

**Town of Pinetops
Board of Commissioners
Regular Monthly Meeting (Also available via Zoom)
Minutes
October 3, 2023
Pinetops Town Hall**

A. Call Regular Meeting to Order

Mayor Harrell called the Regular Meeting to Order.
All Board Members were present.

B. Invocation

Commissioner Taylor led the Invocation.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Harrell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Proposed Agenda

Commissioner Taylor made a motion to approve the proposed agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Webb. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the September 5, 2023 Minutes as written. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

F. Public Comments

1. No public comments were made at this meeting.

G. Departmental Reports

1. **Police Department:** Chief Harrell read over the police report for the month of September 2023. The police department answered and/or initiated 828 official police actions during the month. A detailed copy of the entire police report is hereby attached to the minutes. Chief Harrell informed the Board that hopefully the current cadet which makes up the 7th police officer position should be on the street by January.
2. **Public Works Department:** Cody Lancaster, Public Works Supervisor presented the water and wastewater totals report for the month of September. The total water produced was 4.5 million gallons and the total wastewater was 4.3 million gallons. There were 3 reported water leaks, one of which was an 8" main. There were also 3 electrical outages reported during the last month because of the Hurricane that brushed our State. The Public Works Supervisor stated that Tarboro was willing to help with preventative tree trimming. Cody has received two estimates and is waiting on a third to see what the

cost would be to clean out around 200 ft. ditch on Pitt Street at the end of MLK. The ditch currently contains high spots within that were created by dirt that has been washed in over time. This could be paid out of the stormwater management. The average cost of the two estimates already received is around \$2,000.

3. **Fire Department:** Chief Burress presented a copy of the fire report for the month of September 2023. There were 12 service calls for each month. A detailed copy of the fire report is hereby attached to these minutes. The Fire Chief informed the Board that the fire department received a state grant (previously pork barrel funds) for \$300,000 to be used towards the purchase of a fire engine. Commissioner Sugg mentioned that we need written acknowledgement of the \$300,000 state award before the town makes any type of purchase obligation. A copy of the cemetery report for the month of September was also furnished. There was a total of 8 lots sold for the month. A detailed copy of the cemetery report is hereby attached to the minutes.
4. **Finance Department:** Ms. Keesler presented the financial report for the month of September 2023. The general fund had a gain of \$ 26,294.71. The electric fund had a gain of \$ 103,545.59 for the month. The water/sewer fund ended the month with a gain of \$28,831.31. A Paid Check Report and Budget to Actual Report was also presented for the month of September. The adjusted ending balance for the month of September is \$ 4,044,761.30.

As requested at the last meeting, the Finance Officer has compared interest rates for the town's investments and as a result 1 Certificate of Deposit has been moved out of Southern Bank and deposited into a NC Capital Management Trust Account. The variable rate is currently 5.23% at NCCMT. After some discussion, Southern Bank agreed to move the current Money Market Checking Account into a CD with a fixed rate of 5% for 12 months. The town still has 2 other smaller CD's that will be reviewed when they come up for renewal to see if any better investment options are available. They are a little harder to negotiate since these two must remain separate. The changes mentioned above should result in an additional \$17,750 to the General Fund annually.

5. **Administrator Report**
 1. **First Street/Deputy Manning Street** – This item will be discussed further down on the Agenda under Action Items.
 2. **Water & Sewer (Wastewater) Asset Inventory and Assessment (AIAs)** – This item will be discussed further down on the Agenda under Action Items.
 3. **New Internet Service Provider** – A new internet service provider, Brightspeed may be coming to our area. There are no specific details currently. The town attorney has been made aware of this possibility and will make sure an agreement is in place if needed to protect the town. He mentioned establishing a pole fee and suggested looking into drawing up a general ordinance that would cover these types of future projects.
 4. **Dilapidated buildings and unkept properties** – Brief update on the 10 dilapidated buildings brought up at the last meeting. Currently 5 of the owners have responded to the letters that were sent so they will be given an additional 30 days in which to

formulate a plan on how to proceed. One of the properties has already been torn down and cleared away. The attorney will proceed with the next legal step for the remaining 5 property owners that haven't responded to the certified letters.

(Basically, they will be given a time frame in which to bring the property into compliance or the structure will be demolished, and a lien will be attached.)

