



**Minutes of Regular Town of Fremont
Meeting
January 19th, 2016 (amended)**

The regular meeting of the Board of Aldermen for the Town of Fremont, NC was held at 7:30 p.m. on January 19th, 2016. Present were:

W. Darron Flowers, Mayor
W. T. Smith, Alderman
Leon Mooring, Alderman
Joyce C. Reid, Alderwoman
Annie Lewis, Alderwoman
Al Lewis, Alderman
Joyce M. Artis, Alderwoman

Also in attendance were Interim Town Administrator Barbara Aycock, Town Clerk Marti Jones, Finance Officer Shameshia Fennell, Billing and Collections Clerk Shannon Daly, Public Works Director Tim Howell and Chief Paul Moats.

Quorum Present: YES

Call to Order

Mayor Flowers called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Rev. Ira Reynolds offered a prayer. Alderwoman Annie Lewis led all in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

Agenda

Mayor Flowers stated he would like to amend the agenda under Action items A. It should read water and sewer project, and also at the end of the meeting place a closed session item for personnel. No more comments. Alderman Smith made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Alderwoman Reid seconded the motion. No discussion or comments. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the minutes for the December 15th, 2015 Meeting. Alderwoman Joyce Reid made a motion to accept the minutes of the December 15th, 2015 meeting. Alderman Annie Lewis seconded the motion. **Alderwoman Reid stated on page 5 she did not oppose the Budget Amendment #5.** Should read Alderwoman Artis stated on page 5 she did not oppose the Budget Amendment #5. No more discussion or comments. Alderman Mooring made a motion to approve the amended minutes. Alderwoman Lewis seconded the motion.

Action Items

A) Michael McAllister (report on water and sewer project) and current application with CDBG.

Mr. McAllister stated we should be wrapped up with the water project in the next few weeks. A lot of the issues with driveways, bushes etc. will be taken care of when they do the punch list.

On January 18th, 2016 the water authority released the tentative grant awards and we did not get it. The meeting will be held at the old rural center building on Thursday January 21st. We had applied for \$2 million for the Norwayne pump station. He stated we had to do something soon with this pump station. Mr. McAllister stated that we may have to back up and look at it another way. He is proposing that we look at USDA. This is a 40 year note but they also combine with 50-60% grant money depending on the numbers. At the beginning the USDA offers a SEARCH grant that is a grant for \$30,000 that allows you to do the preliminary study and the environmental report to start that ball rolling. We need to discuss what other funding opportunities we can find because we have a lot of pump stations that need to be replaced in town or we are going to be in a serious mess.

Mayor Flowers asked to talk about the water first. He asked if everyone has been hooked up yet.

Mr. McAllister states that he has 1 more tie in to do. He will have the contractor over here to walk everything and do a punch list to fix everything and he will not receive the final payment until everything is finished correctly.

Mayor Flowers asked if the tie in would cut off water in town?

Mr. McAllister states it will for a short period of time. He will contact the contractor and find out a more definite answer of what part of town and get back with Tim Howell.

It will also be advertised well so that the Town's citizens will be notified well ahead of time.

Mayor Flowers asked if anyone had any suggestions as to how to notify the public any better.

Alderwoman Artis asked if the Town would notify the board members so that they could notify the people in their district.

Mrs. Aycock states we will be posting on the sign on Main Street, putting up notices in the businesses around Town and The Post Office.

Mayor Flowers stated out biggest problem is that we don't have a tremendous amount of time.

Mr. McAllister stated we could do door hangers but it was noted this would be around 650 and that would be too much.

Mayor Flowers stated we would try to notify as many as we could starting with notifying the Board members.

Mr. McAllister asks the Board about the consensus about chasing the USDA.

