

Mount Pleasant

North Carolina

Founded in 1848

Town of Mt. Pleasant
Board of Commissioners
Town Board Meeting
Town Hall- Commissioners Meeting Room
Monday, March 3, 2014
5:00 P.M.

Attendance: Mayor Del Eudy
Mayor Pro-Tem/Commissioner Lori Furr
Commissioner Scott Barringer
Commissioner James Sells
Commissioner Warren Chapman
Commissioner Steve Ashby
Town Administrator Randy Holloway
Town Attorney Christy Wilhelm
Town Clerk Cathy Whittington
Fire Chief Jerry Taylor
Benchmark Vagn Hansen

Also Present: Samantha Grass, Tom Earnhardt, Troy Barnhardt, Marie Schnitz, Noelle Scott, Steve Wagoner, Tim Reaves, Rev Bruce Gwyn, Tina Condor, Shannon Lancaster

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Eudy called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION

Rev. Bruce Gwyn led in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Eudy led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC FORUM

Attorney Christy Wilhelm officially resigned as Attorney for the Town of Mt. Pleasant. Christy Wilhelm has been appointed District Judge by Governor

McCory. Christy Wilhelm introduced Brittany Love to the Board. Brittany Love will be the new Attorney for Mt. Pleasant. Also in attendance was Michael Burgner.

Marie Schnitz, 8753 Oldenburg Drive, wanted to thank the Town for the work they did during the snow. She also wanted to thank them for fixing pot holes. Marie Schnitz made a statement about Christy Wilhelm. She stated that while she was on the board there was an issue with a development and Ms. Wilhelm told the Board to keep their mouths shut and let her do the talking and she beat the big guy.

Tina Condor, a parent representative to the Cabarrus County Board of Education. She wanted to speak on behalf of the Mt Pleasant Middle School. She stated that “you guys are going to start arguing about where you want it”, Please don’t let it happen. If you start questioning where it’s going to go, they’ll pull out the 13 million they have set aside for the school.

With no other comments, Mayor Eudy closed the public forum.

PRESENTATION

Noelle Scott with Cabarrus Arts Council just wanted to say thank you to the Town for their contribution to the Cabarrus Arts Council. She stated that the Mt. Pleasant High School take advantage of the exhibits and the art grants that are available. There are over 30,000 students served by the Cabarrus Arts Council.

APPROVE AGENDA

With the addition of a Proclamation – National Athletic Trainer Month to the Consent Agenda, Commissioner Barringer made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Ashby seconded the motion with all board members in favor. (5-0)

CONSESNT AGENDA

The consent agenda consist of the minutes of the February 3, 2014 Regular Board Meeting and a Proclamation-National Athletic Trainer Month. Commissioner Furr made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Chapman seconded the motion with all board members in favor. (5-0)

REPORTS

- 1. Police**
- 2. Fire Chief**
- 3. Town Administrator**
- 4. Finance Officer**
- 5. Public Works**
- 6. Town Attorney**
- 7. Code Enforcement**

All reports submitted accepted as written.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Receive an update on discussions that are on-going related to the location of the new Mount Pleasant Middle School.

The Board will recall a proclamation that was recently approved by the Town Board requesting consideration for the location of the proposed new Mount Pleasant Middle School to remain at the current location. That proclamation was forwarded to the Cabarrus County Board of Education for their consideration and they are in the process of evaluating that project. Recently various Community leaders have discussed the possibility of the new Middle School being located somewhere else inside the Town limits (or adjacent to) allowing for the potential development of the current site for a park, sports complex, YMCA, commercial development, etc. The Board should discuss this idea in some detail and coordinate with the School Board to update them on the Town's desire for the best possible location for the new Middle School.

Tom Earnhardt stated that last year he served as Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce. He stated that he noticed in his stint the disparities across Cabarrus County. Many of the discussions were about the Western part of the County and not seeing anything in Mt. Pleasant. He stated it was time that the Eastern part of Cabarrus County became vocal and that we needed to take care of ourselves. Tom Earnhardt was one of those that were opposed to moving the Middle School. Tom Earnhardt stated that one of the main reasons that citizen did not want the school to be moved was because of the shared fields. He stated that he has three children and they all scramble to try to find field to play on. He knows the Board passed a resolution to build the Middle School at the current location. Since that time a new idea has surfaced. His first reaction was no he wasn't going to go for it and then he consider the possibilities it would bring to Mt. Pleasant. He decided that it needed to be talked about, to discuss the pros and cons. There were several reasons to think about new locations (1) Logistics-The students will be on site while the new school is being built. (2) If we can get the existing site repurposed not only would we be taking care of the kids but the entire community. Mr. Earnhardt sees patients on a daily bases with crippling arthritis that would benefit from a warm water pool. He has to send them to Rowan, Stanly County or Kannapolis. He would like the Town to revise the Resolution with 3 stipulations (1) no delays (2) make sure new site is in or around Mt. Pleasant. There are 4 sites available. (3) That existing site is repurposed with a warm water pool.

