

The Smithfield Town Council met in regular session on Tuesday, January 23, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Smithfield Town Hall, Mayor M. Andy Moore presided.

Councilmen Present:

Roger Wood, Mayor Pro-Tem
Sloan Stevens, District 2
Travis Scott, District 3
Dr. David Barbour, District 4
John Dunn, At-Large
Stephen Rabil, At-Large

Councilmen Absent

Marlon Lee, District 1

Administrative Staff Present

Michael Scott, Town Manager
Ted Credle, Public Utilities Director
Lawrence Davis, Public Works Director
Pete Hedrick, Chief of Police
Gary Johnson, Parks & Rec Director
Tim Kerigan, Human Resources
Eric McDowell, IT Director
Shannan Parrish, Town Clerk
Greg Siler, Finance Director
Stephen Wensman, Planning Director

Also Present

Robert Spence, Jr., Town Attorney

Administrative Staff Absent

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Moore called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

INVOCATION

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Mayor Pro-Tem Wood made a motion, seconded by Councilman Scott, to approve the agenda with the following amendments:

Add to the Business Items:

- Consideration and request for approval for street and drainage repairs on Brookwood Drive as Afton Lane.

Unanimously approved.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Proclamation – Recognizing Steven (Tony) McLeod’s 20+ Years of Service to the Town of Smithfield

Mayor Moore presented Tony McLeod with the following proclamation and wished him well on his retirement.

PROCLAMATION
In Honor of Fire Captain Steven Anthony
(Tony) McLeod's
20+ Years of Dedicated Service
to the Town of Smithfield

WHEREAS, Steven Anthony McLeod has been a dedicated employee of the Town of Smithfield for more than 20 years; and

WHEREAS, Steven Anthony McLeod retired on December 31, 2023 and is being honored for his years of service as a member of the Smithfield Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, throughout his professional career, Steven Anthony McLeod helped advance the Smithfield Fire Department by serving in a variety of roles including Firefighter, Engineer and ultimately as a Captain; and

WHEREAS, through his dedication and service to the residents of the Town of Smithfield and Johnston County, Steven Anthony McLeod directly contributed to creating a safer and more resilient community; and

WHEREAS, Steven Anthony McLeod has earned and deserves this public recognition for his many years of service and commitment to the Town of Smithfield.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, M. Andy Moore Mayor of the Town of Smithfield along with the members of the Town Council, express our sincere appreciation to Steven Anthony McLeod for his distinguished service to the Town of Smithfield and wish him well in his future endeavors.

2. Proclamation – Recognizing February as All in Red Month in the Town of Smithfield

Mayor Moore read the following proclamation and explained the importance of the campaign.

PROCLAMATION
Recognizing February as "All in Red Month"
in the Town of Smithfield

Whereas, the well-being of our community is of paramount importance and maintaining excellent health among our citizens is a top priority, February marks the month-long, county-wide heart health awareness campaign entitled "ALL IN RED", organized by UNC Health Johnston and Johnston Health Foundation; and

Whereas, in the United States, North Carolina, and Johnston County, heart disease is a leading cause of death among men and women;

Whereas, per the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 80% of deaths from premature heart disease and stroke could be prevented by changes in physical activity, diet, education and management of common medical conditions, and;

Whereas, ALL IN RED is an opportunity to increase heart health awareness, while addressing the growing needs of local cardiology patients; and

Whereas, the ALL IN RED campaign invites all Johnston County residents, business owners and visitors to participate in this initiative by wearing RED on February 2, 2024, National Wear Red Day, and/or running a RED promo or fundraiser in February; and

Whereas, the financial challenges of a heart patient are enormous; all funds raised within this campaign period will benefit local heart patients through the Johnston Health Foundation's Heart Fund; and

Whereas, on this day, we recognize heart disease and stroke survivors, those battling the disease, their families who are their source of love and encouragement, and applaud the efforts of our medical professionals who provide quality care; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, M. Andy Moore, Mayor of the Town of Smithfield along with the members of the Smithfield Town Council does hereby proclaim February 2024 as "ALL IN RED MONTH" and encourages businesses, industries and citizens in the community to support and participate in this event.

