



MINUTES
of the Regular Meeting of the
WENTWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
January 3, 2017
7:00 pm
Wentworth Town Hall

Council Members Present: Mayor Dennis Paschal Jr., Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner, Cheryl Moore, Dennis Paschal III, Iris Powell
A quorum was present.

Staff Present: George Murphy, Town Administrator
Yvonne Russell, Clerk / Finance Officer

Others Present: Patrick Kane, Attorney – Smith Moore Leatherwood

Article I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Dennis Paschal Jr. called the meeting to order.

Article II. INVOCATION

Mayor Paschal gave the invocation.

**Article III. APPROVAL OF TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA –
A. Requests and Petitions of Citizens**

No one signed the speaker register.

B. Approve/ Amend Agenda

Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner made a **MOTION**, *“To approve the agenda”*.

Councilmember Dennis Paschal, III seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Town Council Meeting – December 6, 2016

Councilmember Iris Powell made a **MOTION**, *“We accept them as written”*.

Mayor Pro Tem Conner seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article V. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration of Board/Committee Reappointment

1. **Wentworth Recreation Committee – Jim Scott, 180 Canterbury Rd.**

Mayor Paschal made a **MOTION**, “*That we reappoint Mr. Scott to the Wentworth Historic Preservation Committee*”.

Councilmember Paschal III seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS

B. Discussion of a Transportation Capital Reserve Fund

(George Murphy, Town Administrator)

Mr. Murphy proposed the creation of a Capital Reserve Fund for Transportation to assist with funding of possible future transportation projects within the town limits of Wentworth. He cited two sidewalk projects that he has submitted to the North Carolina Department of Transportation Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). He noted that inclusion of a project on the STIP does not guarantee that the project will be funded.

(Note: Mr. Murphy’s discussion notes are herein incorporated and made a part of these minutes. These notes list sidewalk project costs and a several questions for Council regarding the projects and the possibility of a Capital Reserve Fund for Transportation.)

ADMINISTRATOR’S NOTES: Transportation Capital Reserve Fund – Consideration

On November 5, 2015, I spoke with Town Council regarding two issues:

1. Applying for the North Carolina Department of Transportation 2016 Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Initiative. It was agreed at that time that we were not ready to move in that direction.
2. I requested permission to explore placing sidewalk projects for the Town of Wentworth in the North Carolina Department of Transportation Statewide Transportation Improvement Program’s (STIP) two year update in what is referred to as SPOT 4.0. The STIP is a ten-year plan and new transportation proposals that were not part of the original plan are scored and considered for inclusion.

Even when a new proposal scores well enough for inclusion, it may take five to ten years or more for a project to be funded and proceed.

For example, the upgrade to the intersection of NC 65/87, Sandy Cross Road, and Wentworth Street that will be presented to the public later this month was under consideration years before I began working with the Town, and, at best, the project may not begin construction until 2018 or later.

In like manner, the proposed upgrade of NC 65/87 between County Home Road and Freeway Drive, may, and I stress MAY, make it onto the STIP as a part of SPOT 4.0. My point, we are talking about planning that is years from now, and without planning, will never happen.

Transportation needs planned and overseen by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) include the following:

- Aviation
- Bicycle / Pedestrian
- Ferry
- Global Trans Park
- Highway
- Ports
- Public Transportation
- Rail
- Turnpike

A Capital Reserve Fund (a.k.a. Capital Project Fund) could be established for transportation projects in the Town of Wentworth including construction, maintenance, and repair of roads, sidewalks, trails, and bikeways. (See NC G.S. § 159, -13, -18, -20, -22)

Historically, the Town of Wentworth in collaboration with NCDOT and property owners living on gravel roadways within the municipal limits of the Town has provided funding for paving some of the Town's gravel roadways.

Additionally, the Town currently has the responsibility for maintaining the sidewalks constructed in front of the Museum and Archives of Rockingham County.

Now, we could also choose to include Aviation, Ferry, Ports, Public Transportation, and Rail; however, I am willing to forgo my desire for the Wentworth light rail subway system even though it means giving up on the dream of saying to Yvonne, "I'm taking the tube to the courthouse."

Additionally, unless we illegally satellite-annex the Shiloh Airport or decide to launch a ferry on one or more of the ponds in Wentworth, I am also willing to give up on aviation and ferry and focus instead on Bicycle/Pedestrian and Roadway as realistic focuses for the Town of Wentworth, and I would include with regard to Bicycle/Pedestrian sidewalks, greenways, and bike pathways.

Neither of these two projects is moving forward in SPOT 4.0 since they lacked the necessary points to be moved ahead of the plethora of projects that were even under consideration. (I have, at least, gotten both of these projects on the list for consideration. Not all that were discussed by the TCC and the TAC have made it that far.)

Even if they had made it on the SPOT 4.0 update, based upon conversations with a DOT official, it would have been at least 2022 or later before planning and construction could conceivably begin. Again, neither proposal made the list.

Mayor Paschal was not present at the November 2015 meeting when I first discussed sidewalks with Town Council, and in our communications since, he has expressed some reservations primarily well-founded on budget concerns.

