



TOWN OF PRINCEVILLE
Board of Commissioners Minutes
Regular Session
July 15, 2024, 7:00PM
201 S. Main Street, Tarboro, NC 27886

Board Present: Mayor Bobbie Jones, Mayor ProTem JoeRoam Myrick, Commissioner Vananza Brown, Commissioner Lee V. Staton, and Commissioner Alvin Jones

Staff Present: Interim Town Manager Ronald Jackson, Assistant Town Manager Alexis Carter, Town Clerk Stephanie McBeth

I MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY MAYOR JONES AT 6:00 PM

II Invocation: Mayor ProTem Myrick

III Public Comments: (Limited to five minutes each as announced by Mayor Jones)

1. **Chief Deputy C. Williams (Tarboro, NC Sheriff's Dept.)** addressed the concerns and issues of the Town of Princeville's Board Members and Princeville's citizens regarding the Sheriff's Department's response to 911 calls and recording incidents. Deputy Williams assured everyone that he lives on respect and integrity and runs the department based upon these principles. He also stated that the department tries to answer Princeville's calls within 3-4 minutes. Commissioner Jones referred to the minutes from June 17, 2024, about shot calls at Asbury Park not being recorded. Deputy Williams said that a monthly report is pulled by the Sheriff's Dept. and items could not be added to or taken away from that report. Deputy Williams pointed out that there is a difference between shot calls and someone being shot. Commissioner Jones also mentioned a debt that was left by the Town of Princeville in the amount of \$125K under former Sheriff Knight that the Sheriff's Dept. never pursued. Mayor Jones assured the citizens that Princeville is one of the safest towns and commended the Sheriff's Dept. for their part in this. Mayor ProTem Myrick reminded Mayor Jones about the safety concerns of some of our citizens; he added that his brother who lives in the community has cameras on his property which never pick up officers' visibility. Mayor ProTem Myrick also stated that Commissioners Brown and Staton also shared his concern about the Sheriff's Dept.'s visibility in the community. Some citizens in attendance, however, complimented the Sheriff's Dept. on their visibility in their communities. Sheriff C. Atkinson then stepped up to the podium and asked if we still wanted Edgecombe County to provide these services for Princeville. Commissioned Brown responded affirmatively, but if it's done effectively. Mr. Ron Jackson stated that at the rate the Sheriff's Dept. charges us, we need to count our blessings! He added that we need them, and they support us so we need to be supportive of them. The officer stated that "taxes" are not the issues and he understands that what we need is more coverage. He stated that the Sheriff's Dept. will continue to provide services and they take their jobs to heart.

2. **Ms. Yvonne Shaw (203 3rd St., Princeville)** talked about several concerns that she had. Her first concern was the cleanliness of the town and how workers leave POD containers in citizens' yards after work is done, namely on Geddy Ave. Another concern that she mentioned was tree limbs overhanging on power lines. She mentioned that Edgecombe Co. EMC had done some work to address this but had not done a good job. Her next item of concern was house repairs that have been needed since previous floods. Next, Ms. Shaw mentioned bulk items not being picked up in a timely manner, and she believes that people outside of Princeville are bringing/leaving some of these items in our communities. Ms. Shaw also expressed concern about the number of citizens that we have lost recently/just this month and over the past year. Lastly, she talked about seeing the Sheriff Dept.'s visibility on a regular basis.

Mayor Jones mentioned sending out letters to citizens about property maintenance. He also said that cable tv companies were responsible for trimming tree limbs on streets and highways. He stated that the DOT also takes care of some clean-ups, and that our Public Works Dept. does as well.

Mayor ProTem Myrick addressed Ms. Shaw and advised her that some of the Sheriff Dept.'s reporting did not pertain to the period that Deputy Williams referred to, and that he knows there were NO shot calls filed on THAT report. Ms. Shaw encouraged the Board to be mindful of their tone, what they say, and how they speak. Commissioned Jones stated that he stands on what he says.

Mr. Ron Jackson asked Mayor Jones if he would like Public Works to pick up the bulk items Ms. Shaw mentioned, and he advised him to call GFL and let them take care of that. Mr. Jackson said that he would.