Commissioner Chapman asked where the 4 sites were. Tom Earnhardt stated that Virginia Foil had been approached and is willing to put forth some land, there is land down Highway 73, the most preferable site is at Highway 73 and 49. If that site can be obtained there is a good possibility that natural gas could be run to the site.

Mayor Eudy asked when you say we are you saying the School Board. Tom Earnhardt stated that he was. The School Board is the only one that can purchase land for a school. He stated that he did not have anything to gain from this, but he thought that it did need to have some consideration, not only for the children but for the elderly of the community.

Commissioner Furr wanted to know why the group wanting to bring a YMCA to Mt. Pleasant could not obtain the land. Mr. Earnhardt responded that he had been working on getting a YMCA in Mt. Pleasant for 5 or 6 years and it is not on their radar.

Commissioner Barringer stated that he served on the YMCA Board of Directors when he was Mayor years ago. They consider at one time taking the old JC Hut and building a pool on the end of it. The YMCA was open if you provided the property. Commissioner Barringer stated that he has lived in Mt. Pleasant longer than anyone on the stage and probably anyone in the audience. He voted to keep the Middle School at the current location, but his biggest concern was to keep it away from the High School property because of recreational facilities. He stated that by building the School where it is we will lose recreational facilities and the programs has grown tremendously in the community. Commissioner Barringer is open to looking at other properties. He stated that bringing a YMCA has been a big thing for many years in Mt. Pleasant, not only for a warm water pool but a place for the swim team that has to go out of the community. He stated that the repurposed facility could also be used by Rowan Community College programs. He sees a lot of potential for the citizens of the Town. This would still not affect the athletic fields that are there and he is in favor of amending what was sent to the School Board

Commissioner Sells stated what he has heard is that that's Mt. Pleasant Middle School and we want it to stay on site. He stated it was given to them at the eleventh hour and not much time was given to research it.

Tom Earnhardt explained that this has just surfaced and he thinks it has a lot of potential and everyone can benefit from these thoughts. Mr. Earnhardt stated that when he spoke to Betty Honeycutt, who was one of the most vocal at keeping it at the present site, she felt like she could get behind this as long as there was no delay. Tom Earnhardt stated that this was something that needed to be thought about because it would be something that would be around for a long time. Another thing when Mr. Earnhardt spoke with one of the School Board Member he stated that they would look at 45 to 50 acres for a single school site, this School Board Member asked, "Can you find us 70 to 75 acres?" The reason for this is that they are anticipating something is going to have to be done with Mt. Pleasant Elementary School at some point.

Commissioner Furr stated that she had also spoken with Betty Honeycutt. She stated that Betty Honeycutt was not aware that the Town had already passed a

Resolution and sent it to the School Board. She said Betty Honeycutt wanted a definite that the County would donate the land to Mt. Pleasant, that Mt. Pleasant would donate the land to the Y, that cost was covered for the operation of the Y and upkeep of the buildings. She stated that Betty Honeycutt had a whole list of things that she would like guarantee before she would support it otherwise she's good with where it is. Commissioner Furr stated that the conversations that she has had consistently from the moment this came up until now was, Thank you for standing up for our kids we appreciate that you want to keep some part of Mt. Pleasant, Mt. Pleasant, yes we want growth, yes we need to bring jobs. She stated that was a special spot for a lot of people.

Tom Earnhardt stated that he agreed, he has 3 children and he understands the passion. He feels we can get the best of both worlds. He stated the County taxpayers are going to spend a lot of money to demolish something that can be repurposed. There is about \$350,000 in asbestos abatement that has to be removed before they can tear down the existing facilities. Then you have the cost of the actual demolish work itself. It cost will easily be 1 to 1.5 million dollars and this is money that can be used to buy land in Mt. Pleasant that will serve all our needs and then we've got something left that we can build upon. As far as a YMCA, that might not be the best fit. It may be a public/ private entry, it should not be held hostage to a YMCA.

