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**TOWN OF WENTWORTH  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES  
December 2, 2008  
7:00 P.M.**

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**The Wentworth Town Council** held their regular monthly meeting in the Town Hall meeting room at the National Guard Armory, on **Tuesday, December 2, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.**

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

**Council members absent:** Councilman Robert Aswell

**A quorum was present.**

**Staff Present:** Brenda Ward, Town Clerk, Deputy Sheriff Clarence Cheshire

**Staff Absent:** Fred Baggett, Town Attorney

**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 Mr. Richard Capps signed the Speaker Register in reference to the Interlocal Agreement and the old Wentworth School.

The mayor made a motion, “...to add Richard Capps to the Agenda under Old Business, Item A.”

**Councilman Belcher** 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 – November 6, 2008**

**Mayor Paschal** noted, “Everybody has a copy...”

**Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner** made a motion, “*The Minutes stand as written.*”

**Councilwoman Iris Powell** seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

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**Article V. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Consideration of Interlocal Agreement Draft between  
Rockingham County and the Town of Wentworth for use of the  
Old Wentworth School Ball Field and Gymnasium**

**Mayor Paschal** asked **Mr. Richard Capps** to address Council.

**Mr. Capps** referred Council to Page 7 of the November Minutes, first paragraph, reading, “Mr. Capps thinks perhaps the County should assume a little more responsibility than alluded to in the Agreement...”

He continued, “I would like to comment further on that...regarding the tour of the old school and facilities, several of you were there...as well as Jim Scott, who has a long standing reputation of working with youth in this community.”

**Mr. Capps** said that he and Mr. Scott coached the Rockingham County Youth Football team that represented Wentworth this year. He advised that Mr. Scott is interested in starting a youth basketball league from the Wentworth community.

“After the tour,” said **Mr. Capps**, “Jim and I stayed behind for about an hour and made another tour of the building and grounds.”

“I was a little bit disappointed, to be honest with you. I really thought they would have taken better care of the buildings.” He referenced the peeling paint, plaster, and sheetrock, “...and we don’t know if the plumbing works...and the flat roof on top of the gymnasium is a rubber roof...which is a problem.”

“The County has its own maintenance department,” said **Mr. Capps**, “and I feel in my heart that if we’re going to enter into any kind of lease with the County...it needs to address maintenance of the roof by the County. And, as for the walls and ceilings, I don’t think it would take a whole lot of work for them to take a maintenance crew down there and get the walls and ceilings in shape for us to put some paint on.”

**Mr. Capps** continued, “The plumbing situation...again, I think that is something that they should take care of. If we are going to commit to take it over and keep it going, I think they should at least turn it over to us in good, working condition.”

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**Mr. Capps** referred to his conversation with Mr. Tommy Wagoner, an Engineer with the County. He advised, “Mr. Wagoner was supposed to set up a meeting with members of the Recreation Committee and the Fire Marshall and building inspectors, but that hasn’t happened yet.” He said Mr. Wagoner mentioned that there has been talk about needing to put a firewall between the school area—the new part—and the gymnasium.

**Mr. Capps** continued, “This really isn’t a major undertaking, but again, they have people on their maintenance crew who could tackle this. A handicap ramp is also needed, which would not be hard to do. So, I feel that if we’re going to take this on, some of these things should be done beforehand. Mr. Wagoner made the remark that there is a \$10,000 budget for that facility over there, and thus far it has gone to facilitate the parts that are already being utilized, to keep those tenants happy.”

“I don’t think it would cost that much, really,” said **Mr. Capps**, “for them to go in there and get the plumbing going again, get the walls and ceiling scraped and in better condition for us to finish it up, and then have them agree to look after the roof when something needs to be done. I have also done some research on the heating situation...that seems to be the biggest deal with everybody—the cost involved.”

