

**TOWN OF GARLAND
RECONVENED REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 2020
7:30 PM**

The Reconvened Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Garland was held remotely via GoToMeeting on Thursday, June 25, 2020 at 7:30 pm.

The following members of the Board of Commissioners were present:

**Austin Brown
Eddie Bronson, Jr.
Jo A. Strickland
Barbara A. Peterson
Carolyn R. Melvin**

Also present remotely: Mayor Winifred H. Murphy and Ms. Pamela Cashwell, Town Clerk/ Finance Officer. There were no citizens in attendance.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Winifred H. Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm and welcomed everyone in attendance. Town Clerk, Pamela Cashwell, was present recording notes for the minutes.

QUORUM

Mayor Winifred H. Murphy and Clerk Pamela Cashwell established there was a quorum present.

Mayor Murphy thanked everyone for all their dedicated hard work they have put into the budget planning for 2020/2021. She stated with the Covid-19 Pandemic and the closing of the *Brooks Brothers* factory, this budget year is unlike any she has seen in the past eight years. She stated Finance Officer Pamela Cashwell has worked extremely hard scrutinizing the numbers and adjusting the budget in light of the economic impacts that we are experiencing. Mayor Murphy stated we still don't know the full economic impacts we are facing and encouraged board members to consider whether expenditures were essential and necessary while this uncertainty exists. She informed the board she has joined with a group of other mayors in writing letters to our Senators asking for replacement revenue for our financial shortfalls in revenue.

PERSONNEL

Mayor Murphy stated they had discussed pay increases for staff members during closed session on June 16, 2020 but failed to discuss this after they entered back into open session. She stated our employees are our greatest asset. She recommended giving permanent full-time staff employees, A. Devane and P. Cashwell a one dollar an hour increase in pay and giving our temporary employee, R. Boone a fifty cent an hour increase in pay with this being retroactive to June 16, 2020. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to approve the increases in pay as recommended by Mayor Murphy retroactive to June 16, 2020, seconded

by Commissioner Eddie Bronson, Jr. and carried with a vote of three to one. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown, Commissioner Eddie Bronson, Jr. and Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin voted in the affirmative. Commissioner Jo A. Strickland voted no, and Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson was experiencing technical difficulties with her remote connection and was unable to express her vote.

Mayor Murphy stated they had previously discussed hiring our current ORC, Mr. Neil Carroll to do some additional contract work for the town and she is recommending to contract with Mr. Carroll to work forty hours per month at \$17.00 per hour. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to contract with Mr. Carroll to work forty hours per month in public works for \$17.00 per hour, seconded by Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin and motion passed with four votes in the affirmative with Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson unable to vote due to technical difficulties with her remote connection.

PURCHASE APPROVALS

Clerk Cashwell discussed quotes received from Mr. Glenn Heath of *Core & Main* for necessary supplies we need to have in inventory for repair of water and sewer lines as well a gasoline powered sump pump to assist with needed repairs. (See attached). Board members discussed these quotes and Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to approve the quotes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Jo A. Strickland and the motion passed with a vote of four in the affirmative with Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson unable to express her vote.

CARES ACT GRANT AWARD

Clerk Cashwell explained to the board members that the Town of Garland's subaward from Sampson County of \$31,604.00 from the CARES ACT was included in the 2020/2021 Budget Ordinance. A revenue line item for CARES ACT GRANT RESTRICTED FUNDS was included in the General Fund and expenditures were allocated as follows: Administration- Supplies \$3,000.00 and Capital Outlay \$15,000.00, Buildings- Supplies \$5,000.00, Streets-Supplies \$5,000.00, Parks and Recreation-Supplies \$3,604.00. Clerk Cashwell stated these funds must be used for Covid-19 Pandemic related expenses only. Examples such as the purchase of PPE to prevent the spread of the virus, park signs that were purchased stating the park areas are closed to the public, cleaning and sanitizing public access areas, equipment used to clean and sanitize public areas, laptops and printers used to encourage remote working for employees are a few of the things that are related to the response to the pandemic. Board members were asked to notify Clerk Cashwell of items needed for their respective committees to decrease the transmission of the virus. These funds will need to be expended by November 1st and the allocations can be amended as needed with a budget amendment approved by the Board of Commissioners.

UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING PROJECTS FOR THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR

Mayor Murphy asked each board member to give an update on the projects they are finishing out for this fiscal year. Commissioner Jo A. Strickland stated the security system has been installed at the ballpark complex. Mr. Lee Carberry built a metal security box and installed it and the dvr was placed in the box and secured with a lock donated by Mayor Pro Tem

Austin Brown. She stated Mr. Leo Skinner installed an electrical outlet specifically for the security system. All expenses for this project are ready to be paid. Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson stated the former ABC store projects should be completed by tomorrow and she will have all invoices submitted and ready to be paid. The painting has been completed. She stated areas of the flooring has had to be repaired before the new floor covering was installed due to deterioration and those areas should be finished tomorrow so the rest of the flooring can be installed. Mr. Leo Skinner is in the process of repairing/replacing the thermostat in the building and all work will be completed by end of day tomorrow. Commissioner Eddie Bronson, Jr. stated he wasn't able to complete the new flooring project at the Garland Senior Center as the contractor was unable to secure the flooring he had quoted for the project. Clerk Cashwell stated she has appropriated funds for the flooring project from the use of Fund Balance for the proposed 2020/2021 Budget. Commissioner Bronson, Jr. thanked Clerk Cashwell for including funding for this project in the 2020/2021 Budget. Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin stated she has cleaned out the concession stand at the park complex. Mayor Murphy asked Clerk Cashwell to review the outstanding invoices for this fiscal year for the board. Clerk Cashwell reviewed the outstanding invoices and asked if the curbing and paving in front of the library was going to be completed in this fiscal year. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown stated plans are for it to be completed by Tuesday of next week. Clerk Cashwell asked Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown if he would go by and inspect the installation of the new steel door that was placed on Well #3 prior to her processing the invoice for payment and he agreed to do that this evening. The only outstanding bill that has been requested several times is from *The Sampson Weekly* for the notices placed for the public hearings for the proposed 2020/2021 budget. Mayor Murphy stated the reason we needed to know what invoices or projects would be outstanding is so we can appropriate fund balance in the 2020/2021 Budget Ordinance to cover the costs of the outstanding expenses.

APPROVAL & ADOPTION OF THE 2020/2021 BUDGET ORDINANCE AND FEE SCHEDULE

Clerk Cashwell stated she has provided the Board with copies of the recommended 2020/2021 Budget Ordinance, 2020/2021 Fee Schedule and a line item worksheet of the 2020/2021 recommended Budget. She stated the only recommended change in the 2020/2021 Fee Schedule came from Mayor Murphy to increase commercial zoning application fees to \$100.00 and residential zoning application fees will be the recommended discussed \$75.00. Mayor Murphy stated the rationale for this recommendation is to generate revenue to offset the costs needed to provide training to the zoning and planning boards and hopefully for some code enforcement. All Board members agreed with the recommendations for zoning application fees. Clerk Cashwell read the recommended 2020/2021 Budget Ordinance to the Board and noted specific recommendations and changes for the General Fund as follows which were included in the recommended ordinance: Cares Act Restricted Funding of \$31,604.00 was added to the ordinance and placed in the following departments- Administration-supplies \$3,000.00, capital outlay \$15,000.00, Buildings-supplies \$5,000.00, Streets-supplies \$5,000.00, Parks & Recreation-supplies \$3,604.00. Additional Fund Balance of \$20,000.00 was appropriated in the recommended 2020/2021 Budget Ordinance and allocated expenses were \$15,000.00 in Buildings to complete the upgrades to the restrooms at town hall and install new flooring at town hall and the senior center. \$5,000.00 was allocated to Streets to cover the costs associated with making the needed repairs and

