



## **Minutes of Regular Town of Fremont Meeting**

**April 23, 2019**

The regular meeting of the Board of Aldermen/Alderwomen for the Town of Fremont, NC was held at 6:30 p.m. on April 23, 2019. Present were:

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

Also in attendance were, Town Administrator Barbara Aycock, Town Clerk Shannon Daly, and Public Works Director Tim Howell.

Those not in attendance were Chief Paul Moats.

**Quorum Present: Yes**

### **Call to Order**

Mayor Flowers called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Flowers gave the invocation.

Alderwoman Lewis led all in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Flowers asked to approve the new agenda. Alderman Mooring made a motion to approve the new agenda dated April 23, 2019 and Alderwoman Lewis seconded the motion. Alderwoman Artis asked why Walter Bunch was not on the new agenda as the new planning board member and Town Clerk Shannon Daly said that he was not able to be on the planning board and she had to get a replacement. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

## **Public Comment**

Mayor Flowers opened the meeting for public comments and read instructions on how it should be conducted.

Beatrice Jones of 108 W. Wayne Street commented that there are dogs running loose and there should be an ordinance that would hold the owners accountable. She stated that she was doing yard work and two dogs came toward her. Also, she stated that she was greeted by two Doberman's as she walked around the block. She is concerned that she may be attacked and wanted to bring this to the board's attention. Mayor Flowers stated that the ordinance does fill the requirements that we need, but we have to start enforcing it. Alderman Mooring asked if she knew who owned the dogs and she said she did not. Alderman Lewis said that the two Dobermans lived on the corner of Pine and South Street in front of the church. Mrs. Jones stated that there are three more dogs that live across the street from her and she isn't sure what type of dogs they are. Mayor Flowers said to call the police department and report it. Alderman Lewis said that he has called twice. Pro-tem Smith asked if we had traps and Public Works Director Tim Howell said that we did. Alderwoman Artis asked if public works could set traps and Public Works Director Tim Howell said the first step is to call animal control and let them set the traps or we can set them and call animal control to pick up the animals that are caught. Mayor Flowers said no one should be afraid to come out of their house. Mayor Flowers stated that he has seen an increase in animals roaming the streets and between our police department and animal control we should be able to have better control.

Priscilla Cummings of 205 E. North Street said she has another home at 207 N. Vance Street. She stated that she has a problem with the water and sewer bill. There was a glitch in the computer system that did not calculate the usage. Mrs. Cummings does not feel that she should have to pay all of the bill. Mayor Flowers stated that he thought that there was going to be an adjustment to her bill due to improper use. Town Clerk Shannon Daly stated that she was going to do an adjustment to the sewer bill if she could get a statement proving there was a water leak. She stated that the remainder of the bill could be paid over the next 6 months. After much discussion, Mayor Flowers asked Mrs. Cummings to get a statement stating she had a water leak and give it to Town Clerk Shannon Daly and she would make the adjustment. He said then we can meet to try to see if we can resolve the issue. Mrs. Cummings stated that the water meter was old and Administrator Barbara Aycock said that we would change out the meter. Administrator Barbara Aycock explained that the old meters slow down; therefore, their bill may be higher in the future due to more usage being captured on the new meter.

Mayor Flowers closed the public comment session.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the minutes of March 19, 2019 Board Meeting. Alderman Mooring made a motion to approve the minutes of March 19, 2019. Alderwoman Lewis seconded the motion. No discussion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

## Information

Mayor Flowers recognized Ja'liyah Gillespie who won and earned the title of Boys & Girls Club Youth of the Year for Wayne County. He read a letter that was sent to him from Andreta Wooten, Club Director, pertaining to this award.

Mayor Flowers asked Administrator Barbara Aycock to address the retirement letter from Chief Paul E. Moats. She stated that he has 32 years of experience and he came to Fremont from Wilson County. She said he has been in Fremont for 8 years and has now decided to retire which will be effective June 1<sup>st</sup>. She said she has accepted his resignation with much grievance, because he has been good for the town. She said we will have a reception for him and will let the citizens and board know when this will be. Alderwoman Artis said she hated to see him go because he has done a tremendous job for the town of Fremont. She said before he came to Fremont, the crime rate was high and there were shootings and break-ins, but he has put a stop to a lot of it. Mayor Flowers stated that there had been one person still at large connected to the shooting in December and that he had now been captured. Administrator Aycock said we are like a family and we all work together as a team and when someone leaves it's like losing a family member. She said she hated to see him go, but she understood.

Mayor Flowers stated that Cornerstone Church gave the police department an appreciation dinner on Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> and it was held in the board room. He said he had attended and that there was a good representation of the police department there. He wanted to thank the church for the dinner.

Mayor Flowers said the National Day of Prayer is May 2<sup>nd</sup> and there will be a ceremony at Greater Morning Star Church from 12:00 – 12:45. He said that the churches have been doing this for years and welcomed everyone to attend.

## Action Items

Mayor Flowers called Chris Martin from Andrew Harris' office to give the 2017 – 2018 Financial Audit. Chris gave each board member and staff a draft of the financial audit. He stated that he had to present the draft because the LGC has to approve it before it is final. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to accept the draft. Mayor Pro-tem Smith made a motion to accept the draft and Alderman Mooring seconded it. Alderwoman Artis asked if we should accept the draft being that it has not been approved by the LGC and what would we do if we accept it and it's not approved. Administrator Barbara Aycock said that the draft can be accepted now and if there are any changes to the final audit, we can resend the draft and accept the final audit. She said that she doubts that there will be any changes. Alderwoman Artis said she would rather approve the final audit. Mayor Flowers said that we will approve the final audit, but for now we are looking at approving the draft. Administrator Barbara Aycock asked Chris if they had made the changes to the draft that the LGC wanted and he said yes they had. Alderwoman Artis asked if Chris would come back and present the final audit and Administrator Barbara Aycock said if the board wants him to. Alderman Mooring said if there are no changes made then there would be no need for him to come back. Mayor Flowers said that every board member will get a copy of the final budget to review and if there are any questions then Chris

could come back to answer them. Five favored, Mayor Pro-tem Smith, Alderman Mooring, Alderwoman Reid, Alderwoman Lewis, and Alderman Lewis; one opposed, Alderwoman Artis. The motion passed by majority.

