

**TOWN OF GARLAND
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, APRIL 20, 2021
6:00 PM**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Garland was held virtually via GoToMeeting on Tuesday, April 20, 2021 at 6:00 pm.

The following members of the Board of Commissioners were present:

**Austin Brown (Present Virtually)
Barbara A. Peterson (Present Virtually)
Carolyn R. Melvin (Present Virtually)
Eddie Bronson, Jr. (Present Virtually/Arrived at 6:32pm)**

Also, present virtually: Mayor Winifred H. Murphy, Town Clerk Pamela Cashwell and Ms. Emily Williams of the *Sampson Independent*. 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 board members to review the agenda for approval. Mayor Murphy added #5 under Finance: Health Benefits Renewal and deleted 7. #2 Zoning applications. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to approve the agenda with said changes, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried unanimously. (See attached).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were received.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION

Mayoral Update- Mayor Murphy thanked everyone for their support and condolences during the recent passing of her husband's and her sister. She congratulated former news reporter Mr. Chase Jordan on his new career opportunity with *The Star News* and welcomed back former news reporter Ms. Emily Williams who will be covering news on the Town of Garland. Mayor Murphy spoke of the many projects currently underway in the town: infrastructure improvements and Ralph's Rose Garden. She noted there have been a lot of changes with the Planning & Zoning Board and noted

she emailed her recommendations for appointments and re-appointments to board members. Her recommendations are as follows, Mrs. Hanna Wise Brown for a two-year term, Mr. Tim Register for a one-year term, Mrs. Mary B. Brown for a one-year term, Mrs. Velda Jones Brown for a two-year term and Mrs. Wanda H. Simmons for a three-year term. Board of Adjustment members: Mrs. Sheila Smith and Ms. Cynthia Murphy for a two-year term. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown and Commissioner Jo A. Strickland will be zoning representatives with Deputy Clerk Annette Ricketson serving as Zoning Clerk signing off on permit applications after the board has made a decision on the application. (See attached). Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to approve the recommendations as provided, seconded by Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin and carried unanimously.

Mayor Murphy asked board members to discuss their thoughts on working towards having board meetings back in the boardroom and opening the office back up to the public. It was a consensus among board members to work towards this goal as long as everyone observes the mandates: wearing a face covering, social distancing and proper handwashing techniques to help protect each other from contracting the Covid-19 virus. Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin made a motion to work toward having board meetings in the boardroom by July 1, 2021 with everyone wearing a face covering and social distancing. Anyone taking exception to those two mandates can join the meeting virtually, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown and carried unanimously. Board members will revisit opening town hall offices to the public next month while working on safety measures for the staff. Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin made a motion that anyone entering town hall must wear a face covering or conduct business outside, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown and carried unanimously. Signs with this motion typed on it will be placed at both doors to the building of town hall.

FINANCE

Budget versus Actual – Clerk Pamela Cashwell provided and reviewed 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 no purchases for the month. (See attached).

Budget Planning Sessions- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to schedule a budget planning session for Tuesday, April 27, 2021 virtually at 7:00 pm, seconded by Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin and carried unanimously.

Health Benefits Renewal- Clerk Cashwell reviewed the health benefits renewal rate changes that become effective July 1, 2021. (See attached). Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to approve the renewal application to be signed by Mayor Winifred H. Murphy, seconded by Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin and carried unanimously.

BUILDINGS/CEMETERY

Cemetery Updates/Surveying Maps/Plans to get Records Updated- Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson reported she and Deputy Clerk Annette Ricketson have had to cancel some plans to work on updating the cemetery records for the Garland Community Cemetery. Mayor Murphy noted Deputy Clerk has a lot on her plate with zoning issues and cemetery updates. She recommended allowing Deputy Clerk Ricketson to work some over-time hours after 5pm to concentrate on updating cemetery records. Clerk Cashwell agreed this would help to get the records updated quicker and stated she would recommend Deputy Clerk Ricketson working an extra 20 hours in May and June 2021 to get all of the Garland Community Cemetery records updated by this time. Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson made a motion to allow Deputy Clerk Ricketson twenty hours of overtime in May and June 2021 to solely work on updating cemetery records, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown and carried unanimously.

