

May 15, 2017 meeting,

A special called meeting of the Town of Franklin Board of Aldermen was held on Monday May 15, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room. Mayor Robert S. Scott presided. Council Members Joe Collins, Adam Kimsey, Billy Mashburn, Brandon McMahan and Barbara McRae were present. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the 2017-2018 fiscal year proposed budget and for consideration of changing the style of Municipal Corporation from Board of Aldermen to Town Council.

Vice-Mayor Patti Abel was absent.

Motion was made by Mashburn, seconded by McMahan to excuse Vice-Mayor Patti Abel from the meeting. Motion carried. Vote: 5 to 0.

Town Manager Summer Woodard, Finance Officer Kyra Doster, Fire Chief Kevin Rohrer and Town Clerk Travis Tallent were present.

Mayor Scott called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

Mayor Scott – I wanted to make some additions to the agenda. The first will be if anybody is here that would want to make a comment from the public, then a Labor and Delivery update just very brief concerning the letter that the board wrote to Dr. Paulus. We have a noise ordinance to look at but not vote on tonight, just to make you aware of. I have something about some Macon County berries and a request from the Nikwasi Foundation. Then of course Board action on the charter change.

Motion was made by McMahan, seconded by McRae to amend and approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried. Vote: 5 to 0.

Public Session

No one was present to speak.

Mayor Scott – Just a brief update. I did not hear back from Dr. Paulus concerning the letter that the Board voted to send the other night about Labor and Delivery. There are several things taking place that I can make the Board aware of. There is a group organizing called Operation Heartbeat 2 and they are meeting with the County Commissioners tomorrow night. They are trying to get Mission to change their mind on this thing.

Regulation of Late Night Parties

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – Our Town Attorney was unable to be with us tonight but he did send this ordinance to look over. We can look at this again at our June meeting but he wanted me to go ahead and pass this out so that you all can be looking at it.

Mayor Scott – We need to look at this because it has been an ongoing problem on Depot Street.

May 15, 2017 meeting continued,

Board Action Regarding the Charter of the Town of Franklin to change the style of Municipal Corporation from Board of Aldermen to Town Council

Aldermen Kimsey – I would like to talk a little more about the figures we talked about earlier.

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – Our Town Clerk and myself reached out to Nils Herdelin with American Legal Publishing and we asked him if he could tell us how many times Aldermen or Alderman appears. Last time we were here we were under the impression that it may be about 278 times, but in an email from American Legal they say it appears 130 times and most of those instances are in chapter 15 in which the term appears multiple times. He cannot tell us if it appears on the same page or on different pages. If you were to base it on 130 times and if you wanted to change entire ordinance book it would be \$2,340 or you can do the base cover page for \$18. I reached out to the Town Attorney for what the legal fees would cost at this time and I have an email from Mr. Henning that says, “I have given some thought to the style change if adopted and I contend that costs on my end will be minimal.” That’s all I have from the attorney at this time. Again it would be up to the Board of how you wanted to do the name plates. You could phase them in over time or you could do them all at once. Eventually, when and if you did that, it would be around \$100 each. As far as changing stationary, business cards and the website, again you could do it all at once or over time, but you are looking at about \$500 there.

Mayor Scott – But you could do this with just a cover letter in the beginning of the ordinance book. The name plates could be changed every time there is an election. The changes would be made over time. That’s what the attorney has led me to believe. Over time the minutes on the website could be changed. We change things on the website all the time anyway.

Motion made by McRae, seconded by McMahan to Amend the Charter of the Town of Franklin to change the style of Municipal Corporation from Board of Aldermen to Town Council. Motion carried. Vote: 3 to 2. Collins and Mashburn opposed.

Council Member Collins – Just real quick. We’re talking about fairly small amount of money. I never considered it an economic issue myself although anytime you’re spending money it’s an economic issue. I hate for us to see some of these name plates up here saying Alderman and some saying Town Council Member or whatever. We need to see some uniformity. That’s just my two cents.

