

Town of Pinetops
Board of Commissioners
Regular Monthly Meeting
Minutes
February 11, 2020
Pinetops Town Hall

Present. Mayor Brenda Harrell, Mayor Pro-Tem Florence Pender, Commissioners Donald Webb, Dennis Sugg, Oscar Mabry and Barbara Taylor.

Also in attendance. Town Administrator Natalie Bess, Finance Officer Tammy Keesler, Tax Collector Renae Cooper, Public Works Director Phil Webb, and Police Chief Stacy Harrell. The Town Attorney, Brian Fridgen was also present at the meeting.

A. Call to Order

Mayor Harrell called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

B. Invocation

Invocation was given by Commissioner Taylor.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Harrell.

D. Proposed Agenda

Commissioner Pender made a motion to approve the proposed agenda. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Mabry made a motion to approve the consent agenda with approval of minutes from January 7, 2020. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Pender. Motion carried unanimously.

F. Public Comments

Mayor Harrell asked that all cell phone ringers be silenced during the meeting. She also asked the citizens present to refrain from speaking out during the meeting once the public comment section is closed.

(1) McCauley Reese – Suicide Prevention/Darkness Walk

She came before the board to request the use of the park and Lions Club Building on September 12, 2020 for the Darkness Walk in Pinetops. The event is currently scheduled to be held each year on the Saturday following Labor Day. The event normally runs from 12.00-1.00. They have vendors come out and set up for the event. The walk follows the same route the Christmas Parade uses. She told the board that the event last year raised \$15,000 and the money raised helps to bring classes to the area to help towards mental health and suicide prevention. Commissioner Mabry recommended we table this for now and put it on next month's agenda for a vote. She also told the board that she had a plaque that she would like to have displayed in the town hall since the work they do is for the community. Commissioner Mabry recommended that this also be put on the agenda next month for a vote.

G. Departmental Reports

- 1. Police Department.** Chief Harrell read over the police report for the month of January. The total calls for the month was 1,318. This number was made up of 641 Business Checks and 124 escorts. There were 109 Traffic Stops and 5 reportable accidents. The remaining calls were divided between residence checks, animal complaints, and suspicious subjects/vehicles as well as any other calls that are not included above. Officers have completed Narcan and CPR classes. Annual training will start in the months to come. The town received \$1,700 from FEMA for assisting Wilmington in 2018 during Hurricane Florence. The town received \$3,913 to purchase firearms as part of the \$24,900 Justice Assistance Grant. Commissioner Sugg asked the Chief if the 2 new police vehicles were fully equipped now to which he responded, yes.

- 2. Public Works Department.** (a) Phil Webb read over the water and sewer report for the month of January. The report shows the total million gallons of sewer flow and water discharge for the month. The sewer flow totaled 6.07 million gallons which averages to 195,800 gallons per day and the water discharge totaled 5.39 million gallons which averages to 174,000 gallons per day. He stated that the wastewater was up this month due to the amount of rain we have received. He updated the board on the status of the old water tank which was completely taken

down a couple weeks prior. Commissioner Mabry inquired about the status of getting an assessment report on the wastewater plant since this was mentioned during the last meeting. Mr. Webb informed the board that there were AEI Grants available for assessment reports to assess wastewater treatment plants. Administrator Bess told the board that currently things are on hold as it pertains to the potential future wastewater partnership between Pinetops, Macclesfield and Tarboro due to the Mayor of Macclesfield sickness.

