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**TOWN OF WENTWORTH  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES  
March 3, 2009  
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, March 3, 2009, 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, Yvonne Russell, Finance Officer, and Deputy 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** noted that no one signed the Speaker Register and asked for a motion to approve the March Agenda.

**Councilman James Belcher** made a motion, *“That we approve the March 3, 2009, Town Council Agenda.”*

**Councilwoman Iris 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 – February 3, 2009**

**Mayor Paschal** noted, “Everybody has a copy...are there any changes?”

**Councilman Robert Aswell** made a motion, *“That we approve them as written.”*

**Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner** 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** advised, “Recreation Committee Chairman, Richard Capps, asked that this be tabled until the April 7<sup>th</sup> Town Council meeting. He had a few things he is still working on and asked that we table it, so I make a motion, *‘that we table this until the April 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.’*”

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

**Article VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Funding Request from ReDirections for Fiscal Year 2009-2010  
(\$15,000) – Bonnie Dickens**

**Mayor Paschal** invited **Bonnie Dickens** of ReDirections to address Council.

**Ms. Dickens** thanked Council for letting her speak, commenting, “I think you want to know what your money is paying for, so I’m happy to come and tell you about that.”

“Our Executive Director, Alexey Ferrell, apologizes for not being here...she got the flu over the weekend...”

**Ms. Dickens** said the reason they are not asking for *less* money, but the same amount as last year—\$15,000—is due to recent cuts in everyone’s budget and not being able to secure matching funds for grants.

“I wanted to show you what the (conflict resolution/peer mediation) classes are all about,” said **Ms. Dickens**, “so I brought you a notebook—each student gets this booklet. Each test is the same...some students will do well in the beginning and score lower at the end of the class. Others will score low in the beginning and make a hundred at the end. This way we know who is really paying attention.”

**Ms. Dickens** continued, “The class lasts for 3-1/2 days and covers all phases of conflict resolution...the skills they have, the warning signs, a conflict cycle worksheet, anger words, etc. I would like to leave this information with you so you can see exactly what you are paying for.”

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**Ms. Dickens** added, “For our Peer Mediation training, the students really get a lot of information—a nicer notebook, because they keep this with them during the school year in case they are called in to do a peer mediation session. Inside, they also get the pre and post-tests. They have a nice student handbook that our office copies and makes for each student. They also have a regular manual that covers everything they will need.”

**Ms. Dickens** said, “One of the things with the conflict resolution class—we have contract trainers, **Debbie and Ken DuRee**, who are doing the training for us—but due to State budget cuts, we were forced to lay Debbie off and I had to take over the court mediations and the truancy mediations for the schools. Due to the (Wentworth) Town Council’s funding, we were able to keep them on, and they took over the basic conflict resolutions class and the peer mediation training.”

“As I said, last year and this year we have provided these classes in all the schools in the county but one, and that school has bugged us to death. They only have 20 students and they are a new high school. Not only do they want the conflict resolution class, but they want the peer mediation training too. We are scratching our heads and saying, ‘Where are we going to find the money for this?’ We are hoping that you all, the Town of Wentworth, will help us put this one in.”

“In mediation the other day, I had a 9<sup>th</sup> grader who had six unexcused days of school. The law says that if you miss ten, your parents are going to jail. So, in this truancy mediation, I asked, ‘Are you a 9<sup>th</sup> grader at McMichael?’ He answered ‘yes’. I asked him if he had been through the Conflict Resolution training class, and he replied that he had just finished the class. I proceeded to ask some questions...to check up on my staff. I asked him what he thought of the class. He said, ‘That was the best class. I really enjoyed it. The first day I couldn’t figure out why it was necessary.’”

**Ms. Dickens** continued, “That student related to me that on his way home that day, he could have gotten into big trouble on the school bus, but that he remembered some of the things Mr. DuRee said about stopping and thinking before you react.”

**Ms. Dickens** explained that there are many such testimonials—“This is what our classes are doing in the high school and the elementary. Teachers are asking us if we are coming back next year. Our problem is, we are a non-profit and we have to depend on the Town of Wentworth, the City of Eden, and the Annie Penn Community Trust. The Trust told us last week they have experienced a forty percent cut in their fund gifts. We don’t know if we are going to get the money, but I really feel that this is worthwhile for our young people.”

