

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HOOD ROOM, MATTHEWS TOWN HALL  
MAY 29, 2018 – 7:00 PM**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Paul Bailey; Mayor Pro Tem John Higdon; Commissioners Barbara Dement, Chris Melton, Jeff Miller, Kress Query and John Urban; Town Attorney Charles Buckley; Town Manager Hazen Blodgett; Assistant Town Manager Becky Hawke; Town Clerk Lori Canapinno

**ALSO PRESENT:** Finance Director Chris Tucker

**REGULAR MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

Mayor Bailey called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**INVOCATION**

Commissioner Jeff Miller rendered an invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Bailey led the audience in the pledge.

**ITEMS TO BE ADDED TO THE AGENDA**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**INTRODUCTION OF CHARLOTTE WATER DIRECTOR ANGELA LEE**

Ms. Lee introduced herself and reviewed Charlotte Water's mission, explaining that it's the 17<sup>th</sup> largest utility in the country, carries a AAA rating by all three rating agencies and that next month's annual water quality report will indicate high water quality with no violations. The agency's mission is to protect the environment and serve the community.

## **PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATION FOR BEE CITY USA NATIONAL POLLINATOR WEEK**

Mayor Bailey presented a proclamation honoring National Pollinator Week. Town Manager Hazen Blodgett noted that Matthews is the fourth municipality designated as a Bee City in the country.

## **RECOGNITION OF OBELISK MURAL ARTIST TERSIA BROOKS AND SCULPTURE ARTIST AMY HART**

The community recognized artists Tersia Brooks and Amy Hart for their work. Ms. Brooks painted the concrete obelisk now located at the Country Place pocket park and Ms. Hart sculpted the flower/bee sculpture in the pollinator garden at the same park.

## **RECOGNITION OF PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS TERRI BIBLE, ALEXSANDR KRUPCHENCKO, KEVIN MCCARTHY, ANGELA MULLIS & ABIGAIL REID**

The community recognized participants of the town's recent photography contest, including Terri Bible, winner of the streetscape category; Angela Mullis, winner of the people category; Kevin McCarthy, winner of the celebrations/events category; Aleksandr Krupchencko, winner of the nature, parks and trails category; and Abigail Reid, winner of the youth category.

## **RECESS REGULAR MEETING FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON FY 2018-19 BUDGET**

Motion by Mr. Higdon to recess the regular meeting for a public hearing on the fiscal year 2018-19 budget. The meeting was seconded by Mr. Query and unanimously approved.

Mr. Blodgett reviewed highlights of the proposed budget, explaining that it was amended after the first Board work session. The amended proposed budget is a 3.3% increase over last year's and includes a 1.5 cent property tax increase. The 1.5 penny increase raises about \$525,000 annually and represents a \$45 annual tax increase on a \$300,000 home.

The budget includes a significant change for the Matthews Fire & EMS Department to hire ten new full-time employees to aid in the creation of a 24/7 fire department with less reliance on volunteers. The budget also includes a 3% salary increase pool for full time employees, implementation of a pay classification plan to move to a more competitive rate, two new telecommunicators for the Police Department, a new Landscaping employee in Public Works and the change from part-time to full-time for a transportation planner in Public Works. This budget includes no fund balance appropriation.

The Board heard the first proposal, which included a 2-penny tax increase, and asked it to be reduced to 1.5 pennies. That was done by pulling funds from various places, including fire volunteer incentives, travel and training, assessment center processes, vehicles and historic preservation studies, as well as by revising some revenue information for Crews Road and sales tax. The original proposal was reduced by \$175,000 or a half-penny of the tax rate.

Mr. Blodgett summarized, saying the Town is in an excellent position to make the Fire Department a full-time, 24-hour operation and to compensate employees fairly in a very competitive job market.

Mr. Miller asked for more details regarding the Fire Department and Mr. Blodgett explained that the department currently has 16 full time employees who work 6:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday. Volunteers supplement the remainder of the coverage and the department struggles with staffing. The proposed budget would allow the department to have paid full time employees around the clock with much less need for volunteer supplements.

Mayor Bailey opened the floor to public comment. Fred Reill expressed concerns with the proposed budget, saying the impact of the \$500,000 associated with the employee pay and classification implementation accounts for a vast majority of the additional revenues expected to be brought in from the property tax rate increase. He also disagreed with the way the information was presented, saying the proposed tax rate increase was referenced as being designated for public safety when it was primarily due to the pay and classification implementation. He asked the Board to vote against implementing it as part of the budget and to spend more time understanding the issue and informing the public.

Renee Garner expressed concern about the proposed tax rate increase as well as the possibility of an increase due to the County's property tax revaluation and potential increase due to the municipal charter school issue. She said citizens should see more of a return on their investment and that there are issues that should be addressed, such as speed humps on Crestdale Road and storm water improvements.

