



Minutes of Regular Town of Fremont Meeting

June 21, 2022

The regular meeting of the Board of Aldermen/Alderwomen for the Town of Fremont, NC was held at 6:00 p.m. on June 21, 2022. Present were:

W. Darron Flowers, Mayor
Joyce M. Artis, Mayor Pro tem
Beatrice Jones, Alderwoman
Keith L. Spivey, Alderman
Terry Futrelle, Alderwoman
Leroy Ruffin, Alderman
Annie Lewis, Alderwoman

Also in attendance were Town Administrator Tony Howell, Town Clerk Shannon Daly, Finance Officer Cathy Nichols, Public Works Director Brian Harvey, Assistant Chief Greg Bottoms, and Town Engineer Michael McAllister.

Quorum Present: Yes

Call to Order

Mayor Flowers called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Alderman Spivey gave the invocation.

Alderwoman Lewis led all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

Mayor Flowers asked if there were any additions that needed to be made to the agenda. Mr. Howell asked to add BA 2022-11 under action. Alderwoman Jones asked to add food hunger in Fremont under information. Alderwoman Jones made a motion to approve the agenda with the additions. Alderman Spivey seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Flowers asked if there were any minutes that needed to be discussed. There was no discussion. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the minutes of May 12, 2022 Special Called Meeting, May 17, 2022 Regular Board Meeting, May 17, 2022 Closed Session Meeting, and May 25, 2022 Budget Workshop. Mayor Pro tem made a

motion to approve all of the minutes. Alderwoman Lewis seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Mayor Flowers opened the meeting for public comment.

Mr. Larry Jones of 106 E. Norwayne Alumni Way stated that he would like the Board to consider a website enhancement, with the campaign caption stating, “Fremont has a new look.” He said this would generate interest for prospective residents and business owners to look at our Town. He said with all the new construction we have in the Town, it should be shown on the website which would entice people to come to the Town. He said he would like to come back in July and give a presentation on how the website can enhance the Town of Fremont.

Mr. Larry Jones said that he has asked the principals of the surrounding schools to come address the Board in August about the needs they have for the schools and how the Town of Fremont can assist them. He said as of now, there are three principles from three schools and they are, Charles B. Aycock, Norwayne Middle School, and Fremont Stars.

Mayor Flowers closed the meeting for public comment.

Public Hearing

Mayor Flowers opened the meeting for public hearing concerning the Budget for Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023 and the Land Use Plan.

There were no comments.

Mayor Flowers closed the meeting for public hearing.

Speaker

Mayor Flowers stated that Mr. McAllister is here to discuss the Land Use Plan and asked him to speak on it. Mr. McAllister said that he has made some corrections to the Land Use Plan and the new one was passed out to the Board and staff. There was some discussion about the plan, the sewer, the new elementary school and annexation. Mayor Flowers addressed the public and stated that the state mandated that we have a Land Use Plan and adopt it by July 1st.

Action

Land Use Plan

Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the Land Use Plan. Alderman Spivey made the motion. Alderwoman Jones seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolutions for the Viable Utility Grants

Mr. McAllister stated that there are two resolutions for the Viable Utility Grant. He said one is for the water and one is for waste water. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve both resolutions for water and waste water at a rate of \$150,000 each. Mayor Pro

tem Artis made the motion. Alderwoman Lewis seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Budget for Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023

Mayor Flowers asked Mr. Howell to speak about the budget. Mr. Howell thanked the Board, Mrs. Nichols, and Mrs. Daly for their hard work on the budget. He stated that the only changes that were made to the budget was to the Fire Department and the General Fund. He said that there was a decrease in the Fire Department's budget by \$3,500 and an increase of \$3,500 in the General Fund under contingency. Basically this means that there is \$3,500 more revenue in the General Fund. He stated that the budget is approximately 4.4 million dollars, there was a 20% sewer increase on all accounts except for inside residential customers, and there was a 5% cost of living raise for all employees. He recommended to the Mayor that the Board accept this budget. Mayor Flowers asked if there are any questions about the budget and there were none. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the budget. Mayor Pro tem Artis made the motion to approve the budget. Alderwoman Jones seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Budget Amendment #2022-9, #2022-10, and #2022-11

Mr. Howell explained each budget amendment and stated that Mr. Overton, our accountant, has worked on these budget amendments. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve all three budget amendments. Alderman Spivey made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #2022-9, #2022-10, and #2022-11. Alderwoman Jones seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Subdivision Preliminary Plat on Governor Aycock Road

