

TOWN OF GARLAND  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2022  
6:30 PM

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Garland was held at the Garland Town Hall in Garland, N.C. on Tuesday, February 1, 2022 at 6:30 pm.

The following members of the Board of Commissioners were present:

Carolyn R. Melvin  
Jo A. Strickland  
Barbara A Peterson  
Andy Johnson  
Ralph Smith, Jr.

Also, present: Mayor Austin Brown, Town Clerk Pamela Cashwell, and Mrs. Marie Faircloth, Director of the Garland Senior Center. There were six citizens in attendance.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Austin Brown called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and welcomed everyone in attendance. Town Clerk, Pamela Cashwell, was present recording notes for the minutes.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE

Mayor Austin Brown led the attendees in the recitation of the pledge.

INVOCATION

Clerk Pamela Cashwell provided the invocation.

QUORUM

Mayor Austin Brown and Clerk Pamela Cashwell established there was a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Austin Brown requested board members review the agenda for approval. Mayor Austin Brown requested to delete: #7. Under Finance- Refund approvals for OOT Garbage Customers and add #6. Under Public Works-Surplus Equipment. Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn R. Melvin made a motion to approve the agenda with said changes, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson, and carried unanimously. (See attached).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Mary Smith addressed board members and read a prepared statement. (See attached). She spoke of volunteering for years at the Garland Senior Center. She spoke of an incident last week when Commissioner Strickland visited the center, and she stated the residents and staff had their nerves rattled and felt bullied during the visit. She thanked the board for listening and stated she was excited to see greatness continue to grow in Garland.

Mr. Martin Mortensen addressed board members stating he has been involved at the Garland Senior Center for a while now where citizens congregate to have camaraderie and one elderly lady was concerned the heat was going to be turned off at the building. He stated these older people deserve respect and heat because this is the only place a lot of them have, to go.

Mayor Brown asked if there were anyone else for public comments. Ms. Connie Lee spoke of how much the Garland Senior Center meant to her. She stated the elderly should be made comfortable and respected.

Ms. Mary Smith asked to speak again and was allowed to do so. She stated it would be all their wishes if Mrs. Strickland was not allowed to go back to the center and rattle their nerves. She stated if she changes the way she speaks to them then she can come back. She stated Jo, this is nothing personal against you, I am sure you have good qualities about you. She ended with "God is good."

Mr. Mortensen asked when the pothole was going to be repaired on W. Second Street. He was told this week.

Ms. Lee asked to speak again and forgot what she planned to say. She stated board members need to remember they have professional positions and need to conduct business in a professional manner.

## COMMISSIONER REPORTS

### MAYORAL UPDATE

Mayor Brown read a thank you note from two citizens thanking board members for getting the clock repaired in Rotary Park and noting how pretty the Christmas decorations looked this year. Mayor Brown stated we have a lot of wheels turning trying to move Garland forward and a lot of positives will be announced soon.

### FINANCE

Credit Card Purchases – Clerk Pamela Cashwell provided a statement of and reviewed all the credit card purchases for the month. (See attached).

BVA & A.P. Check Listing- Clerk Cashwell reviewed the BVA reports with Board members and indicated the 30 Fund expenditure for Maintenance & Repairs/Equipment is low and funds will need to be moved from another line item to cover repairs for the remaining fiscal year. Commissioner Ralph Smith Jr. agreed we will need additional funds for this line item. The A.P. check listing report was provided for the month of January 2022. (See attached).

Reports Completed- Clerk Cashwell reported the following reports have been completed: bank reconciliations for January 2022 for all three bank accounts, end of month reports, TR-2 report, W2's, W3, 1094B, 1095B, NC-3, 1096 and 1099's.

Audit Update- Clerk Cashwell informed board members the audit has not been completed as planned due to a sudden tragic event involving audit staff. The plan is to complete the final aspects of the audit in the next two weeks.

Budget Planning Retreat- Clerk Cashwell stated she will reach out to several businesses and try and locate a place to have a budget planning retreat. She stated she would email them any information on suitable sites to meet.

Fiscal Training for Local Government Board Members- Clerk Cashwell reminded board members of an email she forwarded to them asking for them to participate in training videos designed especially for elected officials by staff of the LGC. She stated it is valuable data that explains their fiduciary responsibilities as elected board members. Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn R. Melvin provided her certificate of training she received for taking the modules and she agreed the training has a lot of valuable information. Clerk Cashwell praised Mayor Pro Tem Melvin for taking the valuable training and asked other members to please take advantage of this free training and provide a copy of their certificate of training for their personnel file.

