

Town of Macclesfield  
Board of Commissioners  
Regular Session Meeting  
October 9, 2023 @ 5:00 pm

Mayor Emily Turner called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. Members in attendance were Mayor Turner, Mayor Pro-Tem/Commissioner Paula Lewis, Commissioner Joyce Braxton, Commissioner Charles Lewis, Commissioner Jean Wooten-Jiles, Town Clerk Gracieann Etheridge, Town Administrator Jennifer Stanley, and Public Works Director Benjy Lassiter. Special guests in attendance were Mr. Rich Moore with McDavid Associates, and residents Mr. Michael Speight and Mr. Sanjee Kumar.

Commissioner P Lewis made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner C Lewis seconded the motion and with none opposed the motion carried and the agenda was approved.

Commissioner P Lewis made a motion to approve all minutes submitted. Commissioner Braxton seconded the motion and with none opposed the motion carried and the minutes were approved. Commissioner Wooten-Jiles asked for an amendment to the minutes on page 2 paragraph 3, if anyone had found out the maximum capacity for the community building. Mrs. Stanley stated that she had found out the *maximum capacity is determined by allowing fifteen (15) square feet per person* and this made the maximum capacity at the community building one hundred ten (110). Commissioner Wooten Jiles also asked about a sign stating who to call in the event of an emergency and Mrs. Stanley responded that she is getting those notifications ready to be posted. Commissioner Wooten-Jiles asked for a formal letter on town letterhead to be submitted to the Upper Coastal Plains Council of Government naming her as the town's representative. Mrs. Stanley will get that prepared for her.

The board recognized Mr. Sanjee Kumar to approach the podium to speak to the board. He thanked all for allowing him the opportunity to speak. He then proceeded to speak on the wellbeing and sustainability of the family-owned Macclesfield Grocery Store, and how the store is vital to the community. Every business faces challenges but one challenge the grocery store is facing is the rising cost of electricity. With such a small population in town the store cannot continue to absorb the cost of the high electric bills. When he approached IGA, they refused to come to a town with only 450 people. He is proposing a subsidy on the electric bill to help make it more affordable as well as being able to continue to offer affordable pricing for the goods sold at the store. He feels that such a subsidy will show that the town supports it's local businesses and has the best interest of the residents.

With no more citizen concerns, discussion began on old business. Mrs. Stanley reminded the board of Mr. Bruce Naegelen's visit in January when he presented the results of his Economic Development Study. She then stated that she met with Mr. Naegelen and he has provided a Memorandum of Understanding for review by the board. He informed Mrs. Stanley that with the progression of the project, the town could place vacant houses and business on a vacant building

registry. There would need to be an advisory committee, appointed by the town, that would then discover and implement ways to revitalize the town and make it more inviting to visitors. The attorney has reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding and sees no problems with it. Discussion began regarding the trouble finding willing committee members. The project would begin March 2024 and be completed September 2024. Mayor Turner stated that she would volunteer for the committee. When asked if the committee needed to be members of the board, it was stated that it could be anyone with positive interests in the town. Commissioner P Lewis made a motion to accept the Memorandum of Understanding. Commissioner C Lewis seconded the motion and with none opposed, the motion carried. It was mentioned that Ms. Debra Jenkins would be a good member but could not meet until after 6:00 pm. Ms. Tina Waters was also mentioned for consideration and Mr. Michael Speight volunteered to be on the committee. It was agreed that the meetings could be held at the town hall.

The next item was the Fall Festival update. Commissioner P Lewis stated that the employees all worked hard all day Saturday. Mrs. Etheridge stated that all vendors were polite and eager. The band was a hit as well. Mrs. Stanley stated that the rain off and on in the morning may have scared some people away but once the weather cleared it was a beautiful day. She also stated that the band agreed to come earlier if we have them back. Discussion began on booking the band for the July 3<sup>rd</sup> event and the next fall festival. The 50/50 raffle was a hit – The town sold 637 tickets and the prize was \$318.50. When it was asked who the winner was, it was stated that Raina Lewis was the winner. Mrs. Stanley stated that the band member's daughter, Autumn drew the winning ticket and handed it to Commissioner P Lewis. It was asked if the town made or lost money and Mrs. Stanley stated that until the \$2000 check from the Chamber is received, the town didn't even break even. Mr. Kumar stated that if the town needs any assistance in preparation for any events, he has a moving/junk removal business, "College Hunks", and would be happy to help. It was explained that they are a moving company and offers a 5% discount to Macclesfield residents. Mrs. Etheridge asked Mr. Kumar for information so it can be posted on the website and facebook page.