Review of \$12,500 from the Nikwasi Initiative

Letter from the Nikwasi Initiative Board of Directors is attached.

Council Member Collins – There is a good, rock solid group of people out here working for the betterment of the Town in an area of the Town that needs as much betterment as possible. This has the potential to bootstrap in a lot of money from different areas. I think it would be very shortsighted of Franklin not to support this. We’re not talking a lot of money. The people who are involved are solid and they mean well. They’re trying to make our Town a better place.

May 15, 2017 meeting continued,

Council Member McRae – We’re hoping that the county and the tribe will also contribute. They’re getting a lot of traction and attention. The idea is to create a visitor’s center and make the area around the mound a cultural corridor.

Mayor Scott – Since money is pretty tight right now, how would it go if we gave half the money now and half next year.

Council Member McRae – That would be great.

Council Member Collins – We’re talking \$12,500. Are you talking half in this budget and half after July 1 or are you talking half July 1 and half the next fiscal year?

Mayor Scott – Well either one. Maybe we could make ours contingent on the county.

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – Would this be a one time or an annual contribution Ms. McRae?

Council Member McRae – One time.

Discussion on the proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018

Town Manager Summer Woodard read the budget message. A copy of the message is attached.

Town Manager Summer Woodard reviewed the proposed fiscal year budget by departmental line-items, revenues and expenditures.

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – This budget recommends a onetime appropriation from General Fund Balance of \$119,000 to address the infrastructure needs. You’ll notice that I have given you a sheet of onetime expenditures totaling \$119,200 which is an appropriate use of your fund balance.

Council Member Collins – I’m not sure I’m comfortable with some of these one-time expenses. Some of that is a police car. Every year we have a police car. What is our fund balance?

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – Right at \$700,000.

Council Member Collins – And this is asking for \$120,000? That doesn’t include the \$12,500 for the Nikwasi Initiative and of course I have a wish list myself. I’m not comfortable putting some of this stuff as onetime expenditures especially something like a police vehicle. Other than these here and with what Barbara [McRae] has presented, I have from time to time espoused what I believe is a good investment in a portable restroom. I expect that we would have about \$30,000 in a good one, not necessarily a new one. We are well situated with our staff to maintain it. Nobody likes port-o-johns. These are not those. When you go in them it is like you are in a restroom. If it turns out it isn’t something that benefits us then I suspect we could get most of our money back.

Council Member McRae – I think it’s a great idea. These festivals bring in 2,000 people and there’s 3 restrooms.

May 15, 2017 meeting continued,

Mayor Scott – How many doors will there be?

Council Member Collins – There are two private women’s restrooms and one private men’s room. Basically it could take care of about 4 or 6 people at any one time.

Mayor Scott – What would the cost be as related to portable toilets?

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – Mr. Mayor if I may, the portable toilets we use for town events are donated to us.

Council Member Collins – I have a feeling this would be one of the best things we’ve done, but I could be wrong.

Council Member McRae – One of the main compliments I hear about the Greenway is how nice our restrooms are. People really do notice that sort of thing.

Mayor Scott – Just looking over the one time expenditure list, everything that is on here looks like things that we are out on. These things wear out and they are absolutely necessary. Honestly Joe [Collins] I just don’t see \$32,000 for a portable restroom, not with no more events that we have. I have seen some portable toilets that are pretty nice that have handwashing facilities.

Council Member McMahan – What department would that fall under?

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – That would fall under our Streets Department. Another cost you would have to consider is bringing somebody in on the weekends to move it from place to place.

Mayor Scott - With portable toilets they come in and take care of the maintenance and cleanup.

Town Manager Summer Woodard presented a comparison of expenditures from the 2016-2017 budget and 2017-2018 proposed budget.

Mayor Scott – The Tourism Development Authority is bringing in \$118,000. One thing that is floating around the legislature is the ability for municipalities to be able to use those funds for things such as infrastructure like sidewalk repairs. I think universally across the state, towns are really wanting more say so in what to do with room occupancy tax. Right now, I guess we are still pretty locked in with what we can do with the funds.