Mayor Flowers stated we are going into sewer now and for Mrs. Artis' benefit we have pump stations all over town that are wearing out because of age. We have applied to state funded grant money four times for 100% and instead of getting better and led to believe we would be getting money 3 out of the 4 times and we have yet to receive the funding. If the pump station at Norwayne goes per Mr. McAllister it will put Eureka, Fremont, 3 Schools and the Airport out of business. This is how critical this pump station is. It is eat up from Hydrogen Sulfide and it has to get something done to it. Jerry Pearson from Goldsboro has worked on it and put some jumpers on it to keep it working right now but it is just barely hanging on. Something needs to be done to it well before the USDA program goes into effect because that takes a while. There has to be a lot of documents and paperwork that has to be done and sent to the LGC before the USDA funding could occur. There are many hoops we have to jump through even before the USDA.

Mayor Flowers stated there are really two issues. One is that the primary issue is the Norwayne Pump Station which acquires immediate attention and the other is the other pump stations require attention also due to the life expectancy of these pumps being at a maximum or near maximum life expectancy.

Mrs. Aycock stated that we also have another option with emergency funding from the County that we can seek out immediately. The County Manager has been holding money for the Town for two grant periods and they cannot keep holding it for us but with this money it is like the other grant that we received from the county. It is 5years/\$75,000, so in 5 years we have to pay back this \$75,000 along with the other one we already have which is about \$12,000 a quarter from where we are trying to pay off some loans that the Town has had with high interest.

Mr. Mooring asked what the interest rate on this would be.

Mrs. Aycock states it is zero interest but you have only 5 years to have it paid off, then we have the issues with 10 pumps that have exceeded their life span which is 10-12 years. Each pump is around \$8,000-\$10,000.

Mr. McAllister states that if we would go this route we would need to update the controls and take care of any other I&I issues that are remaining. We received a high unit cost grant for sewer a year ago for the repair of the lagoon and we are under a consent order to get that finished this year. The state has approved the preliminary engineering and environmental report. The plan has been submitted to DEQ and they are under review so when we get authorization to construct we will be able to bid that project.

Mayor Flowers stated that you may ask why is this being sprung on me tonight and why did we not have advance notice. Mr. McAllister brought a preliminary list tonight of those that have applied for the 100% grant money and we are #19 and they only fund the first 10. We need to have authorization from the Board to pursue or per Mr. McAllister at least a consensus for him to start the process because part of this will be a loan.

Alderman Mooring asked how much was the County holding for the Town?

Mrs. Aycock stated \$70,000-\$80,000. This would fix the Norwayne Station and she would have to contact Mr. Wood with the County and get permission to release the funds to the Town if the Board decides on this matter.

Mayor Flowers stated we could do one of two things. We could vote for the County funds or we could vote for the County funds and authorize the staff and Mr. McAllister to go further on finding grant loan monies that might be available for us to make application. It will take at least a year for any work to be able to be done.

Alderwoman Artis asked if the County funds were immediate.

Yes, per Mrs. Aycock they can be received now.

It was reinforced that if the pump station at Norwayne goes down we as a Town go down.

Alderwoman Artis stated she believed this would be the best thing.

Mayor Flowers stated the money from the County would be for just that one pump station and we have 9 others, so do we go ahead and authorize for the other funding?

Mrs. Aycock ask Mr. McAllister if we get Mr. Wood to go ahead and release the funds from the County how long will it take us to start on the Norwayne Station.

Mr. McAllister replied since it is an emergency he believes we can solicit bids quickly and since it doesn't require any permitting as soon as we can get numbers together we can move quickly.

Mrs. Aycock states we have the LGC (Local Government Commission) that has to be contacted. Our audit will be presented in February and per our auditor our audit looks better this year than it did last year but we did go out negative in the sewer which we knew we were due to high rainfall. There has been an average of 450,000 gallons of sewer go through those pumps a day.

Alderman Lewis asked if we received a grant could we pay off other grants.

Mrs. Aycock states no you cannot pay off something that has already been done, but there is a lot of work to be done and we could find ways to use that money.

Mr. McAllister states that with the USDA money you can use a grant to leverage the money. The first stage in the USDA process is to do a SEARCH grant and we can go ahead and get that paperwork in order so that we can set up a meeting with the USDA in Kinston.

