

**TOWN OF WEDDINGTON
SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
2012 BOARD RETREAT
FRIDAY, MARCH 23, 2012 – 8:30 A.M.
MINUTES**

The Town Council of the Town of Weddington, North Carolina, met in a Special Session at the Firethorne Country Club, 1108 Firethorne Club Drive, Marvin, NC 28173 on March 23, 2012, with Mayor Walker F. Davidson presiding.

Present: Mayor Walker F. Davidson, Mayor Pro Tem Daniel Barry, Councilmembers Pamela Hadley and Barbara Harrison, Planning Board Chairman Dorine Sharp, Planning Board Vice-Chairman Rob Dow, Town Attorney Anthony Fox, Town Planner Jordan Cook, Finance Officer Leslie Gaylord and Town Administrator/Clerk Amy S. McCollum

Absent: Councilmember Werner Thomisser

Visitors: None

Item No. 1. Open the Meeting. Mayor Walker Davidson called the March 23, 2012 Special Town Council Meeting/Board Retreat to order at 8:43 p.m. There was a quorum.

Item No. 2. Training Session by Town Planner Jordan Cook on Subdivision Process. The Town Council received a copy of the following document outlining the Subdivision Review Process:

Town Planner Cook reviewed the following subdivision review process with the Town Council:

Subdivision Review Process:

- 1. Pre-application meeting between Applicant and Town Planner.**
- 2. Sketch Plan Submittal**
 - a. Conservation Subdivision to be reviewed by Town Planner and then Planning Board.
 - i. A “yield plan” is required for a Conservation Subdivision. This yield plan should show how many lots would be allowed in a Conventional Subdivision using a minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet. Conservation Subdivisions are to be density neutral (same number of lots as permitted in Conventional Subdivision).
 - b. Conventional Subdivision to be reviewed only by Town Planner.
 - c. Town Planner and Planning Board shall have 30 days to review the Sketch Plan.
- 3. Public Involvement Meetings (PIM’s)**
 - a. Two PIM’s required. Each PIM should be two hours long, one will be on-site and one will be at Town Hall.
 - b. Property owners within 1,300 feet are notified of PIM’s.
- 4. Preliminary Plat**
 - a. Conservation Subdivision to be reviewed by Town Planner, Planning Board and other appropriate agencies. Conservation Subdivision Preliminary Plat will contain much more detailed information than Conventional Subdivision Preliminary Plat, i.e. conservation lands, etc.
 - i. Town Planner and any others required to attend Site Inspection Meeting prior to Preliminary Plat submittal.
 - ii. Planning Board makes recommendation to Town Council.
 - iii. Town Council reviews and votes.

- b. Conventional Subdivision to be reviewed by Town Planner, Planning Board and other appropriate agencies.
 - i. Planning Board makes recommendation to Town Council.
 - ii. Town Council reviews and votes.

5. Final Plat

- a. Following Town Council approval of Preliminary Plat, the applicant can proceed with preparation of Final Plat. Final Plat must be submitted within two years of the approval of the Preliminary Plat. Final Plat can be submitted in section or phases within five years of Preliminary Plat approval.
- b. Final Plat may not be approved until applicant has installed improvements or obtained a bond or letter of credit guaranteeing their installation. Bonds and Letters of Credit shall be 1.5 times the costs and must be approved by the Planning Board, if not in excess of \$1,000,000 or the Town Council.
- c. Final Plat is reviewed by Town Planner, Planning Board and Town Council.
- d. If approved by the Town Council, the applicant will submit mylars of Final Plat to be recorded at UC Register of Deeds.
- e. Conservation Subdivision Final Plats shall contain maintenance plans and agreement for conservation lands, proof of recordation of conservation lands at UC Register of Deeds and review of Homeowners CCR's.

Mr. Cook advised the Town Council of proposed subdivisions that are being considered. He stated, "We could be looking at two to five subdivisions in the coming year. It is going to be completely new to me and this Council. I have not really reviewed subdivisions over the time I have been here. Our engineer, staff and the Planning Board does a lot of the review work before it gets to the Town Council. I am going to encourage the developers to continue to meet with the Town Council to get your feedback. Developers are saying that the customers want conservation subdivisions and builders do not want one acre lots anymore."