Commissioner Ashby asked what the School time line was. He stated that he has not heard an actual time line.

Tina Conder, a parent representative to the Cabarrus County Board of Education, stated you can pull up the Cabarrus County School Board meeting on February 10th. They passed a resolution to move forward with the architectural design and construction based on us getting more funding. She stated you needed to go back and listen to the December and January meetings and listen to what they have to say. Tina Conder said the number one thing that they told her over and over and over again since she started this in 2008, when she started this process working with the School Board. She stated that Dr. Shepherd asked her if they were going to have another argument down there in Mt. Pleasant. She stated that Dr. Shepherd promised her at the end of the school year last year that he was going to turn his focus to Mt. Pleasant. She stated that they have done that and we don't want to turn them away. Tina Conder is not against a Y, she is for a Y but not at a cost to the kids and not at a potential of them pulling the money away from them. She stated that her phone was ringing off the hook about the rumor that this was being put back on the agenda. She stated that she did not have anything at stake here because her son would be in high school by the time the school was built. She stated she was not speaking as a mother; she was speaking as someone that loved Mt. Pleasant and someone that loved her community. She stated that she did not want this tabled again and it is another five years before we get another chance.

Tom Earnhardt's response was that it's time for all Eastern Cabarrus County to becomes more vocal and not be bullied. He stated if we were strong enough and

united enough, it should be one of the items in the resolution that it not be delayed. Tom Earnhardt stated the real push for this was that it gets on the ballot for this fall for a school bond, that's the driving force. He stated it's our people that should make the decision about our school and he appreciates everyone's passion about it, whether they're for it or against it. Tom Earnhardt is not in favor of delaying the process at all. He stated that the people of Eastern Cabarrus County should be appalled at the Commissioners approving \$13 million; they didn't do us any favors. He stated that's half a school, the last school built was \$29 million and why should Mt. Pleasant expect any less.

Commissioner Barringer stated that we were not just here for the kids; we were here for the whole community, the aged as well as the young. He stated baby boomer is the number one driving force in health care today. The Enrichment Center benefits some of the population but how much more could you help if you had programs to offer. Commissioner Barringer stated that he was not in favor of any delays. He worked for the school system for 37 years and 3 months; he knows what goes through their minds. He thinks what Mr. Earnhardt brought tonight is a very viable option to perceive. He stated that \$13 million is not a lot of money and that can't build a facility. Tina Conder spoke up and said it was a start; it was more than they had. Commissioner Barringer stated that he remembers riding his bike to the elementary when it was half a school. He stated the elementary school was land locked and they had talked one time about taking that facility down toward Georgeville and building it down there. The idea about having property that would accommodate both the middle and elementary school is an asset to the Town and to the kids. Commissioner Barringer stated that he has two granddaughters and one goes to the elementary school now and they need better playing facilities. He stated you can't get it where it's located now. He stated that purchasing 85 acres of land is the route to go. He stated that this community was very good at raising money and support and he knew that at one time Northeast Medical Center was looking at this area for a Y. He is defiantly in favor of looking at this option.

Commissioner Ashby stated that he would like to see more factual information where the Town wants this school. He stated that it was ok, for Mr. Earnhardt to say he's talked to people and for Tina Conder to say her phones ringing off the hook, but that doesn't help him. Commissioner Ashby doesn't see in writing 59% of the Town wants it here verses the other. He stated we need to figure out some way to put together a survey of the community, whether that's through the water bills, a take home paper at the middle and elementary schools or a survey monkey online. He stated that he was with both Commissioner Barringer and Mr. Earnhardt, but he was not here for his personal benefit but the Towns. He would like the Town to tell him not one or two or three what the Town says. He stated that was where he stands as far as saying yes or no.

Commissioner Sells talked with someone on the school board and they stated that they have not discussed this based on the resolution that the Board passed. Commissioner Sells stated that when he gets something presented to him, he check

facts and figures to let him know what's going on. He replied to the statement about getting gas down here. He wanted to know who was going to pay the construction cost to get it here. He stated it would be a great thing for the whole community. He asked if the land that was being donated for a school could be donated for a Y. That way we would still be getting the same thing across. He stated that just a couple of months ago this Board was unanimous that they wanted the school to stay where it was.

