

*Town Hall*

*112 East South Main Street*

**July 03, 2018 6:30 pm**

**MONTHLY BOARD MEETING**

*Call meeting to order 6:30 p.m.*

*Pledge of Allegiance followed by Invocation*

*Motion to approve the Agenda*

*Consider approval of Minutes of meeting(s) held June 2018*

*Consider approval and payment of bills made in June 2018*

*Pocket Park Update – Mrs. Sylvia Alston*

*Citizen Concerns and Comments – Mr. Buddy Isles, Sr. - Greater Littleton Development Partnership*

*Mrs. Ophelia Gould Faison*

*Commissioner Reports on activities in June 2018*

*Citizens Comments on Commissioner Reports – comments/questions- limited to 2 minutes.*

*Mayor’s remarks*

*Motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3)(6) to consult with attorney and discuss personnel.*

*Adjourn*

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The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Littleton held the regular Monthly Board meeting on Tuesday, July 03, 2018 at 6:30 pm at the Littleton Town Hall. Present were Commissioners Gerleen Pitchford, Steve Barcelo, M. Bonita Knight, Clara Debnam, Donald Spragins and forty-seven (47) members of the public. Mayor K. Owen Scott presided over the meeting.

Mayor Scott called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and followed with the invocation by Mayor Scott.

Commissioner Knight made the motion; seconded by Commissioner Barcelo to approve the Agenda. The motion voted and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Debnam made the motion; seconded by Commissioner Pitchford to approve the minutes as presented. The motion voted and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Pitchford made the motion; seconded by Commissioner Debnam to approve the payment of bills made during the month of June 2018. The motion voted and carried unanimously.

Pocket Park Update – Project Manager Sylvia Alston reported to the Board that she had followed procedure for Request for Proposals for the installation of water and electric utilities and ADA compliant concrete walkways. Mrs. Alston reported the difficulty that she had with obtaining RFP’s for the pocket park project. She reported she had only received one bid from Pitchford Plumbing in the amount of \$5800.00 to install water line and water fountain. Commissioner Gerleen Pitchford recused herself from the discussion and decision.

Commissioner Spragins made the motion; seconded by Commissioner Knight to award the bid to Pitchford Plumbing in the amount of \$5,800.00. The motion voted and carried unanimously. Commissioner Alston then reported she had received only one proposal for the electric work to be completed at the pocket park.

Commissioner Pitchford made the motion; seconded by Commissioner Debnam to award the bid to Andrews Electric in the amount of \$1900.00. The motion voted and carried unanimously. Mrs. Alston then presented four bids for the concrete walkways and ADA parking space: RMR (\$20,733.00), KPH Paving (\$10,000.00), Harris Masonry (\$11,070.00) and Doug Putney Concrete (\$6,217.00). Commissioner Barcelo made the motion; seconded by Commissioner Knight to award the bid to Doug Putney Concrete in the amount of \$6,217.00. The motion voted and carried unanimously.

**Mr. Buddy Isles, Sr. (GLDP)** gave an update to the Board on the parking lot upgrades. Mr. Isles reported a handicap ramp needed to be included in the plans of the stage. This would increase the size of the stage to 30' and delay the project by one week. When the stage is complete the parking lot can be asphalted. Duke Progress plans to relocate one additional light pole. When this is complete the flower bed can be moved. The Person's Ordinary replica has been moved and will be placed on a new permanent concrete pad across from the new park. The small three crepe myrtle trees will be removed and replaced in the new flower bed.

Mrs. Ophelia Gould-Faison – Read a letter of appreciation to the Town Board and Volunteers and presented a Thank You picture for their support. A copy of the letter is hereby incorporated into the minutes.

#### **Commissioner Reports:**

**Street Report** – Commissioner Barcelo reported the heat is a concern but the crew had been busy in preparation for the annual patriot parade. They had applied some cold patch for the larger pot holes and were now able to make small repairs on sidewalks.

**Cemetery Report** – Commissioner Knight reported the cemetery had been mowed last week. Commissioner Knight echoed earlier comments of lack of bids for work in Littleton. She reported the Board had agreed to extend the mowing contract an additional three years with Olde South Property Services at the work session in June 2018.

**Water/Sewer Report** – Commissioner Debnam read the water sewer report May 15 – June 15. A copy is hereby incorporated into the minutes. No sewer spills or overflows reported.

**Police Report** – Commissioner Pitchford read the Police Report for the month of June 2018, Littleton Township. A copy of the Police Report is hereby incorporated into the minutes. Commissioner Pitchford reported the police station project has been awarded a USDA grant in the amount of 100,000.00 grant and \$166,000.00 loan. The total amount of the project is \$316,000.00 with the town investing the \$50,000.00 from Fund 10 Balance reserves.

