
**TOWN OF WENTWORTH
MINUTES FOR
THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 5, 2013
7:00 P.M.**

The Wentworth Town Council held its regular monthly meeting on **Tuesday, March 5, 2013**, at **7:00 p.m.** in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Council members present: Mayor Dennis Paschal, Jr., Councilman Robert Aswell, Councilwoman Iris Powell, 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 / Attorney Pat Kane / Finance Officer, Yvonne Russell, and Deputy Bob Terry

ARTICLE I. Call to Order: Mayor Dennis Paschal, Jr.

ARTICLE II. Invocation: Councilman Paschal

ARTICLE III. Approval of March 5, 2013, Town Council Agenda

A. Requests & Petitions of Citizens

Mayor Paschal advised of changes to the March Agenda and made a motion to, *“Amend the Agenda to add Item B, under New Business— Consideration of Approval of Contract between Rockingham County Board of Elections and the Town of Wentworth Regarding the Conduct of Municipal Elections, and also Item C. under New Business— Consideration of Application for the Town of Wentworth Recreation Committee, from Mr. Jason Rakestraw of 246 Foch Farm Road, Reidsville, North Carolina.”*

Councilman Dennis Paschal, III. seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor of amending the Agenda.

ARTICLE IV. Approval of Minutes

Mayor Paschal advised that the Town Clerk has a correction to the Minutes.

Mrs. Ward referenced Page 8 of the Minutes in the seventh paragraph, advising, *“We need to change Mayor Aswell to Councilman Aswell...I have made the correction and you may want to as well.”*

Councilman Aswell made a motion, *“That the Minutes stand as written, with the correction.”*

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

ARTICLE V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Updates

- 1. Post Office**
- 2. Purchase of Campano Property on Peach Tree Road**
- 3. Removal of Shrubs near Post Office at Judge Stan Allen’s Office prior to Sidewalk Installation at the MARC**

Mayor Paschal recognized the Town Administrator for updates listed under Old Business.

Mrs. Ward began with information about the **Post Office**.

“I wanted to give you some additional information on the current post office before we address the status of our proposal for a new post office.”

“Our post office, as we reported last month, is working on the new schedule of 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. Each day’s mail is supposed to be distributed for customers by 3:00 p.m. I remembered that the notice from the Postal Service indicated that customers would have 24-hour access to their mail, but I also remembered that Ms. Wall at the post office said she did not know how they were going to work that out.”

“I checked with her today because I stopped going by there in the mornings to pick up our mail, thinking I could not get inside until 1:00 p.m. But when I asked her about it this afternoon, she said the lobby *is* open all the time now, and so you can get your mail at 3:00 a.m. if that’s when you want to go.”

- 1.** As for our **offer to construct a building for the post office**, I emailed Monica Robbs, in Corporate Communications at the Postal Service office in Charlotte, who has been my last contact person, and to date, she has not had any word regarding the ‘Area and Headquarters review’. As she has said previously, ‘those decisions are forthcoming...and it is a lengthy process.’ So, that’s the update on the post Office.”

Mrs. Ward moved to the next item under Old Business.

2. “Regarding the **Campano property** across the road on Peach Tree, we did receive a nice, thick packet of information, including the General Warranty Deed, and the Title Insurance Policy...the deed has been recorded by the Register of Deeds Office and we are now owners of that 4.873 acres on Peach Tree Road.”
3. “The third item of Old Business—**Removal of Shrubs near the Post Office**—Kim (Proctor, Museum Director) can verify that it is done,” **Mrs. Ward** assumed.

Everyone laughed when **Mrs. Proctor** admitted she had not noticed, due to a busy schedule and hurrying in and out of the museum each day.

Mrs. Ward passed around some photos of the area around Judge Stan Allen’s office that were made after Chris Witherspoon completed removal of the shrubs.

Regarding the template for the **Sidewalk Maintenance Agreement**, **Mrs. Ward** said that she and the Town Attorney, “...have been talking about it, and when I contacted DOT, I was advised to call **Donnie Huffines**.”

“**Mr. Huffines** was familiar with the project at the museum, and he said DOT does have templates, but he said that most of the time they have to be altered to reflect the individual project design. He mentioned that one of their funding sources for this project may come from a ‘*Federal pot*’...and that when Federal money is involved, there are several aspects of the project that have to be addressed, such as environmental, archaeological, and historic preservation issues. He said those different groups have to review the projects and that once they have all the information they need, they will provide an agreement for you and for our attorney to review.”

