



Minutes of Regular Town of Fremont Meeting

February 21, 2023

The regular meeting of the Board of Aldermen/Alderwomen for the Town of Fremont, NC was held at 6:00 p.m. on February 21, 2023. 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, Chief Paul Moats, Assistant Chief Greg Bottoms, and Auditor Danna Layne.

Quorum Present: Yes

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

Invocation: Alderman Spivey gave the invocation.

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

Approval of Agenda: Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve or amend the agenda. Mayor Prot tem Artis asked to amend the agenda to add discontinuation of selling cemetery plots as action #8. Alderwoman Jones made the motion to approve the agenda. Alderman Spivey seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve all the minutes of January 17, 2023 Regular Board Meeting, January 17, 2023 Closed Session Meeting, January 26, 2023 Special Called Meeting, February 1, 2023 Board Retreat, and February 7, 2023 Special Called Meeting. Alderwoman Jones made a motion to approve all minutes. Alderwoman Lewis seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Alderman Ruffin stated that he would like to make a comment concerning the minutes. He said Mr. Larry Jones has brought items to the Board and made comments about improving the Town of Fremont. He said that he thinks that the Board should get together with Mr. Jones and join up with him to help Fremont. He said that Mr. Jones does a lot for Fremont and the Board listens, but does not comment or give him direction on what to do.

Alderman Ruffin stated that the Board needs to study the report that Mr. Brian Harvey gives and look at all the vehicles and start setting things in action. He said instead of repairing old vehicles, it's cheaper to purchase new vehicles and he asked the Board to think about it.

Public Comment: Mayor Flowers opened the meeting for public comment and stated that if anyone would like to address the Board, they would need to come to the podium and state their name and address.

There were no public comments.

Mayor Flowers closed public comment.

Public Comment Response Letter: Mayor Flowers stated that there is a copy of a letter, in the agenda packet, that was sent to Mrs. Donna Barrett in response to her public comment.

Public Hearing: Mayor Flowers stated, "By law we are bound to check our status of the voting districts according to our census. The purpose of this public hearing is to get citizens' comments on the voting districts in Fremont. After each centennial census, NC public local government, with true electoral districts, are required to determine the necessity of redistricting and if deemed necessary, redistrict to balance the population of each electoral district. This has been done and the growth is skewed and we qualified as a municipality that has to make adjustments to redistrict. The Town of Fremont has 6 electoral districts for which it elects one alderperson per term for each district by a vote of those that are residing in each district. In addition to the 6 districts elections, there is a municipal election to elect a Mayor, bringing the total number of elected officials on the Town Board to 7. It has been determined through the courts that you develop an ideal population for each district and then you have to make adjustments for those districts with a range of +/- of 5%. Our population is 1,196 and the ideal population for each district is 199, which means that they should range from 189 and 209. The Board has met and looked at the existing districts and the issues facing them and the second step is to have a public hearing, which we are having tonight and the final step will be to develop a map and vote on it and enact the map as part of the electoral process for Fremont at the next Board meeting.

He opened the floor for the public to make comments pertaining to the redistricting for Fremont.

There were no public comments.

Mayor Flowers Closed the public hearing.

Speaker: Danna Layne, CPA – Audit Report

Danna Layne stated that she is a CPA at the firm of Mumford, Shear, and Uzzell in Goldsboro. She said that when Mr. Howell had approached her that the prior auditor had resigned with little notice, we started motions for her to become our new auditor. She stated that she has completed our audit within the past couple of weeks and the bound copy, which she presented to the Board

and staff, is the full audit report that has been sent to the LGC. She stated that she has a PowerPoint presentation that summarizes the highlights of the audit report versus going through the full report. She said the purpose of the auditor is to be a set of eyes for the Board, because she works for the Board, not for management. She said she looks at various financial documents in order to come up with and agree with the figures that are in the financial statements. She said she wants to issue an unmodified opinion and that is the opinion that she has issued this year, which is the highest level of assurance that those figures are what they are. She said the financial statements are a fair representation of the Town as of fiscal year end of June 30, 2022. She said the financial statements are a representation of management and they are not a representation of the CPA, even though the Town chose to hire a third party to prepare those statements and he did a good job. She said she prepared the note disclosures and the unmodified opinion. She suggested to at least read the management discussion and analysis, which is a great summary of the Town. Some highlights of the presentation were:

- Governments operate on a modified accrual basis.
- We ended the year with about \$330,000 in cash accounts, \$130,000 in investments, and some accounts receivables that totals the assets of around \$612,000.
- The total fund balance was around \$484,000.
- The total revenue for the year was about 1.3 million dollars.
- The total expenditures were about 1.2 and a half million dollars.
- There was an increase in the fund balance of about \$180,000.
- The revenues exceeded what was budgeted by around \$7,000.
- The expenditures were under budget by about \$166,000.
- There were no budgetary findings, which is very good.
- The electric fund had a strong cash balance of about \$465,000, some accounts receivable and restricted cash of \$88,000, giving almost \$700,000 in assets. There was an increase in the net position of \$250,000.
- The water and sewer fund had a strong cash and investments balance of \$375,000 and the total assets were 9.8 million dollars. The net position was 9.4 million dollars.
- There were no findings of significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal controls.
- There were two recommendations: one is to update the personnel policy and the other is to make sure the trial balance matches the fund balance or net position of the prior year audit. This can be done by operating on the modified accrual basis throughout the year and only adjust the proprietary funds to full accrual at the end of the year.

- There were no significant problems in performing the audit. The lateness was due primarily from the prior accounting firm and there were no disagreements with management.
- The general fund balance should be between 71 to 132%.
- Our Fund balance is 23 ½%, which is 3 times higher than last year, so we are improving.
- There was a loss of \$791 in the electric fund.
- We have good reserves to operate, which is 4 months of cash over total expenses.
- We did not make a timely audit report, due to the prior auditor resigning.
- We are on the unit assistant list from previous years of financial performance indicators or findings in prior audits. The unit response letter is required to be sent to the LGC by April 23rd.

Mayor Flowers asked Mrs. Layne how she would compare us to other municipalities of the same size. Mrs. Lane said the only frustration she had was with the third party CPA firm and, hopefully, we will get some better results next year, being that we will not be using the same CPA. She said financially she thinks we have a strong base with our cash balances, account receivables, and assets. She said we have some liability on the sewer system, but that is normal because we have to maintain and repair the system. She said we have some good assets to support the little bit of debt that we have and we are not a unit with too much debt. She said to get off of the unit assistance list with the LGC, we may need to manage the general fund costs in order to increase the assets, so that we will have more reserves in the general fund. She said if we decrease the costs, we will increase the cash and that's going to give us more reserves and it will start pushing the fund balance up. She recommended that we look at the salaries in the general fund and put part of them in other funds, which will decrease the costs in the general fund.

Mayor Flowers and the Board thanked Mrs. Layne. Mayor Flowers said that he feels much better than he did before, and we have had some difficulties in this area in times past, and we feel really good about where we are and what we have done.

Action:

(1) Contract with Andrew Harris, CPA – Mr. Howell

Mr. Howell stated that the template of the contract that we have drafted for Mr. Harris is in the agenda packet. He said that Mr. Harris, Mrs. Nichols, and Mrs. Layne reviewed the contract, and all agree with the terms. He said if the Board approves the contract, Mr. Harris will start work tomorrow and his term will be over on September 30, 2024. Mayor Pro tem Artis asked Mr. Harris how long did he work for the Town in the past. Mr. Harris said from 2010 to 2018. He said he was the Town's auditor during the time when Mr. McDuffie and Mrs. Aycock were the Administrators. He said he intends to sign the contract tomorrow and looks forward to working with the finance officer and the Board. There was some discussion about the end of his term. It was determined to keep it at September 30, 2024 and if we need to do an extension or revision, we can look at it at that time. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the contract. Mayor Pro tem

Artis made a motion to approve the contract between the Town and Mr. Andrew Harris as written. Alderwoman Jones seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

(2) Resolution (2023-2) to declare road closures for the 35th Annual Fremont Daffodil Festival – Mr. Howell

Mr. Howell said that the state requires us to have Board approval any time we have a road closure for any state maintained roads. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2023-2. Mayor Pro tem Artis made the motion. Alderman Spivey seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

(3) Four-Way Stop at the intersection of Vance & Carolina Street – Mr. Howell

Mr. Howell stated that Chief Moats stated at the last meeting that we needed a Four-Way Stop at the intersection of Vance and Carolina Street, because there are complaints that people are speeding. Chief Moats said that they believe a Four-Way Stop will decrease the amount of speed on that stretch of road before you get to North Street. He said they get a lot of complaints and they try to monitor that area as best they can, but they cannot sit there 24 hours a day. He said they are hoping that this will reduce the speed and create a safer environment for the citizens that live there. He said they will maintain it and make sure the intersection is fully marked and well-advertised, so that people can see the traffic pattern has changed and the officers will not have to write people a ticket for stop sign violation. There was some discussion. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the request. Alderwoman Jones made a motion to approve a Four-Way Stop at that intersection. Alderwoman Futrelle seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