Mrs. Aycock states we are trying to get away from loans.

Mayor Flowers asked the Board if they want to handle these issues separately or together.

Alderman Mooring states we should do them together. He made a motion that we requests the funds from the County and authorize the staff to go ahead and pursue the loan grants. Motion seconded per Alderwoman Annie Lewis.

Alderman Mooring ask if we were planning on relining at Norwayne and Mr. McAllister responds by saying yes and also replacing controls and pumps.

Alderwoman Artis asked if we do replace the pumps how often are the pumps maintained or is maintenance done on the pumps.

Mrs. Aycock states they are checked every day and we need an operating plan in place on projects that we need to do 5yrs -10yrs and this has never been in place in Town and we are trying to work towards these goals being completed.

Mayor Flowers stated the average life span of these pumps are 10 years and a lot of these pumps are 13 years old. No further discussion. All in favor of motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. McAllister states that going back to the lagoon, the lagoon is leaking. On the back side of the lagoon around the woods area there has been so much wave action just because of normal wind it has eroded the dike. We have had a leak about 4 years and in order to keep the Town from being fined we entered into a special order consent with the

Environmental Management Commission with the objective that they have put us on a time schedule and part of adhering to that is we have to do quarterly reports and the PER and environmental document reports that are approved by the state. Once we get the go ahead to bid for this project it will entail taking one lagoon down and there is money in the budget to take that sewer to Goldsboro for that one lagoon and then we will pump from one lagoon to another lagoon and then we will replace that liner with a synthetic liner. They have given us 5 years to complete this project.

Mayor Flowers ask if there were any more questions dealing with the water or sewer project. He recognized Mr. McAllister for always helping us and for being the best nonpaid staff member for the Town.

B) Approve Resolution for Mr. Leroy Ruffin for his years of Service at Fremont Police Dept.

Mayor Flowers asked for Mr. Ruffin, Chief Moats, Mrs. Aycock, and Mr. Ruffin's wife to approach the Board at the front. Mayor Flowers stated the Board has a proposed Resolution to present to Mr. Ruffin and the Resolution was read aloud by Mayor Flowers. Motion was made per Alderman Mooring to approve the Resolution for Mr. Ruffin. Motion seconded per Alderwoman Lewis. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Chief Moats gave recognition and compliments on Mr. Ruffin's reputation as a police officer. Chief Moats presented Mr. Ruffin with a plaque and his service firearm. Sgt. Bottoms also commented on the accomplishments of Mr. Ruffin and the experience that has been passed on to other officers. Mr. Ruffin shook hands with the Board and gave thanks to his wife and to the Town of Fremont.

C) Board Workshop (Alderwoman Artis)

Alderwoman Artis stated she tried to obtain some information from the NC Municipal League concerning the work sessions and they did not have any information on their websites but she was able to talk to someone there and she was assured the information she has to share with the Board is the same as North Carolinas. She gave out a handout to follow along with as she read. Alderwoman Artis suggest that the Board have work sessions to basically discuss things that would better benefit the Town and to set goals for the Town. This does not have to mean to meet every month, just whatever the Board decides to do.

Mayor Flowers asked if there were any other comments or questions.

Alderwoman Artis states this gives the public a chance to come in to give ideas on what they would like to see in their Town.

Mayor Flower's states if there is no other comments or questions, the chair will entertain a motion as to how the meeting will be structured if we are going to have structured meetings.

Alderwoman Artis made a motion that the Board would meet quarterly to have work sessions to set goals for the Town of Fremont, 30 minutes before the meeting.

Mayor Flowers asked for a second to the motion.

Per Mayor Flowers the motion died for lack of a second.

New Business

E) Rev. Reynolds Report on Renewal Place

Rev. Reynolds reported that after last meeting with the Gold Leaf Foundation he had some questions he had to answer and return back to the Foundation in which he did. On February 4th, 2016 their Board of Directors is scheduled to vote on their LOI or Letter of Inquiry for the grant. After that they can vote for a full proposal. This has to be completed by March 11th, 2016, then in mid-April they will visit the actual site of the house. On June 2nd, 2016 the Board will vote on the full proposal.

