

**Town of Walnut Cove
Board of Commissioner Meeting
May 11, 2021
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present:

Nellie Brown – Mayor
Elwood Mabe – Commissioner
Joe Bennett – Commissioner
Thomas Mitchell – Commissioner
Kim Greenwood – Town Manager
Amanda Town Clerk Amanda Bryant - Town Clerk
Ann Rowe– Town Attorney

Members Absent:

Danny Hairston – Commissioner

Meeting Call to Order: Mayor Nellie Brown called the meeting to order @ 7:00pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: Town Manager Kim Greenwood

Invocation: Town Manager Greenwood

Announcements:

1. Walnut Cove Volunteer Fire Dept. Monthly Meeting. Thursday, June 3, 2021 at 7:00 PM
2. Walnut Cove Planning/Zoning Board Meeting. May 20, 2021 at Walnut Cove Public Library @ 6:30pm.
3. The Cove Group, 1st Tuesday at 6:30PM at Oma's
4. Walnut Cove Board of Commissioners Monthly Meeting. June 8, 2021 at 7:00 PM at the Walnut Cove Senior Center.
5. Recycle: May 14 and May 28, 2021
6. Springfest – Saturday, May 15, 2021, downtown.
7. Town Fireworks, Saturday, July 3, 2021

Adjustments to Agenda

Town Manager Greenwood needed to add 3 adjustments to the agenda.

7. Consent Agenda
 - d. Reappointment of ABC Board Chairman-Brian Booe
 - e. Status Report – Control Burn Solar Farm Property
- Departmental Reports
Town Attorney Update- filing response

A motion was made by Commissioner Bennett to approve the adjustments the to agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mabe. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments – 2

Ada Linster, came regarding the burning in her neighborhood, stated they never knew anything about it. There is debris such as ashes all over the vehicles and yards. She is asking the Town to communicate with citizens so they are aware of what is going on. Next, she addressed a letter she received from code enforcement. The letter arrived on April 12th and the same day her son passed away. No one from Town showed up, the Town should clean up around before they come to us. She started naming properties and streets and problems throughout Town that needed to be addressed including Dehart properties, the burnt house at the end of Fowler Road and many other streets and properties.

Angie Bailey

Wanted to thank the Board for the purchase of the hanging flower baskets, The Cove Group really appreciates them. They have had a very positive response and they appreciate of Commissioner Bennett for his help with those. They did break 3 of the furniture dolly's moving the concrete planters and appreciate the Town for stepping in and helping with those as well as cleaning the streets and roads. At the last meeting it was discussed trying to bring all the groups together for Town events she is working with Fire Chief Booe to coordinate a meeting and will have more information at the next meeting.

1. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes from April 13, 2021

A motion was made by Commissioner Mabe to approve the minutes from the April 13, 2021 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bennett. Motion carried unanimously.

b. Public Hearing- Consideration of Text Amendment Fitness Center.

The planning/zoning board voted to amend the ordinance to allpw B-1 district to add a conditional use permit the permitted use table. Rowe stated we needed a motion to open the public hearing.

c. Proclamation in Recognition of 100th yr. Anniversary of Senior Center/Colored School building (attachment B)

Each Board member received a copy of the Proclamation and will be presented on June 19th, 2021.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bennett to approve the proclamation in recognition of 100th year Anniversary of Senior Center/ Colored School Building. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mitchell. Motion carried unanimously.

d. Re-appointment of Brian Booe, Chair of ABC store

It was brought the Town's attention it is time to appoint a chairperson for the ABC Store, Town Manager Greenwood suggests to re-appoint Brian Booe, as his term expires on May 31st.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mitchell to re-appoint Brian Booe as Chair of the ABC Store. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bennett. Motion carried unanimously.