### BUILDINGS/CEMETERY

Community Center Updates- Commissioners Barbara A. Peterson and Jo A. Strickland met with a contractor to obtain a quote for replacing the windows. No quote has been received to date.

Dispersal/Disposal of Items in Community Center- Commissioner Jo A. Strickland stated it was up to board members to decide what process to use to dispose of the property at the Community Building. Several board members stated they knew of individuals interested in purchasing some of the supplies. Commissioner Ralph Smith Jr. asked if they plan to give the former daycare supplies away for free and several board members replied "no, sale it."

Senior Center Programmable Thermostats Update- Commissioner Ralph Smith Jr, stated *Terry Long Electric, LLC* has secured programmable thermostats for the Garland Senior Center. He stated two would cost approximately \$570.00. Board members discussed replacing the thermostats in the building behind the main building as well. Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson made a motion to replace the thermostats at the Garland Senior Center buildings with programmable thermostats, seconded by Commissioner Jo A. Strickland and carried unanimously. Commissioner Andy Johnson also suggested placing a timer on the water heater at the center as another method in decreasing the monthly electric bills.

Update for Urinal Repairs @ Town Hall- Commissioner Andy Johnson agreed to contact several plumbing contractors he is familiar with to obtain quotes to repair/replace both urinals at town hall.

Cemetery Updates- Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson reported she has reached out to a family member of a deceased resident who placed a double headstone at the Garland Cemetery on a plot that has not been purchased. She noted either they need to pay for the plot or remove the headstone.

### PARKS/RECREATION

Updates- Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn R. Melvin presented a quote for a refrigerator for the concession stand for \$674.00 and a 50-gallon hot water heater for \$479.00. She also received quotes to clean the left and right-side ditches at the ballpark for \$1,723.00. (See attached). She noted the board approved cleaning the ditch adjacent to W. Seventh Street at the last meeting. There was discussion on whether the refrigerator currently in the concession stand was donated or if the owner wanted it back. Commissioner Ralph Smith Jr. stated he would like to discuss the lights at the ballfield before board members decide on these quotes. He stated he had spoken with Mr. Terry Long about the lighting issues at the ballpark. He reported Mr. Long could secure LED lighting fixtures for the ballpark for \$22,000.00. Approximately ten 40-foot poles would have to be purchased as well as the cost for installation. He stated this pricing as compared to previous quotes for \$150,000.00 is very reasonable. Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn R. Melvin stated she had contacted Mr. Long in the past and he declined working on the lighting. Commissioner Jo A. Strickland stated this came about after she recommended taking the light poles down on the large field if they are a safety issue and let the players play without lighting. Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson stated it would take care of the safety concerns with the poles. Commissioner Andy Johnson noted if the lighting is switched to LED lighting, it will save approximately 25% on the monthly electric bill. He noted the softball league was hoping to have adult teams if they could work it out and the little field with lights would not be big enough for the older players and adult players. Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn R. Melvin stated she was a grants person, and she has been looking at different grants available for parks and recreation. Some are matching grants and others are full grants. She stated she would report on application grants at next months meeting. Commissioner Jo A. Strickland stated she had talked with a county commissioner, and he suggested the town appear before the county board during budget planning and request funding for the town. She noted other municipalities that receive assistance from the county and noted the Town of Garland deserves funding assistance as well. She also noted the risk management personnel who conducted the safety assessment noted they have matching safety grants for parks and recreation as well. Mayor Austin Brown asked if they wanted to decide on any of the quotes. Commissioner Jo A. Strickland stated Mr. Todd Marshall donated the refrigerator and does not want it back. Commissioner Jo A. Strickland made a motion to approve the purchase of the hot water heater for the concession stand, seconded by Commissioner Andy Johnson, and carried unanimously. Commissioner Ralph Smith Jr. made a motion to approve the quotes to clean the left and right-side ditches at the ballpark, seconded by Commissioner Andy Johnson, and carried unanimously.