Commissioner Barringer stated that that was true, but these other options were not available at the time. He stated that if these options were available he would have voted for this. Based on the information at that time he was 100% in favor of keeping it in the community but that was the only choice available. Looking into this is well worth the time, he doesn't know the time frame. He asked Mr. Earnhardt if he could spear head this.

Tom Earnhardt stated that this has just surfaced but he thought it had merit. He stated that his understanding was that the School Board was looking to the Town to make a decision. If we revises the resolution with the stipulations in it, they will strongly consider it. If we don't it will send a signal that we're not interested and they will precede with the original option which is a doable options but not as good as this idea being that it's vitally important to all of us in Mt. Pleasant. He stated that now is the time that we stand up and say what direction we want to take in this community.

Commissioner Furr asked who would continue funding this facility.

Tom Earnhardt stated that this was just a week old and you were asking a lot. He stated that if we have this much of a jump start, the only thing we need was a warm water pool. He feels like a public/private venture is the way to go. He thinks the Cannon Foundation will donate a significant amount of money. He feels like several charitable organizations will step up to the plate and he knows there are private individuals that will help.

Commissioner Furr asked about day by day operations, every day in and out, continued support.

Tom Earnhardt stated that's what it's all about; there are several trust funds, perpetual trust that can help support operations.

Commissioner Chapman asked if they were to change their vote to go with this new plan, he thinks we would be behind schedule. We've already got the property and basic ideas for the architectural design. He thinks the County Commissioners and School Board will think that we can't make up our minds and they'll decide that someone else coming up with a good idea, that they will give them the \$13 million they have set aside for us and leave us with nothing. He stated if we had the land today and knew the plan for the building today, we would be ok and on schedule.

He stated this was a good idea and it deserved some thought and discussion, he just wished it had been brought up a long time ago. He stated this was changing horses in the middle of the stream. Commissioner Chapman is willing to listen to the plan. He agrees with Commissioner Ashby and Commissioner Sells. The Town people elected them and they could put them out. He stated that we need to do something quick, we can't fiddle fuddle with this or were going to be up the creek without a paddle.

Tom Earnhardt agreed, he stated that the luxury of time was on our side for doing a survey.

Commissioner Chapman asked who would talk and make the financial arrangements for a site. Tom Earnhardt replied it would be the School Board and that he had 4 sites to put before them that are on the open market. The land could be secured in 30 days.

Mayor Eudy asked, just suppose the School Board donate the current site to the Town of Mt. Pleasant, and then the asbestos abatement becomes the Towns responsibility to finance. Several people responded that unless you tore it down or messed with it, it would not be a problem. Mayor Eudy asked how it would be developed unless you cleared the property.

Tom Earnhardt stated that he had spoken with the air quality guy on this and the gymnasium they are in favor of keeping is fine. The sixth grade pod where the most concentration of asbestos is, if it's repurposed for RCC Campus you won't have to do a thing.

Steve Ashby asked where you would put a pool without disturbing any existing buildings, parking lots or ball fields. Tom Earnhardt started that there were several locations suitable for a pool. He stated there were three main sections of a Y, the administrative offices, a gymnasium and the pool. He stated that we had two of the sections now.

Commissioner Chapman asked Tom Earnhardt how many people were working with him on this project. He stated not many, it was a new idea. Tom Earnhardt asked Troy Barnhardt if he wanted to speak.

Troy Barnhardt stated that he and Tom Earnhardt had been working together for over two years to get a YMCA in Mt. Pleasant. He stated to build a Y from scratch would be about \$25 million dollars. A YMCA will not come in unless you give them a building that is debt free. Mr. Barnhardt stated that it was asked who would manage the Y, if the Y took it over, they would manage it and it would be kept up by membership. Mr. Barnhardt stated that it bother him that only \$13.5 million was set aside for a new school on the present site. He stated that was a drop in the bucket and that Mt. Pleasant was still the red headed step child. He stated that we deserved a school like the new Butch Winkler Elementary School. We need