Mayor Flowers asked if Rev. Reynolds had all he needed for the proposal and would have it all completed by the date due.

Rev. Reynolds responded with yes he has everything he needs and will be prepared for the proposal.

Also, he stated they had looked at the house on 922 S Goldsboro St and just tentatively went through the house to see what the tentative cost would be to fix this house up. This will cost about \$32,000 to fix it up if we get this house. He stated they had already started raising some funds for the house. Habitat for Humanity contacted him concerning the lots they were interested in to build a house on. Also, he has been looking at a grant called Promise Zone. They are looking for an area that has at least 10,000 people. He stated he would have to include the entire Wayne County, but this is still in the works.

Rev. Reynolds stated that in the meantime Wayne Community College had a non-profit management certification program that he attended and has completed. He is able now to start a non-profit organization. Also, he is wanting to attend the Rural Economic Development Institute Class coming soon.

Mayor Flowers stated the Rev. Reynolds has a calling to serve the community and it is his dream to replace the substandard housing and property in the Town of Fremont with standard housing and for it to be in a position to sale the homes to someone who is in need of a home and to be able to afford the payments and then revolve that money into another house. He also Pastors a church and he also is one of the best nonpaid employers for the Town of Fremont and we owe a debt of gratitude to Rev. Reynolds and his group.

F) Mr. Keith Spivey (Step Grant Report) and Step Minutes

Mr. Spivey states this is hopefully his final report concerning Step. He is in the process of finalizing the audit on how much money has been actually spent and reimbursed and he will be making an appointment with Mrs. Aycock to go over all of the reports. Mr. Spivey said Step has been in the Town of Fremont since 2012 and there are people in the audience whom he would like to acknowledge that have been so involved in the process of making the community a better place for everyone. Also, there are 3 people in particular he would like to recognize in particular for their help. He stated school sometimes does not teach you all of the basic information that you need and you have to rely on other people for that information and there are 3 people he would like to acknowledge for their help during this process. First Mrs. Barbara Aycock, Mrs. Marti Jones, and Mrs. Shameshia Fennell. He stated these 3 ladies along with everything they do for the Town have provided so much support for the Step team that they wanted to present them with a plaque on behalf of the Step Committee for their Outstanding Service.

Mayor Flowers asked for the 3 ladies to go around to the Board and shake hands with the Board Members and to congratulate them on their service.

Mrs. Aycock stated this has been a joy for her to see the progress that the Step Committee has done for the Town.

Mr. Spivey stated that the rough draft number of \$87,944.21 is what was spent of the \$100,000.00 the Step Committee was awarded. This was the implementation money. The original planning money right now is showing a balance of \$860.84 but this will fall lower once the audit has been gone through. The final report will be emailed to the Board once everything is reimbursed and done.

Mayor Flowers asked for everyone to recognize Keith for all he has done and for his leadership, and also Alderwoman Artis for her hard work as secretary.

G) Report on Credit Card Process: Mrs. Aycock

Mrs. Aycock stated she has been looking at the installation of a credit card machine ever since she has been with the Town and financially it just has not been on the top of the list due to many other financial issues. Just to install a machine you would have to interface with our financial systems and the cost for the program to interface with our financials itself is \$3,460.00 plus more phone lines would have to be installed. Also, who is to pay the fee when a customer uses the credit card? In previous Towns Mrs. Aycock has worked with, and fewer customers the average credit card fee was around \$600 a month. We have 3 issues: Do we progress along with having the machine installed, who is to pay for the charges of the use and also installing more phone lines?

Mayor Flowers asked who would own the credit card machine.

Mrs. Aycock responded we would have to rent the machine and the cost could be very expensive but we could do whatever the Board wishes.

Alderman Lewis states he feels we should table this for a while.