- 3. Recognition of Police Detective David Johnson's Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate**
Chief of Police Pete Hedrick presented Detective David Johnson with his Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate and congratulated him on his achievement.
- 4. Recognition Of Police Officer Julie Carroll's Intermediate Law Enforcement Certificate**
Chief of Police Pete Hedrick presented Police Officer Julie Carroll with her Intermediate Law Enforcement Certificate and congratulated her on her achievement.
- 5. Administering the Oath of Office to New Police Officer Conner Capshaw**
Mayor Moore administered the Oath of Office to new Police Officer Connor Capshaw and welcomed him to the Town of Smithfield.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- 1. Conditional Rezoning Request - Buffalo Road (CZ-23-01): The applicant was requesting to rezone a 138.63-acre tract of land from the R-20A (Residential-Agricultural) zoning district to the R-8 CZ zoning district with a master plan consisting of 222 single-family residential lots. The property considered for rezoning was located on the east side of Buffalo Road, approximately 300 feet south of its intersection with Holland Drive and further identified as Johnston County Tax ID# 14A03005**

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Wood, to open the public hearing. Unanimously approved.

Planning Director Stephen Wensman explained the location of the property and its proximity to existing neighborhoods. The property consisted of woodland and wetland areas, 500-yr and 100-yr floodplain, and a buffered blueline stream. It was currently zoned R-20A/R-8. The comprehensive plan guided this property for medium density residential, therefore the R-8 CZ zoning was appropriate.

Mr. Wensman explained that prior to making formal application, the developer held a neighborhood meeting. The neighbors:

- Were nearly unanimously opposed to the road connection to Parkway Drive.
- Had concerns about the small lots especially up against Bradford Park.
- Wanted more buffer between Bradford Park and the new development.
- Had concerns about drainage and that the development might worsen the already poor drainage in their back yards.
- Had concerns about potential cut through to Buffalo Road through Bradford Park and speeding.
- Had concerns about increased traffic congestion on Buffalo Road and adjacent roadways because of new development.

Mr. Wensman explained the proposed density was 1.57 dwelling units per acre, within this designation,

you can go up to 9.56 dwelling units per acre. The reason the development appeared to be extremely dense because there was a lot of acreage on the east side of the greenway which would be unused.

The development plans showed two access points proposed onto Buffalo Road with approximately 620 feet between them. The nearest intersection is Holland Drive, approximately 415 feet to the north. The development will also connect to the Bradford Park neighborhood with a Fire Access Trail, to the 4-acre radio station to the north, and the vacant parcel to the South. With the future subdivision application, a Traffic Impact Study will be required. Buffalo Road is state maintained roadway and all proposed access points will require NCDOT approval and compliance with state design criteria to include spacing requirements, turn lanes or other traffic controls

All streets have 60' rights-of-ways. Streets A & B are proposed to be 31' wide back-to-back (back of the curb to back of the curb). The remaining streets are proposed to be 27' wide back-to-back consistent with the draft Standard Detail and Specification Manual. Sidewalks are proposed on both sides of Streets even though the Town requires them on only one side. A Sidewalk was proposed for the Buffalo Road Frontage. Valley curb was proposed rather than standard 6" curb and gutter throughout the development. Street A is about 3,100 lineal feet (.6 of a mile) long from cul-de-sac to Buffalo Road and will certainly attract speeding. The developer was proposing stop signs at intersections to slow vehicles. Staff was recommending a round-about be constructed where Streets A & B intersect; as a result, four lots will be lost.

The proposed minimum lot size of 4,200 sq. ft (42' wide) which was nearly a 53% reduction in lot area and 60% reduction in lot frontage. The proposed minimum setbacks were: 18' front (garages 25'), 5' side, and 12' rear and 18' corner side yard. A 12' rear setback limits patios & sheds. Slightly larger lots were proposed at the back of the cul-de-sac .15 or .16 acres vs. .10 acres (4,200 sq. ft.).

Mr. Wensman explained that architectural designs were provided by the developer, but staff was recommending more architectural standards be provided. A Homeowner's Association will own and maintain the open space and amenities which include stormwater ponds, parking, pickleball court, mail kiosk and street yard buffers.

The master plan note indicates there will be 3 parking spaces per dwelling and 98 overflow spaces. This exceeds the required 2 spaces per dwelling unit. Overflow parking is located within 2 overflow parking lots and in street bump-outs dispersed at various locations in the development, more convenient to use for some lots than others. Each lot will provide parking for 2 cars within a driveway and one or two stall garages that will be a minimum of 12' x 20' or 20' x 20', large enough to fit one or two standard sized vehicles.