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**Ms. Dickens** said, “I tell you this every year, so I know I don’t need to keep preaching to you, but do you have any questions?”

**Councilwoman Powell** replied, “Sounds like you are doing a good job, Bonnie.”

Council thanked Ms. Dickens and asked her to leave the notebooks and information with the Clerk.

**Mayor Paschal** added, “We have a budget work session tonight and we will be looking at funding requests tonight. We appreciate you coming out and bringing the information for us.

**Article VI. New Business**

**B. Consideration of Invitation for Membership in the Dan River Basin Association**

**Mayor Paschal** invited **Dr. Lindley Butler** to speak to Council concerning the Dan River Basin Association.

**Dr. Butler** explained that his wife, “T” Butler, had to go out of town and that he was recruited to come in her place.

**Dr. Butler** referred to the brochure and other information provided for Council in their packets. He noted that the information sheet lists some of the projects the Dan River Basin Association has been involved in, in North Carolina and Virginia.

He put up a map displaying the river(s), river accesses, and the locations of some of their projects. He talked about their work in Henry County (Virginia).

**Dr. Butler** said that one of the association’s main goals is to increase public access to the rivers. “That was one of the main reasons we organized seven years ago,” he explained. “The other, was preserving the corridor...we almost have a wilderness corridor in these various rivers we have. We felt that we needed to think of it as we would a park, which attracts people to the area.”

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“And then,” **Dr. Butler** continued, “there is water quality...we are very heavily involved in water quality monitoring. So much of what the Association does is coordinating efforts. If we are working on water quality down here and they are not doing the same thing up in Virginia, then what’s the use?”

He explained, “The trout classroom in Henry County has been a very successful program, and relates to water quality monitoring. Last year, 2,000 students were raising trout in tanks in their classrooms...about 15 - 16 schools in Henry County and Patrick County (Virginia). That trout classroom has been extremely successful.”

“Since we don’t have trout streams down here—trout are upstream—we could do small or large mouth bass in the classroom...we could have a ‘fish in the classroom’ down here (Rockingham County).”

**Dr. Butler** added, “The main thing we (Dan River Basin Association) are getting into right now is the Uranium mining proposal up in Pittsylvania County near Chatham, north of Danville (Virginia). It seems that very few people in North Carolina know about it. There is a proposal to mine uranium and this is the first time uranium would be mined in an area that is heavily populated, with our kind of climate. As you know, (uranium) is usually mined out west where very few people live and where you have a dry climate. It’s on the Bannister River...” **Dr. Butler** pointed out the location on the map.

Using the map, **Dr. Butler** identified numerous trails they have completed or are working on, including a “rail trail” in Stuart, Virginia.

**Mayor Paschal** asked about the Mayo River State Park. **Dr. Butler** said, “It’s in Virginia...Henry County, and we are working now with Virginia to have a bi-state park. We have acquired 2,000 acres in North Carolina...step one is for Virginia to declare Mayo River in Henry County a scenic river and step two is to work on the state park.”

**Mayor Paschal** asked, “Is it close enough to do day trips between the two parks?”

**Dr. Butler** replied, “Oh, yes, they are going to be contiguous...starting at the border and just go on up. It depends upon acquiring the land...there is at least one landowner who is interested in the land becoming a state park, about four or five hundred acres. That’s a good way to start.”

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**Dr. Butler** answered additional questions and continued to review their “projects list,” noting that the Dan River Basin Association has offices in two states (North Carolina and Virginia) with 6 full-time staff and one and a half office people. He explained, “In Eden office we have 3 full-time employees, plus an office person, but one of those employees is designated for Virginia work as well.”

**Dr. Butler** also talked about the Caswell County-Yanceyville project which he said is funded by the Hospital Foundation in Danville. He explained that Caswell is, “...part of that service area, so they funded it fully, to build a trail which connects a school, library, and a park, all in and around Yanceyville. We have a staff person who is getting that project going.”

“That’s what we do,” said **Dr. Butler**, “...we partner with people. We sometimes find the money through grants, or we partner with towns, counties, non-profits, and hospital foundations who are interested in wellness. Just like Annie Penn in Reidsville who funded Chinqua-Penn Trail improvements...we had several grants from them.”

