

TOWN MANAGER
Ken Deal

TOWN CLERK
Amanda Eller

TOWN ATTORNEY
Tom Brooke



MAYOR
Don Bringle

TOWN COUNCIL
Brandon Linn
Charles Seaford
Steve Stroud
Mike Upright
Lee Withers

MINUTES
A regular meeting of the China Grove Town Council

Tuesday, September 10, 2013
7:00 p.m.

China Grove Town Hall
China Grove, North Carolina

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bringle called the meeting of September 10, 2013 to order and called roll. All council members were present. There was a quorum. The meeting started at 7:00 pm at the Town Hall.

Mayor Bringle led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States.

Mayor Bringle requested to add V) Update from SRU and VI) Update on MPO Guidelines VII) Escrow Agreement to the Agenda under New Business. Mr. Linn made a motion to adopt the agenda. Mr. Seaford seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Upright made the motion to adopt the consent agenda as presented. Mr. Linn seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

CITIZEN COMMENT

I) Mrs. Dari Caldwell – President of Novant Health

Mrs. Caldwell stated that she is very excited to introduce to the Town, the ground-breaking of the new medical plaza that will be located on Hwy 29 to be held on September 26th 4:30 Shovel Ceremony with a low country boil held at the Stag and Doe. She stated that they wanted to thank the Council and extend the invitation to the Council for the groundbreaking and events to follow.

Mayor Bringle thanked Mrs. Caldwell for being present and asked the Council to RSVP to Mrs. Eller.

II) Mr. Pete Kluttz – 908 Railroad Avenue

Mr. Kluttz stated that someone ran over a sign at Railroad and Ridge Avenues sometime around Christmas. He stated that the sign is missing and the pole needs to be straightened. He also stated that he wanted to request that grass not be allowed to be mowed into the street. He stated that it especially shouldn't be done by contractors. He also asked that the Police Department will review where people are parking too close to corners because of traffic. He stated that on Bostian Street, the Little League Field has a driveway and each time it rains, gravel washes down the street. He stated that he would like a work order made for Mr. Ketner to please take care of this each time it happens because of this being Town property. He also referenced bushes and trees that are blocking intersections.

Mayor Bringle stated that they would take the comments under advisement and asked Mr. Deal to follow-up with these items.

QUASI-JUDICIAL HEARING

I) Conditional Use Permit – CUP-2013-01 – Tattoo Parlor on S. Main Street

Mr. Burton provided a review of the staff report for the request of the Conditional Use Permit by Mr. David Bartholow.

Mrs. Eller swore in Mr. David Bartholow and Mr. Jesse Link for testimony during the hearing.

Mayor Bringle called for discussion.

Mayor Bringle asked the hours of the business.

Mr. Bartholow stated that his tattoo parlor is also a ministry and they do not want to take away from the community but also give back by giving away clothing, shoes, and help people with bills. He stated that they do not allow it to be a hangout or clubhouse. He stated that he is an ordained minister and hopes to be a positive influence with the tattoo industry and community.

Mr. Withers stated that he was glad to see it was a unanimous vote from the Planning Board.

Mr. Stroud made a motion to approve the Finding of Facts for CUP-2013-01. Mr. Upright seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Stroud made a motion to approve the request to allow a Tattoo Parlor on South Main Street – TP 104 114A zoned Highway Business (HB). Mr. Linn seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION

I) Central Carolina Council of Governments – Jim Prosser

Mr. Prosser thanked the Council for allowing him to be present and thanked Mr. Seaford for his interest in the CCOG to help grow the community and improve quality of life in China Grove. He asked the Council what the needs are for China Grove.

Mr. Withers stated that they need help with a Master Plan for China Grove.

Mr. Upright expounded that they need help with growth but to maintain services to citizens as well as the Land Use Plan.

Mr. Seaford stated that the Town weathered the recession well, but they must continue to closely watch every dime that is spent so that undue tax burdens are not on the citizens.

Mr. Linn stated that having a Master Plan is big key.

Mr. Deal stated that he wanted help with grant writing for economic development.

Mr. Prosser stated that their planners have municipal experience as planning directors, city managers and economic development consulting. He stated that the costs for these services are more affordable due to the requests of those such as Mr. Seaford.

Mr. Withers made a recommendation to request Mr. Deal to be in contact with Mr. Prosser to begin this process. He stated we should make the effort to use these services since we are paying for them.

Mr. Prosser stated that his commitment is that they provide their service to their satisfaction or they will not request payment. He stated that they are a member organization and are solely for member needs. He stated that they are in the beginning stages of building a framework of growth for the entire region. Quality of life, growth and controlling the cost of government in Rowan County are items which they hope to discuss at upcoming workshop at the Salisbury Civic Center on Tuesday, October 15, 2013. He stated that people in this region are participating in these events because the planning of Towns affects children and grandchildren. He also stated that they have hired staff to assist with grant opportunities. He stated that their focus is on the regional framework for growth, how to grow the economy and jobs and prepared a strategy called "The Path for Prosperity" as a practical approach to achieve growth by collecting information on towns as to what skills are needed for the jobs in that community. He stated that his belief is that they need to work with the town in problem-solving to address issues in the community. He stated that his contact information is provided and hopes that they will contact him as needed and thanked the Town Council.

Mayor Bringle thanked Mr. Prosser for being present and asked Mr. Deal to be in contact with Mr. Prosser.

NEW BUSINESS

I) Discuss the future of the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance

Mr. Deal stated that they have requested to review the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance and take it to the Planning Board for their review and recommendation and then set a Public Hearing to abolish the Ordinance at a future meeting.