Mr. Wensman outlined the requested deviations from the UDO and the proposed standards exceeding the UDO requirements. He further explained the UDO required a street connection to Parkway Drive; however, the developer was proposing an emergency service access trail meeting fire code. The proposed lot minimums are nearly 53% smaller than the R-8 zone (4,200 sq/ ft. vs. 8,000 sq ft.) and nearly a 60% reduction in lot frontage (42 LF vs. 70 LF). The Bradford Park development has a minimum of 10,000 sq. ft. lots and 75 lineal feet of road frontage by comparison. The developer is offering +/- 58 acres of parkland dedication, a greenway connection and other amenities.

Other amenities or conditions that could be considered with this rezoning include:

- A greater number of lots larger than 4200 sq. ft.
- HOA maintenance of the trail connection from the Buffalo Creek Greenway to Buffalo Road.
- Greater side yard setbacks on corner lots.
- Separate the greenway connector trail from the sidewalk.
- Provide traffic calming for Street A in the form of a round-about at the Street B intersection.
- Additional architectural enhancements.
- Require standard 6" curb and gutter.

Consistency Statement (Staff's Opinion):

With the approval of the rezoning, Town Council is required to adopt a statement describing whether the action is consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan and other applicable adopted plans and that the action is reasonable and in the public interest.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan – the development is consistent with the comprehensive plan.

Consistency with the Unified Development Code – the property will be developed in conformance with the UDO conditional zoning provisions that allows a good faith negotiation of development standards.

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses - The property considered for rezoning will be compatible with the surrounding land uses with the conditions of approval

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Board recommended the Town Council approve the conditional rezoning, CZ-23-01, with the following 10 conditions:

1. That the future preliminary plat and development plans for the subdivision be in accordance with the approved Master Plan, R-8 Zoning District, and UDO regulations with the with the following

deviations (this is a standard condition added):

Standard	R-8 Zoning/Subdivision Requirements.	Proposed
Setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front=30' • Corner side = 15' • Side=10' • Rear = 25' • Cornerside = 30' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front Home=18' • Front Garage = 25' • Side = 5' • Rear = 12' • Cornerside = 18'
Min. Lot Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8,000 sq. ft. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,200 sq. ft.
Lot Frontage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70 feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 42 feet
Curbing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6" Standard curb & gutter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valley curb
Lateral Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required connection to Parkview Drive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20' wide trail meeting Fire Code

2. The driveway aprons to the parking lot and residential lots should conform to the town's standard details.
3. Provide written architectural standards should be provided to match the example elevations provided on the master plan.
4. Provide concrete curb and gutter along Buffalo Road (underground drainage) with NCDOT approval.
5. Provide 3-way and 4-way stop signs at intersections along Street A for traffic calming.
6. Provide decorative street lighting and street signs throughout the development.
7. Enhance the landscaping at the development entrances onto Buffalo Road
8. Propose to dedicate the land east of the Buffalo Creek Greenway for parkland.
9. Provide aeration of the wet (stormwater) ponds to assist with mosquito control.
10. Loop the watermains with the Bradford Park neighborhood (upside to an 8" line if feasible) and provide a fire hydrant beyond the cul-de-sac on the greenway for fire protection.

Additional Staff recommended conditions:

11. Provide traffic calming for Street A in the form of a round-a-bout at Street B.
12. Provide standard 6" curb and gutter throughout the development.

Planning Director Stephen Wensman has incorporated his entire record and provided it to the Council in written form in the January 9, 2024 agenda packet.

Mayor Moore asked if there were any questions from Council.

Councilman Dunn questioned if the reduction in setbacks meant there would be more cars spilling out onto the sidewalks. Mr. Wensman explained the garages were setback a little farther to eliminate this potential issue.

Councilman Scott stated R-6 zoning allowed for a minimum lot size of 6,000 sq feet, but the Town doesn't currently use the R-6 zoning for any new developments without a conditional rezoning. Mr. Wensman explained the conditional zoning process and how different requirements could be negotiated.

Councilman Scott further stated the developer was requesting a deviation of almost half the required lot size which was inconsistent with the adjacent development of Bradford Park which had a minimum lot size of 10,000 sq ft. This new development's lot sizes should be similar to those of Bradford Park.