Mayor Flowers asked Mayor Pro-tem Smith to stand to represent the small businesses in Fremont. Mayor Flowers read the National Small Business Week Proclamation. He asked for a motion to approve the proclamation. Alderman Mooring made a motion to approve the National Small Business Week Proclamation. Alderwoman Lewis seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve Wayne Jackson for the Planning Board. Alderman Lewis made a motion to approve Wayne Jackson for the Planning Board. Mayor Pro-tem Smith seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Flowers stated that it is proposed that we have two budget meetings, one on May 8<sup>th</sup> and the other on May 16<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. He stated that lunch will be served. He asked for a motion to approve the budget meeting times. Alderman Mooring made a motion to approve the budget meetings for May 8<sup>th</sup> and May 16<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. Alderwoman Lewis seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Flowers asked Administrator Barbara Aycock to go over Budget Amendment 4686. Administrator Barbara Aycock stated she is working on balancing the budget. There was much discussion concerning the auditor, Andrew Harris. Administrator Barbara Aycock stated that there will be a CPA coming in once a month to look over our books and to give recommendations so at the end of the year, we will have everything in order for the audit. She stated that the LGC has so many requirements that it would be best to have a CPA who is familiar with the requirements to help us on a monthly basis. There was some discussion about FEMA and where we are at in the process of getting the funds. Public Works Director Tim Howell stated that they are continuing to get the information FEMA is asking for. Administrator Barbara Aycock stated that the budget is tight and she is working on it. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve Budget Amendment 4686. Alderman Mooring made a motion to approve Budget Amendment 4686. Alderwoman Lewis seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Flowers asked Michael McAllister to discuss the bid contractors for the Wastewater Collection System Rehabilitation (NCDEQ-DWI No. E-SRP-W-17-0032). Michael McAllister stated that there were 3 bids that were over the budget of the grant the town had in the amount of \$1,200,000. He stated that he will get with Administrator Barbara Aycock and Public Works Director Tim Howell to prioritize what needs to be done and then negotiate with the lowest bidder. He said that he needed a tentative approval contingent that he can negotiate the price with the contractor and get the approval from the NCDEQ Division of Water Infrastructure. Mayor Flowers asked what will happen if he cannot reach a negotiation and Michael McAlister said he will have to re-design and re-bid which he does not recommend, because the contractors are very busy. He said he feels that the contractor will work with us, we need to just prioritize what we want. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the Resolution for the Tentative Award. Mayor Pro-tem Smith made a motion to approve the Resolution for the

Tentative Award. Alderman Mooring seconded it. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Flowers asked Administrator Barbara Aycock to discuss the auditor for 2018 – 2019. Administrator Barbara Aycock stated that she has worked with Petway, Mills & Pearson, PA, in the past, and they are rated #1. She stated that the prices are cheaper than Andrew Harris' prices. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the contract for Petway, Mills & Pearson, PA to be the auditor for 2018 – 2019. Alderman Mooring made a motion. Mayor Pro-tem Smith seconded it. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

### Reports

Mayor Flowers asked Town Clerk Shannon Daly to give the financial reports. Administrator Barbara Aycock stated that the Town of Eureka owes us over \$10,000 from last month and this month they are going to owe \$25,000. She said that the Town of Eureka is out of money and that she has contacted Senator Bell, Senator Perry and the LGC with our concerns. Alderwoman Artis asked if we could turn them off and Administrator Barbara Aycock said that the contract says we can, but the state says we cannot. Mayor Flowers stated that before it is over he feels that we will be in the middle of a war. Alderman Lewis asked if the sewer could be redirected somewhere else, and Mayor Flowers said no it cannot. There was much discussion about how the Town of Eureka's financial situation is going to affect our town. Mayor Flowers said that we will continue this conversation during our budget meeting on May 8<sup>th</sup>. There was some discussion about the garbage and the cost, which will have to be addressed sometime in the future. Town Clerk Shannon Daly stated that there are people consistently moving in to town. Administrator Barbara Aycock stated that we have been getting numerous positive comments from people about our town.

Mayor Flowers asked Public Works Director Tim Howell to give his report. Administrator Barbara Aycock stated that she had gotten some bids on Wayne Street. The bids were \$19,800 and \$26,000. She said that the problem is that the pipe is higher than the ditch and the water would have to go uphill. She said it will take 3 catch basins that need to be connected to the drain. Mayor Flowers asked where the money is coming from and Administrator Barbara Aycock said it will have to be in the budget for next fiscal year if we have the revenue to do it. Mayor Flowers said that this should be something that we discuss at the budget meeting. Public Works Director Tim Howell showed pictures of the Daffodil festival, a beaver damn inside a catch basin, cleanouts, a leaking lateral from the smoke test, and ditches that have been repaired.

Mayor Flowers stated that they needed to go into closed session and asked Administrator Barbara Aycock and Public Works Director Tim Howell to stay. He dismissed Town Clerk Shannon Daly to go home. He asked for a motion to go into closed session. Alderwoman Lewis made a motion to go into closed session. Alderman Lewis seconded it. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

*W. Darron Flowers*

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W. Darron Flowers, Mayor

*Shannon L. Daly*

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Shannon L. Daly, Town Clerk