something that our children will be proud of and an honor to go to. He stated what we were going to get is a butler building with a brick veneer if we accept the \$13.5 million dollars. He stated the County and the School Board was trying to play us because they want the school bonds and we're going to have to have the school bonds. They're going to say we've got the school engineered but we can't build it until the school bonds pass because 13.5 million won't even break ground up there. We can take the present land and build a school two stories high and not even close North Drive but during construction we're going to lose every site up there including playgrounds except the football field. We will lose two of the four ball fields. There are several locations suitable for a school to be built. The Pittinger property, property on Highway 49 and property owned by Mrs. Foil. R. Barnhardt wants to keep the school here; he is not in favor of moving it out of town. He stated that he had talked with Lynn Shue and he thought the idea was good. He has talked to the Chamber and he was told point blank, be careful Mt. Pleasant because you will wind up with a school that you are not proud of, stand up, hold your horses tell the School Board you want something equivalent to Butch Winker Middle School, something the children can be proud of. Mr. Barnhart stated that he and Mr. Earnhardt had letters from the Cannon Foundation and had found a couple of million dollar donors but they could not come up with enough money to buy the property and build a building to bring a YMCA here. He stated he got a phone call one night and someone asked if he had thought about this idea. He stated that he has talked to a few people. He asked that the Board consider it and think about it.

Shannon Lancaster, PTO President for the Mt. Pleasant Middle School, stated that she was totally caught off guard. She stated that they were having parent meeting all through the school year on this topic and this is the first time that she has heard anything about this. Ms. Lancaster didn't know why these gentlemen had not come to any of their meetings to discuss this. Ms. Lancaster stated she was also a former assistant principal for the school system for about 12 years. She stated that we were supposed to have a new school here, by our plans, in 2007 to be completed by 2013. She stated the community argued about where it was going to be built, then the recession hit and it was put on the back burner. Ms. Lancaster stated that for the last couple of years she has asked the School Board what it was going to take to get a new middle school. She stated she was told, you people down there don't want a new middle school, we were going to give you one and you fought about it. She stated they said, you fought about where to put it and what you wanted. She stated her gut feeling was that something underline was going on here, something that is not totally on the up to up. She stated that she was personal friends with several of the County Commissioners and the 13 million dollars that they have set aside is just a starting point. Winkler Middle School cost 27 million dollars and there will not be another 27 million dollar middle school built in this county because that's what has caused our county to be almost 500 million dollars in debt. Ms. Lancaster stated that her children go to A.T. Allen which was built for 18 million dollars and then they come to Mt. Pleasant to middle school. The 13 million is not going to be a subpar building; it's going to be a starting point. She feels certain the School Board and Commissioners will spend what it takes to build the school, but there won't be

another 27 million dollar school. They proposed there was enough cash to build a new elementary and middle school; years ago the county did that. Carolyn Carpenter, who is on the School Board now, contested that this past Saturday when they had a Republican Party Convention. Someone asked her that and she said yes, we build schools with cash when I was on the Board, so it can be done. If there is a bond, if a bond is put on the ballot and it passes a new middle school will be 5 or 6 years even getting started and who knows what can happen.

Ms. Lancaster just does not want a repeat of what happen 5 years ago, it's going to divide the community. Ms. Lancaster states she doesn't know who these two (Mr. Earnhardt and Mr. Barnhardt) are representing but she knows most of the parents who are the stakeholders and have kids there. When they had their elementary meeting, who have kindergarten and first grades and they want the school to stay where it is. She stated as the PTO President she was caught off guard that this issue was brought up.

Tina Conder suggested having a public meeting with parents so the Commissioners can hear what they have to say. She also suggested that when the Board makes a decision to let the School Board know. She stated that they said right know they were moving forward with what they have.

Commissioner Barringer asked if the existing architectural design could be put anywhere. Ms. Conder stated that they had already started the re-design process. She said she would have to go back and watch the meeting from January to see how long it was good for. If it was not used within that time frame it would have to be re-done. Commissioner Barringer asked about the actual design to build the two story building if it could be put on any site.

Mayor Eudy stated that the Board was elected by the people to make decisions on their behalf. Several options were presented tonight.

Commissioner Barringer stated that he was in favor of having a public meeting.

Commissioner Ashby stated that his concern was do you want it or don't you want it. He doesn't need to set in a forum for 3 hours listening to people arguing. He stated we were in a time frame and raises a lot of emotion and we already know we want it here.

Commissioner Barringer stated that nobody has heard the other options. If he had heard these other options, he would have voted these options 100%.

Commissioner Ashby stated that could be done in a survey.

