



**Minutes of Special Called Meeting
&
Budget Workshop**

March 23, 2021

The Special Called Meeting of the Board of Aldermen/Alderwomen for the Town of Fremont, NC was held at 6:30 p.m. on March 23, 2021. Present were:

Joyce M. Artis, Mayor Pro-tem
Beatrice Jones, Alderwoman
Keith L. Spivey, Alderman
Leroy Ruffin, Alderman
Annie Lewis, Alderwoman

Also in attendance was Town Administrator Tony Howell, Town Clerk Shannon Daly, Finance Officer Cindy Rhodes, Public Works Director Tim Howell, Assistant Chief Bottoms, and Town Accountant Jimmy Overton.

Those not in attendance were Mayor W. Darron Flowers and Alderman Ricky Mozingo.

Quorum Present: Yes

Call to Order

Mayor Pro-tem Artis called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Alderman Ruffin gave the invocation and led all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Alderwoman Jones made the motion. Alderman Ruffin seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Pro-tem Artis stated that the Board is happy to have the new Town Administrator, Mr. Tony Howell, here and asked Mr. Tony Howell if he had anything he would like to say before Mr. Overton gave the budget report. Mr. Tony Howell said that he had meet with Mr. Overton and they went through the budget and looked at it in detail and highlighted some areas of concern, which he will be discussing tonight.

Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked Mr. Overton to give the budget report. Mr. Overton stated that he is going to go over the proposed budget and the Board needs to decide what changes need to be made to get the budget in balance. Mr. Overton stated that in order to

increase revenue, there are some things you can control. He stated that you can increase the utility rates, the property tax, the cemetery plots, and the bulk good fees; and change the optional employee benefits, such as deciding if the employees get a cost of living raise, and look at decreasing the expenses. He stated that once the Board decides on what changes they would like to make, he can plug in the numbers and re-work the budget and have it ready for the Board to review. There were some other discussions about sewer issues and how to spend the \$370,000 from the Cares Act.

Mayor Pro-tem Artis stated that the next item on the agenda is the FEMA projects and asked Mr. Tim Howell if he has any information on the status of these projects. Mr. Tim Howell stated that Mr. Brian Taylor is finishing up on South Street and then he will begin on the project at Hillandale. He stated that the lot was wet on South Street and has prevented Mr. Brian Taylor from finishing that project. He stated that after Hillandale project, Mr. Brian Taylor will then start on 408 E. Wayne Street. There was some discussion about the projects and the Board instructed Mr. Tim Howell to put up a barricade at the ditch on South Street. Mr. Tony Howell stated that he inquired about Mr. Brian Taylor's liability insurance and Ms. Rhodes found that it had expired in 2019 and she has asked Mr. Brian Taylor to submit an updated liability insurance policy to the Town.

Closed Session

Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked for a motion to go into Closed Session. Alderman Spivey made a motion to go into Closed Session. Alderwoman Lewis seconded it. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Open Session

Alderman Ruffin asked if anyone has contacted the gentleman that was at the last meeting concerning the solar panels. There was some discussion and it was determined that the Mayor had told Mr. Thigpen, the Manager of Systems Operations from Electricities, that they would get back with him in a week; and he told the citizen that the Town would need some time to do some research, but wasn't sure how long it would take.

Mayor Pro-tem Artis stated that the Board needed to decide on a date for the next budget meeting. There was some discussion and it was determined that the next budget meeting will be on Tuesday, April 13th at 6:30 p.m.

Alderwoman Jones stated that she has been in contact with Goshen Head Administrator Office and they have agreed to have a mobile van or a car drive through come to Fremont to administer the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. She stated that they would like at least 40 to 50 people, but no more than 100. She stated that she would give them the people's names and they would contact them and help with pre-registration.

Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked Alderman Spivey about the negotiation with the City of Goldsboro concerning our sewer contract. Alderman Spivey stated that the contract states that if the City of Goldsboro raises their rates, the Town of Fremont is supposed to raise their rates and as far as he knows, that has not been done. He said the contract is from October of 1998. Alderman Ruffin stated that in the past, when he was on the Board, the

Town did raise the rates, but he's not sure why the Town stopped doing it unless it's because of the rates were going up to high to pass on to the citizens.

Close Regular Board Meeting

Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked for a motion to adjourn. Alderman Spivey made a motion to adjourn. Alderwoman Jones seconded it. All were in favor and motion passed unanimously.

Joyce M. Artis, Mayor Pro-tem

Shannon L. Daly, Town Clerk