(4) No through truck sign for the intersection of Norwayne Alumni Way and Memorial Church Road – Mr. Howell

Mr. Howell stated that there is a problem with 18-wheelers turning off of Memorial Church Road onto Norwayne Alumni Way to get to Meherrin. He said that the trucks are running through the front yard of the property on the corner and damaging the property and the owner is upset. He said that he and Chief Moats has discussed the issue and they are recommending that we install a No Through Truck sign at the corner of Norwayne Alumni Way, as close to Memorial Church Road as possible. He said the alternate route would be to Hwy 222 to Hwy 117. Chief Moats said that there have been two incidents involving damage to the property that involved all four wheels running through the property, causing major ruts. He said the trucks coming down Hwy 222 and turning on Memorial Church Road cannot turn left onto Norwayne Alumni Way without going onto the property, because there is not enough clearance. He said that the idea is to put the sign on the corner as close to Memorial Church Road so that the driver can see it and will continue to go down Memorial Church Road. He said they will have to turn onto Hooks Road, to Robert Peele Road, to Hwy 117, and continue to Meherrin. He said putting the sign on the corner will prevent the trucks from turning, because they would hit the sign if they attempted to turn. Alderman Spivey asked if we need to coordinate this with NCDOT. Mr. Howell said that he would check on it. Chief Moats said that Norwayne Alumni Way is not a state-maintained road. There was some discussion. Mayor Flowers

asked for a motion. Alderman Spivey made the motion. Alderman Ruffin seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

(5) Employee Performance Evaluations – Mayor Pro tem Artis

Mayor Pro tem Artis stated that there are performance evaluations for the Town Administrator, the Town Clerk and other members of our staff in the Board packet. She said the Human Resources Committee has worked hard to get these evaluations put together and needed the Boards' approval to use the formats. She said that they would like the evaluations completed by March 22nd. She asked Chief Moats if they did their own evaluations, yearly, and he said that was correct. There was much discussion and it was determined that each Board member will have the Town Administrator's evaluation completed and turned in to the HR Committee by March 7th, so that the results will be given at the next Board meeting on March 21st. It also was determined that all other evaluations will have to be completed by March 22nd. Mayor Flowers asked for a motion. Alderman Ruffin made a motion to approve the evaluation forms as presented and to be implemented and returned to the committee by March 7th. Alderwoman Lewis seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

(6) Black Heritage Month Proclamation – Mayor Flowers

Mayor Flowers read the Proclamation for Black Heritage Month. He asked for a motion to approve the Proclamation. Mayor Pro tem Artis made a motion to approve Black Heritage Month Proclamation. Alderwoman Jones seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

(7) Budget Workshop Dates – Mayor Pro tem Artis

Mayor Pro tem Artis asked if March 7th would be a good date for a Budget Workshop. There was some discussion and it was determined that March 7th at 3:00 will be our first Budget Workshop.

(8) Discontinuation of Selling Cemetery Plots – Mayor Pro tem Artis

Mayor Pro tem Artis stated that she wanted to make it official that we discontinue selling cemetery plots in both Fremont and Elmwood Cemeteries. There was some discussion. Alderman Spivey made a motion to discontinue selling plots in Elmwood and Fremont cemeteries until the matter at hand is resolved. Alderwoman Lewis seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Reports:

(1) Finance Report – Mrs. Nichols

Mrs. Nichols stated that our checking account balances continue to increase. She said we are operating on a positive income for the month of January. She said there were some big expenses this month with repairs to public work vehicles. She said we have received \$60,000 in fire tax income for the month of February and \$27, 000 in sales tax income. She said everything looks good. Alderwoman Jones asked about the increase in property insurance for the Fire Department and Mrs. Nichols said that our property insurance is higher this year because the rates have gone up.

(2) Billing & Collections Report – Mrs. Daly

Mrs. Daly stated that she would like to respond to the auditor's statement when she said that we needed to increase our collections for electric. She said that when a customer pays their bill, the funds get distributed to the electric fund first, before any other service. She said that she asked Mrs. Nichols why were we short in the electric fund, and Mrs. Nichols said it is because all of Town Hall staffs' salary is an expense to the electric fund. Mrs. Daly said that maybe we should divide the salaries up into different departments so that all if it is not an expense to the electric fund, and this is something we can look at when we do our budget.