**Mr. Capps** added, “But I want to talk about what we’re missing out on by *not* having this facility in good working order and available to us. We could have had a football team there, a wrestling team for the youth, basketball, all levels—co-ed, girls/boys all the way up to adults, church teams. We could get the baseball/softball fields in good condition. Just to let you know, there is also some interest from the Fellowship of Christian Athletes who are in need of a place to meet. We know there is a use and a need for this building and it would be nice if Wentworth could be the place to offer these facilities for recreational purposes.”

“As far as expenses for a recreation program, I have met with the Director of the Madison/Mayodan Recreation Department. They have a unique set-up and we’ll go over that at another time, but they did give me a copy of their budget, and we went over it to see where the money comes from, how money is generated to maintain the baseball fields, etc.”

**Mr. Capps** said that companies like Coca-Cola and Pepsi, “...will give you scoreboards if you sell only their products at a concession stand or use their machines...it is advertisement for them.”

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**Mr. Capps** concluded by saying, “I have had to step back from this dream I have for a recreation program in Wentworth, and tell myself if it’s not going to happen, I have to live with that, because, as I said, I was really disappointed in the condition of the building. But if we are going to pursue this as far as we can, we need to see if the County would agree to get their maintenance crew in there to get it in better shape, so we can do something with it. We need to get them to agree to keep the plumbing and roof up, and we will address the heating issues when we get to that point.”

“Those are the major things that have us all concerned and worried. There is a lot of debris that needs to come out of there, the walls need to be prepped, and the roof is certainly not something we want to tackle.”

**Councilwoman Powell** said, “It looks like if the County wants to lease it, they would fix it up.”

**Mayor Paschal** said, “Well, it’s like Jerry Myers (former County Manager) used to tell me, ‘We’re not in the recreation business.’ But what we’re going to run into there if the County sends their people in to do this work, they’re going to charge us for it, or get it back in the lease or up front, somehow.”

**Mr. Capps** said, “Well, if they won’t spend any money on it, perhaps they will lease it for, say, a dollar a year for the first five years, or something like that. They have a hundred thousand dollar building or better going to rot over there. But they think enough of it to make sure that gym floor is kept in tip-top shape. The gym floor is like brand new, but the locker rooms, the walls, the plumbing, and that sort of thing needs to be looked after. They have put some money up there, because they have that gym building in good shape for the wrestling team. And there is still some debate as to who paid for that heating system when they put it in, but I do know that the school system is paying for the heat and lights...it’s metered separately.”

**Mayor Pro Tem Conner** said, “Jim (Scott), Robert (Councilman Aswell), and I were talking about using prison inmates to do some work, but you have to get on their schedule. We are using them at the Opportunity Center right now. What you have to do is call and request them...they come from Yanceyville. They will do painting, masonry, carpentry, anything. But they will stay for two straight weeks, and then they have to pull away...that’s just the way they do it. They will come back in two weeks and they can scrape the walls, they can paint, any of that. You just have to pay for the supplies, the materials...the labor is free.”

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“That would be more cost effective,” said **Mayor Paschal**, “because if the County does it, they’re going to get it back somehow.”

**Councilman Belcher** said, “Heavy clean-up and cleaning the walls would be a good start, and we could possibly get some of the materials donated.”

“In my heart of hearts,” said **Mr. Capps**, “I know we can get the work done. I have people waiting to start on those ball fields, but what I really don’t want to commit to, is taking care of that roof. I’ve seen it before with a rubber roof...you are constantly repairing from leaks, and it’s just a nightmare. If the County would make that concession and maybe lease it to us for a dollar a year rather than trying to get the money back from us in some other way, I think we could handle it.”

**Mayor Paschal** said, “I can tell you right now, what they would like to have is the land without the building on it. I was approached 3 or 4 years ago and asked what I thought would happen if they bulldozed it down...there are people who have that mindset about the building.”

“I think we need to take baby steps with this. Our attorney looked at the lease and he wanted a separate clause about *routine maintenance*. I don’t consider a leaky roof routine maintenance, so we need to hammer out some things like that,” said **Mayor Paschal**.

