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**TOWN OF WENTWORTH  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES  
JANUARY 4, 2011  
7:00 P.M.**

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**The Wentworth Town Council** held their regular monthly meeting in the Town Hall Council Chambers, on **Tuesday, January 4, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.**

**Council members present:** Mayor Robert Aswell, Mayor Pro Tem James Belcher, Councilwoman Iris Powell, Councilwoman Evelyn Conner

**Council members absent:** Councilman Dennis Paschal

**A quorum was present.**

**Staff Present:** Brenda Ward, Town Administrator - Town Clerk  
Fred Baggett, Town Attorney, and Deputy Clarence Cheshire

**Article I.** Mayor Aswell called the January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011, Wentworth Town Council Meeting to order.

**Article II.** Councilwoman Iris Powell gave the **Invocation.**

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

**A. Requests and Petitions of Citizens**

Mayor Aswell advised that Deputy Cheshire signed the Speaker Register.

Councilman James Belcher made a motion, *“That we add Deputy Cheshire to the January 4, 2011 Agenda, under Article VII. Public Comments.”*

Mayor Aswell 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 – December 7, 2010**

Regarding approval of the Minutes, Mayor Aswell made a motion, *“That the Minutes stand approved as written.”*

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

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**Article V. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Introduction of Kim Proctor, Director, Rockingham County Historical Society, Museum, and Archives**

**Mayor Aswell** invited Kim Proctor to address Council.

**Mrs. Proctor** apologized for missing the December meeting, explaining, “As you know, I had car trouble on the interstate. It was extremely stressful, and I would have preferred to be here.”

“I am the new director of the museum—the Rockingham County Historical Society, Museum, and Archives, and as you know, our main project is pushing forward with the court house and the jail, in supplement to the Wright Tavern and other historical properties, to create a complex and the village atmosphere that so suits Wentworth and is so much a part of its history. We are real excited about that.”

**Mrs. Proctor** continued, “We have started that process and we have secured storage at the old jail for the museum, so we’ll be better equipped to protect your artifacts. We have also started negotiating the lease on the courthouse, so it looks like this is going to be a real and exciting thing for 2011.”

“We are going to count on the Town to continue to support us,” **Mrs. Proctor** said, “and thank you so much for the generous gift at your last meeting. I am sorry you had to go without your Christmas presents, but we very much appreciated it, and moreover, it said to everyone that the Town is supporting us.”

**Mrs. Proctor** concluded, “You also offer wonderful facilities and I am going to talk to Brenda about using these facilities for meetings, going forward. This is Wentworth and we want very much to be a part of what is going on in Wentworth. We want you to call on us to help meet Wentworth goals and we want you to look at us as a valuable part of the community. I hope we’ll prove that for you. Thank you.”

Council members thanked Mrs. Proctor for coming.

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**Article VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Financial Report / Budget Vs Actual  
June 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010**

**Mayor Aswell** directed Council's attention to the Financial Report provided by Finance Officer, Yvonne Russell.

"I hope you have had time to look over it...are there any questions?" **Mayor Aswell** asked. "If not, I'll entertain a motion to accept it."

**Mayor Aswell** made the motion, "*to accept the Financial Report.*" **Councilwoman Conner** seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

**Article VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**B. Consideration of Resolution to Close Capital Project for  
Construction of Town Hall**

**Brenda Ward, Town Administrator**, advised that the resolution is a requirement of the State (NCGS), and explained, "We had to wait until our audit was complete, because Mr. Rouse had to make some adjustments. But as you know, the Town Hall has been completed, everyone has been paid...we're still paying on the loan, of course...but this is the resolution to close out the Capital Project for the Town Hall."

**Mayor Pro Tem Belcher** said, "I would like to make a motion *that we approve the Resolution to Close the Capital Project for Construction of the Town Hall*, and congratulate everybody on the fine work that was done to achieve it."

