

**Town of Walnut Cove**  
**Board of Commissioner Meeting**  
**January 14, 2020**  
**Walnut Cove Senior Center**

Members Present:

Nellie Brown – Mayor  
Danny Hairston – Commissioner  
Elwood Mabe – Commissioner  
Thomas Mitchell – Commissioner  
Kim Greenwood – Town Manager  
Amanda Bryant – Town Clerk  
Ann Rowe – Town Attorney

Members Absent:

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**Meeting Call to Order:** Mayor Brown called the meeting to order @ 7:02pm.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Mayor Brown

**Invocation:** Wesley Durrell

**Announcements:**

Walnut Cove Board of Commissioners Meeting, February 11, 2020 @ 7PM – Walnut Cove Senior Center.

Walnut Cove Volunteer Fire Department, Monthly Meeting. Thursday, February 6, 2020 @ 7PM.

The Cove Group. February 3, 2020 at 6:30PM – Walnut Cove Library.

Town Recycling: January 24, 2020 and February 7, 2020

League of Municipalities Dinner hosted by the Town of Walnut Cove. Jan. 16, 2020 @ 6:30PM.

Town Office and LPA Office closed January 20, 2020

Christian Awareness Program will sponsor a walk, January 20, 2020 at 11:30am beginning at Walnut Cove, Cove Mart and proceeding to Rising Star Baptist Church

Celebration of the life of Danielle Bailey Lash on January 18, 2020 from 1pm-4pm

Palmetto Line Dance will be January 18, 2020 from 6pm-9pm at SEMS

**Adjustments to Agenda**

No adjustments or corrections

**Public Comments – 1**

Oather Golden, 606 Windmill Street, Walnut Cove, NC 27052- wanted to talk with the Board tonight about the speeding on Windmill Street. Because of the new speed bumps people are coming through Windmill to avoid speedbumps. They are driving really fast along Windmill Street and are not stopping at the stop signs. There are children who play and walk along Windmill Street daily so this is an issue. The police patrol the area but nothing is done about the speeding. Mayor Brown thanked Mr. Golden for his comments and explained she has already spoken to the state highway patrol and will be calling them again tomorrow to discuss this issue. The state highway patrol is aware of the situation and are working to help the Town.

## **1. Consent Agenda**

### **Approval of Minutes December 10, 2019**

**A motion was made by Commissioner Hairston to approve the minutes from the December 10, 2019 meeting and seconded by Commissioner Mitchell. Motion carried unanimously.**

## **2. Old Business**

### **A. Consideration of Appointment of Commissioner and Oath of Office**

Town Manager Greenwood directed the Board's attention to Town Attorney Rowe to review the steps and processes the Board would need to take in order to appoint a person to the Board of Commissioners to fill the spot of Danielle Bailey Lash. Ms. Rowe stated the Board will need to declare the seat vacant which can be done by a motion, followed by the Board selecting someone to fill the position. The state does not give a timeframe or how the Board is to select a person, it will be up to our Board to determine how they would like to appoint someone, but this must be discussed in an open meeting. Ms. Rowe suggests the Board can proceed with appointing someone tonight or they can table this item until the next months meeting. Lastly Ms. Rowe informed the Board it was asked in December will this mess up the classes for the current Board, which Ms. Rowe confirmed it will. The new appointed Commissioner will serve until the next election which will be in two years. The seat will become available at the next election and whomever is elected will serve for the remaining two years which will be until 2023. Mayor Brown asked if others wish to be considered can they do that? Ms. Rowe stated if someone has expressed interest that is something the Board will need to discuss but if interested people would like to make themselves known. Greenwood suggested passing around a list for those interested in filling the seat may sign up. Hairston asked if they needed to declare the seat vacant first of which Ms. Rowe stated yes.