e. Status Report – Control Burn Solar Farm Property

Town Manger Greenwood asked Scott Aaron and Brian Booe as well Ann Rowe Town Attorney to determine if anything can be done. They were able to discuss the issue over the phone. The have reviewed the area in the control burn and spoke with the property owners, the smoke should be cleared out by Thursday. The company did obtain the correct permits and because they are in the ETJ they were

not under the Town ordinance of no burning in Town. Mayor Brown stated they had a lot of concerns about the air quality and the effect of the 72 hours strong smoke smell in the area and it was very critical for 2 days. Scott Aaron stated after the review of the ordinance and the area is in the ETJ there was nothing they could do. He wanted to clarify he spoke with the Ann and she was able to clarify the ordinance does not apply to the ETJ. It was a very close call but after speaking with Scott Aaron and Brian Booe it was determined you can't enforce it in the ETJ. Town Manager Greenwood spoke up and stated he understood it is very frustrating for the citizens and the smoke being carried by the wind is a burden to the citizens in the area. He wanted to thank Scott, Brian and Ann for getting answers so quickly and any additional burning down should not affect any citizen of the Town.

2. Old Business

a. Four Year Term Resolution for Mayoral Office (Attachment C)

Attachment C is an ordinance amending the Charter of the Town of Walnut Cove of Stokes County, to provide for electing the Mayor for a Four-year term. This change would allow the Mayoral term to be 4 years verses the current 2-year term. Town Attorney Rowe stated the public hearing portion is complete, the process allowed to vote at this point with an ordinance change allow three options: 1. Declined ordinance change if you choose, 2. Make effective immediately Town Clerk within 10 days of notice, ordinance is adopted but is subject to referendum petition 30 days with specific requirements which includes a 10% of signatures are registered voters, then will hold a special election and it is voted on by the citizens. 3. If adopted make effective only upon a vote of the citizens. You can adopt the ordinance and resolution only by special election. The next election will be a general election on November 2nd, then the citizens can vote for the next term to be changed. Commissioner Bennett wanted to know the thoughts of other Board members. Mayor Brown stated the Board of Commissioner have a 4-year term it is difficult to get a lot accomplished in a 2-year term by the time you learn the process of things it is time for another election. It is very complicated to get anything accomplished it just makes more sense to have the Mayor term a 4 year term. Commissioner Bennett stated it makes more sense to him as well for a 4-year term, a 2-year term isn't long enough and it should be the same as the Commissioners. Commissioner Mitchell stated he feels the same. Commissioner Mabe stated the 1st year you are learning the process and then you have to start over again. Town Attorney Rowe stated all they need now is a motion and a decision of if it is effective immediately with the chance of petition referendum.

Commissioner Bennett made a motion to adopt the ordinance amending the Charter of the Town of Walnut Cove of Stokes County, to provide for electing the Mayor for a Four-year term effective immediately. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mabe. Motion carried unanimously.

Town Manager Greenwood stated the Public Notice would be in the May 20th edition of the Stokes News.

3. New Business

a. Consideration of Contract for Audit Services (Gibson Co. PA) Attachment D

Town Manager Greenwood presented the Board with the contract for audit services for Gibson and Company the audit service company the Town has used for several years. He needs approval from the Board to sign the contract and send it to Gibson and Company.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mitchell to approve the Contract for Audit Services for Gibson Company PA. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mabe. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Consideration of Test Amendment to Add “Fitness Center” in B-1 (attachment E)

The planning/zoning Board approved to amend zone B-1 to include “fitness center” and add it to the permitted use table. It has been properly advertised as well. Commissioner Bennett wanted to know about the change, of which Town Manager Greenwood stated they will be adding additional equipment to the facility. Mayor Brown stated now they have limited space. Town Manager Greenwood confirmed the spacing issue but they are hoping to add more workout equipment. Commissioner Bennett stated it would give folks more health benefits.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bennett to approve the Text amendment to add “fitness center” in B-1. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mabe. Motion carried unanimously.

c. Approval of Board to advertise for Annual Budget 2020-2021 Budget Public Hearing

Town Manager Greenwood stated he was very happy with the Budget retreat there was no tax rate increase, no water and sewer rate increase and we have money in the bank even during a pandemic. He is needing approval to advertise for a Budget Public Hearing.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mitchell to advertise for the Budget Public Hearing, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Bennett. Motion carried unanimously.

