



Minutes of Regular Town of Fremont Meeting July 18, 2023

The regular meeting of the Board of Aldermen/Alderwomen for the Town of Fremont, NC was held at 6:00 p.m. on July 18, 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 Robert Jones, Town Clerk Shannon Daly, Chief Paul Moats, Assistant Chief Greg Bottoms, and Town Engineer Mike McAllister.

Quorum Present: Yes

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

Invocation: Alderman Ruffin gave the invocation.

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

Approval of Agenda: Alderman Ruffin asked to add under action item #8 regarding hiring a journeyman/lineman. Alderman Ruffin asked to add to discussion (after information) electric charging stations and Daffodil Drop. *Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the amended agenda. Mayor Pro tem Artis made the motion. Alderman Ruffin seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.*

Consent Agenda:

- (1) June 20, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Minutes**
- (2) July 6, 2023 Special Called Meeting Minutes**
- (3) July 13, 2023 Special Called Meeting Minutes**
- (4) 2023 Budget Amendments BA-13, BA-14 & BA-16**
- (5) 2024 Budget Amendment BA-1**

Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Alderwoman Jones made the motion. Alderwoman Lewis seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment: Mayor Flowers opened the meeting for public comment. There were no public comments. Mayor Flowers closed public comment.

Special Presentation: Promotion for Officer Jessica Batts – Chief Moats & Asst. Chief Bottoms

With the accomplishment of over 100 hours of classes, Officer Batts will be promoted to Detective and will manage the evidence room on a full-time basis. Detective Batts received her certificate and Detective's badge from Chief Moats and Asst. Chief Bottoms. The Board congratulated her on this promotion. Alderman Spivey thanked Chief Moats for his leadership and support of Detective Batts.

Speaker: Oscar Mooring – Farmer's Market

Mr. Oscar Mooring came before the Board on behalf of the Fremont Rotary Club to present a proposal for Rotary to establish and facilitate a Farmer's Market. The Market would be held every Tuesday evenings on Goldsboro Street in the Daffodil Park. They would like to invite vendors selling fresh produce and local meats. Josh Davis is consulting with the Rotary Club on this project. The time has not be solidified, but possibly 5:00PM-8:00PM and potentially year round.

Action:

(1) Agreement with LGC on Eureka – Mr. Jones

After meeting with the Local Government Commission (LGC) regarding Eureka, we would like to entertain an agreement with LGC to obtain some grant money to work towards regionalization. Mr. Jones asked the Board to appoint a committee to work through an agreement with LGC. Grant writing needs to be completed soon. *Mayor Flowers entertained a motion to enter an agreement with LGC. Alderman Spivey made the motion. Alderman Ruffin seconded. There was a call for discussion.* Alderman Ruffin inquired as to what should be included in the agreement. Mr. Jones explained the draft MOU being developed with Mr. McAlister and conditions involved to become self-sufficient and become a regional provider using grant money. *Mayor Flowers called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.* The committee will be Mayor Flowers, Alderman Spivey, and Alderwoman Jones. Mr. McAlister explained the application will be due the end of September.

(2) 2023 Budget Amendment BA-15 – Mr. Jones

2023 Budget Amendment BA-15 is in regard to hospital insurance. *Mayor Flowers called for a motion to approve this budget amendment. Alderman Spivey made the motion. Alderman Ruffin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.*

(3) Resolution for Property Liens – Mr. Jones

Mr. Jones presented the Resolution for Property Liens, all are for abatements. One of the properties have been sold and will be removed from the list. Abatements will be updated yearly. Dilapidated houses have not been added to the list yet. *After discussion, Mayor Flowers called for a motion to adopt the Resolution for Property*

Liens. Alderwoman Futrelle made the motion. Alderwoman Lewis seconded. Alderman Ruffin asked Chief Moats to explain the abatement process. The motion passed unanimously.

(4) Property at 219 E. Main Street – Mr. Jones

Mr. Jones brought previously tabled discussion regarding the offer to buy 219 E. Main Street to the Board. The property's tax value is \$16,130 and land is \$12,050 with accessory structure worth \$1,200 totaling \$29,380. Mayor Pro tem Artis does not wish to sell. Alderwoman Futrelle was in agreement. *Alderman Ruffin made a motion to not sell the property at 219 E. Main Street. Mayor Pro tem Artis seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Jones will inform the person who made the offer.*

(5) Hours of Operation for Town Hall and Public Works – Mr. Jones

Mr. Jones re-presented the hours of operation discussion. Maintenance will work 6:00AM-3:00PM Monday-Thursday and 6:00AM-12:00PM Friday and move to a half-hour lunch. Office staff will work 8:00AM-5:30PM Monday-Thursday and 8:00AM-12:00PM Friday. The Town Hall office will still not open till 8:30AM, but will remain open till 5:30PM. Alderman Spivey suggested trying this for 60 to 90 days and reevaluate. Mayor Flowers suggested we re-evaluate after Labor Day. *After discussion, Mayor Flowers called for a motion. Alderman Spivey made a motion to allow the town hall staff and public works to go on the modified schedule. We will revisit this at the Board Meeting in the third week of September 2023. Alderwoman Futrelle seconded.* Mayor Pro tem Artis asked that if there is a problem with this schedule before that meeting that the Board be notified. Alderwoman Futrelle said if the constituents call the Board, they will come to Mr. Jones and Mrs. Daly to let them know. *Motion passed unanimously.*

(6) Donating Sick Leave – Mrs. Daly

Mrs. Daly shared that a couple of employees asked if they could donate sick leave to a coworker. There is not currently a policy, but the Human Resources Committee has made a suggestion as to how the policy should be developed:

- The employee donating the sick leave must keep a minimum of 40 hours due to OSHA law.
- The donor can donate up to 240 hours of sick leave.
- If there are unused hours, the hours will be given back to the donor.
- The Town Administrator must approve the donation of hours.
- The recipient must have a note from a doctor certifying the need for donor hours.