Mr. Howell said that the Planning and Adjustment Board met the second Tuesday of this month and there was one plat that was presented, which was Fynloch Chase North located on Governor Aycock Road. He said that there are 27 lots that J&N will develop and these lots are in our ETJ. He said the Planning and Adjustment Board looked over the plat and there was very little discussion before the Board unanimously approved the plat. He said that now this plat needs final approval from this Board. There was some discussion and Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve this plat at the recommendation of the Planning and Adjustment Board. Alderman Ruffin made the motion. Alderwoman Lewis seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Code of Ordinance Changes

50.11 Yard Rubbish

Mr. Harvey stated that the first change is to 50.11 Yard Rubbish. He said that there was some confusion about contractors performing yard maintenance. He said he would like to remove contractors and specify that the Town will pick up trees up to seven inches in diameter. He said this is something that a resident can feasibly cut themselves. There was some discussion. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the changes to 50.11 Yard Rubbish Ordinance. Alderman Spivey made the motion. Alderwoman Jones seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

52.19 Access to Premises and 53.007 Access to Premises

Mr. Harvey stated that there were no access to premises ordinances for water or electrical meters. He read the ordinance which states:

(A) Duly authorized agents of the Town of Fremont shall have access at all reasonable hours to the premises of the consumer for the purpose of installing or

removing town property, inspecting piping, reading or testing meters or for any other purpose in connection with Fremont's service or facilities.

(B) Each consumer shall grant or convey or shall cause to be granted or conveyed to the town of Fremont a perpetual easement and right-of-way across any property owned or controlled by the consumer wherever said perpetual easement and right-of-way is necessary for Fremont water facilities and lines so as to be able to furnish services to the consumer.

These ordinances would be added as ordinance 52.19 Access to Premises and 53.007 Access to Premises. There was some discussion about having the same ordinance in two different places and it was explained that one is for electric meters and one is for water meters. There was some discussion. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve both 52.19 and 53.007 Access to Premises Ordinances. Alderman Spivey made the motion. Alderwoman Futrelle seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Article V. Section 10. The Use of Town Tools, Equipment, and Infrastructure

Mr. Harvey stated that he would like to add under the conditions of employment in the personnel policy, Article V. Section 10. The Use of Town Tools, Equipment, and Infrastructure. He read the policy which states:

Town employees are not allowed to use Town tools, equipment, or infrastructure for personal use, except for personal enrichment, which has to be approved by the department head.

Alderman Ruffin asked if someone violates this policy, what would happen. Mr. Harvey said that in the personnel policy, it states that misuse of Town equipment is a terminable offense with steps that come before that action would be taken. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve this policy. Mayor Pro tem Artis made the motion. Alderwoman Jones seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Article V. Section 11. Dress Code

Mr. Harvey stated that he would like to add under the conditions of employment in the personnel policy, Article V. Section 11. Dress Code. He read the policy which states:

Appropriate work attire is required of each employee based on their department and in keeping with the nature of duties performed. All employees, both uniformed and non-uniformed, are expected to project and maintain a positive public image at all times. The department head or supervisor may give guidance to individual employees with questions or concerns.

Safety equipment, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and uniforms
The town will provide a seven day supply of standard uniform requirements and one set of safety shoes for appropriate employees each calendar year. Should items become unserviceable during the course of the year, items may be replaced early at the department heads' discretion. Specialized safety equipment, PPE and/or job related items will be provided by the town at no cost to the employee. Items of this nature are governed by OSHA standards, professional best practices,

and other regulating bodies; and should be known to resident subject matter experts.

There was some discussion about the boots and uniforms that we provide now and what we will provide. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve this policy. Alderman Spivey made the motion. Alderman Ruffin seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Town Fees and Bulk Good Prices

Mr. Howell stated that there were some concerns about fees and we have received some recommendations from Mr. Harvey and Mr. McAllister pertaining to our fees. There was much discussion about the water and electrical taps. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the water tap (3/4" = \$700, 1" = \$900, custom install = market price) and electrical tap (standard install = \$200, custom install = market price, transformer = \$800, attaching hardware = \$200). Alderman Spivey made the motion. Alderwoman Lewis seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

After much discussion about the fees, Alderman Spivey made a motion to table the fees until the next meeting. Mayor Pro tem Artis seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Howell stated that at a previous meeting, it was discussed that we would double the bulk goods prices and referenced the new price sheet and asked if this is acceptable to the Board. There was some discussion. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the new bulk goods price sheet. Alderwoman Jones made the motion. Alderwoman Futrelle seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Wayne and Aycock Street Project

Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to accept the lowest bid for Wayne and Aycock Street project tomorrow on June 22nd at 12:00 noon. Alderman Spivey made the motion. Mayor Pro tem Artis seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Reports