Mrs. Daly gave her report:

- 1. Billing & Collections:** The difference between what was billed versus what was collected is \$1,081.87. The amount owed to the Town at the end of January was \$10,548.92.
- 2. Vouchers:** There was \$10,840.33 owed to the Town for vouchers. The amount collected was \$5,490.91. The difference is \$5,349.42, which we will collect this month.
- 3. Budget Billing:** There was \$1,106.53 billed and \$895.00 collected. This is a month that bills were higher than what we collected. We collected \$211.53 less than what was billed. There will be months where the amount collected (set monthly amount) will be more than what was billed and months where the amount collected is less. The goal is that the account will be balanced by the end of the year.
- 4. Cut-offs:** There were a total of 24 cut-offs, which 13 were residence and 11 were businesses. As of today, all have been cut on except one resident, because they moved.
- 5. Debt Setoff:** There was \$252.07 put into Debt Setoff from delinquent accounts for the month of October, and there was \$0 collected in the month of January. Accounts have to be 90 days delinquent before they can be put into Debt Setoff.
- 6. Arrangements:** There was a total of \$9,466.88 that was owed to the Town from arrangements and \$1,730.00 was collected, leaving a total of \$7,736.88 owed. This amount is the total owed from 7 accounts.

Alderman Jones had questions about United Health Care helping citizens with their utility bill and what the process is as to how we get the funds. Mrs. Daly said that we are not able to take the payment with the card, because the card has one number more than a credit card and our system does not recognize it. She said the customer has to call and request the payment to be sent by check to us.

Alderman Ruffin asked how many businesses have arrangements and Mrs. Daly said only 1 business has an arrangement, but there are 6 residents that have arrangements. She stated that the majority of what is owed to the Town is from that 1 business, and they are paying \$300 a week. She said they currently owe around \$6,000.

Mayor Pro tem Artis stated that the Fire Department was selling the Crown Victoria and asked Mrs. Nichols if the transaction had been completed and Mrs. Nichols said that it has.

(3) Public Works Report – Mr. Harvey

Mr. Harvey gave his public works report which was:

1. Repairs: Grapple truck- Grapple bolts repaired and air leaks repaired. Electric truck rear seal repaired. Water truck- Hub assemblies replaced. Bac-ho needs hydraulic repair, approximate cost \$4,500.00. East electric feeder repair- Squirrels and insulator. Leaf machine Screen repair.
2. Projects:
 - New School-** Pass through costs billed to customer.
 - Spray field-** Berm tree cutting on hold due to weather. \$150.00 per hour expect 32 hours approximate cost \$4800.00. New contractor sourced for Spray field maintenance.
 - Guard rails for Goldsboro st** – requote coming as the contractor is unable to get the guardrails into the ground.
 - Eureka #2 lift station** leaking and not operating correctly. Bypassed station and manually pumping down every day. Repair sourced through KBS, \$15,895.00. Supply constraints have pushed the completion back.
 - Eureka #2 and Eureka metering** flow meters down. Procurement of new meters and installation being scheduled.
 - HWY 222 west fire hydrant leaking needs repair.
 - New services at Vance and Harrell – 6 units
 - Library Colum repairs complete
 - Graveyard cleanup 1 March
 - Spring cleanup week of 6 March-Dumpster issues.
 - Baseball fields bathroom repairs. Not complete.
 - MLK park fence repair. Not complete.
 - Goshen drainage. Not complete.
 - Storm water ditch from Main Street to Vance st graveyard ditch. Needs survey and repair- impacting a resident’s (Carolina Street) yard due to erosion.
 - Barnes st at Goldsboro st storm water ditch needs survey and repair. Resident yard at risk of piping and erosion.
 - Head walls need replaced on Sycamore and Vance. Balance rd culvers. Cross st ditch re-grade. South Sycamore to dock ditch needs surveyed and dredged.
 - Graveyard drainage issues- Storm water grant study?
3. Response to Board inquiries: N/A
4. Requests to board: *****Wholesale energy Price rate increase in 40 days**

There was some discussion about cleaning up the cemeteries on March 1st. It was determined that Mr. Harvey should follow the rules and regulations that we have concerning the cemeteries.

