

Town of Pinetops
Board of Commissioners
Regular Monthly Meeting (Also available via Zoom)
Minutes
June 7, 2022
Pinetops Town Hall

A. Call Regular Meeting to Order

Mayor Harrell called the Regular Meeting to Order.

B. Invocation

Invocation was given by Commissioner Sugg.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Harrell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Proposed Agenda

Commissioner Mabry made a motion to approve the proposed agenda as submitted. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Mabry made a motion to approve the May 3, 2022 Budget Work Session & Regular Board Meeting Minutes as written. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

F. Guests

1. Patrick Sharpe – Tractor Pull

Patrick Sharpe was scheduled to appear and speak but he was not in attendance.

G. Public Comments

1. Tierra Norwood – Ajon’s Professional Solutions

Tierra Norwood appeared before the Board upon an invitation she received from Commissioner Harrison. She wanted to give the Board a brief outline of the services she offers which includes marketing and professional development. She also provided some of her work history which included working with the Department of Commerce to help initiate “Downtown Rocky Mount.” She is currently conducting her business on Hamlet Street out of the Harrison Tax Accounting Building. She closed by saying she would like to offer her services to the Town of Pinetops in whatever capacity she can in order to see the town grow. She is submitting an application of interest to serve on the Pinetops Advisory Committee Board.

2. Hattie Harris – 217 N S A Gilliam St.

Hattie Harris appeared before the Board to discuss water backing up in the ditch that runs between her house and her neighbors as well as the other ditch in her back yard. She explained that the water backs up in the ditches when the town receives a lot of rain, but it does seem to recede quickly once the rain stops. She was interested in seeing if there was anyway of diverting the water away from her property. The Public Works Director explained that the whole side of town in that area drains towards her property through that ditch tile. In the past the town has spoken to the State to see if they could close the ditch, but it was not allowed due to environmental reasons. The town will follow up with the State to see if that decision has changed and if not ask for any recommendations to help alleviate the problem.

3. Commissioner Taylor

Commissioner Taylor had a question as to whether the beautification funds could be used for both commercial and residential properties to which she was told it only pertains to downtown businesses. She asked the Board to consider adding neighborhoods and communities to the beautification allotment in the future. She reminded the Board that the items she brings up at the meetings are items that citizens bring to her.

H. Departmental Reports

1. Police Department. Chief Harrell read over the police report for the month of May 2022.

The police department answered and/or initiated 1281 official police actions. A detail copy of the entire police report is hereby attached to the minutes.

2. **Public Works Department.** Phil Webb read over the water and sewer report for the month of May 2022. The total water produced for the month was 6,090,435 million and total wastewater treated was 4.09 million. This was up from April totals reported last month but he explained that it may be due to higher water usage such as filling swimming pools, watering grass or gardens, and washing cars. The town (police department) will also be submitting a claim to the truck driver's insurance company as a result of damage caused this past month at the Duck Thru which knocked out power for a while. A detail copy of the report is hereby attached to the minutes.

3. **Fire Department.** Chief Burress presented the Fire report for the month of May. The total calls for the month was 11. A detail copy of the entire fire report is hereby attached to the minutes. Chief Burress presented the Cemetery report for the month of May. The total lots sold for the month of May was 0. A detail copy of the cemetery report is hereby attached to the minutes.

The attorney drafted an updated version of the cemetery rules and regulations for the Board to review and make corrections as needed. The Town Administrator told the Board that the Chief and himself had reviewed the document and did forward a couple of questions/concerns to the Attorney for clarification. The main item discussed was making sure that individuals could indeed be buried on Saturday or Sunday if need be where once it was prohibited due to staff challenges. The only thing the Chief asked was to set a time for around 1.00 p.m. for burials on Sunday in order to respect the Church services since it affects their parking lots. He asked the Board to take time to review the document and table any decision until the August meeting at which time it can be put back on the Agenda for Consideration of Adoption.

4. **Finance Department.** Ms. Keesler gave the financial report for the month of May. The general fund had a gain of \$50,556. The increase was due to an interfund transfer from the electric fund. The electric fund had a loss of \$72,913 for the month while the water/sewer fund also ended the month with a loss of \$89,266. The loss in the electric fund was due to the transfer to the General Fund. Ms. Keesler presented the Board with a Paid Check Report for the month along with a Revenue and Expenditure Report. The adjusted ending balance for the month of May is \$2,748,953. A detail copy of the entire report is hereby attached to the minutes.

I. Items for Discussion

1. Present 2022-23 Budget Message to Board.

Ms. Keesler presented the 2022-2023 Budget Message to the Board. Items highlighted was the fact that the property tax remains the same at 0.46 per \$100. There is no proposed increase in rates for services at this time but inside water customers will see a \$2.00 flat monthly rate for stormwater fees beginning in July. Employees will receive a 5% COLA as a result of the highest inflation rate seen in the last 40 years. In the budget message Ms. Keesler did urge the Board to be diligent to the fact that interfund transfers are still needed in order to present a balance budget in the general fund. A copy of the budget message is hereby attached to the minutes.

2. \$1,500 QVC Fire Donation

The Fire Department received a \$1,500 donation from the United Way Tar River Region on behalf of QVC for fire assistance the night they lost their building. The Town Administrator asked the Board if they had any suggestions on how they wanted to disburse these funds.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to allow the fire department to retain the \$1,500 donation since they provided the services. The motion was not seconded. Commissioner Taylor made a motion that the fire department retain \$1,000 but the remaining \$500 go towards non-profit donations. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion. Motion passed.

3. Bulk Waste Fees

The Town Administrator asked the Board to consider charging customers for bulk items that are being picked up weekly. The Edgecombe County Landfill will be increasing their prices in 2022-2023 from \$61.50 per ton to \$65.00 per ton for garbage and from \$46.00 per ton to \$50.00 per ton for construction/demolition which will be an added cost to the town. The additional cost of disposal to the town will be approximately \$2,000 - \$2,500 annually.

Commissioner Mabry stated that he will work with the Public Works Department to create a document that address pick up items in detail and bring it back to the August meeting for Board review.

4. Locality Network/Use of Town Owned Poles.

Will Burge from Locality Network appeared before the Board with a proposal. He explained that in the past Crystal Broadband had their cable tv lines attached to the town utility poles in town. They are no longer in business in this area but left their cables attached without providing maintenance so some of the poles are in bad shape and in other areas the cables are hanging. He explained that Locality Network currently has 2 routes going out of town but are in need of 5

routes so his proposal is to come in and remove all the old cables which would allow the town to take down the old, dangerous poles. He would also make a list of the poles that have Century Link cable still attached so the town can confer with them to have it removed. This was brought up in the past under previous administration, but the process was never fully completed. The Board instructed the Town Administrator to contact the attorney so a letter can be drafted and send to Crystal Broadband giving them a set time to comply with removing their lines or they will be deemed abandoned at which time the town could enter an agreement with Locality Network. In lieu of pole rental fees Locality Network will continue to provide internet and police camera access.

5. Any Other Business.

J. Action Items/New Business

1. Approval Resolution on surplus property at 204 S 4th St.

Ms. Keesler informed the Board that the town received an initial bid of \$5,500 for the property located at 204 S 4th St. The bid was received from Peggy Bowens on 5/5/2022. Advertisement for upset bids was ran on 5/19/2022 in the Tar River Times. The deadline to receive upset bids was 5/29/2022 which was 10 days from the date of publication. No upset bids were received. The attorney prepared an Approval Resolution if the town chooses to accept the initial bid of \$5,500 from Peggy Bowens. The town has the right to accept this bid or reject the offer and re-advertise. Commissioner Webb made a motion to adopt the resolution authorizing the conveyance of real property. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. Motion passed. Ms. Keesler will then forward the signed resolution to the town attorney so he can proceed with the closing.

2. Schedule & Advertise Public Hearing on 2022-23 Budget

A copy of the proposed budget for 2022-23 will be advertised in local paper. A copy will be available in clerk's office for public inspection. A copy will also be posted on the town's website for viewing. On June 28th at 5.00 p.m. the Board will hold a public hearing on the proposed 2022-23 budget. After the public hearing the budget ordinance will be presented to the Board for adoption but before that the Board will need to adopt a Grant Project Ordinance for Pinetops ARP of 2021, Coronavirus State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. There will also be some compliance requirements that will need to be approved by the Board as they pertain to ARPA. Ms. Keesler will provide the Board with 2 separate packets prior to the Public Hearing for review. One packet will contain all the ARPA compliance requirements and the other will

contain the budget message, budget ordinance, and a copy of the proposed budget for 2022–2023. Commissioner Webb made a motion to schedule a Public Hearing for the 2022–23 budget to be held on June 28th at 5.00 p.m. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion passed.

3. Interfund Electric Transfer to General Fund.

Commissioner Mabry made a motion to approve the interfund transfer from the Electric Fund to the General Fund in the amount of \$114,926 as presented. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion. Motion passed.

4. Approve Budget Amendments.

Commissioner Sugg made a motion to approve the budget amendments as presented. Commissioner Mabry seconded the motion. Motion passed.

5. Approve New Holiday Juneteenth (June 19th)

The Town Administrator asked the Board to consider adding Juneteenth to the holiday schedule we currently follow. Commissioner Taylor made a motion to add this as a holiday that will be observed by the Town of Pinetops moving forward. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion. Motion passed.

6. Any Other Business.

Commissioner Harrison suggested the Board consider closing the day following July 4th in order to allow employees to have a long holiday. After a brief discussion the Board decided not to move forward with this suggestion due to the fact employees are already granted July 4th has a holiday and they just added Juneteenth (June 19th) as a holiday.

The Town Administrator had a couple of questions as it pertains to disposing of surplus property. He informed the Board that the current policy is not very clear as it names three different individuals who have the power to dispose of property and the amount currently shown states \$30,000 as the limit before the Board gets involved. Mayor Harrell stated in the past that property would have to be declared as surplus and then it could be advertised for sale; normally through the dot.gov website. She also mentioned that employees were prohibited from bidding on property due to it being a conflict of interest. The Town Administrator told the Board that he will have the attorney look over the current policy and see what changes need to be made.

The Town Administrator informed the Board that he had received a Special Event Application from Sunset Slush requesting to use the town ballfield monthly for a truck rodeo. The application stated that 2 or 3 more food trucks might be included. He went on to say that he and the Police Chief would spearhead the event to make sure there are no safety issues and to make sure it doesn't interfere with the baseball games scheduled.

K. Adjournment

Commissioner Webb made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Date: June 28, 2022



Mayor Brenda Harrell

ATTESTED:



Finance Officer/Town Clerk Tammy Keesler