Financial Report

Mayor Flowers asked Mrs. Nichols and Mrs. Daly to give the Financial Reports. Mrs. Daly went over the April Billed and May Collected and Expenses Financial Report. Mrs. Daly said that one thing that stands out on the report is that we collected \$16,639.70 more for electric than what we billed. She said that the biggest reason for this is because we received extra money from social services for everyone that had received help in the past. She said this money was left over from a grant and needed to be used. She said in addition to that, we have the regular vouchers, arrangements, budget billing, debt setoff, and cutoffs that affect the numbers. She said the main thing to look at on this report is the total difference between what we billed versus what we collected and as long as we are in the positive, everything is good. She said that the difference is \$17,384.13 in the positive. She said the expenses for garbage is \$1,006.47 more than what we collected and this is due to the expenses for the grapple truck. She stated that we collect enough money to pay GFL, but not enough to cover the grapple truck expenses. She also stated that the total expenses for the month of May were \$258,130.73 and the total revenues were \$263,134.27, which is a difference of \$5,003.54 to the positive. Alderman Spivey asked how many people on the cutoff list were repeat offenders and Mrs. Daly said probably

around 75%. Mayor Pro tem Artis asked if the money that came from social services would be a credit on the customers' accounts and Mrs. Daly said yes it would be and that she is not sure how the numbers will look on next month's report, due to the credit. Mrs. Daly referenced the cash collection monthly summary report and stated that this is where she gets the numbers for the collected portion of the report. She said that she added an extra report, which is the billing register totals and this report is where she gets the numbers for the billed portion of the report. There was some discussion on how many people we are billing for garbage versus how many we are being billed for. Alderman Ruffin stated that we have a lot of expenses and Mrs. Daly said that the total expenses includes what we pay for electric, sewer, water, garbage, salaries, gas, etc. Alderman Spivey asked if we have heard from Electricities or GFL about raising the rates, and Mr. Howell said Electricities said they were not going up, but GFL did go up 4.2%.

Mrs. Nichols referenced the budget to actual report and stated that it has the revenues on it. She said if you take the revenues and subtract the expenses, we were over in revenues by \$377,000. Mayor Pro tem Artis asked if that meant we are over \$377,000 for this year and Mrs. Nichols said that is through May. Mr. Harvey stated that he is having to send all of the sewer to Goldsboro right now, but it is only 29 gallons per minute which is not a lot. Mrs. Nichols said on the cash balances reports, she wanted to point out on the totals how much we had last year at this time versus what we have this year, which is \$250,000 more this year. She said we have done great this year.

Public Works Report

Mayor Flowers asked Mr. Harvey to give the Public Works report. Mr. Harvey gave his report. The following was the report:

1. Capital Outlay: Researching Jumping Tarp to purchase: Approximate cost \$4K
2. Repairs: Identified two water leaks on Peacock. Current water distribution employee on convalescent leave, expected return to light duty on or around the 23rd of June, full duty return on or around the 10th of July. MLK park fencing repaired. 10 June, North St and Sycamore cutout blew, Owl landed on hot lines in the sprayfield, outage <three hours. 13 June, Ballfield outage, tree branch fell and tripped cutout, outage <one hour. 15 June, Hwy 222 towards Eureka, large tree branch severed line, repaired line, outage > three hours.

Mr. Harvey said that there are no toilets or sinks in the MLK Park or the ballfield at Peele Park. He said he plans on ordering the toilets, sinks, and plumbing before the end of June. Alderman Ruffin asked if he had some money left in this budget and Mr. Harvey said he had \$2,000 and just found that out from Mr. Overton today. Mr. Harvey said that he would like to get the Parks in a state to where the residents can use them. There was some discussion about the vandalism that has happened and what can be done to prevent it.

Mr. Harvey stated that the power grid in Fremont is 1978 technology that was installed in 2004. He said that the City of Wilson is going to give us two power grid controllers so that we can update our system at no charge. He said Electricities came out last week to try to find the issue of what causes our electric grid to blink, but our system is too old for them to be able to use their computer system to find the problem. He said once we get the

two power grid controllers from Wilson, Electricities will install them for us and then we will do a compensation study or a conditioning study for power so that we can figure out if we have a fuse problem that is causing the grid to blink. He said we do not have a map for the power grid that shows where the fuses are and we have to develop that to be able to do the study, which is time-consuming and dangerous.

