

Town of Walnut Cove

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING MINUTES

June 11, 2019

Mayor Charles Mitchell-absent

Commissioners Present:

Elwood Mabe-Mayor Pro Tem

Danny Hairston

Thomas Mitchell

Charles Byron

Staff present:

Town Manager Kim Greenwood

Town Clerk Amanda Bryant

Town Attorney Ann Rowe

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 PM at the Walnut Cove Senior Center by Mayor Pro Tem Elwood Mabe. Wesley Durrell gave the invocation following which Town Manager Greenwood led in pledging allegiance to the American flag.

ANNOUNCEMENTS-

- a. The Cove Group; Tuesday, June 4th, 2019. Oma's Coffee Shop at 6:30 pm
- b. Walnut Cove Volunteer Fire Dept.; Regular Meeting. 7:00pm. Saturday, July 6, 2019. Walnut Cove Fire Department
- c. Walnut Cove Board of Commissioners; Regular Meeting. Tuesday, July 9, 2019. Walnut Cove Senior Center.
- d. Town Recycling; 06/14/2019 and 6/28/2019
- e. Town Fireworks, Wednesday, July 3, 2019, Lion's Park.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – 0

ADJUSTMENTS/CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA-

1. Commissioner Byron stated the Cove Group will meet on July 2, 2019.

A motion was made by Commissioner Byron to accept the adjustments/corrections to the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hairston. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes from May 14, 2019

A motion was made by Commissioner Hairston to approve and accept the May 14, 2019 minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Byron. The motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS- Public Hearing Budget Ordinance 2019-2020

- a. No one signed up for the Public Hearing
- b. Commissioner Byron asked if any adjustments had been made to the Budget since the Budget Retreat or any recommendations. Mr. Greenwood stated the expenditures had not changed but the revenue lines have increased by \$40,000.00 more than anticipated. Mr. Greenwood stated he had not seen a reason to change anything in the proposed budget. Commissioner Byron stated he agreed to no changes on the long-term perspective unless we know what has changed and why. He feels the Walnut Tree annexation has created a neutral position in taxes and we must be fiscal responsible. Mr. Greenwood stated there was no rate increase in the water and sewer rates.

A motion was made by Commissioner Byron to approve the 1\2019-2020 Budget Ordinance. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hairston. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

a. Joe Southern-Carolina Choice Realty

- a. Joe Southern from Carolina Choice Realty introduced himself as well as Amanda Tucker from Carolina Choice Realty who recently opened their office in Town. He wanted to give the Board an update on the current real estate market in Walnut Cove. Mr. Southern explained they have numerous calls from people wanting to move or invest in Walnut Cove. They have a lot of investor interested in building in the Town, but no one has made the initial step yet.
- b. Mr. Southern provided the Board with some statistics:
 - i. They currently have 60 listings with agents from Davidson County to Surry County. In the last six months they have had 22 active listings ranging from \$15k-\$3.6 million, currently Danbury has 100 acres listed for \$8.5 million with several other properties as well.
 - ii. The previous closed listing within the last six months just in Walnut Cove have prices ranging from \$17k to \$525,000.00. People are looking for Town homes and duplexes. They are also under contract with a couple from Hawaii looking to retire in Walnut Cove.
 - iii. For the current land properties they have 54 active listings.
 - iv. Commissioner Byron stated it is very encouraging to hear this but we as a Board and Town must be proactive in our infrastructure and may need to consider an additional well to the one already planned to be installed. He stated this could be a potential concern of prospective buyers. Mr. Southern stated his concern is not whether he or anyone at Carolina Choice Realty get the listing but would like to see some movement in Walnut Cove. He explained King is in the process of building 12 town homes and of the 12 homes, 6 have already been sold. Mr. Southern continued by explaining many baby boomers want and need less to

do and would like the Town to look at the possibility of a duplex. Investors look for properties they can sell quickly.

- v. Commissioner Byron stated Walnut Cove would be a desirable location for an assisted living community. Mr. Southern stated he would love to see something started in Walnut Cove; people are discovering the Town. Mr. Greenwood stated with the current contract with Stokes County water authority we have room for expanding.

b. Lilies Project-Caroline Armijo

- a. Mr. Greenwood introduced Caroline Armijo to the Board. Ms. Armijo is asking the Board to approve a grant to address the Coal Ash problem. Ms. Armijo explained the coal ash would be recycled into different items that can be used to beautify the Town. She has received a creative grant that is to be used to highlight Stokes County and is in the process of determining the best way to use that money. Ms. Armijo explained to the Board she has been working with Brian Harman from the Stokes County Extension office to find trees and plants that would work well in that area.
- b. Her main concern is the Erosion that is taking place at the Library on the bank on the left side. She held a meeting in May with Chuck Hunner who designs and builds labyrinths. Mr. Hunner presented the Board with a model of a labyrinth and explained the purpose of a labyrinth. Labyrinth are circular concrete slab with a pattern made of brown granite type material. The labyrinths serve as a calming place or pathway to walk to help clear the mind and provide a clear perspective for those who use them. The process of building the labyrinth takes approximately 7-8 days to complete.
- c. Commissioner Byron asked if the 40'-50' was a rough average size of the labryinths? Of which Mr. Hunner stated Ms. Armijo chose this pattern which directs the size. The actual labyrinth would be 42'x42'. Commissioner Byron asked about the maintenance of the labyrinth, Mr Hunner stated short term you would need a leaf blower to clean it off

from debris but the long term every 3-5 years it would cost \$800-\$1000.00 to reseal to protect it.

