

**River Bend Town Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 20, 2020
River Bend Town Hall
7:00 P.M.**

Present Council Members: Mayor John Kirkland
Don Fogle
Brian Leonard
Bud McClard

Absent Council Members: Buddy Sheffield
Bud Van Slyke

Town Manager: Delane Jackson
Town Clerk: Ann Katsuyoshi
Town Attorney: Dave Baxter
Finance Administrator: Margaret Theis
Police Chief: Sean Joll

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kirkland at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 20, 2020 at the River Bend Town Hall with a quorum present.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Mayor presented the Council with the Consent Agenda. Councilman McClard **moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.** The motion carried unanimously. Within this motion the following items were approved:

A. Approve

*Minutes of the July 9, 2020 Work Session
Minutes of the July 16, 2020 Closed Session
Minutes of the July 28, 2020 Special Meeting*

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

PARKS & RECREATION/CAC – COUNCILMAN BUD MCCLARD

Organic Garden – Councilman McClard said that the Organic Garden continues its work. The bee hives have been re-established after being lost last year and the spring crops are coming in. Councilman McClard stated that the board still has not met since Covid arrived.

Councilman McClard introduced Pat Lineback to the Council. Ms. Lineback is a citizen of River Bend who had requested to be appointed to the Parks and Recreation Board. The Council all welcomed Ms. Lineback and stated they were pleased to have her interested in serving on the Parks and Recreation Board.

Vote – Appoint Pat Lineback to the Parks and Recreation Board

Councilman McClard motioned to appoint Pat Lineback to the Parks and Recreation Board for a term beginning August 20, 2020 and expiring June 30, 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC WORKS – MAYOR JOHN KIRKLAND

The Mayor stated that the Board has several openings and solicits volunteers to serve on this Board. If interested please contact PWAB Chairman Mr. Buck Irvin, Town Clerk or myself. Applying is as easy as filing a form with the Town Clerk then it will be presented to the Council for action.

FINANCE – Councilman Harry McClard (for Councilman Van Syke)

Financial Report – Finance Administrator Margaret Theis told the Council that the total of the General Fund Cash Balances as of July 31, 2020 was \$3,916,367. Ad valorem tax collections for FY20-21 were at \$30, and Vehicle Ad valorem tax collections were at \$6,125.

Vote – Budget Amendment 20-B-01

Councilman McClard motioned to approve Budget Amendment 20-B-01 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Vote – Capital Project Fund Ordinance Amendment #2

Councilman McClard motioned to approve Capital Project Fund Ordinance Amendment #2 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC SAFETY – CONCILMAN DON FOGLE

Councilman Fogle stated the CERT team has not been able to meet in person since Covid arrived, but Councilman McClard and a few CERT members went to Edenton to help with the clean up after Hurricane Isaias. He stated how the area was demolished as an EF-3 tornado touched down in the area.

Councilman Fogle presented a proposal to the Council to permanently fly the POW/MIA Flag at the Municipal Building beginning on September 18, 2020. He stated this flag is now accepted nationally and internationally as the symbol of vigilance and remembrance of all POWs and MIAs. He also suggested that the Veteran's Monument, which was located at Town Hall, but was moved for construction, should be relocated to nearby the flagpole at the Municipal Building. Councilman Brian Leonard stated that he supported flying the POW/MIA flag and relocating the monument. Councilman Fogle stated that the two items would fit well in River Bend because recent data states that over 17% of River Bend residents are military veterans.

Vote – POW/MIA Flag at Municipal Building

Councilman Fogle motioned to fly the POW/MIA under the American flag on the Municipal Building flagpole daily beginning on Friday September 18, 2020. The motion carried unanimously.

MAYOR'S REPORT

The Town of River Bend owns and operates the water and wastewater utilities for the Town. In 1995, the Town held a referendum and decided to purchase the water and sewer utility from Carolina Water Service (CWS). The utilities have been constructed by the original developer of the Town. That developer then sold the utilities to CWS.

The Town Council decided to expand the water service to every street on the east side of Highway 17 shortly after acquiring the system. This project also involved building the 300,000 gallon elevated tank on Plantation Drive. The original service area for water service did not include the Barbara Drive and the Piner Estates subdivisions, which was served by the City of New Bern water utility. The Council later negotiated the purchase of the New Bern assets and converted the subscribers in those areas to River Bend customers. Those customers had been paying twice what a New Bern resident would pay for water service. This practice is authorized by act of the North Carolina General Assembly That authorization extends to all municipalities. On average, this change in ownership saved most of the involved customers about \$500 per year. More than ten years ago, the Council engaged a consultant to develop a "rate model" that could be used by the Council each year for setting the rates for the utilities. This study has been very useful in providing sound management of financing for the ongoing utility operations. With the input data to populate the model, the rate recommended can be justified to customers who may question the validity of utility rate.

The bonds issued for the purchase of the utilities and expansion of the water service will be paid off in the 2027 fiscal year. The North Carolina State University publishes an annual "Dash Board" that displays the cost of utility operations for municipalities in similar size population peer groups. River Bend is consistently in the mid-range of all elements being evaluated in our peer group.

The day-to-day operation of the utility system is directed by Public Works Director Mr. Brandon Mills. Brandon and his staff hold a number of State issued licenses required for personnel operating public utilities. The following is a list of these Town employees and the licenses that they hold.

The state Division of Water Resources also performs periodic unannounced site inspections of our facilities. The records of the daily operations and testing results of the output are examined for both in house and contract laboratory testing. The staff has been diligent in the operation of the utilities. These state inspections have not resulted in any notice of violations over the years that the Town Staff have been responsible for utility operations.

During the present COVID-19 emergency and the recent hurricane preparations the Staff has faithfully performed their duties and we have had no interruption of utility service. Not every municipal or privately operated utility can make such a claim. We all need to express appreciation to Brandon and members of his staff.

That staff and their qualifications:

{Brandon Mills}

Grade III Wastewater

Grade III Collections

Grade I

Physical/Chemical

B – Well

A – Distribution

Cross Connection Control

{Thomas Harper}

Grade II Wastewater

Grade II Collections

Grade I Physical

Chemical

B - Well

B - Distribution

{James Jones}

Grade II Wastewater

Spray Irrigation

C – Well

B - Distribution

Cross Connection Control

PUBLIC COMMENT

Susanna Elliott, 209 Shoreline Drive, said that she supported Councilman Buddy Sheffields' opinion of not requiring people to wear masks at public meetings.

ADJOURNMENT/RECESS

There being no further business, Councilman Fogle **moved to adjourn**. The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.


Ann Katsuyoshi
Town Clerk