Mayor Pro tem Artis made a motion to approve this policy for donating sick leave hours as described by Mrs. Daly and developed by the HR Committee. Alderman Spivey seconded. A copy of the completed policy will be shared with the Board and included in the Personnel Policy. Motion passed unanimously.

(7) Vehicle Take-Home Program Policy and Procedure – Chief Moats

Chief Moats presented a Vehicle Take-Home Program Policy and Procedure as included in the Board packet. Vehicles must stay within a 30-mile radius. Chief Moats will not take home his vehicle. Full-time officers qualify for this program, currently two

employees. *After discussion, Alderman Spivey made a motion that our police officers be able to take their vehicle home in accordance to Chief Moats' presented Take-Home Policy. Alderwoman Futrelle seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

(8) Hiring Journeyman Electrician to Assist & Increase Pay – Alderman Ruffin

Alderman Ruffin explained that last month our present Lineman was offered another position making \$3.75/hour more. Alderman Ruffin added a request to hire a Journeyman Electrician to assist. Mr. Jones suggested moving the present Lineman to Assistant Public Works Director along with a pay raise. The funds for the position would be paid through the electric fund. *Alderwoman Jones made a motion that our current Lineman get an increase which is already in our 2024 Budget and a Journeyman be hired, if the money is available. Mayor Pro tem Artis seconded. Motion passed. [Yes: Mayor Pro tem Artis, Alderwoman Jones, Alderman Spivey, Alderwoman Futrelle, Alderman Ruffin. No: Alderwoman Lewis]*

Reports:

(1) Finance Report –Mr. Jones

Mrs. Daly reported the Budget to Actual and check cut in June. No cash trending report is available as our new accountant, Ryan Marlar, found some things to correct prior to reporting. Our current balance is close to \$1.4M as of this morning.

(2) Billing & Collections Report – Mrs. Daly

Mrs. Daly gave the May Billing and the June Collections Report.

1. **Billing & Collections:** The difference between what was billed versus what was collected is (\$2,504). The amount owed to the Town at the end of May was \$218.
2. **Vouchers:** There was \$0 owed to the Town for vouchers.
3. **Budget Billing:** There was \$725 billed and \$895.00 collected. This is a month that bills were lower than what we collected. We collected \$170 more 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 12 cut-offs, which 10 were residents and 2 were businesses. As of today, all have been cut back on.
5. **Debt Setoff:** There was \$144 put into Debt Setoff from delinquent accounts for the month of May and there was \$0 collected in the month of June. Accounts have to be 90 days delinquent before they can be put into Debt Setoff.
6. **Arrangements:** There was a total of \$1,392 that was owed to the Town from arrangements and \$229 was collected, leaving a total of \$1,164 owed. This amount is the total owed from 5 residents.
7. **Work Orders:** There were 6 new connects, 6 disconnects, and 5 transfers for the month of June.

(3) Public Works Report – Mr. Jones

The work order list was presented as a new part of the Public Works Report. Mayor Flowers inquired about the status of the bridge across the ditch in the cemetery. It is still closed until repair. Alderwoman Jones asked about the status of Norwayne Alumni Way and Memorial Church Road regarding a no turn sign for through trucks. Posts are going to be installed to stop the trucks from going through the yard with signage.

(4) Police Report – Chief Moats

- **Introduction of the new patch design for the Police Department**

No major incidences since our last report. The new patch has been designed to differentiate us from Goldsboro PD.

(5) Cemetery Report – Mayor Pro tem Artis

Mayor Pro tem Artis had nothing new to report.

Information:

Reminder that there will be a lunch at the new school on Wednesday, July 19th at 12:00N.

Discussion:

(1) Electric Charging Station – Alderman Ruffin

Alderman Ruffin wants to keep in our mind to find a grant opportunity for an electric charging station. There was discussion of possible locations.

(2) Daffodil Drop – Alderman Ruffin

Alderman Ruffin asked that we think about implementing a Daffodil Drop for New Years' Eve. Mayor Pro tem Artis stated the Pickle Drop is put on by Mount Olive Company. Mr. Jones will look into the possibility.

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

Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to go into Closed Session. Mayor Pro tem Artis made the motion. Alderwoman Lewis seconded it. Motion passed unanimously.

Open Session:

Alderwoman Jones made a motion that effective tomorrow, Mrs. Daly will be allowed to earn up to 10 hours per week in overtime, plus continue with an increase in salary of \$4,800 until such time when an assistant is hired; then she will become a salaried employee. Mayor Pro tem Artis seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Alderman Ruffin made a motion to allow someone to be hired on a temporary, part-time basis to fill in the position as needed. Alderman Spivey seconded it. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to Close Regular Meeting:

Mayor Flowers asked for a motion to adjourn. Alderman Spivey made the motion. Alderwoman Lewis seconded it. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting ended at 9:05 p.m.

Encouraging Quote: “Worry is a misuse of imagination.”– Dan Zadra, author and creativity consultant

W. Darron Flowers, Mayor

Shannon L. Daly, Town Clerk