d. Approval of Board to advertise for anticipated Zoning Ordinance Amendments for June meeting. Town Manager Greenwood needs approval from the Board to advertise for the Zoning Ordinance Amendments that will become effective July 1st. There are some additions to the ordinances in red and change to our land use policy. Ginger Booker the attorney for PTRC is in the process of working on the changes and should have them to use within the next week. We anticipate voting on these changes in June. We will need to run an advertisement for a public hearing. We will complete a bulk vote instead of individual ours is a major rewrite. Town Attorney Rowe commented she will confirm but one vote likely will work and make one motion and adopt.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bennett to approve Town Manager Greenwood to advertise for a public hearing for the new Zoning Ordinance. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mabe. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Departmental Reports

Attorney Update

Town Attorney Rowe gave the Board an update on the pending lawsuit with the Teramore group. Our next step in the appeal is to compile and present records of everything covered in the lawsuit. Cory reviewed the appeal. The appeal has been delivered to the court on Friday, and they are working to prepare a written response. We are anticipating the hearing date to be in the summertime. Also, she will have the finished rules and procedures for virtual meetings for the June meeting. This will be an opportunity to vote. Town Manager Greenwood asked about the moratorium for the sweepstakes businesses, Town Attorney Rowe stated they would extend it in June will need a Public Hearing to allow for the extension. They will need a motion to adjust the agenda in June to include the moratorium public hearing.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bennett to adjust the agenda to include the Moratorium extension. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mitchell. Motion carried unanimously.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Mitchell to advertise for a public hearing in June with the extension of the temporary moratorium. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bennett.
Motion carried unanimously.**

Administration

Springfest update: The town is making final preparations with the Sheriff’s office, Fire department and Cove Group as we anticipate a large crowd. We are testing the software that will allow the payment of Water/Sewer online and hopefully go live in June. We have advertised for the street mapping and will present to the Board in June with the bids. A copy of the proposed Budget ordinance 2021-2022 is attached and will be advertised and on public display. Additionally, we have received some information regarding the American Relief Plan proposed by President Biden. Some of the highlighted items the monies can be used for including water and sewer, broadband, infrastructure. We will receive half this year and the remaining the following year.

License Plate Office

The LPA had an excellent March. The following is their Net figures.

DMV Transactions:	\$12,236.86
<u>Notary:</u>	<u>\$2,304.00</u>
Net Profit:	\$14,540.86

Code Enforcement

The Zoning Administration will have a busy May/June. Ms. Booker, the contracted PTRC attorney has sent us the mandated legislative changes to be made before July 1. I have attached categories that need revision marked in red. I will advise further as the Planning/Zoning Board moves through this process. An application has been filed with the town requesting a re-zoning of parcel designated for apartments/duplexes on First street.

Public Works

Public works has had a busy month. We repaired on major break on Main Street April 24th. We continue our mowing projects and have replaced the winter banners with the summer banners. Also, signs have been ordered those will be put up in anticipation of Springfest. We anticipate a lot of traffic for Springfest and are working with the Sheriff’s department to help control the traffic and speeding.

Items for future consideration

In the June meeting, following a public hearing, we can adopt the 2021-2022 budget. To amend our ordinance, a public hearing must be held prompting us to schedule the public hearing for June to adopt the new changes.

I will update the board on progress of preparation of July fireworks at the June meeting.

5. Items of General Concern

Mayor Brown wanted to thank Fire Chief Booe for all his hard work. Fire Chief Booe wanted to add Angie Bailey has contacted 3 of 5 events looking for co-sponsors. They are working on an events calendar to be posted on the Town website and the Cove Groups website. They will meet in the next week or two and are working on a plan and how to fix the lack of communication. They have all agreed to come together and have one common goal and provide points of contact. Fire Chief Booe also wanted to give an update on the ABC Board Audit, the policies have improved form the last audit. He did need clarification if the Town will allow the full-time employee to be on the Town’s insurance. Town Manger Greenwood stated as long as the Board is ok with it the Town is. Fire Chief Booe wanted to thank the Town for all their support.

Mayor Brown wanted to thank everyone and she just visited New York City and she wore her "I love Walnut Cove" shirt. We are very blessed in Walnut Cove. She asked for everyone to pray for Springfest for there will be a lot of people. The citizens want this and need this and they deserve it. She also wanted to recognize Commissioner Mitchell's son who just graduated from. UNC Chapel Hill.

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

6. Meeting adjourned at 8:15PM

Nellie Brown, Mayor
Town Clerk

Amanda Town Clerk Amanda Bryant ,

Date

Date