## STREETS

Updates- Commissioner Andy Johnson states he has contacted Mr. King to come out and prepare quotes for several different streets so the board can decide which streets to pave based on how much money is available for paving. Perma patch has been purchased and will be used to repair the hole on W. Second Street secondary to repairing a water line leak. Commissioner Ralph Smith, Jr. stated they plan to complete the repairs by weeks end. Commissioner Andy Johnson noted we have a lot of street name signs that need replacing and we need an inventory of the signs we have in stock for use. Clerk Cashwell noted she had ordered ten stop signposts as requested by public works and Mayor Brown that have not been invoiced to date.

## PUBLIC WORKS – WATER/SEWER/GARBAGE

Public Works Director Job Vacancy Advertisement- Commissioner Ralph Smith Jr. stated he, Commissioner Andy Johnson and Mayor Brown have an interview scheduled this week for a Public Works Director. He also noted the advertisement will be posted on the Rural Water website.

Updates on Water Line and Lagoon Repairs- Several recent water main breaks have been repaired and cost approximately \$3,000.00. The rental for the equipment to complete the repairs cost \$500.00 per day.

Purchase of a Mini-Excavator- Board members discussed the emergent need to purchase a mini-excavator and trailer to decrease the cost of water and sewer line repairs. They discussed several quotes and determined a cost of \$60,000.00 would be needed for the purchases. Finance Officer Cashwell recommended moving \$30,000.00 from the MMA to the General Fund and increase Fund Balance appropriations in the General Fund by \$30,000.00 and increase Street Capital Outlay by \$30,000.00, in the Water/Sewer Fund move \$30,000.00 from Capital Outlay Improvement to Capital Outlay Equipment. This would appropriate the cost 50/50 for each fund as the equipment would be used for both departments. Commissioner Jo A. Strickland made a motion to move \$30,000.00 from the MMA to the General Fund account, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson, and carried unanimously. Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson made a motion to approve the budget amendment suggested by Finance Officer Cashwell and approve Mayor Austin Brown to sign off on the amendment to purchase a mini-excavator and trailer for up to \$60,000.00, seconded by Commissioner Andy Johnson and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Jo A. Strickland made a motion to take a brief recess, seconded by Commissioner Ralph Smith Jr., and carried unanimously.

Meeting called back to order at 7:35 pm.

Backhoe Repairs- Commissioner Ralph Smith Jr. stated he had someone assessing the repair needs on the backhoe.

Surplus Equipment- Mayor Brown provided a packet of pictures of town owned equipment. He informed board members they would need to deem the equipment surplus to sell the equipment. Commissioner Ralph Smith Jr. made a motion to deem the packet of pictures of equipment as surplus equipment, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried unanimously. (See attached). After a lengthy discussion on how to sell the equipment and reserve pricing for the equipment, Commissioner Ralph Smith Jr. made a motion to table this item until fair market pricing can be obtained for the equipment, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn R. Melvin, and carried unanimously.

SAFETY

Updates- Commissioner Jo A. Strickland reported she, Commissioner Ralph Smith Jr. and Mayor Austin Brown met with Sampson County Sheriff Jimmy Thornton about patrol coverage for the Town of Garland. She stated due to a staffing shortage, Sheriff Thornton stated the best alternative he could suggest at this time is to hire off duty deputies to provide police coverage. He stated several municipalities use this method and typically the cost is \$20.00-25.00 per hour. Mileage is reimbursed at \$.56.8 per mile for a maximum of fifty miles per eight-hour shift. Someone would have to be responsible for scheduling the deputies for duty. Board members discussed this and stated they would need to budget \$80,000.00 in the upcoming budget planning to secure coverage for the town beginning in the next fiscal year.

OLD BUSINESS

Attorney Search Updates- Commissioner Jo A. Strickland stated Attorney Gary Grady was interested. She was asked to schedule an interview at the March 1, 2022 meeting.

MINUTES APPROVAL

January 18, 2022 Regular Meeting- Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Ralph Smith, Jr., and carried unanimously. (See attached).

CALENDAR OF EVENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CONDOLENCES

Condolences: The Town of Garland sends our sincerest condolences to all of those who have recently lost loved ones.

Next Regular Board Meeting will be March 1, 2022 at 6:30 pm at Town Hall

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn R. Melvin made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Ralph Smith Jr., and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.



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Pamela Cashwell, Town Clerk/Finance Officer

Board Approved:

  
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Austin Brown, Mayor