

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL
STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION
February 17 and February 18, 2023**

THE FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL held a special called meeting/strategic planning session beginning on Friday, February 17, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room located at 95 East Main Street Franklin, NC.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jack Horton called the meeting to order at 6:43 p.m. with the following members present:

Vice Mayor Joe Collins, Council Members David Culpepper, Stacy Guffey, Adam Kimsey, Mike Lewis and Rita Salain.

Staff members present: Town Manager Amie Owens, Finance Director Sarah Bishop, Budget & Fiscal Analyst Alison Stamey, HR Director/Town Clerk Nicole Bradley, Tax Collector Sabrina Scruggs, Fire Chief Benjamin Ormond and Police Chief Devin Holland.

2. BUDGET AMENDMENTS- Sarah Bishop, Finance Director

A. Water Sewer Fund:

- i. Close out Gemstone Village CO/CA
- ii. Clyde Street Project – materials and engineering

B. General Fund- receive funds for K-9 program

Council Member David Culpepper made a motion, seconded by Council Member Adam Kimsey to approve all of the budget amendments as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote 6 – 0.

Council Member Salain asked if the \$61,176 was a continuous charge. Finance Director, Sarah Bishop explained that this was for the purchase of ductile iron pipe. There will be additional costs as the pipe is received for the project. Town Manager Owens added that materials are reimbursable via the ARPA grant received from the State for the Clyde Street project. The bid opening for the Clyde Street project is on March 8 at 2:00 p.m.

3. REQUEST APPROPRIATION FROM FUND BALANCE FOR SKATEPARK TO PROPERLY SATISFY THE PREAUDIT REQUIREMENT

In order for Finance Director, Sarah Bishop to preaudit the skatepark contract with Artisan Skateparks the shortfall of funds, \$110,575, needs to be appropriated from the General Fund Balance. The Local Government Fiscal Control Act requires that the funds be available prior to execution of the contract. This would be an appropriation SK828 is still raising money and the County Commissioners are being asked to include funds in their budget to assist with this project.

Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Council Member Stacy Guffey to appropriate funds from Fund Balance for Skatepark to properly satisfy the preaudit requirement as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6 – 0.

4. PRESENTATION

Town Manager Amie Owens and Finance Director Sarah Bishop presented a slide show for the Year in Review. This included a recap from last year's retreat priorities, a financial picture at mid-year and an introduction of budget considerations. Slideshow presentation is incorporated into these minutes as Exhibit A.

5. PRIORTIES FOR DISCUSSION AT SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18th MEETING

Town Manager Owens provided flip chart pages with items/projects that the Mayor, Council Members and Staff had requested to be considered for FY 2023/2024. Manager Owens went over each item and then asked the Mayor and Council Members to place stickers next to the items they feel are most important. A list of priorities will be developed and these items will be discussed during the Saturday morning meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Town Council Members began prioritizing topics for tomorrow's discussion at 7:59 p.m.

The meeting was recessed at 8:04 p.m. and will reconvene on Saturday, February 18, 2023 at 8:30 a.m.

The meeting was reconvened at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, February 18, 2023 by Mayor Jack Horton with the following members present:

Vice Mayor Joe Collins, Council Members David Culpepper, Stacy Guffey, Adam Kimsey, Mike Lewis and Rita Salain.

Staff members present: Town Manager Amie Owens, Finance Director Sarah Bishop, Budget & Fiscal Analyst Alison Stamey, HR Director/Town Clerk Nicole Bradley, Tax Collector Sabrina Scruggs, Fire Chief Ben Ormond, Police Chief Devin Holland, Public Works Director, Bill Deal, Town Planner/IT Director, Justin Setser and Town Attorney John Henning, Jr.

2. PRESENTATION BY WITHERSRAVENEL- Water Treatment Plant Phase II Improvements

Ken Orie, Utilities Engineer Director and Dana Bolden, Senior Project Manager from WithersRavenel presented information related to the current Water Treatment Plant operating conditions. Mr. Orie and Mr. Bolden were present to answer specific questions Council Members had regarding Phase II of the Water Treatment Plant Improvements. Mr. Bolden stated they were here to implement our priorities for the Water Plant. Mayor Horton suggested that staff get together with WithersRavenel and come up with a priority list of equipment that needs attention and report back to Council.

3. REQUESTS FROM:

A. No Wrong Door- Shelia Jenkins, Executive Director, and Dinah Mashburn, President, of No Wrong Door made a request to use the Town-owned property on East Palmer Street as a warming station for the clients. The warming station could allow individuals to shower, do their laundry, get warm, heat up food and rest. This would not be a shelter. They would like for it to be open three days a week. They are asking the Town to help refurbish the building and they would be able to fund the purchase of recliners and washer/dryer units.

Mayor Horton suggested to make a list of items to refurbish the building and then find out the cost of the improvements. Town Attorney John Henning, Jr. explained how the Town could lease the building to No Wrong Door at no cost, but could not gift the building to them.

