
**TOWN OF WENTWORTH
MINUTES FOR**

**THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 6, 2012
7:00 P.M.**

The **Wentworth Town Council** held its regular monthly meeting on **Tuesday, March 6, 2012**, at **7:00 p.m.** in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Council members present: Mayor Dennis Paschal, Councilwoman Iris Powell, Councilman Robert Aswell, and Councilman Dennis Paschal, III.

Council members absent: Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner, due to illness.

A quorum was present.

Staff Present: Brenda Ward, Town Administrator & Town Clerk / Yvonne Russell, Finance Officer & Deputy Clerk / Fred Baggett, Town Attorney, and Deputy Travis Loftis

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Dennis Paschal

ARTICLE II. INVOCATION: Councilman Dennis Paschal, III. gave the invocation.

ARTICLE III. Approval of March 6, 2012, Town Council Agenda

A. Requests & Petitions of Citizens

Mayor Paschal advised that no one signed the Speaker Register to address Council, and said he would like to make one change to the Agenda—*“to remove Item D under Article VI. - Old Business. There is no further update on the intersection of 65 and 87.”*

“So moved,” said **Councilman Aswell**. **Mayor Paschal** seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

ARTICLE IV. Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes for February 7, 2012

Councilwoman Aswell made a motion to, *“approve the Minutes as written.”* **Councilwoman Powell** seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

ARTICLE V. PUBLIC HEARING

**A. Consideration of Revisions to the Town of Wentworth
Planning & Zoning Ordinances**

Chapter 1, Definitions; Chapter 2, Article XII - To establish the Town's Administrative Agencies, to Set out the Membership, Organization, and Powers and Duties of the Planning Board, and to Amend the Definition of Planning Board

- **Lucas Carter, Rockingham County Planning Department**

Mayor Paschal called the Public Hearing to order and welcomed Lucas Carter.

Mr. Carter advised, "Tonight, you are voting on changes to the Planning Board, the definition of the Planning Board; also, you are going to discuss the Board of Adjustment...and the responsibilities of the Planning Board. You will notice in the packet...there is a change in the definition of 'Planning Board'...in Chapter 1 (Definitions). This actually comes straight from the (UNC) School of Government, a recommended definition..."

Mr. Carter read the definition, as follows: "*A citizen committee appointed by the Wentworth Town Council to assist in land use planning and the zoning process. The Planning Board usually reviews all proposed zoning amendments and makes a recommendation to the governing board regarding their adoption. The Planning Board may also be assigned some or all of the duties of the Board of Adjustment, most typically deciding Special Use Permit applications.*"

Mr. Carter added, "...and again, that is recommended by the School of Government."

"Going farther in Chapter 2 (A), this establishes the Board of Adjustment and basically says they are to have all the responsibilities that are set aside by North Carolina General Statute 160A-388; and then farther down, we established a Planning Board and say that they are to have the powers that are set aside in NCGS 160A-361 and the powers that are described herein."

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Mr. Carter continued: “Number 2 is about Membership. It states that the Planning Board shall consist of seven members and they shall be appointed by the Town Council to serve four-year terms. It also discusses how they can have consecutive terms, and goes on to discuss alternate members, and how they may serve in the absence of a regular member, and discusses their ability to vote as a regular member when they are seated in someone’s absence.”

“Next, we look at Organization, and this is where it talks about the Planning Board electing a Chairman and a Vice-chair. It says that they may adopt rules, commonly known as bylaws. It also discusses the attendance policy, stating that a planning board member who misses more than three consecutive regular meetings or half of the regular meetings within any 12-month period will be subject to removal and replacement by the Town Council. It does go on to say that absences due to sickness are, basically, approved absences.”

Mr. Carter continued, “Number 4 - Powers and Duties of the Planning Board, and those are set out in this section. You will notice, and maybe I should have explained this is the beginning, but everything that is strike-through text, is the text proposed to be removed from the ordinance. The italicized words are what is being proposed to add to the ordinance, and the regular type text is what is in the ordinance already, and proposed to stay.”

“Look back to Page 1 under Section 1- Board of Adjustment Created. We deleted the wording that talks about the Board of Adjustment being made up of Planning Board members. We deleted it from there because we have added the Powers and Duties section, (4a), at the very end, under *b.iii*, where it is specifically stated there that they are to sit as the Board of Adjustment. So, if you just read Page 1, it looks like we have done away with the Planning Board also sitting as a Board of Adjustment, but further into the document under Powers & Duties, we specifically say that the Planning Board also sits as the Board of Adjustment.”

