

The Smithfield Town Council met in special session on Wednesday, March 21, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Smithfield Town Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to hold a second meeting for continued discussion of the annual Council retreat agenda. Mayor Norman Johnson presided.

Councilmen Present:

Charles Williams
Vic Ogburn
Daniel Evans
Andy Moore
Sidney Broadwell
Clayton Narron
Tom Bell

Councilmen Absent:

Staff Present:

Peter T. Connet, City Manager
Debra Godwin, Town Clerk/HR Director
Mark Stephens, Finance Director
Paul Emblar, Planning Director
Bobby Tripp, Interim Public Utilities Director
Marty Anderson, Public Works Director
Tim Johnson, Parks/Recreation Director
Steve Gillikin, Police Chief
Patrick Harris, Emergency Services Director

Also Present:

Bob Spence, Jr., Town Attorney

Staff Absent :

The invocation was given by Mayor Pro-Tem Evans.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Grading and Clearing Bids for Brogden Road Substation

Interim Public Utilities Director Bobby Tripp addressed the Council on bids received for the clearing and grading for the Brogden Road Substation project. The Town's engineering firm, Booth & Associates, Inc., recommended awarding of the contract to James Paul Edwards, Inc. in the amount of \$137,611.00.

Councilman Williams made a motion, seconded by Councilman Moore, to award the bid to James Paul Edwards, Inc. in the amount of \$137,611.00. Unanimous.

2. Adoption of Annexation Reports for Involuntary Annexation for the Southwest (US 301 South & Galilee Road) Area and US 70 Business/Mallard Road Area

City Manager Pete Connet addressed the Council on adoption of the annexation report for the above listed areas.

Councilman Broadwell questioned how the annexations would affect water rates. Mr. Tripp stated that he did not foresee that these annexations would affect the rates in the future.

Councilman Broadwell questioned if there were any substandard lines to address. Mr. Tripp stated not to his knowledge.

Following discussion, Councilman Narron made a motion, seconded by Councilman Williams, to adopt the annexation reports. Unanimous.

3. **FY 06-07 Street Paving - Possibility of Paving Third Street**

Public Works Director Marty Anderson addressed the Council regarding the street paving project. He noted that Turner Drive would be deleted from the list as it is a private drive and sections of Canterbury Road would be added.

Councilman Moore discussed the condition of Third Street from Market to Johnston street. Mr. Anderson explained the method of the numeric rating that the contractor who studied the streets in January 2006. He stated that the contractor did not feel that Third Street was priority.

Following discussion, it was the general consensus of the Council to direct Mr. Anderson to meet with the contractor to review the possibility of paving Third Street. No action.

4. Discussion of Old Water Plant Map with easements and flood zones shown

City Manager Pete Connet reviewed with the Council the map depicting the easements and flood zones for this property. No action.

5. Retreat Discussion Items

The Council discussed the following items:

- Review of Last Year's Accomplishments
- Moratorium on billboard signs

Town Attorney Bob Spence Jr. discussed with the Council a sign moratorium on billboards for 60 days so as to address the issue. He stated that the Special Use Permit procedure for approval of billboards is not well designed for billboards or mobile/modular home usage. He expressed the following reasons for the moratorium and suggested the Town consider later a moratorium on manufactured homes to redo the ordinance on the location of those dwellings: (1) The Town of Smithfield is growing and has not amended its billboard ordinance in years so that billboards are technically permitted with a Special Use Permit at clearly inappropriate locations from an aesthetic point of view such as at the center of Town on Market Street; (2) The code allows billboards with Special Use Permits at locations that appear to staff and the town to be inappropriate due to the possible distractions created by the sign at that location; (3) The current code does not address the new technology of billboards with signs that move and change or with signs that have high resolution type projections of moving images; (4) There are currently provisions in the municipal zoning code inappropriately allowing with the approval of a Special Use Permit billboards at the entrances to town and the two major corridors, Highway 301 and 70, where at some locations billboards are clearly inappropriate; (5) The special use process may allow billboards at inappropriate locations because a denial of the application would be difficult or expensive to defend under the current special use procedures which the Town Attorney has advised are not well suited for a zoning plan as to billboards; (6) The suspension of all special use approvals or even acceptance of permits for special uses for billboards will allow the Town to look at revising the current zoning code on billboard allocations; and (7) The suspension will also allow the Town to create a code that protects the principal entrances of the town, the two

primary corridors (Highway 301 and 70), and protects the aesthetics of the town where there are aesthetic or distraction risks from billboards.

Mayor Johnson opened the public hearing. There were no comments.

Mayor Johnson closed the public hearing.

After the discussion, the Town Council expressed a desire that a committee review the permitted designs for billboards as to size, height, and movable or high definition projection features at all locations. The Town Council decided to appoint a committee of Councilman Narron, the planning staff and the Town Attorney to study the zoning map to allocate areas where billboards will be permitted with better standards than the special use process.

Councilman Narron made a motion, seconded by Councilman Ogburn, that for sixty days from this date, the Town of Smithfield will have a moratorium on the filing or approval of all billboard applications for Special Use Permits or any advancement of any application in that process where the special use has not been approved. Unanimous. (Attachment I)

- Discussion on Johnson Controls Inc. automated meter reading system

Interim Public Utilities Director Bobby Tripp discussed the steps regarding the automated meter reading system and funding. (See Attachment II) Further, Mr. Tripp stated that a committee, including Council members, will review the benefits vs costs identified in Step 8 and take part in the selection of equipment and vendors. The committee will review and approve the measurements and verification specifics identified in step 9. The committee will review the audit completed in step 10. The committee will make a recommendation to full Council for decision identified in step 13. The committee will oversee the implementation phases and contractor selections in step 14.

Following discussion, it was the general consensus of the Council to move forward with the project. No action.

- Received the Five Year Budget Projections
- Received the Five Year Capital Budget

It was the general consensus of the Council to hold another retreat meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Norman R. Johnson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Debra W. Godwin, Town Clerk