

The Smithfield Town Council met in regular session on Tuesday, August 2, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Smithfield Town Hall, Mayor M. Andy Moore, presided.

Councilmen Present:

Mayor Pro-Tem Emery D. Ashley
Marlon Lee, District 1
J. Perry Harris, District 2
Roger A. Wood, District 4
John A. Dunn, At-Large
Stephen Rabil, At-Large

Councilmen Absent

Travis Scott, District 3

Administrative Staff Present

Michael Scott, Town Manager
John Blanton, Fire Chief
Lenny Branch, Public Works Director
Ted Credle, Public Utilities Director
Paul Embler, Planning Director
Gary Johnson, Parks & Rec Director
Tim Kerigan, Human Resources/PIO
R.K. Powell, Interim Chief of Police
Greg Siler, Finance Director
Shannan Williams, Town Clerk

Present:

Bob Spence, Town Attorney

Administrative Staff Absent

The invocation was given by Councilman Dunn followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Councilman Wood made a motion, seconded by Councilman Harris, to approve the agenda with the following amendments:

- Remove Public Hearing 2: *Conditional Use Permit Canon Farms, LLC. (CUP-16-05). This was removed at the request of the attorneys involved and will be added to the September agenda.*
- Add Business Item #4: *Consideration and approval of a Scope of Work with Sanford Holshouser for implementation of the Strategic Economic Development Update Action Items.*
- Add Business Item #5: *Consideration and approval of the placement of a "No U-Turn" sign and bollards on Outlet Center Drive and Smithfield Crossing Drive.*
- Add a Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) to consult with the Town Attorney.

Unanimously approved.

PRESENTATIONS: None

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

- Alisa Bizzell addressed the Council on the flooding of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and Furlong Drive during the last major rain event. Town Manager Michael Scott explained that Public Works Director Lenny Branch did locate a problem in an area that was the responsibility of NCDOT. Mr. Branch contacted NCDOT and the dam was removed and the area cleared.
- Marvin Burke introduced himself to the Council as the new Athletic Director at Smithfield Selma High School.
- Tony Nixon expressed his appreciation to the Council and staff for participating in the Annual Fun in the Park Day at Smith Collins Park.

- Jamie Foye and her son, James Foye, invited the members of Council to the South Smithfield Elementary School's Back to School Bonanza on Friday, August 5th from 5:00 – 7:00 pm.
- Jessica Davis president of the Junior Women's League of Smithfield introduced herself to the Council. She explained that the organization currently has 119 members that are committed to promoting positive community services in the Town. Mayor Moore and Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley expressed their appreciation to Mrs. Davis and her organization for their community involvement.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Councilman Harris made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wood, to approve the following items as listed on the Consent Agenda:

1. Approved the following Minutes:

July 12, 2016 – Regular Meeting
 July 12, 2016 – Closed Session

2. Special Event – Touch a Truck: The applicant, the Junior Women's League of Smithfield, Inc., gained approval to hold an event with amplified sound and food vendors on November 12, 2016 from the hours of 10:00 am until 2:00 pm in the 200 block of South Third Street. Permission was also granted to close the 200 block of South Third Street.
3. Special Event – Community Day and Book Bag Drive: The applicant, the Venomous Ryderz Motorcycle Club gained approval to hold a special back to school event with amplified sounds and free refreshments on August 13, 2016 from the hours of 11:00 am and 3:00 pm. This event was also approved as an annual event.
4. Approval of an agreement renewal with Lane Lawn Care for Town Right of Ways, I-95 Exits and the Water Plant.

*(Attached by reference and made a part of these official minutes is a copy of the approved agreement with Lane Lawn Care
 A copy is on file in the Office of the Town Clerk
 Agreement – 2016: Lane Lawn Care – ROW, I-95 Exits & Water Plant)*

5. New Hire Report

<u>Position</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Budget Line</u>	<u>Rate of Pay</u>
Firefighter I	Fire	10-5300-0200	\$15.18/hr (\$33,153.12/yr)
Firefighter I	Fire	10-5300-0200	\$15.18/hr (\$33,153.12/yr)
Firefighter I	Fire	10-5300-0200	\$15.18/hr (\$33,153.12/yr)
Police Officer I	Police	10-5100-0200	\$15.58/hr (\$34,836.88/yr)
P/T Laborer	PU – Water/Sewer	30-7220-0200	\$8.00/hr
P/T Lifeguard	P&R – Aquatics	10-6220-0220	\$7.50/hr
P/T General Staff	P&R – Aquatics	10-6220-0210	\$9.00/hr
P/T Aquatics Staff	P&R – Aquatics	10-6220-0220	\$10.00/hr
P/T Instructor	P&R – Aquatics	10-6220-0230	\$15.00/hr