Mr. Carter said he would be glad to answer any questions.

Mayor Paschal asked if there were any questions from Council.

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Councilman Paschal asked, “Under Chapter 2, Section B - (Planning Board) under Membership, it says, ‘each member shall be eligible to serve two consecutive terms,’...is that something new to this, or...”

Councilman Aswell answered, “That is the way it is set up now.”

Councilman Paschal: “Okay, so that is the current practice?”

Mr. Carter commented, “If the Planning Board has bylaws, it may be set aside specifically in the bylaws, but it was not specified in the ordinance, so this could overlap with the bylaws if the Planning Board has adopted them, but it is not currently in the ordinance...that they can have two four-year terms. Again, they may be following this as a matter of policy, but this puts it in the ordinance.”

Councilman Paschal said he was just curious and wondering, “Is there any reason for limiting them to two-year terms...is there a reason we have done that?”

Mr. Carter answered, “...it is good general practice...I have to say that I didn’t do the research on this, but if you look across the state, most planning boards only have two-year terms.”

Councilman Aswell said he thought Council had on occasion extended the terms beyond that.

Mayor Paschal said that has happened, “...when we didn’t have anyone applying (to serve).”

Councilman Paschal said that is why he was asking—“I know it is sometimes hard to get people to serve, so I just wondered why...”

The **Town Administrator** added, “The Planning Board does have Rules of Procedure and the term limits are set forth there, but any of it can be changed by council at any time.”

Mayor Paschal asked the Town Attorney, **Fred Baggett**, if the changes looked okay to him.

Mr. Baggett replied, “Yes, I worked with Frankie and Luke on this. It looks fine...we needed to put some powers and duties in there that are consistent with what this Council wants.”

Mayor Paschal noted that no one signed the Speaker Register to address Council, and **declared the Public Hearing closed.**

Councilman Aswell made a motion, *“That we approve the revisions to the Wentworth Planning and Zoning Ordinance, and I move that we adopt the Statements of Consistency as required in NCGS 160A-382(b) and 160A-383, and as outlined in the Town Council’s Analysis and Statement,”*

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

ARTICLE VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Update on July 4th 2012 Celebration in Partnership with RCHSMA, RCC, and the Town of Wentworth

-Kim Proctor, Director, Rockingham County Museum

1. Consideration of Funding Request for July 4th, 2012, Celebration Expenses

Mayor Paschal invited **Mrs. Proctor** to address Council.

Mrs. Proctor thanked Council for letting her “come back again.”

“Brenda, Yvonne, and I have been working diligently on delivering what we said we would, and we have brought a Funding Request with a full description of what we are planning to do for the 4th of July Celebration, partnering, as Mayor Paschal indicated, with Rockingham Community College, the Museum and Archives of Rockingham County, and the Town of Wentworth.”

“I have approached Dr. Helmick at RCC, and he has excitedly agreed to be involved in this, loves the idea of the event occurring out at the Historic Village, and is willing to offer his cleaning staff, security detail, history department, and all the other tools he has, to our resources for this event.”

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Mrs. Proctor continued, “It is shaping up to be a really exciting idea. I look forward to being with all of you on that day, because I have every confidence that we will enjoy a successful, fun time.”

“This outline you have, pretty much gives the information we provided last month, so I am not going to take time to read it, but I realize you haven’t had a lot of time to look it, so if you have any questions, I’ll be glad to answer them. If not now, then later by phone or email.”

“We are looking at a project budget of approximately \$9,800.00 and this includes some *free* concessions for the public. We have tried to be frugal with the ones we have chosen. There will also be vendors with food that can be purchased. The contests we have discussed are the hot dog eating, pie eating, and then a judged, homemade ice cream-making contest, with registered participants making their commitments early. The budget also includes some moderate cash prizes and certificates, and we also will ask for gift certificates from the community businesses, as prizes for some of the smaller contests.”

“The funding will cover some materials for stage construction. I did check with RCC to see if they have a stage, but what they have is the amphitheater that is a good distance away from the Historic Village. Most of you are familiar with the village area and you know that there is a large field around there with plenty of room for a stage and seating.”

“We are going to do a program that day, where each hour there will be a new event, including speakers on Rockingham County history, musicians, a play...and of course the crowning glory—the reading of the Declaration of Independence.”