The Cycle NC event went well. There were over 800 cyclists that came through town. There was one near incident with a truck not paying attention and coming close to hitting a cyclist. There was a big turnout. There was one problem with a couple dogs chasing the cyclists. When it was stated to call the Sheriff's office immediately, Mrs. Etheridge explained that when she has called, they state that they will send someone out as soon as possible. Mayor Turner stated that she would get the contact information for Eugene and Amy (the two dog catchers) to Mrs. Etheridge.

Mrs. Stanley stated that sadly the SECU has declined to install the ATM at this time since they are facing upcoming updates on the ATM machines and don't want to pay the cost for installation just to have to turn around and change out the machine. They will keep the paperwork for 12 months and review at that time. Mayor Turner asked if a different site might change their minds. She stated that the town owns the spot between the dumpster and the fence at the Kwik Stop would be a good spot. Mr. Kumar stated that the ATM machines are installed through the state and if they don't think they will have much use, they won't install.

Mrs. Stanley explained that the attorney has reviewed the resolution for the fire tax and has found only one part questionable – A General Statute is referenced that should really be referencing a different statute. The attorney stated that if the town passes the resolution, it would take the focus off the town and onto the county. Commissioner Wooten-Jiles made a motion to table the fire tax resolution. Commissioner P Lewis seconded the motion and with none opposed the fire tax resolution was tabled until next month.

Commissioner Wooten-Jiles began the update on the CDBG-NR grant. Mr. Chris Harris and Mr. Tony Jackson came to town to inspect the homes. They went to each of the six homes and interviewed the resident, took pictures, and made notes of the issues in each home. Mr. Tirence Horne and Tyra Hines have already started writing the grant. Mr. Harris will turn in his recommendations to the town, the committee will meet again, and a public hearing will have to be held to make the final decisions known and the reasoning behind them. The application is being submitted for \$850,000.

Mr. Rich Moore, McDavid Associates, began to explain the Resolutions for the Asset Inventory Assessment Grants. Mrs. Stanley stated that the attorney has not responded regarding the grant resolutions yet. The first one is for the water system and will include a rate study, system evaluation and GIS mapping of the system, and a capital improvement plan for the water system. Commissioner Braxton made a motion to table the Resolution until next month. Commissioner Wooten-Jiles seconded the motion and with none opposed the motion passed. Mr. Moore stated that the Wastewater grant would include a rate study, GIS mapping, system evaluation, CCTV of the collection system, and a Capital Improvement Plan. Commissioner Braxton made a motion to table this resolution as well. Commissioner C Lewis seconded the motion and with none opposed the motion passed.

Mrs. Stanley reported that Ms. Natalie Rountree visited the town on September 20<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Rountree discussed how towns were placed on the Unit Assistance List, amendments that needed to be completed for changes made after the budget was approved. She recommended that two people open the mail together, the town should work with the county to improve the collection rate. She recommended that Mrs. Etheridge be sent to Clerk classes and become a Certified Clerk as well as being named the Deputy Finance Officer. There needs to be another set of eyes on bank reconciliations each month. Ms. Rountree recommended a shortened Purchasing Policy, Bank Reconciliation Policy, and a Public Comment Policy. Commissioner P Lewis made a motion to name Mrs. Gracieann Etheridge the Deputy Finance Officer. With none opposed the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner C Lewis asked who had the credit cards. It was stated that Mrs. Stanley and Mr. Lassiter have credit cards. Commissioner P Lewis made a motion to accept all three policies presented. Commissioner Braxton seconded the motion and with none opposed the motion passed. Commissioner Wooten-Jiles asked if there was any reference to when we will be off the Unit Assistance List. It was explained that there was no mention of that but once we get the 2022 and 2023 audits completed, it would be a good start. It was also asked if Ms. Alicia Melton could come back and do another rate study for the town.

Mrs. Stanley reported that a quarterly report as well as the monthly report was included in the agenda packets. The savings accounts earned \$2,953.09 interest the past month. For the quarter we deposited \$505,147.01 and paid out \$483,640.05. She stated that if there were any questions regarding the finance report to please ask.

Mrs. Stanley reported that there are several trainings coming up that staff is participating in. Mr. Lassiter will be attending a Unit Assistance List training on October 25<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Lassiter and Mr. Wooten will be attending a Lead Service Line Inventory class on October 19<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Wooten will be attending a Cross Connection Class on October 16-17<sup>th</sup>, Mrs. Stanley will be attending the class in Chapel hill October 24-26<sup>th</sup>, and Mrs. Etheridge will be attending Clerks Academy on October 27<sup>th</sup>.