3. **Fire Department.** Steve Burress read over the Fire report for the month of January. The total calls for the month of January was 13. The report consisted of Town Fire Calls - 5, Mutual Aid Fire Calls - 1, and Medical Responder Calls - 7. Hours in Training & Meetings - 170, Fire Prevention & Life Safety Programs -0, Total Volunteer Hours - 170. The Fire Department received a donation of \$1,000 from Duck Thru at their Grand Opening to be used towards the purchase of equipment. They also received a 5,000 Forestry Grant which is a 50/50 grant that will be used towards replacing all their 800 Mhz. Radios. He mentioned that they have 14 radios that must be replaced within the next five years. This is due to a change in the type of radios that is used on the NC State Viper System which we operate on. They will continue seeking grant funds to help cover the need radio replacements.
4. **Finance Officer.** Ms. Keesler gave the financial report for the month of January. The general fund had a negative balance of \$11,351.82 while the electric fund had a positive balance of \$57,607.07. The water/sewer fund showed a negative balance of \$575,936.59 but that was due to how the Water Tank Rehab. Project was posted- Revenue received for that project was posted to the water/sewer fund when it should have been posted to the (50) Account but at the time there was no Revenue Account set up under the (50) fund. The December 2019 Financial Report showed an increase in the water/sewer because of this but in January 2020 the money was taken out of the water/sewer fund and distribute correctly under the (50) fund. These figures represent the operating revenue and expenses for the month of January.
5. **Town Administrator.**
 - a) Administrator Bess reported that most of the walkability signs have been installed but once the one at the Gazebo has been installed the County Representatives will be here to officially introduce the signs to the public.

- b) Administrator Bess updated the board on the stream debris removal. The project is now completed and the Final Inspection and Certification is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on February 12th.

- c) Administrator Bess updated the board on the Well Replacement Project. The company recommended by The Wooten Company and which was also the lowest bidder was Bill's Well Drilling Company. The bid was for Well No. 4 Replacement–DWI project in the total bid amount of \$519,975.

- d) Administrator Bess reported that the water tank removal was completed the last week in January by Isler Demolition, Inc. Administrator Bess wanted to let the board members as well as the citizens present know that folks will be in our area conducting the 2020 census. The Census for 2020 will start April 1, 2020. She reminded those present that the Census folks are willing to pay local residents to help out and more information on this can be found at the Town Hall.

- e) Administrator Bess has been working on the waste reduction & recycling grant program. The program is designed to have local governments work with the school systems in establishing ways to reduce waste. The deadline for the waste reduction & recycling grant program is the end of February.

- f) Administrator Bess informed the board that the PNC–US Bank MM Account which contains \$28,954.45 has been closed out. This money was the balance left in estate after the town purchased a knuckle-boom truck and camera system in the past. The money has been transferred out of this account and into the Electric Fund Checking. She asked the board if there was anything specific they wanted this money earmarked for or just leave it in checking. Commissioner Mabry as well as some of the other board members suggested we wait until the budget retreat for direction on where to put the money. The budget retreat is scheduled for February 28th.

- g) Administrator Bess took a few moments to update the board on Janitorial Services. She explained that currently the board is paying someone \$105 bi-weekly to clean the town hall. Recently that individual has been sick and has not been able to provide the service in about 3–4 weeks. The Administrator told the board that she had contacted Royal Quality

Maintenance which is the company that cleans Southern Bank which stated they would clean for \$171 per month. Commissioner Mabry recommended waiting until budget time so we can go out for bids before awarding a contract. Commissioner Webb made a motion to hire Royal Quality Maintenance on a temporary basis for \$171 per month until the end of June at which time the town will bid out the service. The current cleaning also includes the Lion's Club. Commissioner Mabry seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- h) Commissioner Mabry asked that from this point on any open projects be included in the Administrator's Report so the board can receive monthly status updates. He suggested leaving the open projects under the Administrator's Report until they are closed out.

H. Items for Consideration

- a) Tax Collector's Report – Administrator Bess presented the board with an annual tax collector's report for year 2019. This report must be presented to the town board sometime during the month of February. Total 2019 taxes billed \$228,097.97. Total 2019 taxes collected to date is \$191,163.71. This currently leaves \$36,934.26 uncollected which makes the current collection rate 83%.
- b) Pinetops Baptist Church Annexation Request – Administrator Bess told the board that she had received a request for annexation from the Pinetops Baptist Church. Mayor Harrell stated that since she is a member of the church she can provide some additional information about the request. She explained that part of the Sanctuary is outside the city limits so they are requesting that part be annexed for insurance purposes. Administrator Bess told the board that she would return the petition back to the church to fill out completely and once that is done the process can move forward.
- c) Planning Board Recommendation – 112 N. 1st Street
The Planning Board met in January to discuss the zoning variance they received from Chester Lancaster dated January 16, 2020. He requested a zoning variance for the property he owns on 112 N. 1st Street. The purpose of the variance was to request to change the minimum separation allowed between buildings be reduced from 20 ft. to 5ft. to allow for six buildings across the property. Administrator Bess told the Town Board that the Planning Board recommended approval of the zoning variance. Attorney Pridgen stated that the zoning variance procedure is straight forward. The town would