Mrs. Proctor added, “We are asking for funding to be able to provide souvenirs for our visitors. Our souvenirs of choice are small parchment rolled Declaration of Independence copies, and a small American flag to go with them. Taking those two pieces away, I think, as a historian, that I would just love to get those...”

“We are planning for 500 people, as far as what we are ordering, but it would not surprise me to have more...but at least we will have something for the first 500...”

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“My group (Historical Society) is very excited about making sure that these things happen in a timely way, and doing the oversight tasks...I have such wonderful help from your folks here (Brenda and Yvonne) but I am not going to overuse them...”

Mrs. Proctor advised, “RCC is providing us with four representatives for a joint committee to develop this. There will be security, history, publicity, and then administrative areas covered, so that any liability issues and things like that...we’ll have all of our ducks in a row, for RCC to be responsible for that.”

She added, “The more that we worked with this...the document here, and discussed what you all have done in the past with different requests, and trying to be responsible in our request to you, the more real and tangible it feels and I think it is something that will receive great press coverage.”

“Let me just say, that we had our visit from the Smithsonian Institution relative to the ‘Journey Stories’ exhibit...they were so incredibly excited about what we were doing. We have deviated and gone outside the box a little, and we have deviated in the layout. When they saw what we are doing and they realized that for the first time, this Smithsonian Traveling Exhibit is being used to help *open* a museum, it was a concept they had never seen...so they are making us a model for this in the future.”

Mrs. Proctor asked if there were any questions she could answer.

Councilwoman Powell asked, “Did you say that this will take place at the Historic Village?”

“Yes, at the Historic Village on the RCC campus. They are the best choice really, because we highlight education and give the kids, and not just kids, but adults, too...an opportunity to see what is out there...adults are having to reposition themselves in life because of the economy, or because they are retiring. We already have those structures there and it’s perfect. The parking is excellent. It works well for traffic, and the equipment and staff that RCC has, means it’s going to be really easy...”

In conclusion, **Mrs. Proctor** remarked, “I submit this request to you and hope that you will consider it during the course of your budget meeting. I thank you for your time and effort to include us, and I look forward to hearing the results of our request.”

Mayor Paschal thanked Mrs. Proctor and said, “We’ll be taking this into consideration at our budget work session a little later on.”

ARTICLE VI. OLD BUSINESS – Continued

B. Update on Lobby Floor – Mayor Paschal

Mayor Paschal updated everyone, explaining, “We talked to the folks at Alley, Williams, Carmen, and King, and the builders (Wright & Wray Construction), before our meeting last month, and asked them to give us a couple of options, but they haven’t come back to us yet with their solutions, but hopefully we will have something by our April meeting.”

C. Update on Post Office Status – Town Administrator

Mayor Paschal asked Ms. Ward if she would update Council on the post office.

Ms. Ward advised, “Councilman Paschal asked me a couple of weeks ago about the status of our request for a post office....I forgot to include that on my Administrator’s Report last month.”

“You will remember that it was on our Agenda some time last year to consider the petition for a Wentworth address, but the motion from council ended up being a request to inquire *one more time*, about a *new* post office.”

“Prior to that meeting, I read in the newspaper that Senator Kay Hagan in Greensboro was asking the Postal Service to schedule public meetings in any small town where the post office may be on the closing list.”

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Ms. Ward continued, “So, knowing of all the closings I had heard about and read about, I decided to start with Senator Hagan. I talked with one of her staff members and sent her the information she requested...the background of our past efforts to get a new post office.”

“Several months went by without hearing anything, so I decided to go ahead and send letters to the other representatives and senators in our district, to see if they could help, or had names of contacts within the Postal Service.”

“I heard back from **Senator Berger** and **Representative Bert Jones**, and they said they would investigate to see if there was anything they could do as elected officials.”

“I haven’t actually written to the Greensboro office...I’ll have to call and get names since the people we dealt with before are no longer there...; so, unfortunately, that is really about all I know at this time.”

“However, I do want to say that we have been incorporated for almost 15 years, and people still complain about our address being Reidsville.”

“The TV stations in the last few weeks have referred to the Rockingham County Animal Shelter in *Reidsville*.”

“The Sheriff’s Department and 911 Emergency Operations Center use *Reidsville* as their address when giving their location...memos that go out about meetings, training, etc. say they will be meeting in *Reidsville*.”

“Also, I went on line to a site to check for some demographic information, and nothing comes up under our zip code...the *Reidsville* zip code showed all the schools in the County...and the ones in Wentworth are listed as Reidsville schools.”

