

The Town of Smithfield Appearance Commission met on Wednesday, May 18, 2022, at 5:00 in the Town Hall Council Chambers located at 350 East Market Street, Smithfield, North Carolina.

Members Present

Stuart Lee – Chairperson  
Robin Cook – Vice Chairperson  
Mary Foy Ragsdale  
Peggy Scott  
Kaitlyn Tarley  
Carmen Zepp

Members Absent

Julia Narron  
Tim Depp  
Councilman David Steven

Staff Present

Lawrence Davis – Public Works Director  
Shannan Parrish – Town Clerk

Staff Absent

**Call to Order**

Chairperson Stuart Lee called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm

**Invocation**

Chairperson Stuart Lee offered the invocation.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes – March 15, 2022**

Vice Chairperson Robin Cook made a motion, seconded by Kaitlyn Tarley, to approve the minutes as submitted. Unanimously approved.

**Financial Report**

**Appearance Commission General Fund: \$21,657.44**

Chairperson Stuart Lee informed the members of the Appearance Commission that \$10,000 had been earmarked for the mural project and \$5,000 had been earmarked for the large rocks for the boat ramp project.

**Donate-A-Tree: \$600.00**

**JB George Fund: \$280.04**

**JP George Fund: \$531.61**

**Boat Ramp Project**

Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that she contacted Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson about the rocks. He indicated he has had no contact with the contractor concerning the rocks or a proposed maintenance agreement for the landscaping. Mr. Johnson was going to contact another landscaping firm to install the rocks. Parks and Recreation staff were maintaining the area, but they needed more pine straw for the steep slope. Mr. Johnson indicated it would be beneficial if the fence was installed at the top of the hill to deter people from walking across the landscaping.

**Mural Discussion**

Chairperson Stuart Lee informed the members of the Appearance Commission that the quote for the mural was \$13,600 which was over the budget of \$10,000. The muralist, Ashley Fabrizio, charged \$15 a square foot which was half the cost of what the Ava Gardner muralist charged. He was requesting the

Commission vote again on the project since the cost had increased. The Commission could vote to move forward with the project and increase the funding or table the project for now. Chairperson Stuart Lee stated even if the Appearance Commission approved the project, the Town Council still had to approve the expenditure.

Vice Chairperson Robin Cook stated the Appearance Commission has put a lot of money into the boat ramp project. If the Commission was not going to complete the mural, then Commission should use funds to replace the dead plantings at the boat ramp.

Mary Foy Ragsdale stated she did not like the design of the proposed mural. She felt something more botanical would be more attractive.

Since the Finance Department does not allow spending after May 27<sup>th</sup>, the project could not be approved by the Town Council before that deadline. The funds for this project would need to be encumbered and spent in the next fiscal year.

Carmen Zepp made a motion, seconded by Vice Chairperson Robin Cook, to spend \$13,600 for the pig design mural proposed by Ashley Fabrizio. Chairperson Stuart Lee, Vice Chairperson Robin Cook, Carmen Zepp and Kaitlyn Tarley voted in favor of the motion. Mary Foy Ragsdale and Peggy Scott voted against the motion. Motion passed 5 to 2.

Vice Chairperson Robin Cook made a motion, seconded by Peggy Scott, to encumber the Appearance Commission funds from this fiscal year to be used in the next fiscal year. Unanimously approved.

### **Welcome Sign I-95**

Peggy Scott informed the members of the Appearance Commission that the plantings around the Welcome Sign at I-95 and Highway 70 Business East (near the Zaxby's restaurant) needed to be replaced. Public Works Director Lawrence Davis explained it would cost approximately \$800 to replace the Holly Trees, liriopse and loropetalum. This project should be completed in the fall of the year.

Vice Chairperson Robin Cook made a motion, seconded by Carmen Zepp, to spend \$800 for the replacement of plantings at the Welcome Sign. Unanimously approved.

### **Action Items**

#### **Boat Ramp Maintenance and Fencing**

Chairperson Stuart Lee informed the members of the Appearance Commission that a maintenance agreement and the installation of the rocks would be put out for bid. Peggy Scott questioned if the Commission would consider spending \$3,800 for the fencing to be installed at the top of the hill adjacent to the parking lot.

Vice Chairperson Robin Cook made a motion, seconded by Peggy Scott, to spend \$3,800 for the fencing for the boat ramp project. Unanimously approved.

Vice Chairperson Robin Cook made a motion, seconded by Kaitlyn Tarley, to use fiscal year 2022-2023 funds for the maintenance, rocks and fencing for the boat ramp. After those expensed have been incurred, the Appearance Commission would spend no additional funds for the boat ramp project. Unanimously approved.

**Update on Action Items 1- 19**

Carmen Zepp informed the members of the Appearance Commission that she reached out to Marketing and Communications Specialist Brian Eaves about an Appearance Commission Facebook Page. At this time, the Town is determining if a separate page was needed. She suggested the Appearance Commission be more active in sending items to Brian to be posted on the Town's Facebook page.

Mary Foy suggested the Commission consider hanging baskets in the downtown area.

**Brainstorming**

Chairperson Stuart Lee informed the members of the Appearance Commission that a brainstorming session would be held at the Public Library on May 21, 2022 at 10:30 am.

**Recess**

Being no further business, Kaitlyn Tarley made a motion, seconded by Carmen Zepp, to recess the meeting until May 21, 2022 at 10:30 am to be held in the Board Room of the Public Library of Johnston County and Smithfield. The meeting recessed at approximately 5:56 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Shannan L. Parrish  
Town Clerk