5. **Recycling** – The Town Administrator informed the Board that a new flyer was inserted with the utility bill this month informing citizens of some changes. The changes were also mentioned through an all-call. The biggest recycling change is they will no longer accept glass jars/containers or any type of plastic bags.
6. **Surplus Town Property** – The centennial House furnishings were advertised on the govdeal site, but no interest was generated. The Chevrolet HHR vehicle will be put on that same site very soon; hopefully it will generate some interest. The status of the sale of the old fire truck will be discussed in greater detail further down on the agenda.
7. **Town of Pinetops Community Center (formerly Lions Club)** – The Town Administrator thanked Commissioner Taylor and Mayor Harrell for all the work they have done getting the community center ready for rental. He is still reviewing some mock-up versions of a new proposed community center sign. The Administrator hopes to have some options for the Board to review at the next meeting. An Internet Service will be added to the building. Commissioner Taylor asked that the handicap ramp be inspected because some of it looks in need of repair.
8. **Electric Department** – The Town of Tarboro has mentioned that they may be able to provide preventative maintenance tree trimming for Pinetops.
9. **Other Public Works** – Cody Lancaster has already mentioned getting estimates on clearing out the ditch on Pitt Street at the end of MLK Street.

H. Items for Discussion

1. **Attorney Agreement between Town & Kyle Cecchi “Moss Kids” Book Exchange**

At the last meeting, Administrator Ventresco tabled the Book Exchange until the October meeting since Mr. Cecchi wasn't present and needed time to review the attorney agreement. Just so happens he is not present at this meeting either so the issue will be tabled indefinitely unless it is brought back up by Mr. Cecchi.

2. **2023 Christmas Parade**

The Town Board was presented with a copy of the Christmas Parade Guidelines & Regulations for review. Kirby Fuller, the parade coordinator wanted to make sure the Board reviewed the document and to see if they wanted to alter the current rules in anyway. One item that was discussed was whether the Board would allow candy to be either thrown or handed out from those participating in the parade. Due to it being a safety concern it was the consensus of the Board not to allow candy to be thrown from any motorized vehicles or even handed out from those participating in the parade. Any parade participants found to be in violation of the above rule will not be allowed to participate in any future parades sponsored by the Town. Another item that was discussed was possibly imposing a minimum age limit on anyone driving any type of motorized vehicle in the parade due to it being a liability issue. As always, the parade committee is in need of volunteers so an All-Call will be sent out stating that anyone interested in helping with the parade should contact the Town Office.

3. Reschedule November Monthly Meeting Date/Election Date

Commissioner Webb made a motion to reschedule the November Board Meeting until Tuesday, November 14, 2023, since the first Tuesday of the month is election day. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Any Other Business

There was no additional business to be discussed at this time.

I. Action Items/New Business

1. Approve resolutions for Water & Sewer AIA Grants

Commissioner Webb made a motion to adopt the Offer & Acceptance for ARP funding Resolution for the water system. By adopting the resolution, the town is hereby accepting the American Rescue Plan (ARP) offer of \$150,000 to perform an Asset Inventory and Assessment (AIA) study on the water system which from here on will be known as Project No. AIA-D-ARP-0022. Commissioner Mabry seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to adopt the Offer & Acceptance for ARP funding Resolution for the Sanitary Sewer System. By adopting the resolution, the town is hereby accepting the American Rescue Plan (ARP) offer of \$150,000 to perform an Asset Inventory and Assessment (AIA) study on the sanitary sewer system which from here on will be known as Project No. AIA-W-ARP-0021. Commissioner Mabry seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Street Renaming Petition for 1st Street/Deputy Manning

The Town Administrator presented the Board with a "petition to change street name" he had received from Ada Morgan requesting that Deputy David Sean Manning Street be changed back to First Street. The petition contains over 75% of the signatures from the property owners who own frontage on the road as stated as a requirement in our ordinance. The main reason for the street name changes request is because residents on that street are having trouble receiving mail/packages. The petitioner is requesting that the cost associated with the petition is waived since the first name change was enacted by the Town Board. Upon acceptance of the petition the next step would be to hold a Public Hearing pertaining to the above-mentioned street name change request. Commissioner Taylor made a motion to waive the associated fees and proceed with the Public Hearing. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Status on Sale of Old Fire Truck

Administrator Ventresco informed the Board that we had not received any bids since the old fire truck has been advertised on a "truck only" site. The asking price on the site was \$15,000. He wants to advertise the truck on both sites for an additional 30-60 days to see if there is any interest.

4. Any Other Business

Commissioner Taylor took a few minutes to speak on the topic of the upcoming election which could be summarized as; "all candidates need to be respectful of each other because at the end of the day a town divided cannot prosper."

Administrator Ventresco told the Board that he had been contacted by Dave Sharpe with the Tarboro Chamber concerning the Cycle NC event. The cyclists are riding to promote fitness and will be coming through Pinetops on Friday, October 6 around 8:00a.m. His hope was to have the Board as well as residents cheer them on as they bike through town.

Beginning Life Ministries sent a Thank You letter to the Town Board for their non-profit donation of \$500.

The Pinetops Baptist Church will host a "Meet the Candidate" on October 10th at 7:00pm at the church. All are invited to attend.

J. Adjournment

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

Date: 11/14/2023



Mayor Brenda Harrell

ATTESTED:



Finance Officer/Town Clerk Tammy Keesler