Unanimously approved.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

1. Approval to enter into an agreement with Expert Global Services to provide online utility bill payment services.

Finance Director Greg Siler addressed the Council on a request to enter into an agreement with Expert Global Service for online bill payment services. Mr. Siler explained the Town of Smithfield contracted with NCO Financial Systems in September 2014, to provide online bill pay to the Town's utility customers at a cost of \$2.45 per transaction (paid by the customer). Just months after contracting with the Town, rules changed for NCO prohibiting them from charging the \$2.45 transaction fee. As a result, for nearly two years customers have enjoyed online bill pay with no transaction fee. NCO has since sold the contract to Expert Global Solutions (EGS) and the Town's contract expires in September of 2016. In the search for a new online bill pay provider, eight companies were considered including our current online provider NCO/EGS. NCO/EGS is once again offering the lowest transaction fee of \$3.00 per transaction. NCO/EGS online bill pay would allow utility customers to make "blind" payments since system integration between LOGICS and NCO/EGS is not an option. There is no additional installation/set up charge, but a transaction/convenience fee of \$3.00 per transaction is charged. Mr. Siler further explained he negotiated several items in the contract and EGS was agreeable to those amendments.

Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley questioned if the customer would pay the transaction fee. Mr. Siler responded it was his recommendation that the customer pay the transaction fee.

Councilman Harris inquired if the credit card convenience charge could be passed on to customers who paid their utility bills at the collection window since there are some customers with extremely high utility bills that choose to pay with a credit card at Town Hall. Mr. Siler responded that the Town could not charge face to face customers a transaction fee.

Councilman Harris made a motion, seconded by Councilman Dunn, to approve the two year agreement with Expert Global Solutions for online bill pay services. Unanimously approved.

2. Approval to purchase the second sludge press for the Water Plant

Public Utilities Director Ted Credle addressed the Council on a request to purchase the second sludge press for the Water Plant. Mr. Credle explained that as part of the approved 2016-2017 budget, the acquisition and installation of a second sludge press at the Water Treatment Plant was approved by Town Council. The first sludge press had been bid twice and had only received one bidder. Included in the original bid was the price for a second press. In the interest of saving time, with the understanding that bids for this type of machinery were historically scarce, the recommendation was made to order the second press now. The hope was that the two presses could be installed together and save money on installation costs. The second press was quoted by the same manufacturer to be \$83,000.00. This bid was within budget and within project specifications. As previously discussed, the second press will add redundancy, reliability, and efficiency to the sludge removal process.

Councilman Harris made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wood, to approve the purchase of the second sludge press at the Water Plant. Unanimously approved.

3. Adoption of the Wayfinding System

Town Manager Michael Scott addressed the Council on consideration to adopt the Wayfinding system for the Town of Smithfield. He explained that in June of 2014 the Johnston County Visitors Bureau hired Frazier and Associates to undertake the task of completing a wayfinding sign system that could be implemented within Smithfield to better identify primary routes through the community for purposes of economic development, beautification and the highlighting of key destination points for our visitors. The Johnston County Visitors Bureau, the Downtown Smithfield Development Corporation (DSDC), the Smithfield Appearance Commission, and Smithfield Town Staff all collaborated during the creation of this project. The final design and recommendations were endorsed by all groups and remain supported by each. The Smithfield Appearance Commission has agreed to allocate funding to beautify the Monumental Gateway Signs once they are completed. The DSDC has agreed to seek funding to implement the wayfinding project within the Downtown area of Smithfield. However, the DSDC cannot seek grant opportunities until the Town of Smithfield adopts the plan as its Wayfinding System. Once the Wayfinding System is adopted, the Town can begin moving the project forward by approving the Gateway Signage on each end of East and West Highway 70 and each end of North and South Highway 301. Funding for the project can be achieved by approving the use of two (2) percent

reserved tax dollars held by the Johnston County Visitor's Bureau. There is currently \$100,000 in that fund and the Town can allocate \$50,000 of those funds for this project.

Councilman Harris stated that it was his understanding that the I-95 Bridge and interchange would be reconstructed in the near future. He asked that the Town work with NCDOT to ensure that the signage was cohesive with the plans for the interchange and bridge. Town Manager Michael Scott responded that Town staff would work with NCDOT to be certain signs are appropriately placed so as to not interfere with the bridge replacement project.

Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley questioned if staff anticipated any cost associated with the placement of the gateway signs for easements. Town Manager Michael Scott responded that staff will work with NCDOT to acquire right-of-way easements so that the Town does not have to acquire public property.

Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley asked as to who would make the decision on where the directional signs would be placed and what would be displayed on the signs. Town Manager Michael Scott responded that he would work with the various groups and any decision would be brought before the Council in phases for approval.

Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley made a motion, seconded by Councilman Harris, to adopt the Way-Finding Plan and begin implementation by authorizing gateway signage placed at the Town's gateways of North and South 301 and East and West Market Street with a beginning budget of \$50,000 using the Town's reserve 2% tax dollars held by the Johnston County Visitor's Bureau. Unanimously approved.

4. Approval of a Scope of Work with Sanford Holshouser for Implementation of the Strategic Economic Development Update Action Items.

Economic Development Liaison Tim Kerigan along with Rocky Lane of Sanford Holshouser addressed the Council on a request to approve a scope of work with Sanford Holshouser in the amount of \$16,500 to implement the economic development update action items. Mr. Kerigan explained that in 2014, the Town contracted with Sanford Holshouser to update the Strategic Economic Development Plan that was initially completed in 2004. Since that time, the Town has not been able to implement any of the identified action items. Mr. Kerigan further explained that by contracting with Sanford Holshouser, the Town can begin moving its economic development efforts forward and to see the plan come to fruition.

Town Manager Michael Scott stated that things in motion tend to stay in motion and the Town is starting to move forward with economic development efforts.

Councilman Wood made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley, to approve the scope of work with Sanford Holshouser for the implementation of the strategic economic development update action items. Unanimously approved.

Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley questioned if the hours in the contract rolled over to the next month in the event that they were unused. Mr. Lane responded that he didn't foresee that being an issue, but they would roll into the next month if necessary. He further explained that since his firm completed the strategic economic development plan and the update to that plan, the Town has unlimited phone calls, emails and meetings at his Raleigh office.

Councilman Harris inquired if Mr. Kerigan had spoken to Mike Fleming's group about this. Mr. Kerigan responded that there was some conversation, but nothing definitive was determined. Mr. Harris recommended that that group be included. Mr. Kerigan and Mr. Lane responded that they would be included.

Councilman Rabil questioned if a monthly activity report would be submitted to the Council. Mr. Lane responded that he would send a monthly report to Mr. Kerigan to be forwarded to the Council.

5. Approval of the placement of a “No U-Turn” sign and bollards on Outlet Center Drive and Smithfield Crossings Drive

Town Manager Michael Scott addressed the Council on a request to install a “No U-Turn” sign and bollards on Outlet Center Drive at Smithfield Crossings Drive. He explained that the bollards on Outlet Center Drive would extend west from the median on Outlet Center Drive and Smithfield Crossings Drive to help reduce traffic accidents in the area. The Police Department has investigated twenty-one (21) accidents at this intersection since the opening of the road, including two in the last few days. In attempt to reach the restaurants located on Smithfield Crossings Drive, vehicles travelling west on Outlet Center Drive attempt to make U Turns after the median ends. This causes the west bound vehicles to turn in front of traffic that is traveling in the same direction originating from Smithfield Crossings Drive.

Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wood, to approve the installation of a “No U-Turn sign and bollards at outlet Center Drive and Smithfield Crossings Drive. Unanimously approved.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. In accordance with NCGS 160A- 536 (d1), to solicit input from residents and property owners as to the needs of the Downtown Municipal Service District.

Councilman Harris made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wood, to open the public hearing. Unanimously approved.

Town Manager Michael Scott informed the Council that in the state budget bill, S.L. 2015-241, the legislature made a few changes to the Municipal Service District (MSD) authority. One of the changes that affect the Town of Smithfield is the ability to contract with a private entity to provide services to the MSD. He explained that the purpose of the public hearing was to gain input as to the needs of the MSD. The input received during the public hearing would be used to craft the Request for Proposals.

Mayor Moore asked if those in attendance that wished to comment. There were none.

Councilman Harris made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley, to close the public hearing. Unanimously approved.

No action was taken by the Council.

COUNCILMEMBERS’ COMMENTS:

- Mayor Moore informed the members of the Council that great things are happening in Smithfield. He explained that the SRAC swim team was undefeated this year and ultimately won the championship. He expressed his appreciation to the SRAC staff and especially Laura Crumpler on the success of the championship swim meet. He explained that he had attended a lot of swim meets and the championship meet held at the SRAC was the most well run he’s ever attended. Mayor Moore also informed the Council that Councilman Scott’s grandmother had passed away Sunday and asked that they please keep him and his family in their prayers. Mayor Moore also expressed his appreciation to Fire Chief John Blanton and the Smithfield Fire Department for all the positive things coming out of the Department including the neighborhood Kool Kids events.
- Councilman Harris informed the members of Council that the flower beds along US 70 West would be maintained by NCDOT in the coming weeks. He explained that NCDOT was responsible for the maintenance and care of the beds for the first twelve (12) months. After that time, it would be the responsibility of the Town to maintain that area. Mayor Moore expressed his appreciation to Councilman Harris for his efforts on the US 70 West beautification project and reminded the Council that maintaining these areas would need to be discussed and addressed during next year’s budget sessions.