Mrs. Aycock states this has been something she has been looking at for a while and the cost just was too high, plus the more that use it the higher the cost would be. Some towns absorb the cost of the machine and others would have to charge the customers for the use. Mayor Flowers asked for any comments or concerns. No further comments.

Reports

Financial Summary

Mrs. Fennell stated that last month collections were exceptional.

We were not able to spray as much in the spray field due to all of the rainfall and that makes our sewer bill higher.

Mayor Flowers stated that the Wayne Water District is still not billing us correctly and they have been notified numerous times.

We are on a system that is controlled by the State so that for 4 months out of the year they control our usage of how much we can spray. It has proven through our sewer bills over the last year how we have made improvements to our sewer system but we still have a lot to work on and fix.

Tim Howell, Public Works

Mr. Howell gave a slide presentation of projects that have been completed or are being worked on at the present.

One issue was at 504 E Wayne St. where there is a 30 inch concrete pipe under the drain that the Town has been dealing with for over 40 years. It started at Green St. and the joints are deteriorating and you can dig down and patch the joints but it follows another weak joint so it just moves itself down and now it is at Wayne Street. It is holding its own right now and it is working good but it did have a gas truck run over it soon as it was put down but we are keeping an eye on it. Mr. Howell also stated we have been experiencing issues with electrical flickers. Flickers are not a relay. It is a warning that something is fixing to break down. Under normal operations if there is a fault on the line it will do one of three things. It will for the first two shots either clear itself or isolate itself and if it doesn't do that the third shot it will lock out so if your lights blink that means there is a fault on the line so it will either isolate itself or clear itself. When we have a relay we always get a report that is sent out to us.

We will be soon doing our annual Tree Trimming starting at the substation.

He stated they have been responding to some sewer high water alarms, worked on pot holes and 2 water leaks this month.

Mr. Howell explained if we get a call about a pot hole we send it to NCDOT and they report to us when and if they are going to fix it.

Upcoming projects: ditches also the sign for Norwayne Alumni Way was ordered and it was incorrect so it will be reordered.

A driveway on Aycock St. was cut during the water line replacement. Mr. McAllister stated the contractor will replace the driveway and any other issues after the water lines have been tested. This is part of the punch item list that will be completed at the end of the project. Also, the customer on Aycock St was concerned about some shrubs that were taken down during this and she said she was told she had to prove the shrubs were alive when they were taken down and she could not prove this because they were already taken down. Mr. McAllister stated that generally the contractor videos the entire route so hopefully we can go back and look at them. If they were alive the contractor will be responsible to put them back.

Mrs. Aycock ask if there were any questions.

Alderwoman Artis asked about the future projects of the drainage at the Doctors office.

Mrs. Aycock responded that it is full of old roots and has been an issue for a long time but we are still working on it.

Mrs. Aycock stated she placed information on voting and different issues with voting in the packets and also district maps.

Mrs. Aycock stated we have also sent a letter to the CSX concerning the parking along the railroad and we have not heard anything back as of yet.

All of the paperwork has been sent concerning changing the street name of Branch St to Norwayne Alumni Way. Calls have been made to places that needed to be submitted to.

Debt Set/off- If there are any accounts that have been left due as of December people will be receiving a letter that their name will be sent to the Dept of Revenue to debt set off if arrangements have not been made with the Town to pay these past due accounts.

Chief Moats

We ended the fiscal year of 2015 on a good note. We were about 100 less incident reports than the year before. We had an altercation that led to a shooting in 2015 that resulted in an investigation and quick arrest and the suspect is currently in jail. The Town is still trending very well in the reduction of crime rate over the last 5 years. People are starting to hear that Fremont is now a safe place to reside.

Mayor Flowers asks for any comments or questions. Alderwoman Artis stated she thinks the police dept is doing a great job.

Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to adjourn until Wednesday January 20th at 5:30.
Alderman Mooring made a motion to adjourn until Wednesday January 20th at 5:30 P.M.
Alderwoman Artis seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

W. Darron Flowers, Mayor

Martha A. Jones Town Clerk