The **Town Administrator** cautioned, “Based on my understanding of the wording in the lease and from conversations with the County attorney, the county is not *obligated* to make major repairs. If the roof leaks and needs replacing or whatever, they can refuse to fix it and then we either use it with the leaks or we stop using the building altogether. Even though it’s stated that the Town will only handle routine maintenance, it still doesn’t obligate the County to make the repairs.”

“I really think they would have a problem, though, letting it leak onto that gym floor,” said **Mayor Paschal**.

“I forgot to address something else,” said **Mr. Capps**. “This is never going to be a money-making thing, but you will have to charge fees, and you just hope to break even. But, what I wanted to say is, if we do take over this building...they (County) have equipment and furniture all in that room under the gym...they said they don’t have anywhere to store it. But if we take it over, I think they need to clean all that out of there, because that gives us additional space that we can use.”

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“You’re talking about the classrooms under the gym?” asked **Mayor Paschal**.

“Yes,” replied **Mr. Capps**, “underneath the gym.” “Also, Mayor Paschal, you mentioned asbestos in the building. It is my understanding that all the asbestos is in the old part of the school, in the old classrooms, not in the gym or the new building adjoining the old part. In the Ag building, there is one 4 x 8 sheet of Asbestos paneling in there. They’ve got all of it out but that, but the rest of it is not considered dangerous or uncovered.”

**Mr. Capps** added, “The bathrooms in the basement, somebody tried to do this for heating, I’m sure, but they put a drop ceiling in the bathroom and over time, the moisture became a problem. It would clean up, but it’s a mess right now.”

“The major thing, really, is about the roof,” said **Mayor Pro Tem Conner**.

“And the clean up,” said **Councilman Belcher**.

“The state of the building when it is turned over to us,” said **Mayor Paschal**.

Council discussed fees for parking, for use of the facility, etc. as a means of recouping expenses.

The **Town Administrator** suggested, “Perhaps Mr. Capps and/or others from the Recreation Committee, and maybe someone from the Town Council should meet with the County Manager or Attorney, and a couple of the County Commissioners, to present them with the concerns we have. If we put something in a letter, they will just read it and say, ‘Oh, we can’t afford to do that,’ and it will just be dropped and forgotten about. But, if we talk with them face to face, it may make a difference.”

**Councilman Belcher** agreed, “We need to sit down with them and see where they’re willing to go...”

**Councilwoman Powell** said it would be good to send a letter to each commissioner. **Mayor Pro Tem Conner** said that could be done after the face to face meeting.

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**Councilman Belcher** said he thought the Recreation Committee should, “take these ideas you have, and put them in the form of a proposal to us, hopefully, at the next meeting, and we will discuss them with our attorney. Then we can approach the County, maybe have some others from the Recreation Committee and the community at the meeting, and raise our concerns.”

**Mayor Paschal** said, “We may take your comments and proposal and tweak it a little bit before meeting with the County, but that will be a start.”

**Mayor Paschal** made a motion, “*That we table Consideration of the Interlocal Agreement Draft between Rockingham County and the Town of Wentworth for use of the Old Wentworth School Ball Field and Gymnasium until our January meeting.*”

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

Council thanked Mr. Capps for his work and thorough report.

**Article VI. New Business**

**A. Approval of 2009 Holiday Closing Schedule for Town of Wentworth Office**

**Mayor Paschal** asked for a motion.

**Councilwoman Powell** made a motion, “*That we approve the Holiday Closing Schedule for next year.*”

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

**B. Update on Christmas Parade – Orientation Meeting on Thursday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.**

**Mayor Paschal** asked Deputy Clarence Cheshire to give Council an update on the Christmas Parade.

The Town Clerk noted that Council members are welcome to attend the Thursday meeting, or the second meeting on Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>.

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**Deputy Cheshire** began by advising Council, “Believe it or not, there has already been some talk around town about *next year’s* parade.”