3. Projects: Ditch cleanout continues. Washington and Sycamore Street ditch cleaned. One dump truck full of trash removed. Interviews in progress for Spray field operator position. Water taps for Owens Farm road. Pikeville cemetery water fountain. Electric installation on Owens Farm rd. Electric three phase installation out to Fremont Meadows. Electric load bank installation to new school. Power line tree trimming. Baseball fields bathroom repairs. Goldsboro meter repair. C. Howell residence ditch. Wayne and Aycock drainage. Goshen drainage. Sewer clean out 10%.

Mr. Harvey said that they cleaned the ditch at Chestnut Street, the ditch at the end of Vance Street, the ditch at the Rest Home on Vance Street, and the ditch at the Pine Street apartments. He said they cleaned all those ditches using the grapple truck.

He said the interviews are in process for our spray field operator and they hope to have someone in place in early July; the water taps on Owens Farm Road are in process; Pikeville Cemetery wants to put a water fountain in on our water system, because it looks like it will be cheaper to use us rather than Pikeville; the electric system installation on Owens Farm Road is going on; and the electric three phase installation out to Fremont Meadows is something that we are working our way through currently. He said the Goldsboro meter has come in, which is what tells us how much sewer we are sending to Goldsboro, and we are trying to schedule to have it installed. He said the ditch behind Clark Howell is under contract and should be completed by the end of June. He said, we have a contractor ready to get started on the Wayne and Aycock drainage ditch, but he has been waiting to get a quote from Eastern Earthscapes and is giving him until tomorrow and then he will move forward with the lowest contractor bid, which they can start in 3 weeks. He said the Goshen drainage and the sewer cleanout they have to do 10% here and for the sewer cleanout we will get the 10% done, but they have not started yet. He said the Fire Department is going to let them use their fire trucks to clean out the sewer. Mayor Pro tem Artis asked why we had to do 10% a year and Mr. Harvey said that according to the State we have to clean out 10% of our sewer lines a year, but we have not done that from as far back as he could tell. He said they are working to get that done. Alderman Ruffin had a question about Goshen drainage and Mr. Harvey said that the entire drainage is gone and when it rains, the Goshen parking lot floods. He said that area should flow out to the ditch on Wayne Street. Mr. Harvey said that there are 4 main ditches in Fremont; one that runs from the Mayor's house to the back of the cemetery, one that runs under Green Street, one that is at the end of Goldsboro Street that runs under Hwy 117 and the last one is the one at Goshen that runs out to Wayne Street. He said all four need to be redone at some point, but it is very expensive to be done and we may need to look for grant funds for this project.

Mr. Howell said that Wayne and Aycock Street needs to be repaired and Eastern Earthscapes has not given us a quote after repeated attempts to get it. He said KBS Construction is ready to start on the project for \$68,700, but they need a commitment from us so they can go ahead and start getting the materials. He said we were planning on using some of the ARPA money for next fiscal year, so we would not be billed for it this fiscal year. There was some discussion. (See Action Section)

Police Report

Mayor Flowers asked Assistant Chief Greg Bottoms to give the police report. Assistant Chief Bottoms stated that due to it being summertime, they have seen an increase in calls, because more people are at home, being that school is out. He said they have had a few minor incidents, but nothing major, concerning juveniles and they are in the process of getting three juvenile petitions. He said these three juveniles are from Goldsboro and not Fremont. He said that he and Chief Moats have gotten some complaints about the bar across the street and they are in conversations with the owner and workers. He said that about 9:30 at night, there is a different crowd, a younger crowd that wants to stay out all night. He said around the time that the bar closes, the officer on duty will show up and aid them in leaving the downtown area. He said there is an issue with splat guns that uses gel beads. He said they have talked with the young people using them and has advised them as to the dangers of using them. He said they are still patrolling the parks and he has talked with Mr. Howell about possibly getting cameras installed that can help deter vandalism. He said Fremont Rest Center is closing, but there are a few people left there and it will remain open until all clients have been placed somewhere else. There was some discussion about the splat guns and how dangerous they can be; the type of cameras that could be used in the parks; the Rest Home closing and not the Villa, if we are patrolling the solar farm and that they have not paid us yet; and the dangers of using fireworks on the 4th of July, due to how dry it is.

Discussion

Charging Station for Electric Cars

Mayor Flowers asked Alderman Ruffin to speak about the charging station for electric cars. Alderman Ruffin stated that he has already picked out a spot where we can put a charging station, which is beside Speedway, which already has a meter on it. He said that President Joe Biden has put out a lot of money for these charging stations and he would like us to look into it.

Fremont Elementary School

Mayor Flowers asked Mayor Pro tem Artis to speak about Fremont Elementary School. Mayor Pro tem Artis said that they have been to a meeting concerning the school. Alderman Spivey said that he has talked with a surveyor and they are getting ready to start. Mr. Howell said that the property has been sold and we will need to annex, re-zone and get a special use for the property. He said all of this will be brought back before the Board within a month or so. Mayor Flowers suggested that this subject should be added to the agenda every month to get an update on what the progress is.