have to hold a public hearing on the zoning variance request and all adjoining property owners must be notified of the request by a certified letter. Commissioner Webb made a motion to hold a public hearing on the Zoning Variance Request on March 3, 2020. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

- d) Continuing participation in the Down East Home Consortium – Administrator Bess asked the board if they wanted to remain in the Down East Home Consortium. The Consortium keeps communities informed on different type of grants that are available for eligible homeowners in their area such as for rehabilitation or home improvements. She did tell the board that recently Tarboro pulled out of the Consortium. Commissioner Mabry suggested this be table until the next agenda to be voted on. Administrator Bess told the board that she had to let the Consortium know by February 14th as to whether the town was going to remain or pull out of the Consortium. She did mention that being a member of the Consortium does not cost the town anything and it is a good way to keep the community informed of available grants. Also the membership is renewable annually. Commissioner Webb made a motion that the Town of Pinetops remains a member of the Down East Home Consortium. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- e) Tax Foreclosures – 107 W. Sater Street; N. Third Street
Attorney Pridgen told the board that no one appeared at the foreclosure hearing for either property so as it stands the town is now the owner of both properties. The attorney went on to explain the two options available to the town. The town can choose the pay \$7,789.93 for the 107 W. Sater Street property and own it outright to use as we wish or pay \$776 and try to resell the property to a 3rd Party buyer. The town would also be responsible for paying county taxes at the time of that sale. The town could also choose to do the same thing for the N. Third Street property with the only difference being the outright price the town would have to pay is \$2,545.35. Commissioner Mabry made a motion to proceed with the second option for both properties which would be to pay the \$776, try to resell both properties with the understanding that the town would be responsible for paying county taxes at the time of a sale. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously. Commissioner Sugg asked the attorney if the town could go straight ahead and demo the 107 W. Sater Street property since it is not structurally sound to which he replied, yes.

- f) **Beautification Grant Recommendation** – Administrator Bess presented the board with a list showing a breakdown of how she recommends the beautification funds be distributed this year. Along with this she also recommended the board form a committee to decide the guidelines of how the beautification program should operate in the future; such as should the funds be used strictly for outside improvements or for inside improvements as well. Commissioner Pender made a motion to accept Administrator Bess recommendations as it pertains to the Beautification Program. Commissioner Mabry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- g) **Lawn Cutting Recommendation** – Administrator Bess told the board that she had received 4 bids for lawn care with the lowest bidder being Forehand’s Lawn Service in the amount of \$1965 per cut not to exceed \$35,370. The bids were accepted through 5.00 p.m. on February 7th. All bidders were given a packet showing the scope of the work which included cutting the cemetery. Bids on the towns lawn care will be accepted yearly. Commissioner Sugg made a motion to accept the lowest bid from Forehand’s Lawn Service at a cost of \$1965 per cut not to exceed \$35,370. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- h) **Town of Pinetops Library Lease Renewal** – Administrator Bess told the board that she had received a 3 year library lease renewal from Marshall Dunn at a cost of \$1,750 monthly. The fee on the new lease renewal is exactly the same as what the town currently pays. The 3 year library lease renewal will run from March 2020–Feb 2023. Commissioner Pender made a motion to renew the library lease for a 3 year term at a cost of \$1,750 monthly. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.
- i) **Sale of PNC Bank Building/Property** – Commissioner Sugg presented the Town Clerk with a Summary as well as a Timeline and Transaction Details list as it pertain to the sale of the PNC Bank Building/Property. He requested that this be an attachment to the minutes and become part of the towns official records. Copies will also be available at the town office for citizens interested in picking one up. Commissioner Mabry made a motion to make the details of the sale of the PNC Bank Building/Property part of the town’s official records. Commissioner Pender seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