Mayor Davidson expressed that just because the market is changing; Weddington does not have to change its standards. Mayor Davidson wanted everyone to understand that the Town cannot control the overcrowding at the schools and does not have the right to turn down a conventional subdivision.

The following items were also discussed:

- Senate Bill 831 and time extensions that were granted
- Conservation subdivision regulations versus conventional subdivisions
- Conservation land is deed restricted in perpetuity
- Catawba Lands Conservancy was not interested in the conservation land in the past because they did not want small pockets of conservation land
- Charlotte's tax rate increase may push people into Weddington

Item No. 3. Training Session by Finance Officer Leslie Gaylord on Budget Process. The Town Council received the following document outlining the general procedures and timeframe for budget preparation and the FY2013 Budget Preparation Timeline:

Finance Officer Gaylord reviewed the following information with the Town Council:

BUDGET PREPARATION – GENERAL PROCEDURES AND TIMEFRAME

FEBRUARY/MARCH

Request staff and council to notify town administrator and/or finance officer of any potential new or one-time budget expenditures for the upcoming fiscal year.

Determine from council if they would like to see various tax rate scenarios prepared as part of the initial budget preparation.

Discuss preliminary budget and/or list of potential expenditure items at Town Council retreat. Discuss whether the listing of potential budget expenditures is complete.

Schedule Budget Work Session.

MARCH/APRIL

Finance officer prepares preliminary draft(s) of proposed budget which includes:

Actual revenues and expenditures for current fiscal year to date as well as forecasted total current year expenditures. Also includes current year budgeted amounts.

Forecasted operating budget for next fiscal year excluding any one-time or non-recurring budget items or those items to be reviewed by Council (i.e. outside agency funding, fire department paid salaries, parks and recreation budget). Forecast is prepared for the various tax rate scenarios requested by Council.

Schedule of non-operating expenditures and resulting total net revenues/expenditures. Note that at this point in time the budget may not be balanced.

Budget Work Session

Review preliminary draft(s) of budget.

Discuss various tax rate scenarios (if more than one) and determine which tax rate to use in the proposed budget.

Discuss line by line the potential non-operating expenditures and determine whether or not to include them in the proposed budget and/or whether additional information may still be needed (ie. estimated cost, estimated time frame – should the item be included entirely in one fiscal year or will the expenditures be spread over multiple fiscal years, can the item be included in the current fiscal year's budget, etc.). Incorporate any new line items which may be identified during the work session.

Prepare revised proposed budget based on Council decisions and present to Council at either a second budget work session or the April Town Council meeting. At this time the proposed budget is either balanced or shows a proposed appropriation from fund balance. Continue discussions and potential revisions to be made to the proposed budget.

MAY

Present most current revised proposed budget to Council at May Town Council meeting. Incorporate any additional changes Council may request and call for a public hearing on the proposed budget.

Include proposed budget and date of public hearing in the Town newsletter and invite citizen feedback and comments.

JUNE

Hold public hearing on the proposed budget. Council discusses and makes any final changes to the budget. Final budget and budget ordinance incorporating any council changes are approved by Council.

FY2013 Budget Preparation Timeline

March Town Council Meeting

Preliminary Operating Budget

March Town Council Retreat

Discuss potential non-operating expenditures
Discuss tax rate scenarios to be prepared
Discuss fire departments' impact on budget preparation

April Town Council Meeting

Review proposed preliminary budgets
Select appropriate tax rate
Make adjustments as necessary
Determine if additional work session is needed

May Town Council Meeting

Present final proposed budget
Determine if any additional adjustments are needed
Call for public hearing

June Town Council Meeting

Public Hearing
Discuss and make any final adjustments
Approve final budget and tax rate

Items discussed:

- Tax rate is to be set by July 1.
- Revenues are budgeted low and expenditures high. Finance Officer Gaylord advised that the State requires that it be a balanced budget and this fiscal year it does not look like the Town will be adding to the Fund Balance. She stated, "It is our policy to maintain 50% of our budget in fund balance. We never have had any long term capital projects in the past."
- Council discussed that future expenses related to Town Hall should be budgeted long term as a capital expense. Finance Officer Gaylord advised that the Town has usually funded renovations through operations. She stated, "If you do it formally, you have to create a separate fund. Council agreed to allow Mayor Davidson, Councilwoman Harrison and Finance Officer Gaylord to develop an informal plan for showing reserves for future capital needs for Town Hall in the Fund Balance.
- Councilwoman Hadley discussed the following possible Town Hall expenditures: painting, repair of shutters, inspection of roof and windows, etc.