maintenance as indicated in the Powell Bill Street assessment that was completed. \$6,500.00 was placed in contingency for expenditures in the recommended 2020/2021 Budget Ordinance for the General Fund. For the Water-Sewer Fund an additional allocation of \$5,000.00 from Fund Balance was appropriated to cover any violations or fines that potentially could be assessed from the eight violation letters received to date. For the Powell Bill Fund additional fund balance was available for allocation since some of the paving projects were paid out of the General Fund. Fund Balance allocation of \$19,345.00 was appropriated in the recommended 2020/2021 Budget Ordinance. Clerk Cashwell read the remainder of the recommended 2020/2021 Budget Ordinance. Mayor Murphy made the recommendation for the Board to accept and approve the recommended 2020/2021 Budget Ordinance. Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to approve and adopt the 2020/2021 Budget Ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Barbara A. Peterson and carried with a vote of four in the affirmative. Commissioner Carolyn R. Melvin was experiencing technical difficulty with her remote connection and was unable to cast her vote. Mayor Murphy thanked Clerk Cashwell for all the hard work put into creating the budget for the 2020/2021 fiscal year.

MAYORAL UPDATES

Mayor Murphy discussed the need to keep the town looking nice for the citizens and visitors coming into town that may be interested in purchasing the *Brooks Brothers* facilities. She stated the clock and water fountain in the middle of town needs to be repaired and requested board members work toward these needed repairs. She also recommended to schedule a summer clean-up event since we were unable to do the spring clean-up event to help clean up the town's appearance. She stated she would like to schedule a finance training perhaps sometime in July so she and Clerk/Finance Officer Cashwell can review some of the policies and procedures required with government financing. She stated due to the pandemic, they were unable to meet and she hopes since we have a full board now, we can work on some needed projects and not wait until the final months of the fiscal year to begin projects. She went on to discuss that Mr. Ricky Brown came out and assisted with the busted water line that occurred yesterday with the fiber installation on N. Church Avenue. She called Mr. Brown this morning to thank him for his assistance and stated he is invaluable with his knowledge of line locations in town. The repairs for the busted pipe was further complicated due to the fact that it was an asbestos line. The repair was completed by a contractor hired by *Star Communications* and they plan to cover the costs of the repairs. Mayor Murphy stated it was important the town look for grant opportunities to try and replace all the asbestos lines in town. Mayor Murphy thanked the volunteers and Commissioner Jo A. Strickland for all their hard work with the 2020 Graduation Project and with hanging the banners of the graduates in town. She invited all of them to participate in a drive by parade scheduled for this Saturday at 11:00 am. It will begin on Seventh Street and go through town to Rich Road with the graduates standing beside their respective banner. Gift bags will be given to the graduates after the drive by parade at town hall. Mayor Murphy stated she had called representatives of to thank them for being in business for nineteen years in the Town of Garland and for being family to the town during those years. She requested mask to be distributed to citizens and businesses and they donated 1,000 masks for distribution. Another business donated 1,000 masks as well for distribution. Mayor Murphy stated in light of the executive order mandating

mask be worn while out in public by Governor Roy Cooper and from the statistical data received from county officials with Sampson County being labeled a hotspot for the Covid-19 virus, she asked the board if they wanted to go on-record as supporting the mandate to wear mask while in public. Board members agreed they supported the mask requirement mandates with Commissioner Jo A. Strickland stating she will support wearing a mask while in places like large department stores but not day to day wearing a mask. Mayor Murphy asked about if she was in town hall or in the presence of the board and Commissioner Jo A. Strickland stated yes, she would wear a mask on those occasions. Mayor Murphy stated they also needed to work on ways to practice social distancing for the clerks so they can both work at the office. She suggested mandating visitors to town hall be required to wear a mask and being able to set up additional office space for them to work.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Austin Brown made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 pm, seconded by Commissioner Jo A. Strickland and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Pamela Cashwell

Pamela Cashwell, Town Clerk/Finance Officer

Board Approved:

Winifred H. Murphy

Winifred H. Murphy, Mayor