Commissioner Sells stated he would like to see the options and the stats. Commissioner Barringer stated that we keep hearing YMCA but Mr. Earnhardt also presented a privately funded swim facility.

Commissioner Furr stated that if it was privately funded do we donate land to it, is it for profit is it not for profit, does it throw another knick into it.

Commissioner Barringer made a motion to reconsider the resolution that was sent to the Cabarrus County School Board to include the options of alternate sites made by Mr. Earnhardt tonight. Also if there is a need to have a public forum next week he has no problem with that.

Commissioner Chapman stated that he would feel more comfortable making a decision if he knew which site was going to be picked.

Mayor Eudy stated that was the School Board's decision, that's not a decision that this board will make. Mayor Eudy asked what the Board wanted to do moving forward, call for a public hearing, leaving the resolution like it is or to amend it.

Commissioner Ashby stated that he was still not clear on the time line. He's hearing that it is of the essence but he is also hearing that it's five or six years down the road. Commissioner Ashby keeps hearing that we only have money for half a building and that depends on the bonds and that they've promised more money but it ain't there yet. He stated he is not seeing the urgency that is being put on this.

Town Administrator Randy Holloway stated that part of the urgency time line was that the County had to go before the Local Government Commission in May to get approval to move forward with putting this for a bond referendum.

Commissioner Furr asked if Mt. Pleasant was on the bond, she thought originally they were on the bond but now they were off.

Tina Conder stated that they were on, but when the Commissioners gave that partial money they did not say whether we would be on the bonds or not. In the discussion with the School Board Members, they asked if Mt. Pleasant needed to be on the bonds anymore. She stated right now it was going to take six months for the architect to do his work. This is for administration services for the replacement of two middle schools to be constructed at the existing site as funding becomes available.

Commissioner Barringer stated that the catch all is "when funds become available". Tina Conder stated that was correct because everyone knows you can't build a school for 13 million, it would be at roughly 24 million. She stated that this community could raise some money, but we needed to let them know we still want a school without delay.

Commissioner Barringer stated that looking at the big picture the elementary school was going to have to be replaced. Tina Conder stated that when the School Board looks at Mt. Pleasant they think that we are not growing. They don't look at Mt.

Pleasant as a big growing area. When they look for the growth they always look at the northwestern part of the County and that's their number one priority.

Tom Earnhardt stated that he did not want this to be a decisive issue and it did not need to divide the community. He stated what they want is what is best for all of Eastern Cabarrus County and their citizens and it does reach out further than the city limits. If you do consider revising the resolution that was sent to the School Board another stipulation should be that the Mt. Pleasant Middle School needs to be on the bonds.

Commissioner Barringer made a motion to present a redesigned resolution to look at the Mt. Pleasant Middle School site to include no delays, to include that it be on the bonds.

Mayor Eudy stated that the four bullet points were; no delays, keep in Mt. Pleasant, existing facility be donated and for it to be on the bonds.

Motion failed for lack of a second.

Commissioner Ashby stated that he was in favor of parts of the motion. He would like to explore more avenues that the Town has been made aware of. He is not in favor of a public forum but would like a survey may be sent home with the students.

Tom Earnhardt suggested that the Town Board could select a group to meet with some of the School Board Members and architect and lay out in a brief format the pros and cons. His concern with a public forum is that you will get the citizens riled up. Mayor Eudy asked about the group that originally met with the Board that led to the original resolution. That group was Mayor Eudy, Commissioner Furr, Commissioner Barringer, Tom Earnhardt, and Dr. Shepherd. Mayor Eudy stated that at that time the other options were not available. Commissioner Ashby asked if the two individuals speaking at the meeting tonight should attend this meeting. Mayor Eudy asked Tom Earnhardt to communicate with the Town Administrator to set up the meeting.

It was the consensus of the Board to set up the meeting.

2. Update on Architectural Assessment of the Masonic Lodge building

Town Administrator Randy Holloway met with the Architect today and will have a report ready by next month.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Annexation Petition- Barringer Property

Information only

2. Clerk Certificate of Sufficiency

Information only

3. Set Date For Public Hearing On Annexation

Commissioner Ashby made a motion to set April 7, 2014 for a public hearing on the annexation petition. Commissioner Sells second the motion with all Board Members in favor. (5-0)

Commissioner Barringer stated that he was not related to the Barringer's that owned the property in the annexation petition.