State of the Town Address

Mayor Flowers asked Mayor Pro tem Artis to speak about the State of the Town Address. Mayor Pro tem Artis stated that it will be held on the 28th of this month at 6:30 p.m. at Fremont Methodist Church. Alderwoman Jones said that they have been working on publicity to try to make people aware to attend. Mayor Flowers passed around a sheet of topics that he had jotted down to speak about at the State of the Town Address. He read over the list of items. There was some discussion and Mayor Flowers asked if there are

any suggestions to send him an email. Alderwoman Jones said that she will do the agenda and several Board members will make decisions on the food to be served.

Time Limit for Board Meetings

Mayor Flowers asked Mayor Pro tem Artis to speak about the time limit for Board meetings. Mayor Pro tem Artis suggested that we keep the meeting to a two hour maximum. Mayor Flowers said that we could recess if the meetings go over two hours and it would continue the next evening. Alderman Spivey stated that one of the things that he suggested once he got on the Board is for the Mayor's position to take control of the meeting and everyone raise their hand to be called on. He said this would eliminate cross-talking, which will help limit the amount of time that we are in the meetings. He said we have gotten away from that and he thinks that was significant in keeping the meetings on track, because a lot of times we go down a lot of rabbit holes and we only find squirrels. Alderwoman Lewis said that we should not be here too late. Mayor Flowers suggested that we change the agenda format to have all the important issues at the top of the agenda. Mrs. Daly said that she had changed the agenda to having the action items at the beginning of the meeting and asked the Mayor if he liked it and he said yes.

Town Usage for Utilities

Mayor Flowers asked Alderman Ruffin to speak about the town usage for utilities. Alderman Ruffin thanked Mrs. Daly for getting the information together, that he had requested at the last Board meeting. Mrs. Daly said that Mrs. Brooks actually put it all together and she pointed out that there are some meters not working and we were unable to capture the usages on those meters.

Property Bids

Mayor Flowers asked Mrs. Daly to speak about the property bids. Mrs. Daly referenced the list in the Board agenda packet that gave information on all properties that the Town has for sale. She said the three that are highlighted are closed and we have received the funds on them. She said there are three that are sold, but not closed. She said 202 E. Wayne Street had a bidding war, which started at \$3,000 and went up to \$19,000. She said she has advertised for the 10 day upset bids and she has sent over the paperwork to the attorney for closing. She said 205 Dickinson has a bid of \$2,500 and 405 S. Sycamore has a bid of \$4,500. She said both of these have been advertised for the 10 day upset bid, and are owned by the Town and the County. She said she has sent over the information to the County Clerk, Carol Bowden, to be put on the agenda for July 19th to get an approval from the County Commissioners. She said once they approve the bids, she will send it to the attorney for closing. She said the Town has made \$46,650 off of the sale of six properties and the public works department does not have to cut the grass on these properties. She said we have one more property for sale which is 608 S. Goldsboro Street. She said after that one sells, we will make around \$50,000 total, plus we will bring in revenue from property taxes and utilities, because most of the properties sold were to contractors who are going to build houses on them.

Information

Food Hunger in Fremont

Mayor Flowers asked Alderwoman Jones to speak about food hunger in Fremont. Alderwoman Jones said that last week on June 14th, Alderman Spivey, herself, Mayor Pro tem Artis, Mr. Howell, Mr. Larry Jones, and Pastor Sutton met with Bruce Griffin from YMCA of Goldsboro. She said the YMCA has gotten involved with food and explained the different programs that the YMCA is involved with. She said they decided that we do not have enough time to be involved with the summer program, but we could get involved with the mobile van that brings fresh produce. She said they could set up on Thursdays from 11 to 12 at the library building and as she learns more about this program, she will inform the Board. Mayor Pro tem Artis said that there was a survey done and that there are 99% of children that receive free lunch and when they are not in

school, they are without food during the day. Alderwoman Jones said they started with 10 families in 2020 and grew to 200 families per day at the peak and at the end of 2020 school year, they were serving over 20,000 meals. Mayor Pro tem Artis said this is only for children. Alderwoman Jones said the mobile van is for children and adults.

Mr. Howell stated that there will be a library meeting on Thursday at 6:30 at Pikeville Town Hall. He said he is planning on attending.

Recess

Mayor Flowers stated that we are going to recess until tomorrow night at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting ended at 9:05.

W. Darron Flowers, Mayor

Shannon L. Daly, Town Clerk