“Not to mention Fed Ex / UPS and people using GPS that can’t find us...these are just some examples of why I think we need a Wentworth address.”

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“Quite honestly,” said **Mrs. Ward**, “right after you asked me to do this, I was reading article after article and hearing on TV about post offices closing, and I just felt weird about calling and telling them we would like for them to build us a new post office. Not to mention the recent tornados from east to west, which may have produced the same problems as Hurricane Katrina, the reason they say we didn’t get the post office that was promised to us before.”

“But, I will proceed further and find out who the person is I need to speak with, if that is what you still want me to do.”

She addressed **Councilman Paschal**, “That is my update, but since you asked about it, you may have some comments or questions.”

Mayor Paschal thanked Ms. Ward, commenting, “Well, it seems like when things seem the bleakest, that’s when something usually happens. I know that before, when we thought we were beaten down and never going to get anywhere, a new person came to the Greensboro facility and things began to move to the point where they came before us and said, ‘Oh, your post office has been approved, and we’re going out for bids, and then Katrina hit and everything went out the window. But you never know when something is going to change. I just think we need to push ahead and maybe we’ll get lucky.”

Councilman Paschal asked, “So we want Brenda to continue to try to contact them?”

Mayor Paschal replied, “Call around the Greensboro office and see if we can get someone to respond, locally, first...”

Councilwoman Powell said, “I think you would accomplish more if you had a face to face meeting...make an appointment and go talk to them in person. It’s real easy to open a letter or the packet and say, ‘Oh, okay, we’ll think about it’ ...and then lay it aside. But if you are sitting here talking with someone face to face, they have to give you an answer.”

“...we met with them before,” said **Mayor Paschal**, “and I agree. If we can find someone to come out here, then you’re in better shape.”

Councilman Aswell asked about the Wentworth Postmaster's daughter. He said he thought she may be over the postal facilities.

Mrs. Ward said she would check with Ms. Wall at the Wentworth Post Office.

Note: Mrs. Ward inquired about this and learned that Ms. Wall's daughter, Dawn Lambert, is the postmaster at the McLeansville Post Office. (More information will be given in Mrs. Ward's next report to the Town Council.)

"You have to be careful, though," said **Councilwoman Powell**, "Because they may say, because they're family, that is the reason she got behind it. The thing you have to push, is the fact that if we don't have a post office, then we're the only county seat in North Carolina that would not have one."

"We have pointed that out many times," said **Mayor Paschal**. "Maybe we can get somebody to meet with us and we'll see what we can do."

ARTICLE VI. OLD BUSINESS – Continued

D. Update on Extension of Intersection at NC 65/87 (For Access to Justice Center Drive)

Note: THIS ITEM WAS REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA UNDER ARTICLE III—APPROVAL OF MARCH AGENDA

ARTICLE VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration of Deer Urban Archery Season Renewal: January 12 - February 16, 2013

Mayor Paschal introduced the first item of New Business.

Councilman Aswell said, "Mayor, I would like to make a motion that we go ahead and *"extend this for a ten-year period and let the Town Administrator re-file it every year and not have to bring it to Council every year."*

Mayor Paschal asked the Town Attorney, "Is it okay if we do that?"

Mr. Baggett answered, “As far as I know, you can. I don’t know why you couldn’t.”

“Another council could change it at some point in time if they wanted to.” **Mayor Paschal** reasoned.

“That’s correct,” said **Mr. Baggett**, “as long as you understand that...you can leave it as a standing decision.”

Mayor Paschal said he would second Councilman Aswell’s motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

ARTICLE VII. NEW BUSINESS – Continued

B. Consideration of Proclamation in Recognition of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week, March 12-18, 2012

Mayor Paschal recognized **Barbara Cooke**, a Wentworth resident, who read the Proclamation for those in attendance.

Mrs. Cooke thanked Council for the opportunity to talk about Multiple Sclerosis and commented, “Having a daughter with MS, I am very aware of the importance of getting the word out about this disease. Hopefully, someday, a cure and prevention can be found. Thank you for your consideration of this Proclamation declaring March 12-18, 2012, as Multiple Sclerosis Week in the Town of Wentworth.”

“I would also like to add that I am on the MS Walk Committee for Rockingham County, and I would like to invite all of you to join us on Saturday, April 14th, for the walk. Thank you.”

The mayor and council members thanked Mrs. Cooke for coming to share the information about MS.