Mrs. Ward added, “I did ask him (Mr. Huffines) about removal of the shrubs, and at first he said that because of the Federal money involved, we may want to wait. I told him that I had someone lined up to begin the work on Monday. **Mr. Huffines** said he needed to check on some things and get back to me.”

“As we talked, though, he finally concluded that it was probably alright, because Bobby Norris (NCDOT), who met with our folks at the site, indicated the shrubs were the hold-up in being able to get a line of sight for the design plans.”

“I explained that **Mr. Norris** mentioned that even if the project should not be approved, the shrubs are in the line of sight for safe passage back and forth across the highway, and that people are already crossing the road when they come for tours at the museum.”

Councilman Aswell confirmed, “**Bobby (Norris)** did say that removing the shrubs was necessary anyway to get a good line of sight there.”

Mrs. Ward said, “Right, and that is what **Mr. Huffines** finally concluded as well...that it is a safety issue.”

“**Chris Witherspoon** said he has about a half-day’s work to do. He has to go back to grind up the azalea stumps next to Judge Allen’s house...he said a grinder can go straight down without harming the foundation...then he will rake everything and sow grass. He also said they went back about 25 feet instead of 15...”

Mrs. Proctor and **Councilman Aswell** agreed, saying, “That’s not a problem.”

Mrs. Ward confirmed that she thought Mr. Witherspoon had done a good job and said, “Everything looks good.”

4. Regarding the last item under Old Business—the **quotes for the work on the rental property to address the water drainage problems,**” **Mrs. Ward** said that neither one of the gentlemen she has spoken with, had their quotes ready for the meeting.

She asked, “I assume you will want me to bring those back to you at the next meeting.”

Mayor Paschal said, “Yes, we will want to look at them.”

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration of Funding Requests

1. Rockingham County Arts Council
Katherine Gauldin, Executive Director

Mayor Paschal welcomed **Katherine Gauldin** and asked her to address Council concerning her funding request.

Ms. Gauldin said she wanted to ask Council to include \$1,000 in their budget for the Arts Market. She said she would be glad to answer any questions about the request, and said she provided detailed information with the request in their packets. (*Note: The information provided by Ms. Gauldin is attached hereto, and becomes part of these Minutes, as Attachment I.*)

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Ms. Gauldin said the money is used to support the Arts Market and the programs they have, and that there has been an increase in attendance at the market.

Mayor Paschal asked Council if they had any questions for Mrs. Gauldin. There were no questions, except from the mayor who asked, "Did you say a thousand dollars, I think the request (form) shows \$1,500.00."

"Oops," said **Mrs. Gauldin**, "yes, it is \$1,500 not \$1,000. I believe you may have given us a thousand last year, but we are asking for a little more this year, which is half of the project cost."

Mayor Paschal made a motion, "*that we approve the request of \$1500.00 for the Rockingham County Arts Council.*"

No one seconded the motion, and **Mayor Paschal** asked, "No second?"

Councilman Paschal asked, "Is this not something that we would take up in our Budget Work Session?"

"Yes," said **Mayor Paschal**, "but we *can* vote on it now, too. Usually for small amounts...like for SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) or something like that, we can go ahead and vote on it."

Mrs. Ward, speaking to **Councilman Paschal**, advised, "You are right, since this would come out of the *new* budget, it is something you could wait to talk about in the Budget Work Session. But it is entirely up to you all, because as he said, sometimes for small amounts, you may feel okay about voting on it beforehand."

Councilman Paschal replied, "I just thought that since we were having the Budget Work Session, we would talk about it then, but if everyone else is okay with doing it now, that's fine."

Councilman Aswell seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and all voted in favor of granting the Funding Request from the Rockingham County Arts Council in the amount of \$1,500.00.

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration of Funding Requests

2. Museum and Archives of Rockingham County (The MARC)

Mayor Paschal invited **Kim Proctor**, Director of The MARC, to address Council.

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Mrs. Proctor advised, “I have provided a Funding Request, asking that you all, the Town of Wentworth, become members of the MARC. The membership fee is \$35.00. It allows you to be members and we can have a membership card that can be interchanged between you. I suggested to Brenda that we may want to keep it in her office and you guys can pick it up whenever you want to visit.”

“You have been so incredibly supportive of us and it has meant so much...just the partnership we have together...it seems that you all ought to be on the membership roster.”

Mrs. Proctor added, “So, the membership fee is only \$35.00, and I have made that funding request.”

Mayor Paschal asked if Council had any questions.