B. Macon County Transit has requested Town Council to consider funding of the Mountain Gem route for FY 2023/2024.

Macon County Transit submitted information for consideration for potentially funding the Mountain Gem route that is within the Town limits and runs throughout the day. Council will consider this request and if approved, any support would be included in the annual budget.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS FROM STAFF

A. Town initiated rezoning project- Justin Setser, Town Planner

Justin Setser, Town Planner, would like to rezone 347 parcels to align with the future land use map. Town Attorney John Henning, Jr. stated this would have to follow the same process as all other rezoning request. Councilman Culpepper wants to make sure notice gets out to everyone. Town Planner Setser said there would be one-half page ads run in the paper and it would be on social media and the town's website. Town Council members all agreed, by consensus, to send the various zoning requests to the Planning Board for their review.

B. Polices for Consideration

*** Policy Documentation- John Henning, Jr., Town Attorney**

Town Attorney John Henning, Jr. provided a sample policy template and a spreadsheet of policies/procedure updates which are logged related to when the policy was adopted by Town Council.

*** Fund Balance Policy- Sarah Bishop, Finance Director**

There is not currently a Fund Balance Policy for the Town. Sarah Bishop, Finance Director would like to look at other municipalities to see what their Fund Balance policy states. She would like to have a

minimum/maximum funding level in place to prevent the overextension of the Town related to funding and/or financing.

* Addition of reporting via CarFax for Police Department and revenue potential- Devin Holland, Police Chief

The Police Department currently uses CarFax for Police Program as an investigation tool. CarFax also offers a Driver Exchange Tool. The Police Department could use the driver exchange tool for accident investigations. Another feature they offer is through crashdocs.org. Crash reports can be retrieved from this site and the revenue would come back to the Police Department. Chief Holland suggested implementing the crash report fee: \$10 for private individuals and \$20 for insurance/corporate. Town Manager Amie Owens will add this to the March Town Council agenda to modify the fee schedule. Chief Holland will forward the contract for implementation.

* Naming/Sponsorship Policy- Amie Owens, Town Manager

Town Manager Amie Owens discussed the proposed Facility Naming and Sponsorship Policy. She stated it just formalizes the criteria for naming a facility. She asked the Council to review and consider any changes; this will be presented to the Ordinance Review Committee in March and referred back to the Council in April.

C. Direction related to Tax Rate for upcoming year

Town Manager Amie Owens stated that based on revaluation information from Macon County, the revenue neutral rate for the Town would be \$0.28. This would be difficult for the Town to operate if the rate was lowered to \$0.28. She presented information on increases for FY 23/24 for employee medical/dental insurance rates and the increase on retirement rates. She requested direction from Council since Department Heads are developing budgets for the upcoming year. Mayor Horton suggested waiting to adjust the tax rate. He would like to see what it takes to put the Town in a stable financial position and meet obligations based on budgets provided by Town Staff. The first budget work session is on April 17, 2023 and this will be included in the discussion.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS FROM MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL AS PRIORITIZED FROM FEBRUARY 17, 2023

* ABC Store Relocation - Mayor Horton wants to study this topic more. Questions that were noted included: How much will it cost and who will pay for it?

* Council Member Guffey commented related to housing and engaging developers/investors and potential partnerships with Macon County, WNC Region and the State of NC. There will be an upcoming meeting with John Faye to discuss the affordable housing plan for Macon County.

* Council Member Culpepper brought up Social Districts. Macon County leases the Town Square property to the Town and on the lease, it states alcohol is not allowed on the property. Council Member Guffey said it would be good to meet with County Manager Derek Roland and Commissioner Danny Antoine, the Town's liaison to the County Commissioners, on Social Districting. Manager Owens explained how the

Town of Sylva handles their Social District. Town Council would like to explore the option of bringing Social Districting to Main Street.

* Council Member Rita Salain brought up sanitation/maintenance and bathrooms. The Town has an agreement with Crabtree General Store for the use of their restrooms during festivals and events. Manager Owens said she could go back to Macon County to see if they would open up the restrooms at the courthouse; this was met with an explanation that a judge had ordered the restrooms closed outside of regular business hours.

6. SETTING NEXT STEPS, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES- MAYOR HORTON AND TOWN COUNCIL

Mayor Horton noted that this has been a good retreat and that information provided has given the Town Council much to consider and he applauded the staff for their efforts in making this strategic planning session a success.

7. CLOSED SESSION

Council Member Stacy Guffey made a motion, seconded by Council Member Adam Kimsey to enter into Closed Session under NC General Statute § 143-318.11(a)(5) to discuss acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange or lease. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6-0.

The Town Council entered Closed Session at 11:37 a.m.

The Town Council returned from Closed Session at 12:17 p.m.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Mayor Joe Collins made a motion, seconded by Council Member Adam Kimsey to adjourn the meeting at 12:17 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 6- 0.

C. Jack Horton, Mayor

Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk