



Minutes of Regular Town of Fremont Meeting

March 19, 2024

The regular meeting of the Board of Aldermen/Alderwomen for the Town of Fremont, NC was held at 6:00 p.m. on March 19, 2024. Present were:

Eddie Yelverton, **Mayor**
Leroy Ruffin, **Mayor Pro-tem**
Joyce Artis, **Alderwoman**
Tim Howell, **Alderman**
Oscar Mooring, **Alderman**
Annie Lewis, **Alderwoman**
Wayne Jackson, **Alderman**

Also in attendance were **Interim Town Administrator:** Joyce Artis, **Police Chief:** Paul Moats, **Town Clerk:** Junnie Williams

Quorum Present: Yes

Call to Order

Call to Order: Mayor Yelverton called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Invocation: Mayor Yelverton gave the Invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance: Alderman Oscar Mooring led all in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

Mayor Yelverton: The next thing is the Approval of the Agenda and there are some Amendments to the Agenda for this evening.

Alderwoman Artis: Yes sir, I would like to amend the Agenda and **Add** as a **Speaker:** Mr. Bruce Johnston of Red Lizard Technology, **Add** under **Discussion:** East Carolina Coastal Committee, and also **Add** under **Action:** Greater Morning Star Holiness Church. That all I have.

Mayor Yelverton: Asked for a Motion to approve the amended Agenda.

Alderman Howell: So Moved.

Alderwoman Lewis: Seconded the Motion.

Mayor Yelverton, asked are there any discussion? If not, all in Favor of the approval of the Agenda, let it be shown by the raising of hands. **Motion** passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Yelverton: Asked for a Motion to Approval the Minutes on the Agenda.

Alderman Howell and **Alderman Jackson**, stated errors in the Minutes for Regular Public Board Meeting - **January 16, 2024**, and Regular Public Board Meeting - **February 20, 2024**.

Town Clerk Williams: Will corrected errors in these Minutes.

Mayor Yelverton: Asked for a Motion to approve the Minutes with all necessary corrections on the Agenda.

Alderwoman Artis: So Moved.

Alderwoman Lewis: Second the Motion.

Mayor Yelverton: Asked if there were any other discussion? If not, all in Favor of the approval of the Minutes, let it be shown by the raising of hands. **Motion** passed unanimously.

Public Comments

Mayor Yelverton: Opened the Meeting for Public Comments. No comments were made from the audience. Mayor Yelverton: Closed the Public Comment Session.

Speakers

Mayor Yelverton: We have now come to the Speaker: Bruce Johnston, Red Lizard Technology.

Alderwoman Artis: Bruce Johnston is the Town of Fremont, IT person for numerous years.

Bruce Johnston: Presented to the Board an up-to-date Security proposal that he has put together, due to the one in which the Town now having being out of Compliance and long overdue. Bruce stated one of the Town's main issues is the Server, and that comes from the Server being very ancient. Bruce the cost of another Server is somewhere around **\$4,000** or **\$5,000** and cost can always be a factor, but it's time for and update as far as any kind of Security basically. Bruce stated anyone can come into Town Hall, put anything on a thumb drive and walk out of the Town with valuable information. Bruce stated the proposal that he has put together covers everything from emails, to emails filtering, to employee training for anyone that has a Fremontnc.gov. Bruce suggest that the Board look over the proposal as he is sure there will be future questions on everything that is in there, because there is a lot in this Security proposal, and to get with Alderwoman Artis, she will get with him, but again, it is time to move up.

Alderwoman Artis: Asked Bruce to inform the Board members as to what will happen, if the Server was to go out?

Bruce Johnston: Stated everything is backup, don't get me wrong, but you problem is the Town has nothing to fall back on with the backed up Data. The Server is not something you order 1 day and it comes back 2 or 3 day later, not it takes up to 30 days before you can get a Server, then it's a matter of getting everything restored back up and during that period of time no one is going to be able to get in there and make payments, whether it is walk-ins or on-line, you won't be able to do any payment billing. Thank you, everyone.

Action

Mayor Yelverton: next is Recognition of Businesses by Mrs. Artis.

Alderwoman Artis: Mrs. Artis wanted to get the input of the Board Members as to how, they should recognize their Fremont Businesses in and around Town. Mrs. Artis stated she thought on during a Spotlight for the month on 1 of the Town's Businesses, **or** we can allow the Business to advertise on our Facebook Page, **or** our Website (Gooroo), **or** whatever, we would like to do, and therefore the Town's Businesses will know and see, how appreciative the Board is of them.

Alderman Jackson: Stated he thinks this is a good idea, himself.

Alderwoman Artis: Stated that she would get some type of Plan together and get back with the Board.

Mayor Yelverton: Asked for a Motion.

Alderman Jackson: I make a Motion that we follow Councilwoman Artis, Recognition of Businesses for the Month and come up with a plan of action for how we would like to recognizing the businesses.

Alderwoman Artis: I Second.

Mayor Yelverton: Are there any Discussions? If not, all in Favor, let it be shown by the raising of hand. **Motion** passed unanimously.

Mayor Yelverton: Recloser's topic, again.

Alderwoman Artis: In your packets, there is a quote for a new Recloser from Sunbelt Soloman, which is **\$5,810** each and TransEast Inc., is the quote for the refurbishing Recloser, in which is the 1 Recloser that we currently have and it is **\$2,221.43**.

Alderwoman Artis, stated Ray Bostic who is the Town of Fremont, Lineman in the Public Works Department, he recommends that, we would buy 1, switch out and repair the other, then switch the final 1 to have a spare.

Alderman Howell: Stated he agrees with that.

Alderwoman Artis: So all together the Total cost of **1 new Recloser**, and **2 Refurbish Recloser**, would be a **Total** cost of **\$10,252.86** give or take a little, which is way better than **\$65,000**.

Alderman Howell and **Alderman Jackson:** Oh yes, way better.

Alderman Mooring: Do we need a Motion?

Mayor Yelverton: Yes, just make a Motion.

Alderman Mooring: I make a Motion that we purchase 1 new Recloser and swap that out and eventually have the other 2 recondition, so that we will have 1 spare.

Mayor Yelverton: asked do we have a Second.

Alderwoman Artis: I Second.

Mayor Yelverton: Are there any Discussions? If not. All in Favor, let it be shown by the raising of hands. **Motion** passed unanimously.

Mayor Yelverton: next, we have Greater Morning Star Holiness Church, James Ruffin.

James Ruffin: Stated on February 13, 2024, he and other members of Greater Morning Star Holiness Church attended the Planning Board and Adjustment Meeting, here at the Town of Fremont, and received an approval by the Planning Board to start the additional add on to the building at Greater Morning Star Holiness Church. Mr. Ruffin stated he was now there to address the Board of Alderman/Alderwoman, in what the Board was in need of from the Church in order to move forward with the building process of Greater Morning Star Holiness Church.

Alderwoman Artis: The Planning Board approved the additional building work to be done to the existing Church, there now.

During the Closed Session Meeting, on February 20th, 2024 Alderman Mooring made a Motion that we offer the Town Administrator, position to Mr. Johnathan Allen, with a Base Salary Range of \$76,000 to 80,000 a year, and Alderman Jackson, second the Motion. Mayor Yelverton asked all in Favor, let it be shown by raising of hands. 3 in Favor, Alderman Howell, Alderman Mooring, and Alderman Jackson. 3 not in Favor, Mayor Pro tem Ruffin, Alderwoman Artis, and Alderwoman Lewis. Mayor Yelverton, was the tie breaker and therefore Mr. Johnathan Allen was the candidate chosen as the new Town Administrator.

Mayor Yelverton is there a **Motion** to come out of Closed Session?

Alderwoman Lewis made the Motion.

Alderman Jackson made the Second.

Mayor Yelverton is there any discussion? All those in Favor, let it be shown by the raising of your hands? **5** – Favor, **1** – Undecided (Mayor Pro tem Ruffin).

Motion passed.

Mayor Yelverton is there a **Motion** to go back into **Open Session**?

Alderman Mooring made the Motion.

Alderwoman Lewis made the Second.

Alderwoman Artis asked a question, if Mr. Allen, doesn't work out, will the next person be given this same opportunity, Salary Range as Town Administrator?

Mayor Yelverton stated if Mr. Johnathan Allen doesn't work out for the Town Administrator, position, Mr. Marvin Sharpe will be called and given the same opportunity, Salary Range.

Reports:

Finance Report

Interim Town Administrator: Alderman Artis stated the **Finance Report** was not available at this time, due to former **Finance Officer:** Shannon M. Berry, quitting on March 14th, 2024 and not preparing a Financial Report for the Town of Fremont, Regular Public Board Meeting that was already scheduled for March 19th, 2024. Alderwoman Artis was at the Airport, March 15th, 2024, late Friday evening returning back to the Carolina's from vacationing, when she notice an email sent from Mayor Yelverton of Shannon M. Berry decision to quit, in spite of Shannon M. Berry's, agreement obligation to the Town Board of Fremont, agreeing to work 4 extra days only in the month of March for the Town. 1 day per week, as scheduled March 5th, March 13th, March 19th, and March 27th, 2024. Alderman Artis stated the **Finance Report** would be presented at a later date

Billing & Collection Report

Town Clerk: Junnie Williams, gave the January/February 2024-Billing and Collection Report as of **March 13, 2024.**

Billing & Collections: The difference between what was billed versus what was collected is \$13,923.49. \$8,691.74 is due to an error in the readings/billing for one account. We credited back \$2,086.16 in Water and \$6,605.58 in Sewer. This still leaves

a difference of \$5,231.75 which we still had \$3,662.14 owed to the Town at the end of February.

Vouchers: There was \$1,011.12 owed to the Town for Vouchers.

Budget Billing: There was \$1,190.25 billed and \$895 collected.

Cut-offs: We had a total of **11** Cut-offs. This consists of **9** – Residents, **2** – Businesses. All accounts have been cut back on except for **4**, as of **March 13, 2024**.

Debt Setoff: There was \$0.00 put into Debt Setoff from delinquent accounts for the month of **December 2023** and there was \$0.00 collected in the month of **February 2024**.

Arrangements: There was a total of \$488.58 that was owed to the Town from Arrangements and \$105.65 was collected, leaving a total of \$382.93 owed. This amount is the total owed from **3** residents.

Work Orders: For the month of February there were **1** connect, **1** disconnect, and **1** transfer.

Police Report

Police Chief: Paul Moats stated

Chief Moat, Town Update Report:

Alderwoman Joyce Artis:

Discussion

Information:

Encouraging Words:

Mayor Eddie Yelverton

Junnie Williams, Town Clerk