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

**Article VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**C. Consideration of Application for the Historic Preservation  
Committee**

**1. Cindy Shannon - Wentworth, NC**

**Councilwoman Powell** asked, "Do we need someone on the Historic Committee?"

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“Yes, we do,” replied **Mayor Pro Tem Belcher**, “and I think Cindy has shown quite a bit of interest in the Town and in helping us out. I would like to *make a motion that we appoint her to the Historic Preservation Committee.*”

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

**Article VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**D. Consideration of Personnel Evaluation & Recommendation of Salary Increase for Yvonne Russell, Finance Officer  
-Personnel Committee**

**Councilwoman Conner** noted, “The Personnel Committee did recommend that we give Yvonne Russell a 2.5 merit increase, which was part of the new budget, and that this be retroactive to September 15, 2010. Brenda (Town Administrator) and I talked, and she had set some goals for Yvonne and she feels like those will be met in this fiscal year, so I would like to make a motion *that we give her the 2.5% merit increase.*”

**Mayor Pro Tem Belcher** added, “I think we are fortunate to have the employees that we have, and I would like to second that motion.”

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

**Article VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Mayor Aswell** recognized **Deputy Clarence Cheshire** for his comments.

**Deputy Cheshire** began, “Thank y’all for the opportunity to speak. First of all, I would like to wish you a Happy New Year, and I hope you had a good holiday. I think the parade went extremely well this year...the best one so far. It had something for everybody. The addition of the (professional) floats really made a difference...gave that festive look to it.”

“As I always do,” **Deputy Cheshire** continued, “I start thinking of bigger and better things. I’ve already started working on this year’s (parade). One thing I wanted to bring to your attention...you may recall that we talked about having a fireworks display for the Town. Councilman Paschal said he would like to have it as close to July 4<sup>th</sup> as possible.”

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“I don’t know if you are still interested in entertaining that idea, if it’s something you want to think about, but this is somewhat time-sensitive, because to be able to get someone...by July 4<sup>th</sup>, will require as much notice as possible.”

**Councilwoman Powell** asked Deputy Cheshire if he knew if the college (RCC) would be having fireworks this year. She said they had fireworks there last summer.

Discussion about this seemed to lean toward last year’s fireworks at the college being a one-time thing for some special event. **Deputy Cheshire** said he could check with them to be sure.

**Council** talked about what day July 4<sup>th</sup> is on, and **Mayor Pro Tem Belcher** commented, “I am just really hesitant, given the budget climate this year. Everyone is expecting more cuts...and since we want to continue to put on a nice Christmas Parade, this would be an additional cost and I would be real hesitant about adding anything, especially not knowing what the North Carolina budget situation is going to be, and I expect it to be dramatically different unless...”

**Deputy Cheshire** replied, “I just wanted to bring it up in case...as I said due to the time limit...”

**Mayor Pro Tem Belcher** said “It would be nice, but I would have to think about it long and hard...I think we might need to postpone that until an improvement in the economy, especially since we have had excellent success with the parade, we don’t want to put ourselves in the position where we are spread too thin.”

**Councilwoman Conner** asked about the Town’s anniversary—“Is this our 13<sup>th</sup> year?”

**Mrs. Ward** replied, “Yes, I believe so, so our 15<sup>th</sup> year would be 2013.”

**Council** said perhaps a fireworks display could be done on the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Town’s incorporation.

**Mrs. Ward** advised, “Clarence and I talked about it...whether or not you would want to budget for fireworks this year, and I told him you may not be inclined to do so until we know more about what cuts the Governor will be making.”

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**Deputy Cheshire** replied, “We can put it off until another time...it’s not a problem. It’s just that if you did want fireworks this year, I would need to get on that right away.”

**Council** agreed that waiting until the Town’s 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary may be the best time to consider fireworks, but expressed their appreciation to Deputy Cheshire for staying on top of things.

**Deputy Cheshire** said he had some new thoughts about this year’s Christmas Parade and wanted to let Council know what he is working on.

He explained, “I didn’t have any luck last year...I am envisioning Wentworth’s parade to be something like the Macy’s Parade...as far as entertainment—someone on a float, singing or entertaining.”

**Deputy Cheshire** said he wondered if Council would consider a little extra in the parade budget this year in case he came up with some entertainment. He mentioned trying to get Chris Daughtry, for instance, if he could get him at a reasonable price.