Mrs. Stanley explained that the attorney responded regarding the Member Cooperative Bid Agreement with Electricities that if approved would give Electricities permission to bid contracts on the town's behalf. The attorney found no issues with the contract. Commissioner Wooten-Jiles made a motion to approve the contract. Commissioner P Lewis seconded the motion and with none opposed the motion carried.

Commissioner Wooten-Jiles asked about how to get a class approved if the board has already met. Mrs. Stanley explained that there could be a phone vote to approve. She stated that she did find out that the town has access to NCLM attorneys at no cost.

Mr. Lassiter reported that he had gotten prices on shelters from Leonard, Cardinal, and a place in Wilson with the place in Wilson being the least expensive. The price given was \$2300 with a vertical roof. Commissioner C Lewis asked if there was money in the budget for a shelter. Mrs. Stanley stated that she would double check but there should be funds in Capital Improvement. It was also mentioned that the gazebo needs work on the steps. Mr. Lassiter then reported that he had sent the contract back to Xylem and has left messages, but no one has come out yet. He stated that he would call them again tomorrow. Commissioner P Lewis stated that she would contact the main boss tomorrow as well. He was told it would take approximately three weeks to complete the work needed. Mr. Lassiter reported that Mrs. Stanley has asked about installing the large over the road Christmas decorations and he has been getting prices but has not heard back from the pole supplier.

It was asked if there would be a tree lighting this year. After some discussion it was agreed that there would not be.

It was also clarified that there would be a Trunk or Treat at the town parking lot on Halloween night from 5-7 pm.

Mayor Turner stated that when Mrs. Etheridge takes over Facebook, Santa Claus will flood it with posts and she would only approve one per week. She also stated that sometimes people mistake us for UK Macclesfield.

Commissioner Wooten-Jiles asked if the tent revival has insurance. It was explained that Mrs. Norville has brought by the certificate of insurance and the electric fee. Mayor Turner asked Commissioner P Lewis to offer the opening for the revival. Mayor Turner stated that she can let Mrs. Norville know how many seats to reserve.

Commissioner Wooten-Jiles asked about the holiday rental of the community building. It was explained that all rental dates are first come, first served and the key can be picked up the day before. The only way to reserve a date is to pay the fees and fill out the application.

Commissioner C Lewis asked about the money for the shelter. It was mentioned to maybe hold a bake sale. Mrs. Stanley will be checking the budget for funding for the shelter.

Commissioner Braxton mentioned holding bingo at the community building but it was stated that it was something Mr. Speight wanted to bring up at a later date. She also stated the benches turned out good and she was pleased and appreciative of the work done to install them.

Commissioner Braxton asked about the garbage cart at Ms. Jeanene Hamilton's. There is still service at the home so there should still be a garbage cart there. Staff will check and make sure there is a cart still there. She asked about a lot before the trailer park, what can be done about the grass. It was brought up that there have been two holes repaired but two more have appeared near Mayor Turner's home. Mr. Lassiter will check on them.

Commissioner Braxton asked about the steps to the gazebo as well as some missing pickets in the railing. She stated she may have some spare pickets if needed. There was discussion regarding the two vehicles belonging to Codie Etheridge being parked on town right of way. There have been letters sent to request they be moved.

Mr. Lassiter explained that the storm water system is in severe need of repair. He has been asking Mr. Moore for any information on Storm Sewer Grants. Mrs. Stanley stated that she had found a file in the other office on a Storm Sewer Grant and will review it.

Commissioner Braxton asked about the lot behind the shop and the high grass there. Mr. Lassiter sent letters to the owner and will send another one certified to be sure the letter is received. If the town cuts the lot, they can place a lien against the property. It was stated that one citizen stated that the "town is becoming like a gated community with the grass rules". City of Greenville has very strict rules – there are three people that obtain an administrative search warrant, enter the house and if necessary condemn it on the spot.

Commissioner Braxton asked about the house on Green Street with all the trash piled out front. Mr. Lassiter will call the landlord and have him explain to the tenants that the cart needs to be pushed to the road to be picked up.

Discussion began on the situation with the electric bills for the grocery store. Mrs. Etheridge printed the account history to show when the rates were corrected. Mr. Lassiter stated he would call Wilson and Pinetops to try to get clarity on the meter itself. Would the town be able to charge the grocery store what the town pays Wilson at cost. After discussion, it was decided that Mr. Lassiter would gather information and Mrs. Stanley would inform the board and either a special meeting or a phone vote would take place.

Commissioner Braxton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner P Lewis seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Paula Lewis