Buildings Updates-Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson reported they have received one bid for replacing flooring at the former police department as the other contractor stated he didn't have the equipment to complete the work. Commissioner Eddie Bronson Jr. arrived in the meeting and discussed the one quote that was received was \$3,500.00 for the labor and the guy wouldn't know what materials would be needed until he tears the old flooring out. The town would be responsible for all materials. Clerk Cashwell noted she couldn't pre-audit the project without some type of estimate for the completed project. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown asked if it was even safe to be working in that building with the mold issues. Commissioner Bronson stated the guy was going to put something on the walls. Commissioner Bronson stated the estimate for the \$3,500.00 labor wasn't to replace all the flooring, just the soft spots and holes in the flooring. Mayor Murphy stated she would like a more itemized quote listing all the work he planned to do for the labor costs. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to table this item until more information can be obtained, seconded by Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin and carried unanimously.

Abandoned Buildings Update- Commissioner Eddie Bronson Jr. stated he had staff email everyone a copy of a letter regarding abandoned buildings he received from the attorney and asked board members for their opinion of the letter. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown questioned whether or not the Chapter numbers were correct for the ordinances and stated it would need to be determined who would sign off on the letters to be mailed to citizens. It was determined this would be further discussed when they got to code enforcement later on in the agenda.

Quote for Landscaping at Town Hall- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown stated he had emailed this quote to all board members for their consideration. (See attached). Mayor Murphy questioned the type of mulch that would be used and stated she would like to discuss more specific details with the landscaper. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to approve the quote, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried unanimously. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown stated he would get the number for the landscaper to Mayor Murphy so she could contact him with any questions she has about the planned landscaping of town hall.

PARKS/RECREATION

Concession Stand Repairs- Commissioner Eddie Bronson Jr. reported he didn't intend to do any repairs to the concession stand or place security cameras at the park until they were able to get law enforcement to better patrol the area.

Lighting Fixture Update at Ball Park- Commissioner Eddie Bronson Jr. reported he had spoken with a contractor regarding replacing the light on the pole at the ballfield and the contractor doesn't have a bucket truck that will go that high to replace the light. He stated he is still looking for someone who can complete the lighting repairs. Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin stated she spoke with Mr. Todd Marshall and they were unable to meet with board members and she expressed to him the board members would need updates moving forward. She also stated they planned to discuss scheduling games so they would be finished before dark tonight at this meeting so as to not need area lighting at the park. She stated she would discuss this again with the softball league. She stated they have had either the parent or guardian sign liability waivers as well. They have registered 93 participants from the ages of 4-18 years of age to date. Clerk Cashwell asked that all volunteers be asked to sign a liability waiver as well and have them turned in prior to the opening night of games.

STREETS

Updates- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown reported the paving contractor came out and assessed the sinkhole they had previously repaired on Center Street and they have agreed to further assess the problem and fix the area on Center Street at no cost to the town. The paving contractor plans to begin grading on the two blocks the board approved for paving and hopes to have the paving completed in the next three to four weeks.

Powell Bill Street Assessment Update- Commissioner Jo A. Strickland is working on this and no updates are available tonight.

Inventory of Critical Street Needs- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown stated he had received Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin's list of street needs. He stated he needed to know the area of flooding on Fifth Street so he can determine if it is a street/ditch problem or a homeowner's yard issue. He stated he had spoken with Mr. Ricky Brown concerning the ditch in front of her home and there is a water line running through that area. Commissioner Eddie Bronson Jr. asked about the ditch in front of the walking track on Seventh Street. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown stated he would ask Randy Boone to take the side-arm and work on this ditch area.

PUBLIC WORKS – WATER/SEWER/GARBAGE

Lagoon Restoration Plan/Quote- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown stated this was an update that Commissioner Jo A. Strickland would need to provide as he hasn't received any updates on this issue.