In reference to the Chinqua-Penn Trail, **Dr. Butler** added, “That trail, before all the grants started and the work on the trail, hundreds of people used it during the year, but now I would say the number is in the thousands. You go there now and the parking lot is full, so it is amazing how much the improvements have helped that trail, which is right on the edge of Wentworth.”

**Dr. Butler** noted that the City of Reidsville is working on some trails and that Eden is putting their greenway together. He added, “Wentworth has a lot of potential for trails.”

**Councilwoman Powell** commented, “Don’t we have that in our Land Use Plan and our Central Business District, to have sidewalks or trails?”

**Dr. Butler** replied, “You probably do, and there is already a mile or two at the college, then the little trail here at the Governmental Center...at the Veteran’s Park. There has also been discussion about a small trail behind the new Town Hall and the potential for crossing through the old Cherokee (Boy Scout) Camp, across to the elementary school and come across to pick up the college trail...you could probably have anywhere from 3 to 5 miles of trail in Town, some of which is already in existence.”

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**Mayor Pro Tem Conner** asked about the Settle's Bridge Road landing Dr. Butler mentioned earlier, as to whether it is being used and maintained.

**Dr. Butler** replied, "The County is maintaining it... it is to the right just before you cross the bridge...and that is the half-way point between Eden and Madison, about 10 miles each way."

In conclusion, **Dr. Butler** said, "I guess you may be asking, 'why would the Town of Wentworth want to join the Dan River Basin Association?' My answer would be, 'Because of the partnerships we can develop and the fact that we can work with you on trails development, in terms of not only technical consultation but also to help secure grants.' Annie Penn Hospital, for example, would probably step up because they have consistently backed trails and dietary work in the schools...they are interested in wellness and preventative medicine."

**Dr. Butler** mentioned that Mrs. Butler is on the Wentworth Recreation Committee and that she has an interest in seeing these trails come to reality.

He mentioned other municipalities and corporations that are members of Dan River Basin Association (DRBA), and said that he thought it would be a good partnership if Wentworth decided to join the association.

**Dr. Butler** explained, "We spend a whole lot of time trying to get people together, to work together. We are not an adversarial or confrontational group...we try to get people talking and to work through problems. We think development needs to consider preservation, and preservationists need to consider development. You can have a win-win if you do both...preserving your rural environment if you want to, but still have some development and yet keep the small town atmosphere that we cherish here."

**Councilman Robert Aswell** asked Dr. Butler, "So you think you can help us with planning the trails and to find the money to build these trails?"

**Dr. Butler** replied, we can partner with you and help you with trail projects, yes. As for finding money, I think there is money out there. The Town has to fund trails, but there is help available for the total project, and the Town being on board helps a lot, too, in terms of a project."

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“The Fielddale (Virginia) trail is now two miles and we got grants from the Dominion Power Company...DRBA got that. Henry County built one of the segments but they were reimbursed from the monies we got from Dominion. The last segment, we pretty much handled the construction as well as getting the money from Dominion for it.”

“So, we would certainly partner with Wentworth to get a grant from Annie Penn for a trail here. We need the Town to have a plan for where you want to be. There is a lot of public land in the middle of Wentworth, as you all know.”

**Councilman Aswell** mentioned that there was talk at one time about developing a trail along the sewer lines.

“Yes,” said **Dr. Butler**, “and you have to get a recreational easement on top of the sewer easement, and that can be done.”

**Town Administrator, Brenda Ward**, said that she and Mrs. Butler have been working with someone from PARTF (Parks and Recreation Trust Fund), and that the representative, “...came to see us and did some touring around town. She seemed very excited about the potential for trails in Wentworth, as well as other recreational opportunities. She strongly encouraged us to apply for a grant for a Master Plan that would include trails, and mentioned that Blue Cross Blue Shield has grants available. Perhaps after we get moved into the new Town Hall, we can begin working on some of this,” **Mrs. Ward** said, “or get Bonnie (Dickens) or someone to help us apply for a grant.”

**Dr. Butler** said, “I guess that is all I have unless you have further questions. I hope I haven’t given you too much information. I will say this—from a development point, trails are a real asset to a community in terms of attracting people to the community. Parks, playgrounds and ball fields are great for kids, but trails and fishing opportunities are what senior citizens, as well as others, seem to look for.”