**Deputy Cheshire** gave Council members copies of information that will be shared with the parade participants at Thursday’s meeting. He reviewed as follows:

“You can see that we are going to start the parade on Wilson Way. We will be lining up the floats and larger entries on Wilson Way by the Highway Patrol Station and bring them straight out onto NC 87. That will eliminate us having another deputy on Sandy Cross, blocking traffic.”

“We will have the cars and smaller entries parked at Calvary Baptist Church Parking lot and will merge them into the parade, coming from Wilson Way.”

**Mayor Paschal** asked, “Are we going to stop traffic at Parkland Road?”

“We are going to have a detour at Vance Street Extension,” said **Deputy Cheshire**.

He continued, “The parade route will go NC 87 to the 65 split and continue to the Court House. It is about a three-mile route, and we are pretty much in line with everybody else in the county. The Madison parade is almost 4 miles. It goes through Mayodan and into Madison. We will tell them, especially the walking groups, if they feel they can’t make it all the way to the court house, they can drop off at the old Wentworth School.”

**Councilwoman Powell** said she has checked the mileage, and it came to 3.2 mile.

**Deputy Cheshire** continued by advising of the detours and intersections where deputies would be placed. He said the Fire Department would have trucks at each entrance to the Town, to have better coverage.

He noted that the Highway Patrol would also assist with traffic as needed.

**Deputy Cheshire** noted that waivers will be given to the parade participants at the meeting, releasing the Town from liability should there be any accidents or problems.

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**Councilwoman Powell** asked Deputy Cheshire what time the roads would be blocked as far as people trying to travel down NC 87/65. He advised that the roads would be closed down around 10:45 a.m., "...fifteen minutes before the parade starts."

**Mayor Paschal** asked how long the parade will last. **Deputy Cheshire** said, "It's a guess, but maybe an hour and a half...two hours at most. People will be stopping to perform."

He added, "The judges will be stationed here at the armory, so we know they'll stop here."

**Deputy Cheshire** reviewed the listing of participants, and expressed his excitement over the various entries, saying he believes it will be a good parade with lots of variety. He said he looks forward to having the Bagpipers from Winston-Salem.

**Deputy Cheshire** advised that the Town will be using a one-hundred-year-old sleigh owned by John Burton for Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus to ride in. "Brenda and Yvonne and I will be decorating the float or trailer, and the Sheriff is letting us use their Humvee to pull it with."

He also told Council to be sure to thank Smith Stokes for the use of their cars to transport the County Commissioners.

After reviewing some of the safety issues he will be discussing with the parade participants, **Deputy Cheshire** advised Council of the judges selected: Mark Pegram, Clerk of Court, District Attorney Phil Berger, Jr., Beth Simmons, Director of the Reidsville Chamber of Commerce, and Deputy Jennifer Brown.

Council asked various questions and discussed different aspects of the parade, and thanked Deputy Cheshire for all his hard work.

**Article VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Regarding the **Speaker Register**, **Mayor Paschal** advised that Mr. Capps had already spoken, and no one else signed up to speak.

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**Article VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- ⇒ There will be a **Parade Orientation Meeting** on **Thursday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.** in the Town Hall Meeting Room at the National Guard Armory; a **second meeting** for those who cannot attend on Thursday, will be held on **Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.**
- ⇒ The **Town of Wentworth Christmas Parade** is scheduled for **Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup>** and will begin at **11:00 a.m.**
- ⇒ The next regular meeting of the Town of Wentworth **Planning Board** will be held on **Tuesday, December 16, 2008**, at **7:00 p.m.** in the **Town Hall Meeting Room** at the National Guard Armory.
- ⇒ The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Town Council** will be held on **Tuesday, January 6, 2009**, at **7:00 p.m.** in the **Town Hall Meeting Room** at the National Guard Armory.

**Article IX. A D J O U R N**

**Mayor Paschal** made a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Mayor Pro Tem Conner** seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned.

**Respectfully Submitted By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Brenda Ward, Town Clerk**

**Approved By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Dennis Paschal, Mayor**