Councilman Barbour questioned what was the smallest lot size has the Council approved. Mr. Wensman responded that the East River Development has lot sizes of 3,700 sq. ft. Councilman Barbour expressed his dislike of how density was calculated because unusable wetland counted toward the overall land density calculation. He further expressed his concerns about the proposed lot sizes.

Councilman Stevens questioned if the 58 acres that the developer was proposed to give to the Town for parks was usable land. Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson responded he was unfamiliar with the terrain, but he assumed since the High School used some of the land for cross country meets, that some of the land was dry and usable. Councilman Stevens suggested the developer pay the fee in lieu instead of donating the actual land to the Town. He also expressed concerns about the density of the development.

Councilman Dunn questioned if there would be on-street parking. Mr. Wensman referred to the parking plan that showed where the developer has created pull-out parking whereby the curb is moved to form parking spaces. Most of the excess parking would be along the wider streets. Councilman Dunn questioned if the pull-out parking would impair the sightline in those areas.

Mayor Pro-Tem Wood stated he was in agreement that the lot sizes were simply too small and he was not in favor of the valley curb.

Mayor Moore stated he would not be in favor of taking 58 acres of land off the tax record especially if it was deemed unusable by the Town. He further stated the Council should consider the lot sizes and should know exactly what was going to be built from an architectural standard. It was his opinion that it could be a very nice neighborhood, but some things needed to be worked out before it was approved.

Councilman Scott stated this case was very unique because the developer held a community meeting

which allowed residents to provide feedback. He further stated this development would have an impact on Buffalo Road which was likely to become a gateway into Smithfield. The developers should work very closely with NCDOT because he was concerned that the access points were too close together and would negatively affect Parkway Drive.

Mayor Moore asked if there was anyone in attendance who wished to speak on the matter.

Donnie Adams of Adams & Hodge Engineering informed the Council that he was responsible for the planning and engineering of the project. The developers of the project were Sagan Lampe, Glenn Weeks and Emily Kingston. Mr. Adams stated the 58 acres to be donated to the Town was in fact, useable land. He explained he and the developers met with residents of Bradford Park and listened to their concerns. In regards to the lots adjacent to Bradford Park, those lots would be slightly larger than the other proposed lots.

Mr. Adams explained there were comments made about stormwater and he believed the development would have adequate stormwater measures. He further explained that Bradford Park already had existing issues with stormwater and flooding. Also, the Bradford Park neighborhood expressed concerns about traffic. To alleviate this issue, there will not be a throughway connection between the two subdivisions, but an emergency vehicle connection.

Mr. Adams addressed the density issue. He stated the current zoning allowed for 3.33 units per acre and they were proposing 1.6 units per acre. He thought that Bradford Park's density was 2.2 units per acre.

Mr. Adams explained the amenities of the proposed project: connection to the greenway trail, pickleball court, additional parking, fountains in the ponds for mosquito control, a nice entrance sign and decorative lighting throughout the subdivision. He provided a detailed drawing of the proposed single-family lots. He explained the garage would be 25' from the sidewalk so there would be no vehicles parked within the sidewalk area. He also provided a detailed drawing of the architectural standards that would be used: premium vinyl siding .042 or greater, 20% front façade with stone, brick or premium shake, and any sides facing the street would have shutters on visible windows.

Mr. Adams addressed parking concerns. He explained there would be one and two car garages with at least 1 additional space in the driveway. Also, they identified places throughout the neighborhood where additional parking was proposed instead of dedicated overflow parking areas.

Mayor Moore questioned what type of uses Mr. Adams thought the Town could use the 58 acres. Mr. Adams responded he thought it could be used for anything.

Mayor Moore questioned why the developer was proposing to give that 58 acres to the Town instead of developing it. Mr. Adams responded they were trying to be good stewards of the land and they did not want to increase the density.

Councilman Stevens questioned if the developers proposed any other type of development to which staff was not in agreement. Glen Weeks responded they originally proposed townhouses, but staff was not in favor of townhouses. Then they proposed the single-family houses with reduced lot sizes to maximize the use of the land. Mayor Moore stated the Town did not have the appetite for additional townhouses at this time as there are already so many of those types of developments that has been approved.