3. **Mr. Curmilus Dancy II (Dancy Communications Network Founder)** stated that he supports the Sheriff's Dept. and was disturbed by Mayor ProTem Myrick's attitude towards the Dept. He encouraged everyone to be respectful and thinks we owe the Sheriff's Dept. an apology.
4. **Ms. Tyra Hines (Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments)** said that UCPCG is doing a lot of background work regarding the house repairs on 602 King Ave. and 605 Otis Ave. She said they are working on getting RFP's out and getting funds released for the work needed for these two homes.

IV. Announcements

- A. Carolina Family Health Center Wellness Program Every Wednesday at 6:00 PM
- B. Smoke Testing of Sanitary Sewers in Edgecombe County – Mayor Jones informed everyone that smoke arising from the sewers was not toxic/hazardous, and the testing would be completed within two weeks. Mayor ProTem Myrick asked Mr. Ron Jackson if a report would be given after the testing had been completed, and Mr. Jackson said that Mr. Mike Evans of Edgecombe County would provide a report.
- C. Special Call Meeting July 23, 2024, at 6:00 PM

V. Adjustment to Agenda: None

VI. Approval of the Agenda (Recommendation: Approval): Commissioner Jones motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Mayor ProTem Myrick. Vote carried 4-0.

VII. Consent Agenda: Motioned by Mayor ProTem Myrick to approve the consent agenda Seconded by Commissioner Jones. Vote carried 4-0.

**A. June 17, 2024, Regular Session Meeting Minutes (Recommendation: Approval)
APPROVED**

**B. June 17, 2024, Executive Session Meeting Minutes (Recommendation: Approval)
APPROVED**

VIII. Presentations - None

IX. Department Reports

A. Finance Reports (Check detail, Debit card, Budget vs Actual):

1. **Budget Amendments (Recommendation: Approval):** Mayor ProTem Myrick asked Mr. Ron Jackson questions regarding some amounts on the financial reports. One question he had pertained to the \$123K payment issued to the Fire Dept. Mr. Jackson explained the payment was associated with a grant worked out between the Fire Dept. and FEMA. Commissioner Jones added that it is the Fire Dept.'s responsibility to send that money to FEMA, and FEMA will in turn send them a portion of it back.

Mayor Jones also inquired about some ACH payments, for which Mr. Jackson provided answers. He then asked Mr. Jackson about the \$300K directed grant, and Mr. Jackson reminded him what that grant can be used for. Commissioner Jones asked Mr. Jackson if part of the \$300K can be used for the software that the League suggested. Mr. Jackson told him about some better packages that we are looking into at this time, Oracle being one of them. Mr. Jackson also invited the Board to sit in on some of the demonstrations we're having. Mr. Jackson also advised Commissioner Jones as well that the packages we're researching supersede the one the League offers. Commissioner Jones inquired if there will be storage fees associated with these packages, and Mr. Jackson said that with the packages being Cloud-based, there will be some storage fees and he would keep the Board abreast of them.

Mayor Jones asked Mr. Jackson if information pertaining to ACH payments could be added to the blank column on the report. Mr. Jackson said that could be done.

Mayor ProTem Myrick asked Mr. Jackson about amendments, and Mr. Jackson explained to him that his policy is not to have any negatives in the reports at the end of the Fiscal Year and wants them completely balanced as of July 1. He asked the Board if they could wait until September to start identifying funds for the housing projects.

Motioned by Mayor ProTem Myrick to approve the budget amendments, seconded by Commissioner Jones. Vote carried 4-0.

- B. Public Works:** Mayor ProTem Myrick asked Mr. Jackson about our zero-turn lawn mowers. Mr. Jackson explained that we currently have two in operation. He added that we are currently working to get our equipment repaired and running and to acquire some new equipment as needed so that we can have more than one mobile crew at a time to help us beautify Princeville.

