
**TOWN OF WENTWORTH
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
August 5, 2008
7:00 P.M.**

The Wentworth Town Council held their regular monthly meeting in the Town Hall meeting room at the National Guard Armory, on **Tuesday, August 5, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.**

Council members present: Mayor Dennis Paschal, Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner, Councilwoman Iris Powell, Councilman Robert Aswell, and Councilman James Belcher

A quorum was present.

Staff Present: Brenda Ward, Town Clerk / Deputy Sheriff Clarence Cheshire, and Town Attorney, Fred Baggett.

Article I. Mayor Paschal called the meeting to order.

Article II. Mayor Paschal gave the **Invocation.**

Article III. **Discussion / Revisions / Adoption of Agenda**

A. Requests and Petitions of Citizens

Mayor Paschal advised that no one signed the Speaker Register, and made a motion, *“The Agenda be approved as written.”*

Councilwoman Powell seconded the motion. There was no discussion, all voted in favor, and the motion carried.

Article IV. **Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes**

A. Town Council Meeting – July 1, 2008

Mayor Paschal noted, “Everyone has a copy of the Town Council Minutes for July 1, 2008.”

Councilman Belcher made a motion, *“That the Minutes be approved as presented.”*

Mayor Paschal seconded the motion, and asked for any discussion.

Councilman Aswell asked that the Minutes be corrected to show that he was not in attendance at the July 1st meeting.

Councilman Belcher agreed to amend his motion as follows: *“I move the Minutes be approved with the correction to show that Councilman Aswell was not present at the July meeting.”*

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
August 5, 2008**

Page 2

Mayor Paschal seconded the amended motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration of Request to Partner with Rockingham County Historical Society, Tourism and Development Authority, and Rockingham County, to Fund Feasibility Study for a County Museum (old courthouse building - \$1500)

- **Dr. Lindley Butler**

Mayor Paschal asked Councilwoman Powell if she wanted to comment on the Agenda item.

Councilwoman Powell advised, "The wording on the Agenda covers the topic better than anything I could say, but I will say that we are glad to have Dr. Butler here tonight...he is a member of the Wentworth Historic Preservation Committee, and I think this is a good project."

Mayor Paschal invited **Dr. Lindley Butler** to address Council.

Dr. Butler said he would like to explain, "...how we got to this point...the committee. You see that the committee includes Jerry Owens, Bob Carter, Charles Rodenbough, Rebecca Cipriani, and myself."

"We have been meeting together for some time and started thinking about the fact that the courthouse would be available in a couple of years. A lot of people have been looking at the possibility of a museum in Rockingham County, and the courthouse has got plenty of space for that, as well as for other things."

Dr. Butler continued, "We started talking about it, informally, and we toured the courthouse and looked at the jail, the Wright Tavern, and of course the village at the college and the historical collection there. There are a whole lot of components *in* Wentworth that could make up this...not thinking about something *just* in the building, but you might say, incorporating *all* of our historical assets. There is nothing like *that* kind of concentration in the county."

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
August 5, 2008**

Page 3

“We got to this point,” **Dr. Butler** explained, “and it is an informal committee, I might add. We’re not part of anything yet. We haven’t quite figured out what we should be, but we did bring up from Greensboro, Bill Moore, who is the retired director of the Greensboro Historical Museum. He was there for about 30 years, and made that into one of the best museums in the State. He has done a similar study for Randolph County a few years ago, involving the use of the courthouse.”

“We knew about that and I’ve known him for a long time, as have several of us. He came up, looked at the courthouse, and proposed to do a feasibility study for up to \$6,000. So, that’s when we came up with this idea, and that’s a capped figure. It may come out less than that, he wasn’t sure. And that’s very reasonable as you know, if you’ve had any consultants or done any kind of feasibility studies before.”

“We, the committee, are going to do a lot of the research and since he has done similar studies before, he can build on those,” **Dr. Butler** explained.

He continued, “The idea was to involve the Historical Society, Rockingham County, Tourism and Development Authority, and the Town of Wentworth—obviously, the Town of Wentworth stands, I think, to gain the most out of this, since it will be *in* the Town of Wentworth. But, we feel like it is for the whole county and we don’t see it standing in the way of museums anywhere else in the county, but we feel like this should be the flagship—the museum that tells the story of the whole county.”

Dr. Butler said his letter to council does not reflect the fact that the Historical Society has already given their support and pledged their portion of the money for the feasibility study. He said the committee would be approaching the Tourism and Development Authority and the County Commissioners in the next two weeks.

He noted also, “This is sort of a public/private partnership, and then it would be a matter of getting the feasibility study done, maybe by the end of the year. You have to do the study before you can even think about applying for any grants.”

“Where we are going from here, if this works...we probably will form a non-profit corporation—501C-3. The idea would be that the non-profit group would then seek grants to make this happen. There is money out there for starting up museums, planning museums, staffing, etc. So, we feel this is a real thing that can happen, that we can find funds to put into this project.”