There were no further questions from Council.

**Mayor Paschal** made a motion, “*That we join the Dan River Basin Association as a corporate member.*”

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

The **Town Clerk** asked Dr. Butler when membership begins. He replied, “When you join.”

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**Dr. Butler** thanked the Town Council, and said he had one additional piece of information, not related to the association. He advised that the feasibility study for the old courthouse to determine its use as a museum was completed and that a meeting would be held the following day to go over the findings. "We will be getting back to you with that, soon I hope," said **Dr. Butler**.

**Article VI. NEW BUSINESS – Continued**

**C. Review / Update of Services Provided by Paychex  
- Jennifer Sapp**

**Mayor Paschal** asked the Town Administrator if she was going to review the information from Paychex.

**Ms. Ward** said she would like Council to take the information home and review it, "...because Jennifer (Sapp) will be here next month to give the update. She lives on the other side of Winston-Salem and was concerned about weather conditions tonight. Each year they do a Human Resource Assessment, and that is what this is."

**Mayor Pro Tem Conner** made a motion, "to table Item C. Review / Update of Services Provided by Paychex, to the April 7<sup>th</sup> Town Council Meeting." **Councilman Aswell** seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

**D. Consideration of Budget Amendment No. 3 for FY 2008-2009  
- Yvonne Russell, Finance Officer**

**Mayor Paschal** asked the Finance Officer to present the Budget Amendment.

**Mrs. Russell** said she would go over the memo, "step by step". She explained, "The third Budget Amendment for the year will reflect an increase of \$58,191.00 in General Fund Revenues: Fund Balance Appropriated, and an increase of \$58,191.00 in General Fund Expenditures: Public Safety: Road Paving. This is due to overages in the paving of Dove Road and Foch Farm Road. They (North Carolina Department of Transportation) sent us a letter saying they had spent more than they originally budgeted or thought they would. So this is our half of what they spent, in addition to what we already paid."

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**Mrs. Russell** continued, “The second part of the amendment will reflect the transfer of \$32,250.00 *from* the following general fund expenditures: Cultural and Recreational, Other Operating Costs: Administration, Other Operating Costs: Planning and Zoning, Public Safety: Miscellaneous, and *from* Travel, *to* General Fund Expenditures: Capital Outlay: Office Furniture/Equipment.”

“If you would like,” **Mrs. Russell** said, “I can go through the detail on that third page that you have with color highlighting and explain where each of these amounts are being transferred from. If not...if you want to skip that part, we can go through the furniture and equipment estimates attached to your amendment. If you have any questions about the details, I can go over that with you.”

There were no questions from Council.

**Mrs. Russell** continued, “I’ll give you a minute to look over that—the Furniture and Equipment Estimates—the way I broke it out, starting out with furniture, was the lobby, council chambers, conference room and offices. There are estimates from each furniture supplier and then after each room, I have given you the estimates from highest to lowest. Beside each room, in parentheses, I have told you what that furniture consists of. For instance, in the lobby we are talking about a sofa or love seat, two chairs and a coffee table.”

“In the Council Chambers, our public seating...the room will seat 60, so that’s what we are getting estimates for, the whole 60. We won’t set all of those out at one time, of course, but we may need them so I think we should go ahead and purchase all sixty instead of a few at a time. You may go back and they won’t have the ones you originally bought.”

“The other seating for Council Chambers is at the Council chambers desk and also for the clerk and the attorney. In the conference room, the estimate here is for a table and eight chairs, and in the offices the only estimates we have here are for task chairs, for two staff members and the mayor’s office.”

“For equipment,” said **Mrs. Russell**, “we don’t have all of the equipment estimates in. We have people still working on that. We have a couple of phone system estimates there.”

**Mayor Pro Tem Conner** commented on the Avaya system, saying she wishes she had never heard of them.

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**Mrs. Russell** replied, “We do expect to get some additional estimates in. Also, for the sound system, we expect to get at least one more, hopefully.”

**Mrs. Russell** asked if anyone had a question concerning the information, and added, “Just a note, in looking through all of the furniture estimates—for the total amount—it ranges from \$11,337.00 up to the highest amount, \$20,611.00, for everything. What we like, what we have looked at and thought was the best as far as style and quality, is somewhere in the middle—the total is about \$14,700.00.”