Mr. Harvey stated that over the last several years, we have enjoyed a perk, offered by Wayne County Dump, which has not been offered to any other municipality in Wayne County. He said they have been bringing and retrieving dumpsters, as we fill them up. He said during Spring and Fall cleanup, we have asked for double the dumpsters, which they drop them off

and pick them up once we are done. He said they stopped this service, but after talking with them, they have agreed to let us keep the dumpsters through Spring Cleanup. He said after that, the days of free dumpsters are over for the Town of Fremont. Mayor Pro tem Artis asked what the cost will be for the dumpsters. Mr. Harvey said that we cannot get one through Wayne County, but we can get one through GFL. The cost through GFL, for a 20 yard dumpster for the Daffodil Festival, is \$50 delivery fee, they waive the rental fee for the weekend, \$155 removal fee, and \$58 per ton. He said losing the dumpsters is going to affect the Town, because when we pick up bulk goods, we will have to pay for a dumpster or we can fill up the grapple truck and take it to Wayne County dump, but they will charge us. He said if we get stuck, they will push us out with a backhoe, which could cause damage to our truck. He said there will be wear and tear on the grapple truck, driving it back and forth to Dudley. He said we do charge for bulk pickup, but it is negligible compared to what we will experience with the charges that we will incur by picking bulk up.

Mr. Harvey said that at the end of last week, they received notice from Electricities that the wholesale energy prices will be going up in 40 days. There was some discussion about how much the increase will be and how that will affect the Town. There was some discussion about the water rate may go up 5%.

Police Report – Chief Moats

Chief Moats stated that they had a couple of incidents this week. He said there were papers served on someone on Pine Street involving a domestic issue, but he could not give the details during the meeting, but will be glad to answer any questions after the meeting. He said yesterday, they made a drug arrest at the Speedway on a traffic violation. He said it originally was reported as a domestic, and there was a little bit of an altercation with the passenger, who ultimately was trying to prevent them from searching the vehicle. He said they found about 2 ½ ounces of weed, which is a felony possession in the State of North Carolina. He said the passenger was arrested without incident. Mayor Flowers asked that in the world that we are in today, is it possible if you make a stop to have some backup and Chief Moats said always in these days and times. He said that Pikeville Officers were there to assist, because they have a mutual aid agreement with them. He said that he actually made the stop and found the drugs, but Pikeville had a new officer that needed to learn, so he allowed the new officer to process the arrest, but it was still a joint arrest. Mayor Flowers stated that Chief Moats and his officers' safety is the primary concern and Chief Moats agreed. Chief Moats said that they have to keep in mind, not only the hostility of certain people they encounter, but also the general public that record the event. He said they treat people fair and like they should, but people are always trying to catch that one moment that will make you look bad, even though they try to do things as professionally and fair as they can.

Chief Moats referenced a document in the agenda packet that gave a description of Officer Batts' completed classes and training that will allow her to assume the responsibilities of the evidence room and crime scene management as a detective. He said even though they have been short-staffed, they have continued to allow her to take classes and train for this position. He said he is a real big advocate for education for his officers. He said once she completes all of her classes, which will be in March, she will have over 100 hours in the area of

investigations and evidence management. He said at this time, they will come before the Board for a promotional process, for Officer Batts, for accomplishing these things to fulfill her position.

Chief Moats said they have hired two part-time officers, Angela O'Neal was hired two weeks ago and Jeff Boykin who is retired from the Wilson Police Department who comes with plenty of experience. He said Mr. Boykin will be helping out with the Daffodil Festival and parades. He said there is a third person who is interested that works for the County, which will require very little training because he already knows the operating procedures for Wayne County. He has an interest in working some weekend hours. He said they also have a fulltime applicant and they have started that process, which takes between 60 to 90 days. He said there are positive things coming for the department that will allow them to become fully staffed.

Cemetery Report – Mayor Pro tem Artis

Mayor Pro tem Artis referenced the cemetery report that she provided. She stated that currently we do not have anything in our ordinance that discusses monuments and she has provided some information that she would like the Board to review for discussion at a later time.

Discussion:

(1) Cameras for Electrical Substations – Alderman Ruffin

Alderman Ruffin referred this to Chief Moats. Chief Moats stated that he has spoken with Bruce, from Red Lizard Technologies, concerning cameras for the electrical substations. There was some discussion about the challenges and cost of installing cameras. It was determined that Chief Moats will contact Bruce and have him come to the next meeting to discuss this further.