Councilman Barbour questioned the type of buffer between Bradford Park and this development. Mr. Adams explained the intention was to leave the 10 feet of existing vegetation. He explained there may be some need for additional clearing to ensure that the property sufficiently drains. Councilman Barbour further questioned the possibility of installing a fence as a way to keep the two neighborhoods separated. Councilman Barbour further questioned the value of the land that would be given to the Town. Mr. Adams responded he felt the land was valuable and could be beneficial to the Town's Park System.

Mr. Weeks explained that one reason the project is shaped the way it was because there was a 20-30 mature tree growth on the property. The idea was to clear only what was needed for the subdivision and the ponds and leave as much of the existing mature forest area.

Mayor Moore asked if there was anyone else in attendance who wished to speak on the matter.

Gene Bruton of Cobblestone Court provided the Council with some photographs of the area. He expressed his concerns about the proposed development and how it would adversely affect his property and all the residents of Bradford Park especially since there were already drainage issues. He explained this new development would cause significant flooding in Bradford Park.

Ray Buckner of Cobblestone Court expressed his opposition to the proposed development. He was concerned the new development would exacerbate the flooding of Bradford Park. He explained that a development of this type doesn't fit next to the Bradford Park neighborhood. He further stated that one pickleball court for 222 homes would not suffice the needs of the neighborhood. He also stated that the traffic generated from this development could pose major problems for the Town.

Councilman Dunn questioned if the developers provided a response to the Bradford Park neighbors about drainage or flooding concerns. Mr. Adams responded he had addressed their concerns, but this development was downhill from Bradford Park and would not adversely affect that neighborhood. Stormwater management would be reviewed and a traffic impact study would have to be completed.

Mr. Buckner further questioned if the Council had considered the impact the proposed development would have on the area schools. Mayor Moore and Mr. Wensman responded that the Town has informed Johnston County Public Schools of the approved growth and the potential for more growth.

Larry Honeycutt of Cobblestone Drive expressed his opposition to the proposed development. He explained that his neighborhood had nice homes and he feared this new development would disrupt the livelihood of his neighborhood. He expressed concerns about the houses that would be built directly behind his home and suggested those be eliminated from the design. He further stated the proposed development would have negative effects on the environment.

Steve Hart of Buffalo Road suggested that the ditch at Everitt Lane be cleaned out to mitigate some of the drainage issues in Bradford Park.

Wendy Lupo of Cobblestone Court stated she had lived in her home for over twenty years. She informed the Council that any time there is a rain event, her yard floods and it has been an issue. While she wasn't opposed to growth, she asked that the it be done wisely.

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

Mayor Pro-Tem Wood made a motion, seconded by Councilman Stevens, to table a decision on CZ-23-01 until the March 5, 2024 meeting. Mayor Pro-Tem Wood, Councilman Stevens, Councilman Barbour, Councilman Dunn and Councilman Rabil voted in favor of the motion. Councilman Scott voted against the motion. Motion passed 5 to 1.

2. Unified Development Ordinance Text Amendment – Town of Smithfield (ZA-23-09 Watershed Ordinance): The applicant is proposing an amendment to the Unified Development Code, Section 10.92, and associated definitions in Appendix A as an update to the Water Supply Watershed Protection Overlay District regulations in accordance with changes in the general statutes, NCGS 143-214.5

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Councilman Dunn, to open the public hearing. Unanimously approved.

Planning Director Stephen Wensman explained staff was requesting to amend the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), Article 10, Section 10.92, Water Supply Watershed Protection Overlay District ordinance and associated definitions in the UDO Appendix A. These changes were in response to changes in the general statutes, NCGS 143-214.5. The Town was required to adopt watershed protection ordinances in accordance with the general statutes. The Town has updated its ordinance based on the model ordinance provided by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ). This draft ordinance has been reviewed by NCDEQ and when adopted by the Town, the adopted ordinance will be forwarded to NCDEQ as proof of compliance.

CONSISTENCY STATEMENT (STAFF OPINION):

Staff finds the zoning text amendment as consistent with the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and other adopted plans, and that the amendment is reasonable and in the public interest.

RECOMMENDATION:

Planning Staff and the Planning Board recommend approval of the zoning text amendment ZA-23-09, with a statement declaring the request consistent with the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and that the request is reasonable and in the public interest.