The **Town Administrator** asked Council, “You do understand that these are things we need you to approve out of this year’s budget in order to be functional when we move in, and we assume we *will* move in during this fiscal year.”

“Yes,” replied **Councilman Belcher**, “we need to put money in place to have for that, but it is just an estimate.”

**Ms. Russell** said, “Most of these are items we feel like we need in order to move in, and from what they have told us, we will be moving in before the end of the budget year, in April or first of May. There are some things you have to have...and some things can wait...break room, fireproof file cabinets, bookcases...can wait until next year’s budget.”

The **Town Administrator** added, “We can wait until after July for the fireproof file cabinets but we really need to get all the files that are in the storage room put into fireproof cabinets after we move.”

**Mayor Paschal** asked if anyone had additional questions.

**Councilman Aswell** asked Ms. Russell if she had a breakdown on the additional charges from NCDOT for the two roads. **Ms. Russell** advised, “Dove Road was \$7,612.26 and Foch Farm Road was \$50,577.97.”

There were no additional questions. **Mayor Paschal** made a motion, “*That we approve Budget Amendment No. 3.*” **Mayor Pro Tem Conner** seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

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**E. R E C E S S**

**Mayor Paschal** called for a five-minute recess prior to the Budget Work Session, but decided to make the announcements first in case someone wanted to leave.

**Article VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**     *(No One Signed Speaker Register)*

**Article VIII. A N N O U N C E M E N T S**

- The next regular meeting of the Town of Wentworth **Planning Board** will be held on **Tuesday, March 17, 2009**, 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, April 7, 2009**, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room at the National Guard Armory.

The **Town Administrator** announced a public work session to be held on **Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>**, at **6:00 p.m.** in the National Guard Armory, concerning the proposed Comprehensive Transportation Plan for the Town of Wentworth and the unincorporated areas of Rockingham County. She urged Council members and the public to attend.

**ARTICLE VI. NEW BUSINESS - Continued**

**F. Budget Work Session**

After the five-minute recess, **Mayor Paschal** reconvened the Council Meeting for the Budget Work Session.

**Mrs. Russell** passed out Budget Work Sheets and engaged council in a discussion of the Budget for Fiscal Year 2009-2010. The obvious conclusion was that current economic conditions and no expectations for improvement in the near future would certainly mean lower revenue projections for the Town. By contrast, however, there will certainly be additional expenditures in the new budget.

Specifically, Council discussed the possibility of sharing the costs for larger (12") water lines, with Rockingham County and Dan River Water—an estimated cost of around \$85,000 each. This is, however, still in the discussion/investigation stages.

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**Budget Work Session – Continued**

Regarding the new Town Hall, the Budget for FY 2009-2010 will include a Debt Service payment (\$50,000), new expenses for utilities (heat/air, gas, water/sewer), garbage pick-up, building and grounds maintenance, and capital expenditures for fire-proof file cabinets, folding tables, and a sound system and alarm (security) service (if not purchased in the current fiscal year).

Regarding funding requests received thus far, council agreed to \$2500 for the (Rockingham County High School) SADD Club and \$10,000 for ReDirections.

Also, the Finance Officer was asked to increase her projection for building maintenance, from \$4800 to \$7500, and to include a \$11,000 line item under Public Safety for the fire department.

**Mrs. Russell** advised that the property liability insurance provider has estimated the new yearly premium to be approximately \$8,000, up about \$1800 from last year's premium.

Regarding personnel expenses, the **Town Administrator** said there has been no indication of an increase in medical premiums for the two employees, and in discussing salary increases and cost of living adjustments, it was decided that COLA increases probably could not be justified, but that merit increases would be considered at the next (budget) work session.

**Mrs. Ward** suggested that Council may want to look at implementing a salary/pay grade for the positions, and/or a longevity schedule in lieu of the "Christmas bonus" provided personally by council.

**Mrs. Russell** said she would incorporate the items discussed in the new Budget Work Sheet for the next work session on April 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Mayor Paschal** asked if anyone had any comments or questions. There were none.

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

**Mayor Paschal** made a motion, "*That the meeting be adjourned.*"  
**Councilman Belcher** seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.

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

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