Mr. Brooke stated that he believes it does need to go before the Planning Board prior to having a public hearing. He stated that there has been litigation, not in China Grove, but legal challenges surrounding this issue.

Mayor Bringle asked Mr. Deal to attend the next Planning Board meeting.

II) Approve or Deny the Municipal with NCDOT, Norfolk Southern Railway Company, North Carolina Railroad Company and the Town of China Grove

Mr. Deal stated that he has been in contact with the Railroad for quite a while on this matter. He stated that he has worked with them to contract in-kind work in the amount of \$80,000 on town-owned roads.

Mayor Bringle asked if Mr. Brooke is comfortable with the verbiage.

Mr. Brooke stated that he is.

Mr. Stroud made a motion to approve the agreement with the NCDOT, Norfolk Southern Railway Company, North Carolina Railroad Company and the Town of China Grove. Mr. Seaford seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mayor Bringle thanked Mr. Deal for his due diligence on this item.

III) Discuss the Town of China Grove 125th Anniversary

Mr. Withers stated that the Town has its 125th Anniversary next March and requested a subcommittee be formed to decide what to do for the event.

Mayor Bringle appointed Mr. Withers to chair the committee and Mr. Stroud as a member and requested to add Mrs. Barbara Doby to the group.

IV) Request for Benches Downtown

Mr. Withers stated that he requested to add this item to move forward with beautification downtown. He thanked Mrs. Eller and Mr. Ketner for removing troublesome trees and vegetation downtown and replanting pots and planters. He stated that because of that there are some open areas that benches might help to encourage people to stop. He stated that the benches are around \$600 a piece, sturdy and metal so that they can be anchored to the concrete.

Mayor Bringle stated that he would like a recommendation as to how many we are requesting and a dollar amount. He stated that he believes this will add to the appearance downtown but need to consider placement and cost including freight.

V) Update from SRU

Mr. Jason Wilson from SRU updated the Council on the rate reduction and hopes that they have experienced a decrease in their bills. He stated that they have been working with Mr. Deal and Mr. Knox concerning Millers Grant subdivision and hopes to see activity beginning out at these sites soon. He stated that they have purchased 700 meters to replace some of the current meter systems in Town because of challenges that they currently face with the four different systems being used. He stated that they will be notifying citizens of these upcoming changes to their meters into drive-by radio-read meters.

Mr. Upright asked whether this will take place in one main location.

Mr. Wilson stated that they would like to change out the 3/4" meters if possible and there is no route because of the way meters have been replaced over the years but they are trying to work out a plan to work across town. He also stated that there are upcoming regulations that there is no lead allowed after January 1st in any check valves or parts that are removed or repaired at that time. He stated that contractors may come out and handle this project so that they can learn from them during the process and citizens will be informed.

Mayor Bringle thanked Mr. Wilson for updating the Council and believes the relationship and switch to SRU has gone well and thanked Mr. Behmer and staff at SRU as well.

Mr. Upright asked the status of the grease trap program.

Mr. Wilson stated that most businesses are in compliance and the program has been overall well-received. He stated that the program was a mandate but they have worked well with the businesses in completing this project. He stated that they have seen improvements in their system because of these regulations.

VI) Update on MPO Guidelines

Mr. Withers stated that the MPO created a new formula that requires final approval by the joint group of House/Senate/DOT. He reviewed the percentages of funding. He stated that basically that DOT have their facts and figures plus the percentage of their opinions and maintain control of the formula. He stated that they need to reach out to show that they are not in support of the current formula for funding and hopes to at least have 30% regional input and 50% local input.

Mayor Bringle thanked Mr. Withers for the update and expressed that the results of this approval of funding percentages will affect the Town.

VII) Escrow Agreement

Mr. Deal stated that he has been working with Mr. Knox and had Mr. Brooke draft the agreement to ensure that they install 1 ½” concrete on the roads and sidewalks. He stated that Mr. Knox has paid the \$144,000 and that they need approval of the Escrow Agreement.

Mr. Stroud made a motion to approve the Escrow Agreement. Mr. Seaford seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Withers asked whether the Town has ownership of the light poles and street signs, etc. at Millers Grant.

Mr. Ketner stated that Mr. Knox purchased the lights and the Town now owns, operates and funds the lights in the subdivision.

Mayor Bringle thanked Mr. Knox for being present.

Mr. Stroud asked what types houses are being built.

Mr. Knox stated that Shea Homes will be the contractors for the homes with no changes to the original plans and restrictions for building.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Bringle thanked staff and the Town for Farmers Day for another successful year in planning the event and for everyone coming together. He thanked Mrs. Eller and presented her with a gift as a token of appreciation.

Mayor Bringle stated that road resurfacing has taken place along Bostian Street as well as the remainder of the parking lot behind Town Hall.

Mayor Bringle reviewed the new schedule at Town Hall and stated that he has not received complaints so this will continue until Daylight Savings Time.

Mayor Bringle stated that the new “Welcome to China Grove” sign has really improved the entrance into Town and thanked Mr. Ketner for their work to maintain the planters downtown and stated that they look the best that they ever have.

Mayor Bringle asked Chief Kluttz to review the tractor trailer truck being parked in Town on Bostian Street.

Mayor Bringle asked Chief Kluttz to have a presence at the Eureka Masonic lodge this Saturday so that they can get out of their parking lot safely.

Mayor Bringle thanked Mr. Deal for working with Mr. Behmer, Mr. Knox and NCDOT/Railroad with current projects.

Mr. Withers thanked the Police Department for them being present at the elementary school as well as the closure rate on crimes that have been committed in Town.

ADJOURN

Mr. Stroud made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Seaford seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mayor Bringle thanked everyone in attendance.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda A. Eller, Town Clerk

Donald E. Bringle, Mayor