

**TOWN OF GARLAND
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 2021
6:00 PM**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Garland was held virtually via GoToMeeting on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 6:00 pm.

The following members of the Board of Commissioners were present:

**Austin Brown (Present Virtually)
Eddie Bronson, Jr. (Present Virtually)
Jo A. Strickland (Present in the Boardroom)
Barbara A. Peterson (Present Virtually)
Carolyn R. Melvin (Present Virtually)**

Also, present virtually: Mayor Winifred H. Murphy, Town Clerk Pamela Cashwell and Mr. Chase Jordan of the *Sampson Independent*. Mr. Todd Marshall and Mrs. Wanda Johnson were present in the boardroom. There were unidentified callers as well in attendance virtually.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Winifred H. Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and welcomed everyone in attendance. Town Clerk, Pamela Cashwell, was present recording notes for the minutes.

QUORUM

Mayor Winifred H. Murphy called the roll and established there was a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Winifred H. Murphy requested the Board review the agenda for approval. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Jo A. Strickland and carried unanimously. (See attached).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Winifred H. Murphy recognized Mr. Todd Marshall and Mrs. Wanda Johnson, officers of the Garland Softball Committee to address board members. Mr. Todd Marshall speaking on behalf of the committee requested board members approve opening the league back up to play softball this year. Mayor Murphy asked the Garland Softball Committee to meet with Commissioners Eddie Bronson Jr. and Carolyn R. Melvin of the Parks and Recreation Committee and present them a plan on how they can safely open the park for participants in light on the Covid-19 pandemic and recent vandalism at the park and concession stand. Discussion followed on issues with the lighting at the park. Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin agreed to contact Mr. Marshall to set a date for a meeting between the two committees to discuss moving forward with this request.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION

Mayoral Update- Mayor Murphy thanked everyone including volunteers for everything they have done during this challenging year. She stated elected officials are role models for citizens and businesses and she encouraged everyone to continue to wear their masks, social distance and practice good handwashing hygiene. Sampson County continues to be a red county for the spread of the virus and measures need to be adhered to in order to move toward more normalcy.

NCORR Grant Opportunity- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to approve Mr. Bob Taylor submitting an application on behalf of the Town of Garland for this grant opportunity, seconded by Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin and carried unanimously. (See attached).

Family Dollar Property- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion approving Mr. Rogers Charles to develop a plan for a small park area on the town owned property adjacent to the Family Dollar Store, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried unanimously.

FINANCE

Budget versus Actual – Clerk Pamela Cashwell provided copies of the current budget vs. actual reports for the Board. (See attached).

Bank Statements/A.P. Check Listing – Clerk Pamela Cashwell provided copies of the bank statements for all three accounts as well as the AP check report from the last month. (See attached).

Credit Card Purchases – Clerk Pamela Cashwell reported purchases for the month include a bereavement arrangement for Mr. Neil Carroll's sister as well as cleaning and disinfecting supplies from the CARES Funding. (See attached).

Budget Amendment 2020-2021-04- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to approve Budget Amendment 2020-2021-04, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried unanimously. (See attached).

Budget Planning Sessions- Clerk Cashwell will begin making appointments with each committee for budget planning sessions next week.

BUILDINGS/CEMETERY

Cemetery Updates/Surveying Maps/Plans to get Records Updated- Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson reported her and Deputy Clerk Ricketson plan to meet tomorrow to continue working on updating the information and records for the cemetery. Mr. Adam Smith asked to address the board at this time. Mayor Murphy asked board members if they would like to allow Mr. Smith to speak. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to allow Mr. Adam Smith to address the board at this time, seconded by Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin and carried with a vote of four to none. Commissioner Jo A. Strickland didn't cast a vote due to issues with her virtual connection. Mr. Adam Smith stated a floral arrangement was stolen from his daughter's gravesite at the Garland Cemetery on February 16, 2021. He stated he called town hall to report it and he understood this information was provided to Mayor Murphy and two commissioners and he hasn't received any follow up on his concern.

Mayor Murphy replied what is your question? Mr. Smith asked what he should do when this happens. Mayor Murphy responded it should be reported to the Sheriff's Department. Mr. Smith stated okay, thank you. Mayor Murphy asked if anyone else would like to address this issue and no one else commented. Mayor Murphy thanked Mr. Smith for his comments and voiced she was sorry this had happened.

Buildings Updates- Commissioner Eddie Bronson Jr. stated he reached out to get a second quote for the flooring repairs at the former police department and the gentleman declined giving a quote stating it was too big of a job for one person to complete. He continued, I guess we are stuck with Alonzo.

Abandoned Buildings Update- Commissioner Eddie Bronson Jr. reported Mr. Jerry Cashwell, the fire marshal stated he has been unable to reach the owners of the old theater. Commissioner Eddie Bronson Jr. stated he was going to contact the town attorney and have him write a letter to the owners asking them to do something about the property. He stated that is what the town attorney gets paid to do. He stated he was tired of dead rats and cats lying in the road and he feels like if this was happening on a certain side of town, something would have been done about it already. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown stated he might want to get a letter sent to the owner of the old depot as well since this property continues to remain a safety hazard. Mayor Murphy indicated she has spoken with the property owner of the old depot and he was attempting to contact the individual who is tearing the building down. She stated she needed to follow up on this issue with the property owner.