- Councilman Lee expressed his appreciation to everyone who participated in the annual Fun in the Park. He also expressed his appreciation to Interim Police Chief Keith Powell and Town Manager Michael Scott for attending the event held at St. Peter's Disciples of Christ. Councilman Lee explained that he has been working with Police Lieutenant Brian O'Branovich to host Kool Aid with a Cop at the Johnston Central Alumni gymnasium.

Councilman Lee also informed the members of Council that last Friday he was notified that the Salvation Army, under the direction on Cary Booth, was hosting a summer camp for approximately fifty (50) underprivileged kids. Ms. Booth reported that the children were being taken to Wilson to utilize a pool facility because the children were not welcomed at the SRAC. Councilman Lee stated that he was outraged by this. Mayor Moore responded that he appreciated all of Councilman Lee's efforts with the young people in the community. Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson was asked to address Councilman Lee's concerns. Mr. Johnson responded that the personnel at the SRAC welcomes everyone who wishes to utilize the facility. He explained that the SRAC offers group swim in the summer, Monday through Friday from 10:00 am until 4:00 pm. He further explained that staff begins taking summer reservations for organized groups in February and this year the last vacant spot was filled on May 18th. The Salvation Army requested the use of the facility on June 8th. Mr. Johnson explained that they were accommodated on that day. Additional time was offered to the Salvation Army, but unfortunately the schedule did not work for the group.

Mayor Pro- Tem Ashley questioned if priority was given to Smithfield groups or if in the future the sign up period for Smithfield groups could begin before other groups are considered. Mr. Johnson responded that was something they could try to implement next year. Mr. Johnson explained that most of the summer groups that use the pool at the SRAC are repeat customers and most contact the SRAC in February to schedule time for the summer months. Town Manager Michael Scott asked Mr. Johnson to make a note to call the Salvation Army in early January to see if the Town could accommodate them for the upcoming summer camp.

- Councilman Dunn expressed his appreciation to the Public Utilities Department for restoring power in less than an hour after an accident had occurred outside his office.
- Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley expressed his appreciation to Electric Superintendent Rodney Johnson for assisting his youngest son who was working on his Eagle Scout project.

Town Manager's Report:

Town Manager Michael Scott gave a brief update to the Council on the following items:

- Good things are happening in Smithfield: Fill the Bus drive, Motorcycle Club conducting a back to school event, FOP campaign for book bags, the Junior Women's Club of Smithfield's Touch a Truck event, Kool Aid with a Cop events, Fun in the Park and the Kool Kids events hosted by the Fire Department. He indicated that he was proud to be a member of this community.
- General Fund Balance: Preliminary numbers indicate the Town Departments in the General Fund will return approximately \$1 million to fund balance following the close out of Fiscal Year 2015-16. He expressed his appreciation to the department heads and the Mayor and Council for working together to make this possible. This will maintain our general fund, fund balance at about 40 percent.
- Crime Data: The Police department has increased patrols and provided reward incentives to individuals who provided information that lead to burglary arrests. Two separate arrests were made for previous burglaries. This has slowed the spike in commercial burglaries reported in the media in July. He acknowledged Interim Chief Powell and the Smithfield Police Department for their continued efforts.
- Property Acquisition: The property at 116 South 5th Street has been purchased and the deed transferred. The Planning Department is preparing an RFQ for the demolition of the buildings on the property.

- Pine Acres Buffer: Bill Dreitzler and the Town Manager met with Mr. J. Etheridge and had a good discussion regarding the buffer and the Town requesting a right of way so a buffer could be placed between Smithfield Crossings Drive and the residences in Pine Acres, west of Smithfield Crossings Drive. Mr. Etheridge responded that he would be speaking with his partner concerning the Town's request
- Streetscape Project: Contract boring for this project will be starting this week for the Market Street Lighting Project.
- **Department Reports**
 - A highlight of each department's monthly activities was given to the Council.

Closed Session: Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)

Councilman Dunn, made a motion, seconded by Councilman Harris, to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) to consult with the Town Attorney. Unanimously approved at 8:35.

Reconvene in Open Session:

Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wood, to reconvene in open session. Unanimously approved at 9:15pm.

Adjourn

Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wood, to adjourn the meeting. Unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:16 pm.

M. Andy Moore, Mayor

ATTEST:

Shannan L. Williams, Town Clerk