**Commissioner Hairston made a motion declaring the seat of Commissioner vacant. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mabe. The motion carried unanimously.**

Town Attorney Rowe cautioned the Board, stating the Board needs to be very clear how they want to proceed as well as how they will identify potential candidates. The general statute gives the Board the authority to decide on their process for appointing a commissioner but they need to be very clear on the process. Town Manager Greenwood asked for Anthony Prysock to come forward, he was the first name on the list. Mr. Prysock stated he would like to be considered for Commissioner, he has lived in the Walnut Tree area and he was instrumental in the annexation process. He feels as though the Walnut Tree area needs someone to represent them. He knows what goes on in the area and they have many different races of people and is helping the children in the area work on community service projects for the elderly. He feels the children are our future. Town Manager Greenwood asked for Olivia Prysock to come forward. She stated she was not going to reiterate what her husband Anthony Prysock has stated, she agrees they need someone from the Walnut Tree area. She feels we need to assert ourselves to work together for the community to help prevent crimes. We have a chance to build a great community and show others Walnut Cove will not tolerate bad behavior. We have gone far the last 10 years and wants to see the Town grown with businesses. She is proud of our community. Town Manager Greenwood asked for Susan Gonzalez to come forward. Ms. Gonzalez stated she was born and raised in Walnut Cove but moved away for about 20 years but moved back to Walnut Cove 7 years ago. She is willing to serve the people of Walnut Cove. She has taken interest in her hometown and will be at service to the Town and she will do her best for the Town. After each candidate had spoken Commissioner Hairston stated he felt it was only fair to go with the next person from the election, who would be Joe Bennett. Commissioner Hairston feels he deserves it because he campaigned just as the others did.

**Commissioner Hairston made a motion to appoint Joe Bennett to the vacant commissioner seat. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mabe. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Town Manager Greenwood asked Brandon Hooker, Stokes County Register of Deeds if he would give the Oath to Joe Bennett. Mr. Hooker thanked the Town for the opportunity and gave the Oath of Office to Joe Bennett. Mr. Bennett had his wife Misty Bennett hold the Bible for him as he took the Oath.**

### **B. The Lilies Project Update**

Greenwood asked Carolina Armijo to bring the Board update to date on the Lilies Project. Ms. Armijo stated last month we celebrated the life of Danielle Bailey Lash and who is the inspiration behind the Lilies Project and the impact she had on the community and with statewide organizations. She continued to discuss the previous presentations she had presented the Board regarding the Labyrinth she would like to have installed beside of the DMV office off sixth street. The labyrinth can fit into the location without disturbing anything, she has checked with Brian Booe from the Fire Department to make sure it wouldn't be in their way. She also had David Alley complete a survey of the property. She has meet with Big Daddy's concrete with the proposed labyrinth only requiring a minimal grading. The pad itself will be 4'x24' and she is hoping to begin the project on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, weather permitting. In June she met with the Board to discuss the butterfly garden, she is working with Brian Hartman of the Stokes Agricultural Extension, to finalize those plans. Information regarding the basketball court at London Elementary she will have the survey completed this week. Eddie's Patching and paving will be providing a quote and a recommendation to overlay the court. Ms. Armijo's friend Chase is a muralist who will host a community workshop in February or March. He will be completing a mural for the Walk Walnut Cove project which will have footprints on sixth street in front of the school and at the cemetery, he will use stencils for this. Ms. Armijo provided an upcoming events sheets and information regarding the solar lights for the top of the coal ash posts. Commissioner Hairston asked about the coal ash post, Ms. Armijo explained the coal ash post are an alternative to wood and will not deteriorate over time or have issues with insects. Commissioner Hairston asked if she could provide writing form the scientist with this information of the fifty-year guarantee. Ms. Armijo explained she has a lot of data on the website and there is a sign in Greensboro that used the coal ash post. Commissioner Hairston asked how many post, Ms. Armijo explained she ordered thirty. Commissioner Mabe commented he is fine everything else but the coal ash post due to the circumstances at Belews Creek he could not agree with putting anything in the ground that contained coal ash, he wants none of it. Commissioner Hairston asked if she had to install the coal ash post? Mayor Brown commented she has seen the many projects Ms. Armijo has worked on and she has known her for many years and she feels Ms. Armijo would never bring anything harmful to the Town. She thinks it's a beautiful thing as Ms. Bailey Lash suffered from the thing that took her life we must look beyond to the future. We need to do our research; she feels Ms. Armijo has done her research and she wants to give back to the Town and give back to the children to provide them a safe place to walk and play. Ms. Armijo explained all the test research has shown there is no evidence of leaching. Commissioner Mabe asked about the distance from the well because of the well that is located there. She explained she had contacted the Stokes County Environmental Health to obtain the set back requirements and the distance from the well to the labyrinth and the post was cleared. Commissioner Hairston made a motion to approve everything but the post. Commissioner Mitchell questioned the motion asking how many chemicals do you have in your home? He stated he felt there was nothing wrong with the post considering the amount of paint, Clorox and other chemicals people put back into the ground. Mayor Brown commented we need to think about the children and there need for a place to go and play. She appreciates the effort Ms. Armijo has put into this project.