Councilman Paschal asked, “Well, since we have such a good partnership and you like us so much, maybe we could have a free membership.”

Amid the laughter, **Mrs. Proctor** replied, “Well, let’s just say it’s symbolic...it shows you believe in us.”

Councilman Aswell made a motion, “*That we approve the \$35.00 membership fee.*”

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

3. Community Planning—Old Fashioned July 4th Celebration

Mrs. Proctor moved on to her second Funding Request, commenting, “I bet I won’t get that big of a response on the next one...it’s definitely one for the Budget Work Session.”

“You see that I have submitted again this year, a Funding Request. This Funding Request is for the 2nd annual 4th of July Celebration—community celebration—at the Historic Village at RCC (Rockingham Community College). I spoke recently with Dr. Helmick and he is, of course, elated to be a partner on this project again—to provide the space and clean-up, and all the electricity and help that we need down there.”

Mrs. Proctor related that one of the by-products of the event last year was that the Historic Village was in need of some repairs, and because of holding the July 4th event there, some people got together and made those repairs and did some cleaning and had the village in good shape for the event.

Mrs. Proctor added, “That was a good thing because we were able to accomplish something, too, from a historic preservation sense.”

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS – Continued

A. Consideration of Funding Requests

3. Community Planning—Old Fashioned July 4th Celebration

Mrs. Proctor continued, “Most of you were there last year...you know that this is a community celebration that we advertise to let folks know that they can go to the Historic Village here in Wentworth and have a glimpse of, I can’t say it is entirely authentic, but a glimpse of what it was like to *feel* that sense of announcement and that importance concerning our independence. I think there is a patriotic trend throughout the nation, and especially here, which is one of the reasons I love it. I am a ‘cry at the Pledge of Allegiance’ kind of girl.”

“What we will plan to do again...and last year I said in my Funding Request that it will be a model for the future, and low and behold, it is. We’ll do much of the same things we did last time. We have added a couple of elements and we are not being specific about the contests. We are still evaluating whether pie eating and hot dog eating is the best thing to do on a hot, hot day. We will also be bringing additional tents from the museum, some things that we acquired during the grand opening, to provide us more cool-down space.”

“It worked really well last year. We have had lots of requests. We had over 500 visitors and from the museum perspective that meant a great deal. I have heard from lots of people who found out about us at the 4th of July event, and I’ve heard from lots of people who are hoping that we do it again. So, I’m coming to you today to ask you to consider funding the second annual 4th of July event and I do truly feel that it will benefit all of our community.”

Mrs. Proctor concluded, “Think about the parents who come with their children...and the Declaration is being read, and they think that cool, rolled, declaration is something to look at, and they hear the different voices from leadership around the county. They will have a sense of how important the document is and then they will play, see the interpreters, experience the celebration, and moreover the parents will perhaps talk to them about their past, and there’s not enough opportunities to do that. Thank you.”

Mayor Paschal asked Council, “This is a little bit larger item but do y’all want to talk about it in the Budget Work Session or do you want to go ahead and vote on it...because I’m sure we want to go forward with it.”

Councilman Paschal said, “I have a couple of questions for Kim...” He asked, “The \$10,000...does that cover the total expenses for the event? I notice that was the amount of last year’s expenses...”

“Yes,” replied **Mrs. Proctor**.

“So our grant covers the total expenses?” asked **Councilman Paschal**.

“Yes, it does,” **Mrs. Proctor** replied. “It’s *all* the expenses. The venue and set-up preparation over at RCC is their contribution and all their network for advertising. We (the MARC) will handle the details, bring the volunteers, lay out the program and secure the musicians and that kind of thing. But, of course, Yvonne and Brenda always help me with this, too. As oversight, you all pay directly and everything is pretty straight forward. So, yes, you do fund it...although I will say that last year we had some donors—the grocery stores helped with things for the contests.”

Councilman Paschal said, “I was there and I may have asked you this, but I’ve forgotten. Do you know how many people participated last year?”

Mrs. Proctor said, “We had over 500 attend. We counted at the desk...we were clicking, but someone said there were people passing by that we weren’t clicking (counting).”

Councilwoman Powell commented, “There probably would have been more if it had not been so hot.”

Mrs. Proctor replied, “Yes, and we’re addressing that, too. We plan to spread out more and provide more space, maybe get more fans...”

There were no more questions, and **Councilman Aswell** made a motion, “*That we fund it.*”

Mayor Paschal seconded the motion. With no further discussion, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS

B. Consideration of Approval of Contract (between Rockingham County Board of Elections and the Town of Wentworth) Regarding the Conduct of Municipal Elections.