Mayor ProTem asked Mr. Jackson about the bathroom doors at Heritage Park. Mr. Jackson told him that we are currently working on getting new ones. Mayor ProTem Myrick mentioned that Mr. Bottoms had ordered bathroom doors for Heritage Page, and Mr. Jackson said that he was told those doors didn't fit. Commissioner Jones added that those doors were too heavy for the sheetrock there. Mr. Jackson was asked where those doors were, and he responded that he was under the impression that they had been returned, because they were not in our inventory.

Mayor ProTem Myrick stated that our dump truck had not been serviced and the Senior Center van also needs to be serviced.

Mayor Jones asked Mr. Jackson about our missing equipment and wanted to know if we have insurance on it. Mr. Jackson said that equipment was not insured because of what the equipment was. Some of the other Board members thought that a/some 0-turns were missing, and Mr. Jackson stated that he was not aware of that but would speak with Mr. Porter, our Public Works Director, about that. Mr. Jackson also advised the Board of his plans to get an inventory system in place for the office so that he could tag and track the office's equipment/assets.

- C. **Senior Center:** Mayor ProTem Myrick inquired about the Senior Center's \$4447K grant. Mr. Jackson that was a 3-year/renewing grant. Mayor ProTem Myrick also asked about the money that Commissioner Jones was going to donate to the Senior Center. Mr. Jackson told him that we will have to discuss this with our attorney to determine how/if this will affect ordinances, etc.

Mayor Jones asked what the maximum capacity is for the Senior Center, and Mr. Jackson said that he would get that information to him and that the Fire Dept. is currently working on an evacuation plan for the center. Mayor Jones was concerned about the capacity limit, noting that he thought the center already had about 61 attendees, and Ms. Tate is still recruiting.

- D. **Edgecombe County Sheriff Office (ECSO):** Mayor ProTem Myrick mentioned that the Sheriff Dept.'s report was not dated and the importance of dating their reports. He also mentioned the Sheriff's Dept. not responding to calls/reports, which he stated that other attending citizens would agree with.

- E. **Carolina Family Health Centers, Inc./Freedom Hill Community Health Center:** No update.

- F. **AmeriCorps:** Mr. Jackson discussed that he was told it would cost \$1300.00 - \$1400.00 to repair a water line at the community garden, but Mr. Matthews with Edgecombe County did the repairs at no charge. Mayor Jones asked Mr. Jackson about the four flower boxes outside the Senior Center, and Mr. Jackson said they were taken care of.

- G. **Princeville Fire Department:** The Fire Dept. received 100 smoke detectors three weeks ago, and if citizens call into the Fire Dept., they can get one installed in their home. Mayor Jones asked about CO detectors, and Commissioner Jones said they were built into the smoke detectors.

X. Town Manager's Report:

- A. **Housing Repair:** Mr. Jackson talked about putting bids out for contractors to do home repairs. Mayor ProTem Myrick suggested applying for a \$50K grant for this project. **Commissioner Brown motioned to find up to \$50K for the home repairs but added**

that we will work with what we get, seconded by Commissioner Jones. Vote carried 4-0.

- B. Cemetery Clean Up:** Mr. Jackson reminded everyone of our upcoming Community Cemetery Clean-up Project that is scheduled for Saturday, July 27, 2024, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm., with lunch served from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm. He said that this is so that we can get the cemetery to a point where our Public Works Dept. can maintain it. Mayor ProTem Myrick said that he will let Commissioner Jones use his riding lawn mower that day since he will not be in town for the clean-up. Mayor Jones added that he will not be there for the clean-up as well.
- C. Heritage Park Update (Famer’s Market Update):** Mr. Jackson mentioned the bathroom doors at Heritage again and also said that he would like to see the building used for other things – other than just for rentals – that could also generate revenue. Mr. Jackson also spoke about his meeting today with Freedom Hill and some plans they talked about for Heritage Park to be used for multiple purposes, including having a playground. He stated that he will keep the Board abreast of those conversations and plans in the future. Mr. Jackson also discussed changes to the plans for Heritage Park/the Farmer’s Market to omit the fence where the dumpster is so the walking trail can be widened. Mayor Jones said that he did not understand this plan/idea, and Mr. Jackson asked him if he wanted to table the plan for now; the Mayor said that he would like to.
- D. Financial Software Update:** This was already discussed earlier in tonight’s meeting.
- E. Town Manager Recruitment:** Mr. Jackson said that Mr. Joe Durham with NCLM has posted this position, and Mr. Jackson said he will share the resumes with the Board as they come in.
- F. Financial Director Recruitment:** Mr. Jackson said that he is also working on looking for candidates for this position and said how important it is to find someone with local government experience. He mentioned Temp Solutions as an option which the State uses. Mr. Jackson stated that he had conducted several interviews for this position but had not yet found the right candidate.