PARKS/RECREATION

Concession Stand Repairs to Building & Security System/Post Break-In- Commissioner Eddie Bronson Jr. stated I don't intend to put up any more security cameras as this would be a waste of money.

Lighting Fixture Update at Ball Park- Commissioner Eddie Bronson Jr. stated he is continuing to work on getting lights at the park.

STREETS

Updates- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown discussed options for paving at least one block of road this year with board members. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to approve paving West Third Street from N. Church Avenue to North Herring Avenue, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried with a vote of four to none. Commissioner Jo A. Strickland didn't have sound with her remote connection and didn't cast a vote. Mayor Murphy repeatedly requested Commissioner Jo A. Strickland to call into the meeting with her telephone as we couldn't hear anything she was attempting to say.

Powell Bill Street Assessment Update- Commissioner Jo A. Strickland unable to provide an update due to issues with virtual connection.

Inventory of Critical Street Needs- Mayor Murphy stated she would like board members and public works staff to compile a list of critical street needs such as potholes, issues with signage and other maintenance needed while they were out and about in town in order to complete some of the needed street repairs.

PUBLIC WORKS – WATER/SEWER/GARBAGE

Lagoon Restoration Plan/Quote- Commissioner Jo A. Strickland unable to provide an update due to issues with virtual connection.

Trappers Update/Cost- Commissioner Jo A. Strickland unable to provide an update due to issues with virtual connection.

Replacement of Inventory-Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown discussed replacement of equipment and supplies that were stolen from the shop. He indicated they needed to purchase equipment and supplies for lawn maintenance. He agreed to purchase needed equipment and supplies as well as an engraver and cabinets to store supplies in at the town hall bay area. Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin agreed to assist with developing an inventory spreadsheet so all new purchases will be engraved and inventoried to include serial numbers, date, place and costs of each purchase. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to purchase needed equipment and supplies that were stolen, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried unanimously.

SAFETY

Exterior Lighting Quotes needed for Town Hall- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to approve the quote submitted by *Terry Long Electrical* for \$2,600.00 to replace the exterior lighting on both sides of town hall, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried with a vote of four to none. Commissioner Jo A. Strickland didn't cast a vote due to issues with her virtual connection. (See attached).

Former Police Department Inventory & Equipment- Commissioner Jo A. Strickland unable to provide an update due to issues with virtual connection.

OLD BUSINESS

Cares Act Funding-Current Expenditure Report- Clerk Pamela Cashwell reviewed the recent purchases from the CARES ACT funds and provided a current expenditure report. She noted the only item missing from the report is the payroll for Deputy Clerk Ricketson when she was out of work due to testing positive for Covid-19. Clerk Cashwell is waiting on further guidance for this expense from the town auditor. (See attached). Clerk Cashwell recommended purchasing two additional laptops for use remotely for meetings and work from home by employees and board members from CARES Funding. Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson made a motion to purchase two laptops as recommended, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown and carried with a vote of four to none with Commissioner Jo A. Strickland not casting a vote due to issues with her virtual connection.

Re-Appointment of Planning Board Member- Mayor Murphy stated Mr. Tim Register had agreed to be re-appointed to the planning and zoning board.

Chapter 160D Plan of Action- Mayor Murphy stated she had spoken with a consultant and requested a quote for assistance with compliance for the 160D Plan. She expects to receive the quote in a few days.

NEW BUSINESS

Garland Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department, Inc. Budget Request-Mayor Murphy read aloud the request from Garland Volunteer Fire & Rescue for \$26,000.00 for a second paid firefighter. (See attached). Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to table a decision of this request for when board members begin budget discussions, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried with a vote of four to none. Commissioner Jo A. Strickland didn't cast a vote due to issues with her virtual connection.

Spring Clean-Up Dates- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to set March 29, 2021 to April 1, 2021 as Spring Clean-Up dates, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried with a vote of four to none. Commissioner Jo A. Strickland didn't cast a vote due to issues with her virtual connection.

Nuisance Inventory- Commissioner Eddie Bronson Jr. asked who owned the old post office building. Several replies were given, and it was determined this would need further research for a clear response to his question.

Mass Mailing-Spring Clean-Up Dates and Education- A mass mailing will be sent out next week to all in town citizens with information on the dates of the Spring Clean-Up as well as educational material on which items are eligible for pick-up and which items will not be picked up. Information will also be provided as to where citizens can dispose of electronics and appliances. Clerk Cashwell will send the previous letter to all board members tomorrow morning for their input into the letter for the citizens.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CONDOLENCES

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

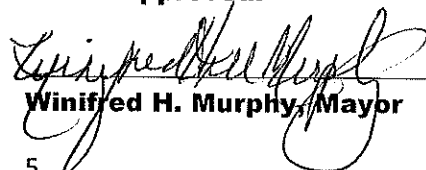
CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to enter into closed session (*Pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11-(3) Attorney-Client Privilege and (6) Personnel*), seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried with a vote of three to none. Commissioners Jo A. Strickland and Carolyn R. Melvin didn't cast votes due to issues with their virtual connections. Board members entered into closed session at 7:19 pm.

Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to exit closed session, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried with a vote of three to none. Commissioners Jo A. Strickland and Carolyn R. Melvin didn't cast a vote due to issues with their virtual connections. Closed session ended at 7:28 pm.

ADJOURNMENT Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried with a vote of three to none. Meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.

Board Approved:


Winifred H. Murphy, Mayor



Pamela Cashwell, Town Clerk