“Anything that y’all think of that you would like to do for the Town, just let me know how I can help,” **Deputy Cheshire** added.

“Since Kim (Proctor) is close by now, maybe we can get her to help us out this year...she’s probably got some ideas.”

**Ms. Proctor** replied, “I can tell you that my son is a close *friend* of Chris Daughtry...in fact, he *employed* him prior to his success, so if we can do anything to help you convince him, let us know.

“There you go, that’s all we needed,” said **Deputy Cheshire**.

**Ms. Proctor** added, “And we (Historical Society) will have a float this year. We wanted to do that last year...we talked about that, but with all the new changes that were going on, we weren’t able to fit that into the agenda, but we are making a commitment to plan for that...”

**Deputy Cheshire** said he was glad to hear that, and advised, “Some of the preparations I have made...I have contacted the Mayberry Deputy, David Browning. He was booked up this past year on the 11<sup>th</sup> but he did tell me to get back with him after the first of the year, so I have already emailed him and asked him to send me his fee so we will know how much it would cost to have him in the parade.”

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“Miss North Carolina—I tried to get her last year as well, but she was already scheduled somewhere else on the same day as our parade. I sent word to the manager and advised that we would like to have the new Miss North Carolina in our 2011 parade and asked them to send us her fee and any rider information needed.”

**Mayor Pro Tem Belcher** asked, “So we’re looking at December 10, 2011, as the date for this year’s parade?”

“That’s correct. December 10<sup>th</sup> is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in December this year,” **Deputy Cheshire** replied.

Continuing, **Deputy Cheshire** said he has already asked the bagpipers to come back again this year. “I think they were a big hit...they really were good...and also, the Pink Heals, the pink fire truck...I’ve asked them to come back, and I think they are coming back in April for the Relay for Life event. Some of those folks contacted them about coming.”

**Deputy Cheshire** concluded, “Mainly, I just wanted to thank you for all your support...being so supportive of me, and for allowing me to run with my ideas, and like I said, if there is anything that y’all want to try to have done, let me know and I’ll try my best to get it done for you.”

**Councilwoman Conner** said, “We appreciate *everything* you do, Clarence.”

“Well, you are quite welcome and I enjoy doing it for the Town. We should have the same opportunities as everybody else. Thank you,”

**Deputy Cheshire** replied.

*(Note: It was, of course, unknown to any of us that this would be Deputy Clarence Cheshire’s last opportunity to speak to the Wentworth Town Council. Deputy Cheshire passed away on Monday, January 17, 2011, and no doubt is helping to plan that big parade in Heaven. We will miss him...miss him already!)*

**Mayor Aswell** advised that Councilwoman Powell would like to add something to the Agenda before the meeting is adjourned, “*concerning a coat rack, and I make a motion to add this to the Agenda.*”

**Mayor Pro Tem Belcher** seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**Councilwoman Powell** advised, “*What I would like for us to do is buy a coat rack to put our coats on when we’re here.*”

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“In the lobby?” asked **Mayor Pro Tem Belcher**. “No, in here,” said **Councilwoman Powell**. “It won’t cost very much.”

The **Town Administrator** and **Council** discussed whether to purchase a “rack” of some sort, or a peg apparatus. **Mrs. Ward** advised, “We’ll look into that and find something appropriate.”

**Mayor Aswell** said he would second Councilwoman Powell’s motion to purchase a coat rack “and leave it up to Brenda to find us one.”

There was no further discussion. All voted in favor.

**Article VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The next regular meeting of the **Town of Wentworth Planning Board** will be held on **Tuesday, January 18, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.** in the Town Hall Council Chambers.
- The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Town Council** will be held in the Town Hall Council Chambers on **Tuesday, February 1, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.**

**Mayor Aswell** asked if there were any other announcements. **Mayor Pro Tem Belcher** said, “We would like to wish everyone a happy and prosperous new year.”

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

**Mayor Aswell** made a motion, “*that the meeting be adjourned.*”

**Councilwoman Conner** seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

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

**Approved By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Robert P. Aswell, Mayor**