### **RECONVENE REGULAR MEETING**

Motion by Mr. Query to reconvene the regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Miller and unanimously approved.

### **REPORTS FROM BOARDS/COMMITTEES**

Minutes and information from the Arts & Science Council, Levine Senior Center Board of Directors, Centralina Council of Governments and Environmental Advisory Committee were submitted. Mr. Miller pointed out the inclusion of useful contact information for citizens in the Centralina Council of Government documentation.

Review of Assigned Board Meetings and Minutes

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approve Minutes of the May 14, 2018 Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting
- B. Approve Minutes of the May 15, 16 & 21, 2018 Special Board of Commissioners Meetings
- C. Approve Four Mile Creek Greenway Culvert Memorandum of Agreement
- D. Approve Revisions to Veterans Advisory Committee Bylaws
- E. Approve Lease and Use Agreement for Matthews Chamber of Commerce
- F. Approve Appointments to the Economic Development Advisory Committee
- G. Appoint Tim Jones as Citizen Representative to The Quad
- H. Accept Planning Board Recommendation to Hold a Public Hearing on Amendments to the Previously Adopted Downtown Master Plan and Set Public Hearing for June 25, 2018
- I. Approve Budget Ordinance Amendments to Transfer to Capital Reserve Funds on a Current Year Building Maintenance Repair Expenditure in the Amount of \$35,000.00

Motion by Mr. Melton to approve consent agenda items A through I. The motion was seconded by Mr. Urban and unanimously approved.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **RECEIVE MONTHLY BUDGET REPORT**

Finance Director Chris Tucker reviewed the finance report through April. He has no concerns about revenue goals or expenditures at this time.

## **DISCUSS ISSUES RAISED AT COFFEE WITH A COMMISSIONER EVENT**

Mr. Blodgett discussed several issues that have been raised that the recent *Coffee with a Commissioner* event and asked if the Board wanted to follow up on the issues. These included complaints about vehicles parked on residential lawns, the façade of the Malone building on West John Street and sidewalk connectivity in the “Old Town” area of downtown Matthews.

Ms. Dement explained that there were comments raised specifically about cars parked on front lawns on homes on John Street because it’s a gateway to the town and dangerous pedestrian issues due to cars using them to bypass the John/Trade square through the narrow roads in the Old Town area. Sidewalk connections are spotty in that area.

Regarding the Malone building, Mr. Blodgett noted that there are some draft downtown design guidelines that would address multistory buildings. Planning staff is currently finishing the draft and it should come before the Board in a few months. Regarding sidewalks, this was discussed at the Planning Conference and staff will bring some cost estimates back to the Board.

Mayor Bailey said the issue of lawn parking has been discussed in the past and he is not in favor of regulating against the practice. Mr. Urban said he’s heard this discussed about multiple locations around town, not just John Street. Mr. Query said some of the concerns involved dilapidated cars and Mr. Blodgett noted those could be addressed with existing code enforcement ordinances.

Mayor Bailey said he will work with Mr. Blodgett to bring these issues back after they’ve been fully vetted by staff.

## **MAYOR’S REPORT**

Mayor Bailey reported on the recent moving Memorial Day celebration and the upcoming John Street community discussion, as well as the next budget workshop on June 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss the public input and any other concerns.

## **ATTORNEY’S REPORT**

None

## **TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT**

Mr. Blodgett discussed the issue raised in a previous meeting by Mr. Query regarding school safety at mobile classroom units and the potential for security cameras to be added to each unit. Police Chief Pennington reviewed the issue with CMS police and produced a report which has not yet been shared with this Board or CMS. The report indicates that the mobile units do not currently have security cameras outside each unit and the cost to provide one for each of the 18 mobile units at CMS schools in Matthews is approximately \$32,000. Mr. Query would like to share this information with CMS before they come to the Board on June 11<sup>th</sup> for their conditional rezoning matter.

Mr. Query said he would like the Town to pay for the equipment and labor. Mr. Higdon said he would like to do this as soon as possible, although he did question the total cost. Mr. Melton noted the equipment proposed is comparable to the standard equipment used by CMS elsewhere. MR. Miller urged the Board to quote out the equipment a few different ways.

The Board discussed the proper method of sharing information so as not to compromise security; Town Attorney Charles Buckley explained that to keep it confidential and not part of the public record, the Matthews police chief would communicate the information to the CMS chief.

Mayor Bailey summarized the issue: by consensus the Board agreed to share this information via proper confidential channels with CMS. After discussions and the June 11<sup>th</sup> public hearing for rezoning then the Board can bring the issue of funding the cameras back as an agenda item for discussion.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Mr. Miller to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dement and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Canapinno  
Town Clerk