

The Smithfield Town Council reconvened the May 7, 2024 regular meeting on Monday, May 13, 2024 at 6:30 pm in the Council Chambers of the Smithfield Town Hall, Councilman John Dunn presided until Mayor Moore arrived at 7:33 pm.

Councilmen Present:

Marlon Lee, District 1
Sloan Stevens, District 2
Travis Scott, District 3
Dr. David Barbour, District 4
John A. Dunn, At-Large
Steve Rabil, At-Large

Councilmen Absent

Roger Wood, Mayor Pro-Tem

Administrative Staff Present

Michael Scott, Town Manager
Ted Credle, Public Utilities Director
Jeremey Daughtry, Fire Chief
Lawrence Davis, Public Works Director
Andrew Harris, Assistant Finance Director
Pete Hedrick, Chief of Police
Gary Johnson, Parks & Rec Director
Tim Kerigan, Human Resources/PIO
Shannan Parrish, Town Clerk
Greg Siler, Finance Director
Stephen Wensman, Planning Director

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Town Manager informed the Council that Mayor Moore would arrive late and Mayor Pro-Tem Wood was absent. Therefore, the Council would need to elect one of its members to start the meeting until Mayor Moore arrived.

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Councilman Stevens, to elect Councilman Dunn to preside over the meeting until Mayor Moore's arrival. Unanimously approved.

Reconvene the May 7, 2024 Meeting

Councilman Dunn reconvened the meeting at 6:35 pm.

Business Item

1. FY 2024-2025 Budget Discussions Continued

a. General Fund

i. Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson highlighted items in the Parks and Recreation's proposed FY 24-25 budget. They are as follows:

- Part – Time Salaries – 29% increase due to increased the salary for part-time employees
- Supplies & Operations – 17% increase due to the increased cost for sports programs. Hang-up basketball goals and soccer goals need to be replaced.
- Capital Outlay - \$300,000 was included for the following:
 - Community Park Parking Lot Repairs \$25,000
 - Soccer Park Construction Plans \$210,000
 - Baseball Diamond Repairs \$40,000
 - Smith Collins Park Basketball Court Repairs \$25,000

Mr. Johnson provided the Council with a design and estimate for the 210 Soccer Park. He explained that the total cost of the project was estimated at over \$6 million. The first phase is estimated to cost a little over \$3 million.

Town Manager Michael Scott explained the parking lot repairs, baseball diamond repairs and the basketball court repairs were all being funded through Park in Lieu fees. The Soccer Park construction plans would be funded through the 2% Tourism funds the Town has been building

Councilman Scott questioned if the soccer fields could be used as anything other than soccer. Mr. Johnson responded that they could be used for soccer, rugby and football.

Councilman Stevens noted that two volleyball courts were shown of the plan. Mr. Johnson responded they could be volleyball courts or pickleball courts.

The Town Manager stated there have been some conversation about converting the tennis court at Smith Collins Park to pickleball courts. Mr. Johnson stated that he and Councilman Lee had a conversation about converting the tennis court to a basketball court and making the current basketball court a tennis or pickleball court.

Councilman Lee stated that after speaking with his constituents in East Smithfield, they wanted to know why there can't be tennis court, basket ball court and a pickleball court. The Town Manager responded that he and Mr. Johnson will investigate if its possible to get all three types of courts at Smith Collins Park.

Councilman Scott asked about crosswalks at Smith Collins Park between the Splash Pad and the Park. The Town Manager responded that there were four options to address the concerns about children crossing the street between the splash pad and the park. The Council could choose to do nothing, paint a crosswalk in the roadway, install speed humps or use a button activated light.

Councilman Stevens stated he thought the only way to slow down traffic was to install speed humps or additional stop signs.

Councilman Scott questioned if there was any resolution to the Disabled American Veteran's (DAV) request for \$45,000 to remodel their current location which is owned by the Town. The Town Manager responded he was still seeking direction as to what the Council wished to do about that situation.

It was suggested that the Town have a conversation with the county to ascertain if they would be willing to fund some of the repairs. Councilman Stevens suggested that the Manager contact Senator Sawrey to request funding from the state for the repairs to the DAV building.

Mr. Johnson informed the Council that the Town received a federal grant for repairs to the Hastings House. However, there is a \$30,000 shortfall for all the necessary repairs. The Council agreed to allocate an additional \$30,000 to the budget for the Hastings House repairs and to contact Senator Sawrey for assistance with funding for the DAV building.

Councilman Scott questioned the future of the Downtown Smithfield Development Corporation. Councilman Barbour responded that he felt the DSDC needed to be moved out of the Hastings House.

Councilman Scott asked if the \$40,000 in unused DSDC funds for special projects could be redirected for repairs to the Hastings House. The Town Manager explained that \$20,000 would be encumbered for next year's budget, while the remaining \$20,000 would revert to the fund balance.

Mayor Moore arrives at 7:33 pm and presides over the meeting.

Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson reminds the Council about the lease on Johnson Park. The current lease is a five-year lease with a one year opt out clause. The owners want a longer-term lease with a five-year opt out clause. The owners do not seem interested in selling the property to the Town.

Councilman Barbour stated he was not in favor of spending additional funds at Johnson Park because eventually the owners would sell the land and the Town would have to remove anything it constructed at the park.

ii. SRAC

Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson highlighted items in the SARC's proposed FY 24-25 budget. They are as follows:

- Capital Outlay: \$51,000 was included for the following
 - Replacement of sand Filters \$12,500 (Town's portion of 50% of the total cost)
 - Wubit Equipment Replacement \$13,500
 - Pool Bleacher Replacement \$25,000 (Town's portion of 50% of the total cost)

Councilman Scott questioned how the program with the East River subdivision was progressing. Mr. Johnson responded it was a good program that was working well.

Mayor Moore stated there may be some interest in a corporate sponsor for the amphitheater. Councilman Scott questioned if it was possible to hold paid concerts at that venue. Mr. Johnson responded a corporate sponsor would be a better route than ticket sales for concerts.

iii. Sarah Yard Community Center

Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson highlighted items in the Sarah Yard Community Center's proposed FY 24-25 budget. They are as follows:

- Capital Outlay: \$5,000 was included for converting the lights in the center to LED.

b. Fee Schedule

i. Water & Water/Sewer

Public Utilities Director Ted Credle explained that the system development fees were increasing based on the system development fees study. These fees are imposed on new construction only.

Sewer rate consumption charges – this was an increase due to Johnston County increasing their rates. These charges would be passed through to the consumer.

ii. Electric

Electric rates were planned to increase by 2% , but with the “true-up” from Duke Energy Progress, the increase will now be 6% for all consumers.

Councilman Scott requested that staff consider increasing residential rates by only 3% instead of the planned 6%. Mr. Credle stated he would have to contact UFS to determine the feasibility of Councilman Scott’s request.

iii. General Fund

Grave Opening Fees – increased due to increase in cost from Craft Digging Company

Fire Department Fees – added fees for commercial plan reviews.

Parks and Recreation Fees

Eliminated Multiple Child Discount

Athletic Field Rentals & Shelter Rentals – eliminated ½ and full day rentals, will become per hour rental

SRAC Fees

Eliminate deposits


Facility rentals will become per hour rentals.


Solid Waste Collection Fees

Increase in yard waste debris collection based on increased costs.

Recess

Councilman Dunn made a motion, seconded Councilman Barbour, to recess the meeting until Monday, May 20, 2024 at 6:30 pm in the Town Hall Council Chambers. The meeting recessed at approximately 9:33 pm


M. Andy Moore, Mayor

ATTEST:

Shannan L. Parrish, Town Clerk