- d. Commissioner Hairston stated he thought it was a good idea. Commissioner Byron asked Ms. Armijo what she was requesting of which she replied approval to have the labyrinth installed as well as feedback from the Board. Commissioner Byron asked if this would alleviate the erosion of the bank, Ms. Armijo stated it would in addition to the plants that would make it low maintenance and a beautiful habitat for people.
- e. Commissioner Byron asked if the location had potential to include outdoor toilets? Ms. Armijo stated they had found a black pipe that is a sewer line, so it is a possibility. The sewer line loops around to Cove Square which would be the perfect way to make a corridor. Commissioner Byron asked about utilities and lighting. Ms. Armijo stated she hopes to have colorful post created by A&T State University. These posts are 4'x48" which are created by a mold by A&T University. But the pillars or post would be the perfect place to install some type of solar lighting on top of the post. Commissioner Byron asked if she knows the life span of the post. Ms. Armijo stated all posts are fiberglass fabricated buried 2' in the ground as well as being fire resistant and insect repellent. Ms. Armijo commented with the grant monies she hopes to create raised beds, a privacy fence between the Boy Scout Hut as well. Commissioner Byron commented Mayor Pro Tem. is the leader of the Boy Scouts and his input would be vital. Mayor Pro Tem stated he feels Ms. Armijo needs to obtain more specifications on the projects along with set back requirements and more details before the Board can approve it. Town Manager Greenwood stated he would have to get with Town Attorney Rowe to review the legalities before the Board can approve it as well.
- f. Ms. Rowe stated she would need to look at the lease of the property. Commissioner Byron asked about insurance as well as if in the past has anyone approached the Board about the corner lot Ms. Armijo is inquiring about. Christine Boles

Branch Librarian for the Walnut Cove library stated someone had interest 4-5 years ago to install a playground and a community garden but it was denied due to a gas station that was located at the current Drivers License office and fear of gas being in the soil. There was an issue of insurance as to who would pay for the gas in the soil to have it removed as well. Ms. Armijo stated former Town Manager Bobby Miller was the one to suggest the location to her. She informed the Board she must have the project complete by June 30, 2020.

- g. Commissioner Byron asked if she feels she has enough finances to complete the project. Ms. Armijo stated she is very frugal with her budget but does not see a problem. Commissioner Byron asked if she can provide the Board with a site plan and a budget to present to them before they approve the project. Commissioner Hairston stated he feels it is a good idea but suggested to table an approval until Ms. Armijo could provide more specific details. Town Manager Greenwood stated he would work with Town Attorney Rowe on the lease.

Commissioner Hairston made a motion to table the approval of the Lilies Project until the August 13, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mitchell. Motion carried unanimously.

c. Round About and O'Reilly's Update

- a. Town Manager Greenwood reported to the Board many may have seen the marking flags have been placed on bordering properties. We had received an anticipated date of next week (June 17th) but due to the rain this has been pushed back.
- b. The Town has completed all the necessary paperwork, permits and etc. for O'Reilly's. We are done on our side.
- c. Commissioner Byron asked if the DOT had worked anything out with Cove Mart of which Mr. Greenwood said their attorney had advised them to proceed onward. Commissioner Byron asked about detours through that area of which Mr. Greenwood informed him we anticipate traffic problems, one

lane road at times but at least one lane would always be open and the Town would receive one isolation valve as well.

Commissioner Hairston made a motion to enter closed session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Byron. Motion carried unanimously. Motion made at 8:01 p.m.

Town Managers Report

- a. The License Plate office profit sheet is attached. Our LPA had a very good May.
- b. I have attached information regarding our “Revenue” lines as of the end of May. I am pleased to advise we are ahead in many areas with another month remaining.
- c. Thanks to The Cove Group, the sponsor of Springfest and its volunteers for a successful town event. Thanks to the Fire Dept., Stokes Sheriffs Office, and the Public Works Dept. for their help.
- d. Special recognition should be given to Brandi Bowman, voted “Best Town Employee” for two years running. The Stokes News also recognized many other people and businesses in Walnut Cove on their service. We congratulate them all.
- e. South Data has completed the replacement of three computers for the town office. We have new emails for all employees and will create e-mail addresses for our Mayor and Commissioners, if desired. These are considered more secure messages and all end as...@townofwalnutcove.org.
- f. A Public works schedule is not attached, Either Mark, Wil or myself can be contacted for weekends and after hours. I have made 911 communications aware of the changes.
- g. It is hard to believe we are proceeding with closing out the 2017/2018 fiscal year. We anticipate scheduling our financial audit in July or August.
- h. The Dept. of Labor will be at Town Hall on June 26, 2019 at 9:00 am., to begin their safety and health audit. We will co-operate and comply with their findings.
- i. The Town Office and LPA will be closed on July 4 in observance of Independence Day.

General Concerns of the Board

a. Commissioner Byron wanted an update regarding the Code enforcement within Town. Town Clerk Amanda Bryant stated she is working with Attorney Rowe and Bradley Davis to keep everything moving. We are to the point of turning many of the violations over to Ms. Rowe to proceed with civil violations. Commissioner Hairston stated they would give him the benefit for another month. Commissioner Byron feels the process is taking to long and needs to be sped up.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hairston to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Byron.

Meeting adjourned at 8:44pm.

Elwood Mabe
Mayor Pro Tem

Amanda Bryant
Town Clerk

Date

Date