



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

**May 4, 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 May 4, 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 were Town Administrator Tony Howell, Town Clerk Shannon Daly, and Finance Officer Cindy Rhodes.

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

**Quorum Present: Yes**

**Call to Order**

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

Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked someone to volunteer to give the invocation. Mr. Tony Howell volunteered and gave the invocation

Mayor Pro-tem Artis lead all in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

**Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked to amend the agenda to add the LGC letter and Closed Session for personnel if needed. Alderwoman Jones seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

**Budget**

Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked Mr. Tony Howell to speak about the budget for 2021/2022. Mr. Tony Howell stated that the information that was passed out is the proposed preliminary budget that needed to be sent to the LGC by May 17<sup>th</sup>. He said that we are \$99,000 short, but we were originally \$240,000 short so we have narrowed the gap. He

stated that there are going to be rate increases on our water, sewer, and garbage for the upcoming fiscal year. He said the water will increase 5%, the sewer 17.50% and the garbage 3.90%. He stated that the sewer could possibly go up another 20%. He stated that going forward we will be able to charge Town of Eureka the outside city sewer rate for the overcapacity usage and it is an average of \$100,000 per year. He said this will cover the \$99,000 that we are short. There was some discussion and Mr. Tony Howell suggested that we send the preliminary budget to the LGC by May 17<sup>th</sup> to meet the deadline, but changes could be made to the final budget if needed. There was some discussion about cutting the budget, having a long-range capital improvement plan, the status of the library, the funds we are receiving from the American Rescue Plan, and the increases in rates.

Mr. Tony Howell stated that someone contacted him about renting Peele Park for a graduation on Saturday, June 5<sup>th</sup>. He said that he checked with Mr. Toler to make sure there were no games that day and there is not a game. He asked if there was a contract for renting the Park. It was discussed that there is not a contract and agreed upon that Mr. Tony Howell will get a sample contract for the Board to review.

Mr. Tony Howell suggested some ideas to increase revenues. He stated that we could add a \$50 deposit for sewer, increase the price of area lights, eliminate Fall cleanup which could save approximately \$3,500, increase the price of cemetery plots, and increase the fees of bulk good items.

There was some discussion about cemeteries and the condition of the Fremont Cemetery. Alderwoman Lewis stated that the grave markers are getting damaged by the lawn mowers and suggested that weed eaters be used around the markers to prevent damage.

Alderman Ruffin asked about the properties that the Town owns that people have showed interest in buying. Mr. Tony Howell said that he would prefer to rent the building on Main Street instead of selling it. The Board agreed. There was some discussion. (See Action Section)

Mr. Tony Howell stated that someone wants to purchase the lot at 608 S. Goldsboro Street, which the Town owns. He said that the individual has bought the house right beside it at 700 S. Goldsboro Street and he wants to put a garden and/or a play area for his children. There was some discussion. (See Action Section)

Mayor Pro-tem Artis stated that Alderman Ruffin had a question about the LGC letter. She asked Alderman Ruffin to speak about the letter. Alderman Ruffin stated that he noticed that there was a cut in part time officers, who are black, and he wanted to know why their hours were being cut. There was some discussion, and it was determined that it was the same paragraph, apart from the dates being changed, that was in last year's LGC letter. It was determined that Mr. Tony Howell would make the needed corrections to paragraph 4 before sending the letter.

### **Action**

Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked if Closed Session for personnel could be on the agendas going forward just in case during a meeting, a Closed Session would be needed. Alderman Ruffin made the motion. Mr. Tony Howell asked if it is known before a

meeting could he be made aware of it so that he can be prepared. Mayor Pro-tem Artis said yes. Alderman Spivey seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked for a motion to rent or lease the building on Main Street for \$500 a month with a \$1,000 deposit. Alderman Spivey made the motion. Alderman Ruffin seconded it. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked for a motion. Alderman Ruffin made a motion to sell the property at 608 S. Goldsboro Street for \$3,000. Alderman Spivey seconded it. There was some discussion and Alderman Ruffin amended the motion to sell the property for \$4,000. Alderman Spivey seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Alderman Spivey made a motion to have the four trees removed and grinded up. Alderwoman Jones seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Closed Session**

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

### **Open Session**

Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked if anyone had any other questions or concerns. Alderman Ruffin asked Mr. Tony Howell of the update on the pipe at Hillandale. Mr. Tony Howell stated that Mr. Brian Taylor has been paid for all his work, but he was still working on South Street. He said that Mr. Brian Taylor gave a quote of \$3,800 to put in another pipe at Hillandale. He suggested that since we are getting quotes from other companies to do the project on Wayne Street, we should get quotes for the pipe at Hillandale. Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked if we would have the quotes by the next Board meeting and Mr. Tony Howell said yes.

Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked about the pine trees. Mr. Tony Howell said the cost would be \$4,300 to take down four trees and grind the stumps. He said that this is already in the budget and we could go ahead and get started. Mayor Pro-tem Artis asked about fixing the road and Mr. Tony Howell said that could be paid for by Powell bill money. (See Action Section)

Alderwoman Jones reminded everyone of the National Day of Prayer on May 6<sup>th</sup> at the corner of Main and Goldsboro Street and of Goshen being at St. James Church of Christ on May 8<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 to 1:00. She read a thank you note from Mr. Randy Lassiter.

### **Adjourn**

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