4. Update Town Administrator Job Description

The changes to the Town Administrator Job Description on the first page under "Comments" it was changed from full time to part time employee, contract employee or contract agency and the position is not eligible for benefits with a maximum of 999 hours in a 365 day period. On the last page under "Selection Criteria" it was stated that the Town Administrator did not have to live in the Town but had to move into Town within 6 months. We've never followed that policy so it was changed to say, it was encouraged but not required.

Commissioner Chapman made a motion to accept the changes to the Town Administrator Job Description. Commissioner Furr seconded the motion with all board members in favor. (5-0)

5. Consider Purchasing a New Mower

The Town was recently notified by Cabarrus County that the contract to mow the two ball field behind Town Hall had been pull effectively immediately. Apparently the County has been mowing the fields for a number of years not realizing that the fields do not belong to the County. The Town's Leadership Team discussed various options to include contracting the service out or having the Town's Public Works Crew take on the additional mowing responsibility. The recommendation from the Leadership Team is to purchase an additional mower and related equipment based on the need for the additional equipment to maintain to maintain the current mowing responsibility. The current mowing equipment is old and in need of replacement. The Town Administrator recommends a purchase not to exceed \$10,000 with a 48 month lease at 0% interest.

Commissioner Barringer made a motion to allow the Town Administrator to purchase a mower not to exceed \$10,000 with a 48 month lease at 0% interest. Commissioner Chapman seconded the motion with all board members in favor. (5-0)

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Commissioner Barringer stated that some neighbor had spoken to him about the alarm at the fire department. Fire Chief Jerry Taylor stated that they would turn the speakers down.

Commissioner Furr stated that she has noticed the police working Main Street “hot and heavy” and people are noticing it. She stated that she appreciated the work that they are doing because people are speeding on Main Street near the School.

Commissioner Chapman stated that he attended the Event Committee Meeting; they are planning the Independence Day Celebration. Commissioner Chapman wanted to thank and stated that a lot of citizen thanked him for the job the public works and the fire department did during the inclement weather.

Commissioner Ashby wanted to thank everyone that came to the meeting tonight about the school issue.

Commissioner Sells stated that he got stopped by a neighbor and he was afraid that it was going to be the Town that he was going to complain on but it wasn't. The County came and plowed Cook Street and left some businesses blocked in.

Mayor Eudy also wanted to thank public work for the work they did, he also wanted to thank everyone that came to the meeting tonight. Mayor Eudy welcomed the new Attorney and stated that he looked forward to working with them.

Meeting was recessed to conference room for budget workshop.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Town Administrator Randy Holloway gave an overview of the workshop.

Randy Holloway stated that this was a launching point to give staff direction on where you would like for us to consider. There will be items for consideration and further direction. One of the items is branding. We have took it upon ourselves to start using have a “pleasant’ day, “where every day is a pleasant day’. We have talked to people in the community to try to get them to use the phrase. Maybe get the Fire Department to put a Tiger on their truck and tiger paw on their apron.

On page 4, the first bullet point, our current tax rate is \$.505 for \$130,422,000 which equates to 13,042, that \$.01 of the tax rate. Town Administrator Randy Holloway stated that was all values including vehicles. The rural fire district tax rate \$.833 per \$100 and that equates to 38,167. The next bullet points are the fund balances. Town Administrator stated that Public Work Director Bobby Hartsell asked if the Powell Bill money could roll into a project fund where major projects can be done. The answer was yes it can be done.

Finance Director Crystal Smith gave an overview of the accounts that the Town have.

Town Administrator reported on options for short term investments for some of the reserve funds.

Some of the goal update;

General

Responding to citizens request for information within 7 days

Reduce cost through continued contract management and review

Public Safety

Keep crime rate low

Expedite response rate

Mobile data

Paid staffing for fire department

Lower fire insurance rating for rural district

Cultural & Recreational

Co-ordinate the Independence Day Celebration

Co-ordinate Christmas Celebration

Public Works

Brush collected and how it will be handled

Water & Sewer

Respond to water & sewer back ups

Clean sewer

Smoke testing

Town Administrator stated that these were the current goals and staff would get back to the Board on updating these.

Finance Director Crystal Smith stated that on the General Fund we were at 53% of our expenses and we were in good shape. We have collected 70% of our General Fund revenues. On our Water & Sewer we are at 48% of our expenses and have collected 54% of our revenues. On the sales tax we have collected 79%, the ad valorem vehicles 68%.