Replacement of Inventory Update/ Truck Repairs Update- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown reported he had purchased the replacement lawn equipment and supplies that were stolen, and all the items have been inventoried and placed in service. He stated Randy Boone had requested they purchase a replacement Drill/Sawzall and kit for

use in public works. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to purchase the drill and kit pending pre-audit approval from the Finance Officer, seconded by Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin and carried unanimously. Clerk Cashwell reported public works staff needed meter locks replaced as well. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown stated he would order these tomorrow. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown reported the first town truck had been received from the body shop and was decal'd with the town logo as well. He noted he had found multiple areas that were not repaired, and he sent those pictures to the insurance representative. She advised him to return the truck to the body shop after the second truck is completed and the body shop would need to send in a supplement for the outstanding repairs and the insurance company will pay the body shop directly for the additional repairs needed.

Annual State Water Inspection- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown reported this inspection is scheduled for April 27, 2021. He noted Neil Carroll and Randy Boone have been preparing for the inspection and he will notify board members of the results of the inspection once it is completed.

Core & Main Quote for Replacement of Hotbox Transmitters- Clerk Cashwell reviewed the quote provided for replacement of the large transmitters used to record county water usage. (See attached). Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to table this item until next fiscal year, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried unanimously.

SAFETY

Former Police Department Inventory & Equipment- Commissioner Jo A. Strickland wasn't present to provide an update. No one else had any updates either.

OLD BUSINESS

Cares Act Funding-Current Expenditure Report- Clerk Cashwell reported the expenditure report is up to date with purchases and reimbursements. A total of \$823.52 was used to pay Deputy Clerk Ricketson when she was out of work secondary to contracting the Covid-19 virus and a pressure washer was purchased in the amount of \$1,497.99 from CARES Funding. Total expenditures to date equal \$26,412.26 with a remaining \$24,407.74 in the fund. (See attached).

Chapter 160D Plan of Action- Mayor Murphy stated the consultant sent a quote in excess of \$7,000.00 to assist with the 160D compliance. She stated one other consultant agreed to complete the update for \$2,000.00 but couldn't begin work on it until June 2021. She stated they are continuing to look for additional resources to assist with the 160D Plan of Action.

NEW BUSINESS

Nuisance Inventory- No updates provided.

Ralph's Rose Garden Update/Dedication- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown reported the garden was completed today. Mr. Terry Long has volunteered to provide lighting to the garden in memory of Mr. Ralph Smith. Plans for a dedication ceremony was discussed. Mayor Murphy and Commissioner Eddie Bronson Jr. voiced concern that the garden stones weren't level. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown stated he had spoken

with the landscaper and he stated the land sloped and that was why the structure is uneven. When asked shouldn't the landscaper have leveled the area prior to setting the stones, Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown stated he did. He stated he would give them the landscaper's number to call with their concerns and he could tell them the same thing he told him. Commissioner Eddie Bronson Jr. asked if the public works staff could put a level on it and determine if it was level, Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown said it was leveled to the side of the building. No date was set for a dedication ceremony.

Code Enforcement- Mayor Murphy spoke of the need to have code enforcement for the town stating there is no need for ordinances if you don't have a method for enforcing them. Several board members agreed the town was in need of code enforcement and Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown stated during budget planning maybe we could look at hiring someone to do code enforcement and some patrolling. Mayor Murphy asked if any board member would be willing to help with some code enforcement duties until plans could be made for a permanent enforcer. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown stated he felt this would fall under the safety committee. Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin agreed to assist with code enforcement duties.

MINUTES APPROVAL

Regular Meeting- March 16, 2021- Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin 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.

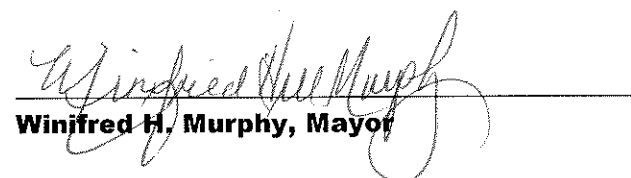
ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:31 pm.



Pamela Cashwell, Town Clerk/Finance Officer

Board Approved:


Winifred H. Murphy, Mayor