels like, based on the response the Town has received from the County, this is the best approach to take. Mr. Dill further stated that the efforts should be focused on a center in the Eastern end of the County. He explained that in the statutes, there is no requirement for any governmental entity to provide these services and if they are provided, it does it voluntarily because it wants to because it sees a need. Attorney Dill stated that the Town is going to work as hard as it can with the County to provide a facility here that will work.

Wade Shepherd, after approval from the Board to comment, stated that the County already has in its budget a line item for a two-story building for a senior center and library in this area and this progress has already been made. He referenced a letter from 2006 from the Burke County Commissioners. He stated that the County had enough money in the budget to buy property to start the process and asked for clarification.

Council Member L. Lowman responded that there is no set budget for a senior center this year. He stated that the plan is that once the County has \$1 million dollars, the County will start the process of the senior center project and until the money is saved, there are no plans to begin the process. He stated that this information is what the Town has been told from the County. Mr. Shepherd stated that this information is different from what the East Burke Senior Center Association, Inc. (EBSCAI) has been informed. Attorney Dill explained that the County has put back money in a capital reserve fund for a senior center in the Eastern end of the County and there has been no location determined. He stated the County had \$400,000 saved and an additional \$250,000 was added this year.

Council Member B. Lowman stated that Attorney Dill and the senior citizen group were stating the same facts. She emphasized that the Town wants the center in Hildebran and wants to go about obtaining this center in a tactful way so that it can hopefully ensure it will be in Town.

Council Member L. Lowman stated that the current Board was new and in order to determine which direction to go, it decided to form a committee to get input from the senior citizens and talk to the County

and mesh everyone together. He asked for time to talk to the County and emphasized that he wanted the center to be in Hildebran.

Mr. Shepherd expressed his displeasure since it has already been 8 years since the letter previously discussed was dated 2006.

Richard Bell discussed his views of a lack of code enforcement in the Town. He suggested a part-time contractor or the Deputy to assist with enforcement.

Carl Reese, after approval from the Board to comment, spoke about his desire to see a senior center.

Sylvia Lail, after approval from the Board to comment, expressed her frustrations about the Town's approach and displeasure with Mayor Cook's performance with the senior center project and the EBSCAI's request for a \$50,000 donation for land acquisition.

**OLD BUSINESS:
FY 2013-2014
AUDIT APPROVAL**

Council was presented with the Town's FY 2013-2014 audit at the August 25, 2014 Council meeting by Eric Bowman, the Town's Auditor. There being no questions, Council Member Banks made a motion to approve the audit. All voted in favor.

**UPGRADED
PHONE SYSTEM
AND ROUTER
SWITCH AT TOWN
HALL**

Council Member L. Lowman informed Council that four quotes were provided for a phone system in Town Hall. He explained that B&L Telephone's quote included a voice over IP system, which is the latest technology. He explained that the system will provide coverage for non-emergency calls due to the new 911 call center in the County. In addition, it will help streamline processes at Town Hall, including the addition of voicemail for staff. He stated that he has rewired the Town Hall in preparation for the phone system. He recommended B&L Telephone's system due to their reputation, the voice over IP system, the system will be cheaper to fix if a problem arises and staff liked the demonstration from B&L Telephone the best of all the companies. Mr. Lowman stated that he no longer works for B&L Telephone and has no ties to the company.

Council Member L. Lowman reported that after speaking with Steve Bruner at B&L Telephone, the Town can purchase the needed switch for the phone and computer system cheaper on its own. After Mr. Lowman rewired the building, he informed Council that a minimum of 28 ports were needed and recommended a 48-port switch in order to allow for growth. The estimated cost will be around \$1,000. Mr. Lowman will also research obtaining secured internet access for the gym and auditorium to allow vendors to use credit card machines during special events.

Council Member Hollowell made a motion to accept the quote from B&L Telephone for an upgraded phone system in Town Hall in the amount of \$6,394.06 as well as allowing for the Town to purchase a 48-port switch. All voted in favor.

Other quotes included: Wynncom at \$5,305.38; M&B Communications at \$5,333.37; and Century Link at \$11,934.07.

Mayor Cook expressed her appreciation to Council Member Lowman for donating his time over the past three days rewiring the Town Hall building. Mr. Lowman stated that Dale Shelton assisted him one day as well.

**COMPUTER
SERVER AND
WATCHGUARD
FOR TOWN HALL**

Council Member L. Lowman discussed the need for a server with Exchange in Town Hall. He stated that the current system of document storage is a fire filing cabinet that isn't sufficient. Council Member L. Lowman made a motion to table this topic until the October 27, 2014 Regular Meeting until more research can be made regarding record scanning, filing and storage. All voted in favor.