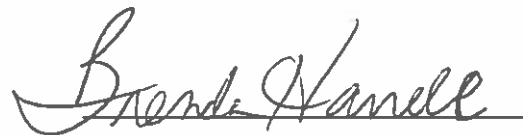
Mayor Harrell took a few moments to recognize Mr. Thomas Hussey who had a question during the meeting he didn't get a chance to ask. Mr. Hussey questioned why the utility rate hadn't decrease yet since he thought it had been approved to be in the past. Mayor Harrell asked him to be a little more patient and this will be brought back up in the near future,

Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Pender and seconded by Commissioner Taylor to adjourn at 7:18 p.m.

Motion carried unanimously.

Date. March 3, 2020



Mayor Brenda Harrell

ATTESTED.



Finance Officer/Town Clerk Tammy Keesler

Town of Pinetops
Sale of PNC Bank Building/Property

Report Date: January 28, 2020

Summary of PNC Bank Property Transaction

PNC Bank offered to donate their bank building/property, located at 102 E. Hamlet St., to the Town of Pinetops on January 3, 2017 . The Town of Pinetops Board of Commissioners passed a motion on January 3, 2017 to accept the donation of said property. The Board of Commissioners subsequently decided to sale this banking property to other financial institutions that were willing to establish a banking branch in Pinetops. In April of 2017, the Board approved the acceptance of an offer to purchase this property from Southern Bank in the amount of \$350,000. In June of 2017, the Town of Pinetops received payment from Southern Bank in the amount of \$347,795.91. This money was initially credited to Misc. Revenue in the General Fund (acct. 10-3830-0000). Later in June, the town Manager submitted budget amendments to the Board to have these funds transferred to the Electric Fund to cover budget shortfalls in that Fund. The chronology of events and transactions are detailed below.

Timelines and Transaction Details

Timeline of Southern Bank Property:

January 3, 2017	Board made/passed motion to accept the donation of PNC Bank Property.
January 12, 2017	Board made/passed motion to sell the PNC Bank Property.
March 7, 2017	Town received key & deed, working on 1 st appraisal, Tax Value 395,000.
April 4, 2017	Board accepted 350,000 offer made by Southern Bank to purchase the PNC Bank property.
May 2, 2017	Board accepts the offer of 350,000 made by Southern Bank & declare it surplus.
June 15, 2017	Settlement Closing Date
June 16, 2017	Check Disbursement of 347,795.91
June 16, 2017	Check was deposited into account 10-3830-0000 Misc. Revenue/General Fund.
	JE-11091 347,795.91

(Over)

June 26, 2017 Manager submitted request to board recommending budget amendments be approved. Necessary amendments including transfers between funds and/or from the fund balance.

June 26, 2017 Board made/passed motion to adopt budget amendments as presented.

June 26, 2017 Funds transferred from General Fund to the Electric Fund to cover budget amendments. BE-11092 Reallocation 339,638.00

Electric Salaries	49,583+	Electric SS Tax	5,082+
Electric Retirement	3,835+	Electric Hospital	15,159+
Electric S/Term	364+	Electric Utilities	1,950+
Power Purchased	224,000+	Street Lights	175+
Utility Sales Tax	12,015+	Computer Maint.	3,341+
Training/Travel	125+	Equipment	13,154+
Truck Expense	9,117+	Maint./Supplies	58+
Miscellaneous	1,680+		
General Misc. Revenue 10-3830-0000			339,638-

June 26, 2017 Funds transferred from General Fund to the Electric fund to cover budget amendments. BE-11093 Reallocation 8,157.00

Electric Admin. Hospital	44,000+	Electric Flex Spending	725+
General Misc. Revenue	10-3830-0000		8,157-
F/B Unappropriated	10-2990-0000		25,178-
General Salaries	10-4311-1210		10,190-
General SS Tax	10-4311-1810		1,200-

BE-11092 339,638 + BE-11093 8,157 = 347,795 vs JE-11091 347,795.91