Planning Director Stephen Wensman has incorporated his entire record and provided it to the Council in written form in the January 23, 2024 agenda packet.

Mayor Moore asked if there were any questions from Council. There were none.

Mayor Moore asked if there was anyone in attendance who wished to speak on the matter. There was no one in attendance that wished to speak on the matter.

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Councilman Rabil, to close the public hearing. Unanimously approved.

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Councilman Rabil to approve zoning text amendment, ZA-23-09, amending Article 10, Section 10.92, Water Supply Watershed Protection Overlay District ordinance and associated definitions in the UDO Appendix A., finding the amendment consistent with the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and other adopted plans, and that the amendment is reasonable and in the public interest. Unanimously approved.

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS: None

CONSENT AGENDA:

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Councilman Rabil, to approve the following items as listed

on the Consent Agenda:

1. The following minutes were approved:
 - November 14, 2023 – Regular Meeting
 - November 14, 2023 – Closed Session
 - December 5, 2023 – Regular/ Organizational Meeting
2. Approval was granted to promote a Fire Lieutenant to the rank of Fire Captain.
3. Approval was granted to promote a Fire Engineer to the rank of Fire Lieutenant.
4. Approval was granted to promote a Firefighter I to the rank of Firefighter II.
5. Approval was granted to promote a Water Plant Trainee to the position of Water Plant Operator I.
6. Approval was granted to hire an Electric Line Technician above the minimum rate of pay due to experience.
7. Bid was awarded to Performance Automotive in the amount of \$44,549.78 for the purchase of a 2023 Dodge Durango for the Police Department.
8. Bid was awarded to Performance Automotive in the amount of \$35,113.00 for the purchase of a 2023 Dodge charger for the Police Department.
9. Bid was awarded to Performance Automotive in the amount of \$28,853.14 for the purchase of a 2023 Ford Escape for the Water/ Sewer Department.
10. Board appointments
 - a. Jeremy Pearce was reappointed to a second term on the Board of Adjustment.
 - b. Julia Narron was appointed to a three-year term on the Appearance Commission.

11. New Hire Report

Recently Hired	Department	Budget Line	Rate of Pay
Firefighter I (3)	Fire	10-20-5300-5100-0200	\$19.19/hr. (\$41,910.96/yr.)
Firefighter II (3)	Fire	10-20-5300-5100-0200	\$20.15/hr. (\$44,007.60/yr.)
Firefighter (9 - Part-time)	Fire	10-20-5300-5100-0210	\$17.60/hr.
Part-Time Athletics Staff	P&R – Recreation	10-60-6200-5300-0210	\$10.00/hr.
Police Officer I	Police	10-20-5100-5100-0200	\$22.26/hr. (\$49,773.36/yr.)
Police Officer II	Police	10-20-5100-5100-0200	\$23.36/hr. (\$52,232.96/yr.)
Equipment Operator	PW – Sanitation	10-40-5800-5100-0200	\$17.21/hr. (\$35,796.80/yr.)

Current Vacancies	Department	Budget Line
Assistant Fire Chief	Fire	10-20-5300-5100-0200
Electric Lineman	PU – Electric	31-72-7230-5100-0200
Police Officer	Police	10-20-5100-5100-0200
Equipment Operator	PW – Sanitation	10-40-5800-5100-0200

BUSINESS ITEMS:

1. **Consideration and request for approval to install stop signs at North Avenue and West Street**
 Chief of Police Pete Hedrick addressed the Council on a request to install stop signs at the intersection of North Avenue and West Street thus making it a three-way stop. He explained that after reviewing a citizen complaint and reviewing accident reports, the physical layout of the intersection, and the high amount of pedestrian traffic in the area, he recommended changing the intersection to a three way stop. This would slow traffic down and improve safety in the area.

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Wood, to approve the request. Unanimously approved.

2. **Consideration and request for approval to move forward with the replacement of the Town Hall Digital Sign**

IT Director Eric McDowell addressed the Council on a request to replace the digital sign at Town Hall. He explained the current sign has been inoperable since October. Staff has had numerous companies and electricians out to evaluate repairing the sign, and none are able to make the repair and all recommend replacement. The original company is based out of Florida, and due to the sign not being under warranty, will not evaluate the sign without the Town paying for their travel, evaluation and repair. Staff was requesting to replace the sign with a sign purchased from a local company, Sign and Awning Systems, that has had experience with this type of signage throughout North Carolina. The replacement cost was \$40,210. Two other estimates were obtained.