Mayor Paschal made a motion, “*That we approve this Proclamation in Recognition of Multiple Sclerosis Week...*”

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

ARTICLE VII. NEW BUSINESS – Continued

**C. Consideration of Town Council Members Serving
(voluntarily) on Town Committees—One Council Member
per Committee**

Mayor Paschal noted that Mayor Pro Tem Conner was to speak about this item of business, but she could not be present for the meeting. He asked Council if they wanted to go ahead with it or table it. He said everyone could think about what committee they may want to serve on.

Councilman Paschal replied, “I don’t see why we can’t go ahead and take it up now, and approve the change in bylaws. We can still take some time to decide what committees we want to be on and talk about that at the next meeting.”

The **Town Administrator** added, “Evelyn sent me a note about what she intended to say, if you would like for me to explain how it came up.”

Mayor Paschal said that would be fine.

Mrs. Ward explained, “Evelyn asked me why a council member could not serve on a committee. I told her it is up to Council to make the change in the bylaws. Some places...other towns, don’t like for council members to serve on their citizen committees, and in others, they do.”

“Evelyn said she knows it is sometime hard to get enough people, and she has some interest in both Historic Preservation and Appearance (committees), and wanted to see how you felt about it.”

Mrs. Ward continued, “Right now, we have a good number on the Historic Preservation Committee, but we really need some bodies on our Appearance and Recreation committees. Kay Hammock has helped us by contacting some folks and we have had two applications returned for the Appearance Committee.

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“What Evelyn had in mind was, *if* a council member was *interested* in serving, would it be okay? Not saying, necessarily, that you *have* to serve on a committee. So, your motion, if you are in agreement to this, would be to change the bylaws to *allow* a council member to serve.”

Mrs. Ward passed out a copy of Mayor Pro Tem Conner’s notes.

Mayor Paschal asked, “In changing the bylaws, we don’t have to give any kind of public notice or anything like that?”

“No,” replied **Mrs. Ward**. “These are just committees you have appointed, but not by ordinance or anything.”

Mayor Paschal made a motion, “*to change the bylaws for Town Committees to allow one council member to serve on each committee, if they want to volunteer.*”

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

ARTICLE VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS – Mayor Paschal noted that no one signed the Speaker Register to address Council.

ARTICLE IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS - Mayor Paschal made the following announcements:

- The **Town of Wentworth** acknowledges **Sunshine Week, March 11-17**, promoting every person’s right of access to public records and government meetings and acknowledges that we are committed to openness and transparency in all aspects of our operations.
- There will be a **JOINT MEETING** of the **Town of Wentworth Planning Board** and the **Wentworth Town Council** on **Tuesday, March 20**, 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, April 3, 2012, at 7:00 P.M.**

NOTE: There will be a **Budget Work Session** at this **Town Council Meeting**.

ARTICLE IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS – Continued

- **RCHSMA** (Rockingham County Historical Society, Museum & Archives) and **Wentworth Presbyterian Church** will host a **Spring Festival & Easter Egg Hunt** on **Saturday, April 7, 10:00 - 2:00pm** at the **Tavern & Church**.
- There will be a **“Garden Tour of Wentworth”** on **Saturday, April 28**, from **9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.** Tickets are available at the Town Hall. All proceeds will be donated to the Arthritis Foundation.
- **“SPRING FORWARD!” Daylight Savings Time Begins THIS WEEKEND. Move clocks forward one hour before bedtime, Saturday, March 10.**

ARTICLE X. FIVE-MINUTE RECESS

Mayor Paschal made a motion, *“That we have a five-minute recess before our Budget Work Session.”*

Councilman Aswell seconded the motion, all voted in favor and Council recessed.

ARTICLE XI. After a brief recess, **Mayor Paschal** reconvened the Town Council Meeting for the **Budget Work Session**.

Finance Officer, **Yvonne Russell**, led the work session, taking Council through each line item. A report of the Budget Work Session is attached hereto as part of the Minutes (Attachment I).

In addition to Ms. Russell’s notes, attached, Council agreed to consider a new contract from Smith Moore Leatherwood for attorney fees. This will be presented at the April 3, 2012, Town Council Meeting.

The **Council** also discussed the purchase of new banners for the main corridor of town, and will look at this again at the next budget work session.

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ARTICLE IX. A D J O U R N

Councilman Aswell made a motion, "*The meeting be adjourned.*"

Mayor Paschal seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Brenda Ward, Town Clerk

Approved: _____
Dennis Paschal, Jr. Mayor