- G. **Mobile Museum:** An RFP is being worked on for this. **Mayor ProTem Myrick motioned to put RFP out for mobile museum repairs, seconded by Commissioner Jones. Vote carried 4-0.**

Mayor ProTem Myrick motioned that if money is available for a generator for the museum, get a quote for the repair and a quote for the replacement of the generator, seconded by Commissioner Jones. Vote carried 4-0.

- H. **Auditor:** An RFP is being worked on for this.

XI. Attorney's Report:

- A. Mutual Blvd Mobile Home Matter
- B. Deed of Trust from Henry D. Pitt
- C. Town Manager MOU
- D. 602 King Avenue & 605 Otis Avenue

The Attorney was not present for this meeting. **Mayor ProTem Myrick motioned to move this discussion to the Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Jones. Vote carried 4-0.**

XII. Old Business:

- A. Planning Board – Refer to the Attorney's Report. **Commissioner Jones motioned to move this discussion to the Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Brown. Vote carried 4-0.**
- B. CDBG-NR Update – The Resolution dated May 18, 2022, was read by Mayor Jones. (Please refer to the handout passed out by Ms. Alexis Carter.)

XIII. New Business:

- A. **53 Acre Funding (Resolution)** – Mr. Jackson stated that OSBM had funded \$2.1 million for the 88 Acre Project then he said this funding could be used as a “contingency” for the 53 Acre Project.

XIV. Board Comments

Mayor ProTem Myrick mentioned the elevator at the Senior Center being operational now. He also mentioned cemetery ownership, and Mr. Jackson stated that we can also reach out to morticians in our quest to determine who owns areas within the cemetery. Mayor ProTem Myrick asked Mr. Jackson if we were required to add the change we recently made to extend the time for public

comments to our ordinances, and Mr. Jackson said that he would find this out. Mayor ProTem Myrick also stated that he hopes he was not offensive in what he said tonight regarding observations and views pertaining to the Sheriff Dept.'s visibility, performance, reports, etc.

Mayor ProTem Myrick motioned to end Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Jones. Vote carried 4-0. Executive Session:

- N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1)(6) To prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of the Chapter 132 of the General Statutes.
 - Personnel

- N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4) To discuss relating to the location or expansion of industries agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations or to discuss matters relating to military installation closure or realignment.
 - Economic Development

Mayor ProTem Myrick motioned to reconvene the Regular Session, seconded by Commissioner Jones. Vote carried 4-0.

Mayor Jones read Mr. Jackson's MOU. Commissioner Brown asked Mr. Jackson if he wanted backpay, and he said that was not necessary. Commissioner Jones said that it would be okay for Mr. Jackson to get backpay, and Mr. Jackson said that he would look into it. **Mayor ProTem Myrick motioned to approve Mr. Jackson's MOU, seconded by Commissioner Jones. Vote carried 4-0.**

Commissioner Brown motioned to disband the Planning Board, seconded by Commissioner Staton. Vote carried 4-0.

Ms. Carter suggested that when we move forward, we should do so with clarity. She stated that we do need a Planning Board. Commissioner Brown said that we need to start anew with the Planning Board then.

XVI. Adjournment: Mayor ProTem Myrick motioned to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Jones. Vote carried 4-0.

Bobbie Jones 09/29/24
Bobbie Jones, Mayor Date

Dina Wilbanks 8/29/24
Dina Wilbanks, Finance Clerk Date