Finance Director Crystal Smith stated that the Board adopted 1.4 million dollar budget. We have collected 1.031 of our General revenues, and \$538,278 of our Water & Sewer.

Town Administrator Randy Holloway reported that the outstanding debt principle and interest on the public works facility is \$528,675 remaining for 10 years. This current physical year we retired \$65,000 off the public works facility, we also retired \$88,000 off of a piece of equipment that was paid off for the fire department. The Board approved to purchase a Tanker and is re-acquiring \$268,000 in debt for a period of 10 years for a payment of \$30,000 a year.

Town Administrator Randy Holloway stated that Law Enforcement had no request for the new budget but he would like to continue to put money in the budget for the police car replacement.

The Fire Departments current approved budget is \$559,477 that includes the \$88,000 that was paid on the fire truck. The Fire Department is recommending a \$900,000 renovation to the Fire Department. It was presented to the membership of the Fire Department at their meeting on Thursday night. The officers are 100% and the majority of the membership of the Fire Department is for the renovation knowing that they will be in the building for the next 10 to 12 years. Another thing that the Fire Chief has proposed is holiday pay for the firefighters that work the holidays, right now just Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas and maybe later adding some of the others. Fire Chief Taylor stated that had been some talk about starting a Jr. Firefighter program. It would cost about \$75 per person and they have talked about limiting it to 10. The last item is to ask the County to increase the rural rate another .67 cent to take it up to 9 cent. Last year we ask for 4 cent and got 2 cent, the additional .67 cent will generate around \$26,000.

The Fire Flow Study should be ready for Jeff Moody to come to the Board in April to give an update.

Public Work budget for this year is \$307,020 and he has talked to Public Works Director Bobby Hartsell about their critical needs for this year. The critical need is for a mini excavator and trailer for \$48,000. They are using the backhoe now, running it up and down the road. With a mini excavator they can do so much more.

In Administration and Finance the current budget is \$320,660 and we are going to ask for a lease on a printer/copier. We are going to ask for some face life items in Town Hall, get a paint job and spruce up outside.

In Planning and Zoning there is no increase in the Benchmark contract.

The Board discussed development in the Town, what they would like to see come to the Town and the tax rate.

Employee Benefits will be explored for more options. One option might be to use the Cabarrus County Wellness Center for regular checkups.

Future parks, recreation efforts, programs, events and annexations were some of the ideas that were mentioned.

Commissioner Barringer stated that with the 64 units coming in maybe it can offset a reduction of 1 cent on the taxes. He asked what interest the EDC had shown in Mt. Pleasant. Town Administrator Randy Holloway stated that they had paid a visit in January and that we have had two lead on All Star Mills. They were also shown the Prison property.

Commissioner Ashby asked if a certain amount of sewer replacement can be put into the budget. He was also asking about an incentive program to bring development to Town. Town Administrator Randy Holloway stated that was something we could put forth to Benchmark.

Town Administrator mentioned a community he has seen that has houses built to accommodate RV's. The RV can be set up to be used as an additional bedroom.

The Board talked about how to get the community involved and to get their input. Some ideas were polls on face book and survey monkey.

Public Works Director Bobby Hartsell talked about a water line that he would have to shut the whole Town down to make repairs. Town Administrator Randy Holloway stated that we have Reserve Accounts that can be used to make some of the necessary repairs that need to be made around town.

The question is do you want to put the budget together without using fund balance and to continue with Capital Improvement Plans. We will continue to set aside money for a garbage truck, a police car and improvements to water and sewer.

Mayor Eudy stated that every year Parks & Rec ask for a load of dirt for the ball fields. He asked that that be put in the budget.

The budget will be presented at the May meeting and possibly be adopted at the first meeting in June.

Commissioner Ashby stated with the 2013 surplus could it be utilize to do the pad at the Fire Department. By his calculation there will be \$216,000 in surplus. Town Administrator stated that on page 4 the bottom right corner the \$324,000 is the undesignated fund balance above the 42%. We have that amount to spend without getting into the fund balance.

ADJOURNMENT

With nothing else to come before the Board, Commissioner Barringer made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Sells seconded the motion with all board members in favor. (5-0)

By our signatures the following minutes were approved as submitted and amended on Monday, May 5, 2014 in the Regular Meeting.

Town Clerk Cathy Whittington

Mayor Del Eudy