(2) Grant Writer – Mr. Howell

Mr. Howell stated during the Board retreat there was discussion about finding a grant writer. He said that he has reached out to several people and received some information concerning each one as to what they do and their fees. In addition, he said Mr. Keith Spivey has contacted him about grant writing and has offered his services part-time. Mr. Spivey spoke to the Board and explained how he would be a great fit for this job and the benefit to the Town would be that it would be more cost-effective than the other options. He stated that he could also act as an Economic Development Coordinator. Alderman Ruffin made a motion to wait until the next Board meeting to present and approve a grant writer. Mayor Flowers stated that he will appoint a committee to review and make a recommendation at the next Board meeting. Alderwoman Futrelle seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously. It was determined that Mayor Pro tem Artis and Alderwoman Jones will work with Mr. Howell to recommend a grant writer to the Board.

(3) Follow up from Board Retreat – Alderwoman Jones

Alderwoman Jones stated that at the Board retreat they realized that the Finance Committee had not been able to meet recently and she stated that they will be meeting,

along with the Human Resources/Personnel Committee to finalize items that were discussed at the Board Retreat.

Mayor Flowers stated that he enjoyed the Board retreat.

(4) Downtown Business Visits – Alderman Ruffin

Alderman Ruffin stated that he appreciated everyone that had a hand in the visitation. He said that one business owner said that she had been there over 20 years and no one has ever been by to check on her. He said this is something that needs to be scheduled to do again in 6 months or so. He said there were some businesses that we did not visit, due to time or due to them being closed when we went by, but we will get another date to go visit them. Mrs. Daly stated that she has thought of some ideas that we could do for the businesses, such as a competition for the owners to decorate their store fronts for Easter, recognizing them at a Board meeting, and using \$1,500 that we get from Electricities to help improve the buildings, instead of giving it to the Daffodil Committee. There was some discussion about the condition of the buildings,

(5) Customer Account – Mr. Howell

Mr. Howell said that we had discussed this account in November and the Board approved to contact the customer to inform her that the Board's decision was to charge her \$1951.96, but would allow a payment arrangement to be set up. He said that Mrs. Daly has attempted to make a payment arrangement, but the customer has not agreed to it. He said at this time the next step is to apply the total amount onto her bill. Alderwoman Jones asked is this something that has been done in the past, as far as putting the full amount onto the bill and Mr. Howell said that he was not sure, but he did know that we have an obligation to collect. He said that the original amount was for 4 years, but Alderman Ruffin suggested that we only charge for 2 years and the Board agreed. He stated at this point we have no other recourse other than applying the total amount to her bill which will show up on the next billing cycle. There was some discussion and it was agreed upon that, even though the full amount will be put on the bill, we will still work out a payment arrangement if the customer decides to do it.

Information:

(1) Black History Month – Beatrice Jones

Alderwoman Jones wanted to recognize February as Black History Month.

(2) Heart Month – Beatrice Jones

Alderwoman Jones stated that February is Heart Month. She said that heart disease is the number one killer of Americans and 1 in 3 women are diagnosed with heart disease, annually. She said the first Friday of February is National Wear Red Day to raise awareness.

(3) Citizen's Request/Suggestion – Mayor Pro tem Artis

Mayor Pro tem Artis said that she received an email from Dr. Blackman and asked the Board to read it and it can be discussed at the next Board meeting. Mayor Flowers said that we need to have a procedure if there is a request to rename a street in Fremont.

(4) Spring Cleanup will be March 6th. All items should be placed by the road before 8 a.m.

Closed Session: Personnel – General Statute 143-318.11(6)

Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to go into closed session for personnel. Alderman Spivey made the motion. Alderwoman Jones seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Recess: Mayor Flowers called for a 10 minute recess.

Open Session: Mr. Howell stated that the renter that we have on Main Street, will be moving out at the end of February. He said the rent is \$500 and the contract automatically renews each year on November 5th. He said the renter had tried to get in touch with Mr. Howell and finally did in January. He said he wanted the Board to know that the renter will be moving out by the end of February, and he and Mr. Harvey will do a walkthrough inspection on the building with the renter. He said he would like to advertise the building for rent for \$500, and instead of having the lease contract automatically renew every year, he would like it to be a month to month lease contract after the first year.

Motion to Close Regular Meeting: Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to adjourn. Alderwoman Jones made the motion. Alderman Ruffin seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting ended at 9:42 p.m.

Encouraging Quote: “You never know how strong you are, until being strong is your only choice.” – Steven Marshall

W. Darron Flowers, Mayor

Shannon L. Daly, Town Clerk