**Finance Report** – Final Year End Finance report was not available for the meeting.

#### **Citizens Comments on Commissioner Reports –**

Mrs. Sylvia Alston inquired on the amount of the contract for each mowing on the cemetery. The Clerk replied the amount Olde South Property Services charged per cut remains the same (\$625.00) for the first two years of the contract increasing \$40.00 per cut the third year of the contract.

Mrs. Sylvia Alston inquired on the amount of the loan and total amount of the police station renovation. The Clerk explained the total project is \$316,000.00 – 50,000.00 applicant contribution from Fund 10 Balance reserves, 166,000.00 from USDA loan and \$100,000.00 grant. Mrs. Alston then inquired if the loan had already been secured. The Clerk responded the USDA package offered a grant of \$100,000.00 with a loan up to \$166,000.00. The final loan documents have not been secured.

Mrs. Sylvia Alston requested the Board of Commissioners consider having the agenda packet available to the Board and public in a timelier manner for review and public input. The Mayor responded this matter could be discussed at a work session.

Ms. Diana Bobbitt inquired with Commissioner Knight if anyone had removed flowers at the cemetery? Commissioner Knight replied that seasonal flowers are removed in February. Ms. Bobbitt reported she is concerned that flowers she has placed at the cemetery are missing or have been removed.

Mayor Scott then made the floor available to the public for questions and comments regarding the water sewer rate increase.

Mrs. Robert Faulcon read a letter from her husband, Pastor Robert L. Faulcon, South Street Missionary Baptist Church, 102 Stokes Street, P.O. Box 220, Littleton, NC 27850. Pastor Faulcon was not able to attend the public meeting due to a prior engagement. The letter addressed two concerns (prior notice and senior citizen population) regarding the increase in water sewer rates. A copy of the letter is hereby incorporated into the minutes.

Mrs. Ophelia Gould -Fasion (237 Ferguson Street, Littleton), concerned with the July CCR water and sewer report and schedule of fees increases. She commented the increase was significant up to 50% in rates. She inquired if the Board took into consideration the hardship this increase will create? She then asked how the Board can be more transparent in sharing information regarding meetings for residents and citizens that do not use Facebook or the internet.

The Mayor responded to the concerns on why and how the Board came to the rate. He explained the water and sewer department expenses had exceeded revenues for the past three years. The Mayor replied that the Board cut expenses of \$85,000.00 from the operating budget and struggled with the amount of the increase in revenue to balance the 2018-2019 budget.

Ms. Diana Bobbitt, North Main Street, Littleton, responded as former mayor that this is too much of an increase for low income and the senior citizen demographic.

Mayor Scott introduced Mr. Randy Welch, SERCAP (Southeast Rural Community Assistance Programs). Mr. Welch explained he had conducted a "rate study" at the request of the Board. A rate study considers all operating costs, debt and depreciation to project a rate to cover all anticipated expenses. The rate study demonstrated that current Littleton rates were not high enough to cover all cost associated with operating the water and sewer system. Mr. Welch had worked closely with Board members during budget meetings to assist in the education and how to best move forward with corrective action.

Ms. Yvonne Hockaday stated the public was not adequately informed about the water rate increase. She requested the Board consider readdressing the rate increase.

Rev. McCullum, pastor Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church added the increase disproportionately affects and places extra burden on residents in Littleton. He suggested the Board reconsider and hold another public hearing without anger and animosity. Incremental increase would have been a better fit.

Mrs. Ophelia Gould Fasion added the Board should consider the per capita system of tax distribution over the ad valorem tax basis. The Board should consider switching to per capita and should contact County Commissioners. Mrs. Gould-Fasion suggested this would increase annual revenue for the general (10) operating fund \$30,000.00.

Mr. Jim Hogan, 301 Mosby Avenue commented that the rate increase is obscene and the Board was wrong to increase the rate to as much as 51% in one hike.

Ms. Gwendolyn Newell (South Square Drive) does not normally use the minimum of 2000 gallons per month. She stated she lives in Halifax County but is on the Littleton water system. She inquired what the Board is offering out of town customers.

Several members of the public asked the Board to reconsider the rate increase and have additional public hearings for citizen input.

Former Mayor Ron Girdley mentioned he attends the open public meetings and knew about the rate increase.

Several attendees inquired about the quality of the water? Water Sewer Superintendent Keith Hamm responded that the water quality exceeds state minimums.

Ms. Kim Gray – challenged the community to come to the meetings and stay informed.

**Mayor's Remarks** – Responded the Board is always looking for ways to balance the \$393,000.00 water sewer budget and that all input is appreciated.

With no further business Commissioner Pitchford made the motion; seconded by Commissioner Spragins to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm. The motion voted and carried unanimously.

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Clerk