Since this was an unbudgeted expense, Councilman Scott question how the Town would pay for the replacement of the sign. Town Manager Michael Scott recommended using contingency funds from the General Fund, the Electric Fund and the Water/Sewer Fund or ARPA funds.

Councilman Scott made a motion, seconded by Councilman Barbour, to approve the replacement of the Town Hall digital sign in the amount of \$40,210 using contingency funds from each of the three funds. Unanimously approved.

3. Discussion concerning Council Meeting Schedule

Town Manager Michael Scott informed the Council that at the December meeting, there was some discussion as it related to the monthly meeting schedule. Staff's recommendation was to hold two Council meetings per month. Meetings would be held on the first and third Tuesdays of every month. Councilman Scott stated he felt the Council needed an additional meeting every other month based on the need to meet and discuss routine business. He further suggested holding a retreat type meeting with staff.

Councilman Barbour was in agreement that the Council should meeting twice a month on the first and third Tuesdays of every month. The first meeting of the month would be a regular meeting and the second meeting of the month would be a workshop type meeting.

Mayor Moore questioned the start time of the third Tuesday of the month meeting. It was the consensus of the Council that meeting would begin at 6:30 pm.

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Councilman Scott, to establish meeting twice a month on the first and third Tuesdays of the month. The first Tuesday of the month meeting would be the Council's regular meeting and will begin at 7:00 pm. The third Tuesday of the month meeting will be a workshop type meeting and will begin at 6:30 pm. The Council will develop a criteria/agenda for the workshop type meeting at its first workshop meeting in February. Unanimously approved.

4. FY 2024-2025 Budget Discussion

Town Manager Michael Scott informed the Council that he will have his first draft of the budget completed by February 29th and distributed to the Council on March 1st. He stated if the Council wanted input prior to that first draft, then Council would have to meet before February 29th. He further stated the sooner the Council could meet to begin discussions, the better the process would be.

Councilman Barbour stated the budget process worked well when Council provided priorities and ideas prior to receiving the first draft.

It was the consensus of the Council to hold its first budget meeting on Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at 6:30 pm.

5. Consideration and request for approval for street and drainage repairs on Brookwood Drive at Afton Lane

Town Manager Michael Scott informed the Council of a complaint received from the resident of 51 Brookwood Drive concerning a drainage issue. During rain events, water is going into the driveway. During major rain events, water reached the garage. There is a catch basin there, but because the road needs to be repaired to divert the water to the catch basin. Staff contacted Garris Grading and Paving to provide an estimate for repairing the street. Apparently, there was a miscommunication because when staff inspected the street earlier in the day, it had already been milled down. The Manager stated the estimated cost to repair the street was \$32,000. He recommended those funds to be paid out of the Powell Bill funding.

Mayor Moore stated he was not sure that he would have been in favor of this project, but since the repairs had already begun, the street had to be correctly repaired.

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Councilman Rabil, to approve the street and drainage repairs on Brookwood Drive at Afton Lane. Unanimously approved.

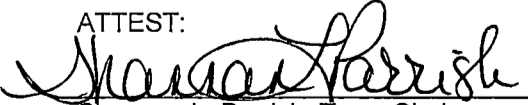
Councilmembers Comments: None

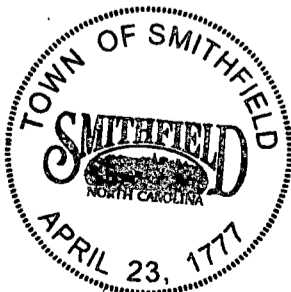
Town Manager's Report:

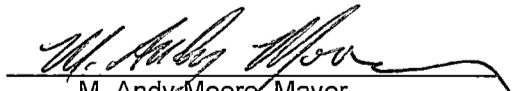
Town Manager Michael Scott provided the Council with his report in written form. He asked the Council to review the document titled "Budget Items for Discussion" prior to next week's meeting.

Recess

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Councilman Dunn, to recess the meeting until Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at 6:30 pm to be held in the Council Chambers of the Smithfield Town Hall. The meeting recessed at approximately 10:21 pm.

ATTEST:

Shannan L. Parrish, Town Clerk




M. Andy Moore, Mayor