Mayor Scott – One question I wanted to ask was about the banners. Banners don’t do weather and wind well. Is this something that is necessary?

Council Member McRae – I have been in towns where they are very eye catching and appealing but I don’t know how necessary they are.

Mayor Scott – Also of note, with all the construction around town, I’m not sure we need the banners at all.

May 15, 2017 meeting continued,

Council Member Collins – What does the \$10,000 for banners represent?

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – It would be able to replace all of the banners on your bypasses. They're rather expensive to replace. The \$10,000 would probably get half to be honest. The life expectancy is 8 to 10 years.

Council Member Collins – I would hate to think we would abandon the project over road construction. If it means taking them down in selected areas because they just don't hold up then fine. We're going to get to the point where we have to take them all down because they are so ratty. The question is, are we going to get out of the banner business? There is talk out there of surrounding towns getting ahead of us and I guess I'm just not up for getting rid of that line-item.

Council Member McRae – I think we should leave them in.

Council Member McMahan – So we are only doing half? So some will be new and some will still be ratty looking?

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – It goes back to what Council Member Collins was saying earlier. You have to start replacing them sometime or you're going to be doing them all at one time.

Council Member Collins – Our millage rate has been stagnant for how many years? I feel like we're being squeezed pretty tight. I don't see any big projects but every time you have to add 2% here or there its concerning. I'm not anxious about having to use our fund balance. This may not be the year but I don't know how we can function at this number much longer. We still have the Whitmire property. I'm sure we won't get all of our money back but that could help us restore what I believe we need for a good fund balance.

Mayor Scott – Does the Board feel like we are okay on our tax rate? What were we told that Sylva did?

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – They went up 12 cents last year.

Mayor Scott – I know to get some of these things you have to have the revenue. I know we did 1 or 2 cents 2 years ago.

Council Member McRae – 2 cents 2 years ago.

Council Member Collins – As far as the \$12,500 for Nikwasi, we could use \$7,000 from the economic line. Then it would just be \$5,500. I would be willing to pull back on my wish list. I don't get the sense from the Board that we are ready for a tax increase on the ad valorem.

Council Member Mashburn – I would like to stretch it one more year but you're right, we can't stretch it much more.

Mayor Scott – Joe how would you and Barbara feel if we pledged half of the Nikwasi money this year and half next year?

May 15, 2017 meeting continued,

Council Member Collins – It's too big of a project Bob. If I'm going to pull back on my wish list then I think we should fund it all.

Mayor Scott – Well if we do a motion would you all be okay with making it contingent on these other organizations coming up with their fair share on the project?

Council Member Collins – I guess so. It wouldn't be of value unless they all did I don't think.

Council Member McMahan – I don't know, especially if \$7,000 can come from the line-item that Summer talked about earlier. I would say that we just do it and show that the town is behind the project. Not even saying contingent upon but saying that we are going to do this because we support it.

Council Member Collins – I think it would essentially be the same thing. If they couldn't raise the money then they wouldn't need ours.

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – Mr. Mayor and the Board, if I may. We have \$7,000 in the current economic development line-item, where would you suggest that Administration and Finance take the remaining funds?

Council Member McRae – Could we take it out of the fund balance?

Council Member Collins – Yeah if there were ever a one-time expenditure, it would be that.

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – What if you decreased your contingency fund?

Council Member Collins – What is that at?

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – \$70,000. This would decrease it by \$5,500.

Council Member Collins – Yeah, why not?

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – Finance Officer Kyra Doster and I will make those changes and show it at our next meeting on June 5.

Mayor Scott – I just want to echo what the manager has said about the employees' work on this budget. I have watched them. They've spent hours and hours of work on this.

May 15, 2017 meeting continued,

Motion was made by McMahan, seconded by Collins to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m. Motion carried. Vote: 5 to 0.

Robert S. Scott, Mayor

Travis Tallent, Town Clerk