Item No. 4. Preliminary Budget Review for Fiscal Year 2012-2013. The Town Council received a copy of the preliminary operating budget for Fiscal Year 2012-2013, potential non-operating expenditures worksheet, Fund Balance Policy and Memorandum 2011-15 regarding Municipal Cash, Taxes and Fund Balance Available – June 30, 2010.

Finance Officer Gaylord advised that the fire department issue needed to be determined before the Town should begin working on the “wish list” for Fiscal Year 2012-2013. Council advised that they would know more after the April 2 Meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Barry felt that two budgets should be developed – one at 3 cents and one at 5.2 cents. Under the 3 cents scenario, \$300,000 would be budgeted to Providence VFD. Under the 5.2 cents scenario for a Municipal Fire Service Area, Providence VFD would be budgeted for \$600,000, Stallings VFD at \$50,000 and Wesley Chapel VFD at \$243,000.

Council discussed proposed non-operating expenditures to be considered for funding and gave Finance Officer Gaylord direction on these items to be discussed later during the retreat.

Item No. 5. Weddington Master Plan and Updating Land Use Plan. The Town Council received a copy of the Weddington Land Use Plan, Zoning Map and Land Use Map.

Town Planner Cook explained that the Town Council directed staff and the Planning Board at last year’s retreat to wait until the Closed Session Matter was resolved before proceeding with an update to the Land Use Plan. He advised that the Plan should be updated every 10 years. The Planning Board has made recommendations to the Goals and Policies section of the Land Use Plan. Town Planner Cook felt that the Land Use Plan could be expanded to be more comprehensive and to include the Transportation/LARTP documents. He stated, “I am looking for direction from the Town Council to move forward with the Land Use Plan changes. I can create the maps. We can have public involvement meetings. We could use COG hours to help.”

Planning Board Vice-Chairman Rob Dow stated, “I have seen a great deal of change in Weddington and it has been a long time since we have done a thorough survey. The Planning Board has used the survey and Land Use Plan as the basis for our decisions. I think that needs to be reviewed.”

Council agreed to the following:

- Work on updating the Land Use Plan
- Update Land Use Map
- Have staff send past surveys to the Town Council and ask COG through member hours to help assist in the development of a survey.

Council discussed that a new survey may show that residents want different kinds of housing options.

Mayor Davidson – We can take a survey and people want stuff. The price of that property dictates what is going to be on that property. People say they want a sit down restaurant but they do not realize you have to have the other stuff to get that.

Item No. 6. Buffer/Transitional Zoning. Council advised that this item came up during the Matthews and Spittle Land Use Map Changes and discussed how to buffer commercial areas from other residential areas. The Council expressed that this is something that the Town should be aware of as the Town grows and should be better defined in the Land Use Plan.

Item No. 7. Policy and Procedure for Utilization of Town Attorney. The Town Council received a copy of the current policy and procedure for utilization of the Town Attorney:

TOWN COUNCIL POLICY ON UTILIZATION OF TOWN ATTORNEY

The Mayor and each member of the Weddington Town Council shall have equal access to the Town Attorney. The Mayor and each Councilmember shall use their discretion when utilizing Town Attorney

services since such services are provided on an hourly basis. Should the Mayor or Councilmember (upon consultation with the Town Attorney) determine that a request for Town Attorney legal services will generate legal fees in excess of two (2) hours of an attorney's work product time, then the item shall require prior approval of the Council before the work is performed.

Councilwoman Harrison - This Council should decide if the current policy is acceptable to them.

Councilwoman Hadley - If one person has an idea and uses two hours with the Town Attorney and then they bring that back to the Town Council and they have no use for it then we have wasted his time and our money. Before research hours and attorney fees have been used, there needs to be some type of solution where we have some type of consensus. I think we should have a gentleman's understanding if you are going to use that time that it at least is agreeable to the majority of the Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Barry – I would hate for the Town Council to establish some type of policy to eliminate the ability to talk with the Town Attorney.