As we prepare for the 2017-18 budget, there are several areas about which we must remain cognizant:

- While we currently have a very healthy fund balance, the Town's sources of revenue remain relatively constant, and there is little to suggest that a Town budget will increase above the current \$638,000 figure of the 2016-17 budget;
- While debt service pertaining to the loan used in the renovation of the Wentworth Community Center for the Post Office currently exists, the auditor has recommended, and Town Council has appeared interested, in retiring that debt early, a strategy I heartily endorse;
- The interior finish of 202 County Home Road has been funded this fiscal year at \$10,000, and, based upon estimates I have gotten, the total cost of completing that interior finish may well be around \$50,000 when electrical, HVAC, and plumbing are considered;
- Town Council has given verbal support to funding a portion of the extension of the Dan River Water, Incorporated water line along Peach Tree Road and the property owned by the Town there. That project may well take place next fiscal year;
- All Funding Requests are due to Clerk/Finance Officer Yvonne Russell by February 24, 2017, one of which may include purchase of a new vehicle for the Wentworth-assigned deputy;
- The public meeting tentatively scheduled for January 30, 2017, regarding improvements to the NC 65/87, Sandy Cross Road, and Wentworth Street intersection is the opportunity to inquire of NCDOT about the establishment of the long-held project of the Wentworth Appearance Committee for a formal, Welcome to Wentworth sign that may very likely require architectural design before approval by DOT;
- It appears that the Rockingham County Board of Commissioners will consider the Interlocal Agreement with the Town of Wentworth regarding the use of the ball field and surrounding grounds at its February meeting;
- The Appearance Committee has also expressed interest in promoting the creation and placement of Way-finding signage along roadsides here in Wentworth.

That said, if we fail to plan for the future, circumstances may radically differ from what we may have otherwise anticipated or preferred.

My belief is that the establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund for transportation projects within the Town of Wentworth including construction, maintenance, and repair of roads, sidewalks, trails, and bikeways addresses the budgetary concerns in a realistic, responsible, and palatable manner. Of course, that assumes that having and maintaining walkability within the Town and including sidewalks as a priority is desirable.

(Quick run-through of NC 65 sidewalk proposal power point)

(Quick run-through of County Home Road sidewalk proposal power point)

(Concluding Power Point of projected projects' costs, Recreation Capital Reserve funding, and Questions for Consideration)

Information contained in Power Point Slides titled, "Sidewalk Projects B151033 and 151096 NCDOT," is below in text form.

SPOT ID: B151033, Route / Facility Name: NC 65
From / Cross Street: SR 2371 / County Home Road
To / Cross Street: Peach Tree Road
Description: Construct 5' sidewalk on the south side of NC 65
Specific Improvement Type: Protected Linear Pedestrian Facility (Pedestrian)
Cost to NCDOT: \$355,840
NCDOT Score (as of October 19, 2016): 21.96
Proposed project B151033 has an estimated cost to NCDOT of \$355,840.
20% of \$355,840 = \$ 71,168.

SPOT ID: B150926, Route / Facility Name: SR 2371 (County Home Road)
From / Cross Street: Gym Road located 0.5 mile west of NC 65
To / Cross Street: SR 2121 (Cherokee Camp Road)
Description: Construct multi-use sidepath behind existing ditch
Specific Improvement Type: 1. Off-Road/Separated Linear Bicycle Facility (Bicycle)
Cost to NCDOT: \$441,092

NCDOT Score (as of October 19, 2016): 22.22
Proposed project B150926 has an estimated cost to NCDOT of \$441,092.
20% of \$441,092 = \$ 88,218.40

Estimated Cost of Projects
B151033: \$ 355,840.00
B150926: \$ 441,092.00
Total \$ 796,932 .00

Estimated Cost to the Town of Wentworth
B151033: \$ 71,168.00
B150926: \$ 88,218.40
Total \$ 159,386.40

Capital Reserve for Recreation Grounds and Facilities
Current Reserve
\$129,933
Fiscal Year 2016-2017

Capital Reserve for Recreation Grounds and Facilities
First Funded 2010: \$ 25,000
2011: \$ 12,000
2012: \$ 20,000
2013: \$ 12,500
2014: \$ 20,000
2015: \$ 20,000
2016: \$ 20,000

Questions to Consider

- **Is Town Council interested in adding sidewalks in the Town of Wentworth?**
- **Is there a more viable method of achieving the goal of adding sidewalks than what is under current consideration?**
- **Are either the NC 65 project or the County Home Road project of interest?**
- **Is the establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund for transportation projects within the Town of Wentworth including construction, maintenance, and repair of roads, sidewalks, trails, and bikeways a viable option for the Town?**
- **Can we responsibly establish such a Capital Reserve Fund in 2017 or 2018?**
- **Should either of both of these project proposals be removed from consideration when SPOT 5.0 is being developed?**

A Capital Reserve Fund funded at \$20,000 per fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 2017-18 would require eight (8) years, or until year 2024, to amass the funds required of the Town for these two projects.

A municipality is responsible for paying 20% of a requested and NCDOT approved Bicycle and Pedestrian project.

(END OF MR. MURPHY'S NOTES)

Council will discuss the possibility of a Capital Reserve Fund for Transportation during their upcoming FY2017-18 Budget work sessions.

Article VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one signed the speaker register.

Article VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Paschal made the following announcements:

- The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Planning Board** is **January 17, 2017, at 7:00 pm** in the **Town Hall Council Chambers**.
- The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Town Council** will be held on **Tuesday, February 7, 2017, at 7:00 pm** in the **Town Hall Council Chambers**.
- A **public meeting** regarding **improvements to NC 87/65**, at **Wentworth St., and Sandy Cross Rd.**, is scheduled for **Jan 30, 2017 at 4:00pm** at **Calvary Baptist Church**.
- **Funding Requests for fiscal year 2017-2018** must be submitted to the **Town Hall Finance Office** on or before **February 24, 2017**.

Article IX. ADJOURN

Mayor Paschal made a **MOTION**, “*We adjourn*”.

Councilmember Paschal, III seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____
Yvonne Russell, NCCMC
Town Clerk

Approved by: _____
R. Dennis Paschal Jr., Mayor