Ms. Armijo stated she has done a lot of advocacy, testified in civil rights, advocated at the US Capital, and is very fearful of coal ash. We do have a small victory with Duke Energy having to clean up Belews Lake. She explained the safest way to handle the coal ash is to attach it to a polymer, this will turn something negative into something positive. If the Town doesn't want the post that is fine. Commissioner Hairston asked if the post were 100% safe. Ms. Armijo explained yes if the coal ash is attached to a polymer, this makes the coal ash a solid and not a liquid, she offered to have the scientist come and present the information to the Board if they wish. She would like the Board to approve the other projects if possible and we can revisit the coal ash posts later.

**Commissioner Hairston made a motion to approve Ms. Armijo's request for the basketball court at the London school, the Labyrinth at the library and the butterfly garden at the library, but does not want to approve the installation of the coal ash posts. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bennett.**

**Motion carried with a 3 to 1 vote, with Commissioner Mabe voting no.**

### **C. Foothills Waste Management Contract (Attachment B)**

Town Attorney Rowe has reviewed the Foothills Waste contract and believes there are a few typographical errors and some change provisions. The contract is an extension of a previous contract set to begin July 1, 2020. The Town is looking at a potential rate increase according to section 12; Ms. Rowe told the Board to be cautious of this. She stated the language in section 14 needed to be stronger, it is not clear regarding the required insurance amount and are they required to have general liability and auto insurance and it needs to start if the coverage is per person. Ms. Rowe recommends for the Board to allow Greenwood to authorize to sign the contract with the revisions completed by Ms. Rowe.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Bennett to approve the contract with the completed revisions.**

**The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mabe. Motion carried unanimously.**

## **3. New Business**

### **a. Sewer Capital Investment (Amanda Bryant, Town Clerk)**

Bryant explained our current Sewer Capital Project Cash account is losing money each money to bank charges. She proposed to the Board to switch this account from a cash checking account to an investment account with NC Capital Management. She spoke with John Frye and the funds would be available if the Town needed to access them without any penalties. She gave each Board member a handout with the transactions of Sewer Capital account.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Bennett to move the Sewer Capital Project cash account to NC Capital Management investment account. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hairston.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **b. Consideration of the 0.25% sales tax Resolution (Attachment C)**

Greenwood directed the Board's attention to Jake Oakley, County manager to explain the 0.25% sales tax increase. Mr. Oakley wanted to speak today to encourage the Town to approve the Resolution, as well as to inform citizens this will be on the ballot March 3<sup>rd</sup>. The proposed sales tax increase would take the weight off all property owners and for the 700,000 visitors the county has each year would help generate more revenue. If it passes the primary the approximate revenue from the sales tax increase would be \$800-900k on the reasonable side and \$1.2 million dollars on the high side. This will mean everyone pays not just property owners. Will Carter, Economic Director for Stokes County, spoke stating the county has around 700k visitors each year and they do not have to pay anything to enjoy the many events like Hanging Rock State park, with the sales tax increase it removes the burden from the property owners and everyone pays. Anthony Prysock asked if Walnut Cove would benefit from the sales tax increase and what would the County do to help build up Walnut Cove. Mr. Carter explained the money would not only help Walnut Cove but also all over the County. Mr. Prysock asked if the money would

benefit King more than other areas? We need structure in Walnut Cove and plans to grow. Mayor Brown thanked Mr. Prysock for his concerns and she appreciates the new companies such as Dominos and O'Reilly's and stated as we go forward more businesses will come. Mr. Prysock commented we have got to grow to bring more people in. Greenwood thanked both Jake Oakley and Will Carter for coming and for being an asset to the Town. Mr. Carter explained it is sometimes difficult to find properties but the Lord has blessed us and he will make it happen. He also commented if everyone will help get the word out about the sales tax increase.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Hairston to approve the resolution for the 0.25% sales tax increase, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Mabe. Motion carried unanimously.**