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
August 5, 2008**

Page 4

Dr. Butler said, “One thing that triggered this idea (of a museum), is that there are collections out there of things that people have spent a lifetime collecting, and many of them have said over and over, ‘If we had a museum in the county, I would donate the collection.’ One particular collection is an outstanding one—everything from antique cars to farm machinery and tools—and the children are not interested in it and would like to see it donated. I’m just saying that these are the kinds of things we are losing in the county...resources like that; and, Wentworth, of course, is the most appropriate place in the whole county for this.”

Dr. Butler concluded, “We are asking two things—the contribution or willingness to pay twenty-five percent (25%) of whatever the final bill is on the feasibility study, not to exceed \$1500; and, if you join this partnership, the contributing parties should have representation as we move forward with the committee. The Town of Wentworth then should appoint someone, as would the county and the Tourism Authority, and the Historical Society...Bob Carter already represents the Historical Society.”

Dr. Butler asked if anyone had questions for him.

Councilman Belcher asked Dr. Butler, “What kind of information are you looking for from the feasibility study...whether the building will meet code...?”

Dr. Butler replied, “Use of space, really, in terms of what the plans are for the museum so we can determine how we conceive the project, and then, the filling of the space. It meets code, we know that.”

“What we don’t want,” said **Dr. Butler**, “is a situation where the building sits vacant and starts deteriorating. Whatever use this building has, and they have kept it up very well, we would like for whoever moves in there to move in very quickly, rather than let the building stand vacant.”

He added, “It (feasibility study) is to help us determine the use of the space we have, how do we want to use it, and what is the conception of the museum in terms of what we want to put into it. Will it be from Indians, to modern times, and everything in between...”

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
August 5, 2008**

Page 5

Councilwoman Powell commented, “You’re just in the planning stages, right...and the Historical Society has already pledged their \$1,500.00.”

Mayor Paschal asked, “What do they do with the things...I’ve noticed that there are exhibits at RCC in the library. The Historical Society has some of their old maps and things in there...where do they store them now? Do different people have it in their possession...?”

“Yes,” replied **Dr. Butler**, “People have it in their individual homes, and the Historical Society has some of it.”

Councilman Belcher commented, “So obviously the courthouse, as a museum, would be an ideal place to archive those types of things and display them on a more permanent basis.”

Dr. Butler replied, “When you look at the Clerk’s Office or Register of Deeds’ Office, you have vaults, you’ve got to have climate control...its perfect storage for that kind of material.”

Dr. Butler explained that the feasibility study and possible 501C-3 is, “A step toward a real proposal as we work toward the museum goal, rather than waiting until two years from now when the courthouse is available and say, ‘Okay, what do we do with the building now?’ We want to have a full proposal and be ready. That’s the idea...that we are ready and have everything in place.”

Councilwoman Powell said she would like to make a motion, “*That we give \$1500.00 for this.*” **Mayor Pro Tem Conner** and **Councilman Aswell** seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Mayor Paschal made a motion, “*That the Town of Wentworth also partner with Rockingham County Historical Society, Tourism and Development Authority and Rockingham County in this endeavor.*”

Councilman Belcher seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Councilwoman Powell said she would like to encourage everyone to consider joining the Rockingham County Historical Society.

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
August 5, 2008**

Page 6

Mayor Paschal asked, “When do we need to appoint someone to this committee?”

Dr. Butler said he would get back to the mayor regarding the committee appointee. He said everything depends on getting the funding for the consultant and getting him on board to do the study.

Mayor Paschal thanked Dr. Butler for the information.

Article V. NEW BUSINESS – Continued

B. Consideration of Petition from University Estates Residents to Increase the Speed Limit on Tall Trees Lane from 20 mph to 30 mph.

- Ms. Glenda Koops

Mayor Paschal recognized Ms. Glenda Koops of 219 Timberwood Trace in University Estates, asking, “Ms. Koops, you spoke at the July Council Meeting, and we have the petition here from what looks like a majority of the folks out there who want this speed limit put back up. Did you have anything else you wanted to say or can we go ahead and vote on this?”

Councilman Belcher said he was ready to act on the request, unless Ms. Koops had something she wanted to add.

Mr. Koops (Vern) answered, “We would just like to document the minutes, the notes that we have from the last meeting. We made a copy for you, basically just for documentation.”

The **Town Clerk** referenced her Minutes of the July meeting, and asked Mr. Koops if he noticed that, “...everything in our minutes are pretty much verbatim, concerning what everyone had to say.”

“Yes,” replied **Mr. Koops**, and you did a better job than we did.”