Mayor Paschal introduced the item of New Business that was added to the Agenda and asked if anyone had any questions.

The **Town Administrator** advised, “I believe everything is the same except for the 2nd paragraph in the new contract, which was not in the previous contract.”

She asked the **Town Attorney**, “Don’t you think that is okay since it is just a reference to the General Statute...?”

“And, we have been reimbursing them anyway,” **Mayor Paschal** added.

Attorney Pat Kane replied, “That would be my only concern, that this is now obligating you to reimburse them, but if you were already doing that anyway, I don’t see it as an issue.”

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“I think they just left it out of the other one,” said **Mrs. Ward**, “but the cost issue is addressed later in the contract.”

Mayor Paschal made a motion, “*That we approve Item B - Consideration of Approval of the Contract between the Rockingham County Board of Elections and the Town of Wentworth Regarding the Conduct of Municipal Elections.*”

Councilman Aswell seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS

**C. Consideration of Application for the Town of Wentworth
Recreation Committee**

- Jason Rakestraw / 246 Foch Farm Road, Reidsville NC 27320

Mayor Paschal said **Mr. Rakestraw** had signed the Speaker Register in reference to his application, and invited him to address Council.

Mr. Rakestraw asked the mayor if Council would like to approve him first, “before I speak?”

There were some raised eyebrows and laughter as everyone must have been having second thoughts about whether they should hear what **Mr. Rakestraw** had to say *before* taking a vote.

Mr. Rakestraw responded, “All of you know me well enough to know if you want to approve me or not.”

Councilwoman Powell said, “One thing you need to do is get all of the schools to let the public use the ball fields.”

“And give everyone a key, right?” **Mr. Rakestraw** said.

Mayor Paschal made a motion, “*That we appoint Jason Rakestraw to the Town of Wentworth Recreation Committee.*”

Councilman Paschal seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Mayor Paschal then asked **Mr. Rakestraw** to continue with his remarks to Council.

Mr. Rakestraw said he has spoken with **Mr. Bill Sinclair**, also recently appointed to the Recreation Committee. He said they talked about their ideas, and that they plan to get together before the next meeting to discuss those ideas, and what is needed. He added, “And maybe you will have some ideas as well.”

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Mr. Rakestraw added, “We have walking trails underway now that the Town has supported, but we need to look at some other things. We may want to talk again about using the old Wentworth School, or maybe look into some sort of water park area.”

Mayor Paschal commented, “We tried to get something done with the old school but the (County) commissioners didn’t go along with us.”

Mr. Rakestraw said, “Lots of kids do not have access to school recreation...”

Councilman Aswell asked the Town Administrator about the former members of the Recreation Committee—would any of them want to be reappointed?

Mrs. Ward said she didn’t know if they would be interested or not, but said she could contact them to find out. She also suggested that Council and those in the audience may want to ask some people they know, “...maybe someone will have an interest in helping us move forward in the area of recreation.”

There was no further discussion. **Mayor Paschal** thanked **Mr. Rakestraw** and moved on to the next item of business.

Article VII. Public Comments (Mr. Rakestraw already addressed Council.)

Article VIII. Announcements

Mayor Paschal made the following announcements:

- **Daylight Savings Time** begins this weekend—“Spring forward one hour!”
- A “**Grand Opening**” of the **Rockingham County Animal Shelter Trail** is set for **March 15th at 1:00 p.m.** (Pets...on leashes...are welcome; refreshments will be served inside the Animal Shelter after the ceremony.
- The next scheduled meeting of the **Wentworth Planning Board** is **Tuesday, March 19, 2013, 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 2, 2013, at 7:00 p.m.** *(Note: There will be a Budget Work Session after the April meeting.)*

ARTICLE IX. Five-Minute Recess

Mayor Paschal made a motion to take a five-minute recess prior to the **Budget Work Session.**

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ARTICLE X. BUDGET WORK SESSION

Mayor Paschal called the recessed meeting back to order and asked the **Finance Officer, Yvonne Russell**, to lead the discussion for the Budget Work Session.

A summary of the **Budget Work Session** is attached hereto as part of these Minutes (ATTACHMENT II).

ARTICLE XI. A D J O U R N

When the Budget Work Session concluded, **Mayor Paschal** made a Motion, "*that the meeting be adjourned.*"

All voted in favor.

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Brenda Ward - Town Clerk

Approved: _____
Dennis Paschal, Jr. - Mayor