**c. Zoning/Code Enforcement Legislative Update (Bradley Davis) (Attachment D)**

Bradley Davis spoke regarding the current legislative updates explaining the State regulated Chapter 1, Section 60D, which includes updating all maps and zones for all properties. They are in the process of adopting this. For specific articles codes will be updated which will make it easier. This is something O'Reilly's had to go through. Chapter by Chapter revisions. We have 14 zones in Town for 1200 people. The setback they are trying to make more uniform and user friendly and we have until the end of the year. Mr. Davis explained he does not know all the revisions but does know it is going to happen.

**d. Springfest Resolution for Street Closure (Attachment E)**

The Cove Group asks the Board to approve the street closure resolution from 3<sup>rd</sup> street to 6<sup>th</sup> street for their annual Springfest. This will give them time to plan, and notify the state, fire department and sheriffs office to prepare for the festival. The festival is May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 from 8am-4pm.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Bennett to approve the Street Closure Resolution on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 from 8am-4pm. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hairston. Motion carried unanimously.**

**e. Consideration of dates for Budget Retreat**

It is time to plan the Budget Retreat for the upcoming fiscal year. Mayor Brown stated she can make any day work but Commissioner Mitchell has a public job and we need to consider his schedule and the days he will be available. Commissioner Mitchell suggested February 20<sup>th</sup> at 9am.

**f. Consideration of appointment of PTRC representative**

The Board needs to appoint or someone from the Board volunteer, to be the representative from Walnut Cove for the Piedmont Triad Regional Council, the former representative was Charles Byron. Commissioner Hairston volunteered to be the representative for Walnut Cove.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Bennett to approve Commissioner Danny Hairston as the PTRC Representative for Walnut Cove. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mabe. Motion carried unanimously.**

**4. Departmental Reports**

**Administration**

The Town Audit Update will be completed soon we had to wait for information from the ABC Board audit which was just completed. We anticipate the audit to be completed for the Town soon. Our revenue lines look strong and expenditures are as anticipated. A full financial report will be provided in the February meeting along with the Town audit results. Potential Property sites to meet with Randy Welch with SERCAP for possible grants and funding for a new Town hall building. An email was provided

outlining the details. The Town is now using the new phone system via Riverstreet network. It is working well but still tweaking the system to fit our needs. Overall, we are happy with the system. Reminder the League of Municipalities dinner hosted by the Town on Thursday, January 16, 2020 at the Library.

**License Plate Office**

Our tag office continues to report outstanding results. Sandra Rogers and her staff continue to provide excellent customer service and very good profits.

DMV Transactions:	\$14, 028.96
<u>Notary:</u>	<u>\$ 2,022.00</u>
Net Profit:	\$16,050.96

**Public Works**

The Christmas lights have been taken down and stored until next fall. The filtration system has been changed at the Fowler Park well and we await the water sample results from Pace Analytical and the State before we place it back online. We did purchase a truck (Ford F-250) totaling with taxes and tag, \$15,000 as budgeted for the year. The old 2002 truck does not run and has electrical problems. I am researching the best way to sale our surplus items. We had discussed "Govdeals" however I think it must be running to advertise it with them. In the February meeting, I will provide the Board with our options in getting it sold. The On-Call list is attached for the next three months. We have been blessed with very kind weather; however, our street equipment has been serviced and ready in the event of winter weather. We have not received a response from WithersRavenal concerning our two grants, (Merger and Regionalization Study and Asset Inventory Study) other than they have been completed and we await the state's decision for approval. Before Christmas, I was informed that the length of this past legislation session held up the progress of various DOT and grant programs.

**5. Items of General Concern**

Mayor Brown commented the Gymnastics show was a big success, the turnout was wonderful. Phil Ford agreed to host a clinic for the young people in the future. Town Manager Greenwood thank you and Commissioner Bennett I look forward to working with you.

**Commissioner Mabe made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bennett. Motion carried unanimously.**

**6. Meeting adjourned at 8:53PM**

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Nellie Brown, Mayor

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Amanda Bryant, Town Clerk

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Date

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Date