“In light of this,” commented **Councilman Belcher**, “I would like to make a motion, *“That we ask the Department of Transportation to increase the speed limit on Tall Trees Lane from 20mph to 30mph.”*”

Mayor Paschal seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
August 5, 2008**

Page 7

Article V. NEW BUSINESS – Continued

C. Consideration of Resolution in Support of Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness in Rockingham County

- Mr. Robert Broome

Mayor Paschal invited **Mr. Robert Broome**, Chairperson for the Rockingham County Coalition to End Homelessness, to address Council.

Mr. Broome said that he and others have appeared before all the municipalities *and* the County in the last several months, seeking support through Resolutions.

He referenced the Executive Summary in Council packets—“When it speaks of ‘homelessness’, it is speaking about chronic homelessness, repetitive...helping them to gain a foothold so they can move forward and become stable and successful in the community and in society.”

Mr. Broome continued, “We have had several successes already. In the last four years, the Coalition has applied for grants through Housing and Urban Development and received those grants each year, a total of about \$983,000.00. This brought vouchers into the county for the purpose of ending homelessness. The vouchers made it possible for us to help more than twenty people, by supplying supportive services, anywhere from education to job training, helping them apply for disability, if they qualify for those benefits, as well as any other benefits that would help them become more stable. Through those twenty vouchers, there was only one that was not successful in the last four (4) years, and we’re very pleased about that.”

Mr. Broome continued, “The Executive Summary lays out the strategies...we already have a committee in place that has been very busy in the last six months, working to pull information together—site visits to other cities and counties to gather information from them, so we have a better handle on what it is we need to do.”

“As for the Resolution,” **Mr. Broome** added, “it helps to have everyone involved in ending chronic homelessness, as well as helping to prevent homelessness. Our last count, just a one-day count on January 30th, revealed there were 226 individuals in our county who were homeless, sleeping in the streets or shelters.”

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
August 5, 2008**

Page 8

Mr. Broome advised, “Too many of the 226 were children, under the age of 18, so we know that these vouchers represent real people, real faces, who receive supportive services with the goal of gaining and maintaining their independence.”

“In asking you guys to support a Resolution,” **Mr. Broome** concluded, “we also would request that you appoint someone from the Town of Wentworth to participate in the planning stages, come to the meetings, help us to make the right decisions and pull in the right service providers—those types of things. The County appointed a staff person to be a part of this. The Coalition is part of the committee.”

He added, “These resolutions do provide us opportunity to get more support and Federal funding/grants as well as individual grants, when they know we have the support of the entire County.”

Mr. Broome said a cost savings was conducted to compare the savings involved when taking someone from homelessness to permanent housing. He said the study revealed a 30% savings, “...in hospital bills, less usage of EMT’s and EMS services, to name a few.”

He noted, “There *is* a cost savings involved in this. Initially, Medicaid goes up a little, but generally, it levels out.”

Mr. Broome asked if anyone had a question for him.

Mayor Paschal asked, “At what point do you need a person appointed?”

Mr. Broome said they would like to have someone in place by the first of October. He added, “I would like to mention, too, if anyone is interested in participating, we meet on the third Thursday of each month at the Red Cross at 8:00 a.m. There are several ways to become involved.”

Mayor Paschal made a motion, “To pass the *Resolution in Support of a Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness in Rockingham County.*”

Councilman Belcher seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
August 5, 2008**

Page 9

Article V. NEW BUSINESS – Continued

D. Council Approval for Attendance at Various Schools / Conferences

- 1. Approval for Town Clerk to attend the 2008 N.C. Association of Municipal Clerks Conference – August 14-16** in Wilmington, NC
Registration: \$150.00; Hotel: \$135.00
- 2. Approval for Planning Board / Staff to attend the North Carolina Planning Conference: September 24 – 26, 2008, in Raleigh, NC**
Registration: \$ 140.00; Hotel: \$ 90.00
- 3. Approval for Planning Board to attend Rules of Procedures Workshop: Nov. 13th** in Troy NC; Registration: \$50.00

Mayor Paschal noted, “You all have a copy of these...” After reviewing each one, **Mayor Paschal** made a motion, “*That Council approve attendance at the various schools and conferences.*”

Mayor Pro Tem Conner seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Paschal advised that no one signed the Speaker Register for public comments.

Article VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next regular meeting of the Town of Wentworth **Planning Board** will be held on **Tuesday, August 19, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.** in the **Town Hall Meeting Room** at the National Guard Armory
- **Annual Prayer-Walk** for Rockingham County Public Schools: **Saturday, August 23rd, 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.**
Contact Rev. Bill Duke - 342-4227 or Janet Rakestraw - 342-5318 for information.
- The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Town Council** will be held on **Tuesday, September 2, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.** in the **Town Hall Meeting Room** at the National Guard Armory.

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
August 5, 2008**

Page 10

Article VIII. A D J O U R N

Mayor Paschal made a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Councilman Belcher** seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Brenda Ward, Town Clerk

Approved By: _____
Dennis Paschal, Mayor