**DIGITAL SIGN
UPDATE**

Council Member Hollowell has been researching other digital signs in the area and will provide bids at the October 27, 2014 meeting. It was determined to provide at least three bids. Attorney Dill stated that the law requires the Board to accept the most qualified, responsible bid, not necessarily the cheapest bid.

**NEW BUSINESS:
BUDGET
AMENDMENTS:
UPGRADED
PHONE SYSTEM,
SERVER, SWITCH
& WATCHGUARD**

Finance Officer Rankins stated that budget amendments will need to be made for the upgraded phone system and switch which were approved. Council Member Hollowell made a motion to do a budget amendment not to exceed \$7,500 for the phone system and switch. All voted in favor. The budget amendment is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes (Attachment A.)

**PROCLAMATION-
NATIONAL
RECOVERY
MONTH**

Mayor Cook read a proclamation proclaiming the month of September 2014 as National Recovery Month in Burke County. The Proclamation is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes (Attachment B.)

**CONTRACT
EXTENSION-
MAINTENANCE AT
RAILROAD AND
HWY 70A WITH
THE
GROUNDSKEEPER**

Mayor Cook informed Council that the Town is in contract with The Groundskeeper for several landscaping jobs. The maintenance at the railroad and Hwy 70A contract expired June 30, 2014. A bid from the Groundskeeper is provided for this area to extend the contract until June 30, 2016, when the other two contracts with them expire. Town Clerk Sanders stated that a pesticide ornamental/turf and right of way licenses are required to work at this area and during the last bid process, The Groundskeeper was the only qualified bidder. Council

Member Hildebrand made a motion to accept the bid from The Groundskeeper until June 30, 2016.

Council Member L. Lowman asked for the cost per year and it was stated it is \$4,000 a year. He expressed his desire to not sign contracts for more than one year in the future and he requested to review the current contracts. Council Member Hildebrand rescinded his motion. Council Member Hollowell made a motion to get bids for the maintenance at the railroad and Hwy 70A. All voted in favor.

AUGUST TAX
REPORT

Town Clerk Sanders provided the tax report for the month of August 2014. The tax report is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes (Attachment C.)

DEPUTY REPORT
GARY TOWERY

Deputy Towery gave his report for the month of August 2014.

COMMITTEE
REPORTS &
UPDATES

Transportation Advisory Committee (COG) – Mayor Cook reported that every project in Burke County is on schedule.

Western Piedmont Council of Governments Policy Board – Council Member Hildebrand stated the meeting is September 23, 2014.

Burke Economic Development – Mayor Cook reported that the meeting discussions were during a closed session.

Recreation & Tourism Committee – Council Member B. Lowman had no report this month.

Water Resource Committee – Planner LoCicero stated the committee reviewed a presentation from a NC Forester and discussed the water quality conference. The next meeting will be held in November 2014.

VEDIC (Valdese) – Mayor Cook reported that VEDIC will be receiving funds around \$1 million from the USDA Gold Leaf and small business loans will need to be dispersed within 18 months.

FACILITIES
UPDATE

None at this time.

CLOSED SESSION

Council Member Hollowell made a motion at 8:18 p.m. to recess into Closed Session pursuant to NC General Statue 143-318.11 (a) (3) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged and (a) (4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development

incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations. All voted in favor.

Council Member Hollowell made a motion to return to open session at 9:00 p.m. All voted in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS

Council Member Banks made a motion to accept the quote from Carolina Paving to repair the entrance section of the annex parking lot that eroded due to heavy rains in the amount of \$3,000. All voted in favor.

Mayor Cook reported that Greta McKinney was hired on a part-time basis since the beginning of the new fiscal year. She asked Council for approval to hire Ms. McKinney on a full-time basis. Council Member Hollowell stated that other cuts in the budget would need to be made. Council Member L. Lowman stated that Council needs to go into closed session at the next meeting to discuss the individual responsibilities of staff. He requested duties and lists of responsibilities for Council to review.

Mayor Cook asked for Council members to help work the Town booth at the Hildebran Heritage Festival on Saturday, September 27th.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Cook encouraged everyone to attend the Festival, Cruise In, Redneck BBQ and fireworks on Saturday, September 27, 2014.

ADJOURNMENT

All business being concluded, Council Member B. Lowman made a motion to adjourn at 9:15 p.m. All voted in favor.

I attest these are the approved minutes of the Board.

Alice Sanders, Town Clerk

Virginia Cook, Mayor