Attorney Fox - The policy puts the burden on me also. We do not have a problem with the current Council and Council usually funnels questions through Amy. Also, when the Council contacts me I keep those individual conversations between me and that council person. If I start sharing conversations, I have to share with everyone.

Council was in agreement to keep the policy as is.

Item No. 8. Invocation/Prayer. Attorney Fox reviewed a memo he prepared regarding an update on the legality of prayer at Town Council Meetings. Mayor Davidson felt that the prayers that he gives would be acceptable under the guidelines he reviewed.

Item No. 9. Establishing Key Objectives for 2012-2013 and Map Out a Strategy to Accomplish These Objectives. The Town Council noted the following objectives for 2012-2013:

- Fire Service
- Land Use Plan (Survey, Retirement housing, transitional/buffer zoning, Land Use Map)
- Budget – 3 cents versus 5.2 cents
- Closure of WCWAA Issue
- Rea Road Extension
- Contract Deputies – Councilwoman Harrison questioned whether there needs to be extra patrols on the weekend because of the drug issue. Council felt that the level of service needed from the Town should be spelled out to the Sheriff's Office.
- Water Tower – Mayor Davidson gave a brief update and advised that Union County authorized \$35,000 for a study to include up to five sites and described the target area to be studied. When Union County finds the five sites they will come back to Weddington to find out which one the Town wants.
- YMCA/Library/Park – There is no interest from the Town Council to buy land for a park. Council does not believe that a library will happen due to the budget issues at Union County. Councilwoman Harrison feels that the YMCA is a business and does not have any passion in pursuing. Councilwoman Hadley felt that the YMCA would be a perfect fit for Weddington and also expressed that she would like to see the footprint of the downtown commercial area increase. Mayor Davidson advised that the Town asked the YMCA to try to come to Weddington without commercial involved or to be located inside the current shopping center area. Mayor Pro Tem Barry felt that if the Town wanted a YMCA then the Town needed to pursue.

Item No. 10. Rank and Discuss Town Financial Future Priorities. Council discussed potential budget expenditures. They decided not to install the column drops or red wrapping on the street lights for this year at Christmas and to not give funding to CLC this year or next. Councilwoman Harrison volunteered to decorate the Town Hall inside and out for Christmas to save money. Council agreed to put the following in the proposed budget at a 5.2 cent tax rate:

- Banner change out for Christmas
- New Christmas tree for Town Hall
- Lighting of two outside trees for Christmas
- \$1,000 towards the Tree Lighting Event
- \$1,000 towards Town Festival
- \$1,200 for Historic Preservation Commission
- \$500.00 for Easter Egg Hunt
- \$10,000 for painting and maintenance of Town Hall
- \$250.00 Litter Sweep
- \$1,000 for watering of medians
- \$3,000 for Urban Forester
- \$10,000 for Consulting
- \$26,000 for Technology Upgrades
- \$600,000 for Providence VFD, \$243,000 for Wesley Chapel VFD and \$50,000 for Stallings VFD
- \$1,500 for increased audit fees
- \$13,145 for NCDOT sidewalk agreement

Finance Officer Gaylord advised that under this scenario the Town would have a \$101,000 deficit. Council discussed which items were reoccurring. She advised under a 3 cent tax rate with the Town giving Providence \$300,000 there would be a surplus of approximately \$40,659. Council advised that they would discuss at a later time COLA or merit increases for staff.

Council felt that Town Administrator/Clerk McCollum should have the ability to authorize expenditures up to \$500 and up to \$2,000 a month contingent upon those items being budgeted. Council requested that she would report those items monthly to the Town Council.

Council set the next budget meeting to be held April 16 at 5:00 p.m.

Item No. 11. Adjournment. Councilwoman Harrison moved to adjourn the March 23, 2012 Special Town Council Work Session/Retreat. All were in favor, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES: Councilmembers Hadley, Harrison and Mayor Pro Tem Barry
NAYS: None

The meeting ended at 2:25 p.m.

Walker F. Davidson, Mayor

Amy S. McCollum, Town Clerk