

**TOWN OF SEAGROVE
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
November 6, 2012**

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m. by Mayor Hale. Commissioners in attendance were: Edmonds, Hewitt, and Luther.

A. Approval of Minutes and Treasurer's Report

Items approved by motion were:

1. Minutes for October 2 were presented for review. Commissioner Edmonds stated that the minutes reflected an error in the last name of the Town Attorney on page 7. Motion to accept with correction for page 7 made by Commissioner Edmonds with second by Commissioner Hewitt. Motion carried unanimously. Minutes will be posted on the Town website within a few days.
2. Treasurer's Report for October was presented for review. Mayor Hale and Commissioner Hewitt had questions on two line items of expense for Police Department which were answered by Chief Maness. Motion to approve Treasurer's Report made by Commissioner Luther with second by Commissioner Hewitt. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Police Report:

Police Chief Maness gave the Police report. He detailed the number of miles driven (890), hours worked during October were 144 with one special assignment. Training hours were 40 with 4 hours in court. There were 13 field interviews and 9 warrants were served with one criminal citation during the month. Three traffic citations were given with 5 written warnings and 28 verbal warnings. There were 10 motorist assists and 5 officer assists. One domestic call was made. There were also one escort call, one animal call, and one juvenile case investigated. There were 4 miscellaneous calls and one incident report with 21 miscellaneous reports. Less than one oz. of marijuana was seized along with two prescription drug pills. There were 32 business checks for the month. Chief Maness then announced the new reserve officer, Jeremiah Bachelor who has already worked 4 times during the month. The Chief explained that the car he drives is down with an estimated cost of \$1,800 - \$3,000 for repairs. The car has 115K miles which is a lot of miles for a police vehicle. Chief Maness asked approval of Council to shop around for new and used cars to find an acceptable replacement vehicle. He recommended staying away from a used vehicle with over 80K miles because it is likely to develop problems quickly. He also asked about the possibility of financing the vehicle over 4-5 years.

Mayor Hale asked about the value of the current car and it was decided that it was probably not worth \$1,500. Therefore, justification for a \$3,000 repair on the vehicle was not worth it. Commissioner Edmonds made a motion that Chief Maness look into used cars but to also check on new cars and related financing. He stated that the only vehicles that the police department ever gets are used cars that other departments have already used significantly. Further complicating the used car market is the economy with other police departments keeping their vehicles longer, which increases wear and tear. Chief Maness said that the Seagrove Police Dept. does not put many miles on a car and a new car would last for many years. Commissioner Hewitt requested that an accurate estimate be obtained on the repair of the current car while researching the new and used market for a replacement. The motion was amended to include the detailed estimate and for Chief Maness to review new and used cars with applicable financing options. Commissioner Hewitt seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

C. Committee Reports:

Commissioner Edmonds reported on the paving of Hoyt Street and his efforts to solicit bids for the repair. After numerous calls to paving contractors, he only received one bid in the amount of \$650.00 and the work would be guaranteed by the contractor. The work needs to be scheduled for a day when temperatures will reach 60 degrees or higher. Work will include filling in a hole 15" deep with paving over top. Along the curb, the paving contractor did not have the equipment to cut the grass back and this will need to be handled by others. The recommendation is to spray the side of the road with white vinegar in order to kill the grass with no environmental impact to the surrounding area. The contractor thinks that the side of the road is in better shape than it appears and this will be revealed when the grass is gone. The spraying would need to be handled by others as well. Commissioner Luther mentioned that the contractor that is currently handling the road-side trimming could possibly handle this part of the work. Commissioner Edmonds will pursue a contractor bid to remove the grass from the road and present it to Council at the December meeting. Commissioner Edmonds then made a motion to accept the bid for the road repair which was seconded by Commissioner Luther. Motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Edmonds then brought up the current mowing need on the road shoulders. He stated that the town grass is mowed every time the state road shoulders are mown but that he does not think that the city streets need to be mown again this year. He would prefer that the contractor utilize the bush-hog with extension arm which could be used to cut back the foliage along the streets which is growing in fast. Commissioner Edmonds made a motion that he obtain a price from the contractor to handle this work in place of mowing along the road shoulders. Commissioner Hewitt asked if the contractor was responsible to trim around the street signs and stop signs around town. Mayor Hale asked Commissioner Edmonds to get this included in the bid package from the contractor. The motion was amended to include this detail work and was seconded by Commissioner Luther. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Luther reported that the committee for the Centennial Celebration had conducted two meetings. There have been suggestions made at this time about things to do and banners to place around town. The location of the events has been discussed. Many ideas have been brought forward but no final decisions have been made at this point. One of the major items is

determining the exact date that the town was incorporated and schedule events from that date. The next meeting will be Tuesday, Nov. 13 at 7:00 p.m. at Seagrove UMC. Commissioner Luther mentioned that everyone is welcome to attend and make suggestions. She then said that the three residents requesting replacement trash receptacles have been accommodated. Mayor Hale said that he would have Clerk Knowles placed on the authorized list with Republic Services to make requests for changes in their coverage.

Commissioner Luther then requested that the time of the Town Council meeting be moved from 7:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. as they were in the past. Commissioner Hewitt agreed with this request. Mayor Hale said that the meetings were initially moved to 7:00 in order to accommodate the heavy agenda schedule but that since the agendas have been lighter in recent months, a change back to 7:30 would be acceptable. Commissioner Hewitt made motion to move the meeting to 7:30 p.m. with second by Commissioner Edmonds. Motion passed unanimously. The December meeting will be the first meeting to be held at the new time of 7:30 p.m.

Commissioner Hewitt stated that the Christmas Tree Lighting will start at 5:00. Also, a food box will be available for non-perishable items that night because the food bank is reduced to 1-2 hours per week due to the lack of food. There are many families around the community who need the assistance. This is not a mandatory issue for admittance to the Christmas Tree Lighting event. She would like to keep the food box available all the time for donations but a satisfactory and visible location has not been determined.

Commissioner Hewitt then deferred to Planning & Zoning Chair Emily Coltrane for comments. Ms. Coltrane stated that she has numerous items in the works but is not ready for presentation tonight. She plans to have a presentation ready for Council at the December meeting. Mayor Hale said that if there are planning & zoning issues brought forward, then a public hearing will be required and sufficient time will need to be allowed.

Clerk Knowles discussed the Hold Harmless arrangement approved by the State Legislature in 2002 which provides proceeds to smaller communities to make up for the change in the state inventory tax collections. He stated that, due to lower sales tax receipts in the state, the Legislature is considering a reduction or elimination of the Hold Harmless payments to the municipalities. This has drawn the attention of local governments statewide and a resolution has been developed for approval by the towns and submission to the local elected officials to retain the Hold Harmless payments during the 2013 session of the General Assembly. Mayor Hale added that this is being sponsored by the NC League of Municipalities, of which Seagrove is a member. Motion to be a part of the resolution was made by Commissioner Edmonds with second by Commissioner Luther. Motion passed unanimously.

Clerk Knowles then brought up the online connection between his office computer and the Town Clerk's computer. There have been disruptions in the service which affects his ability to conduct work from home during the week as well as the signal sent to the police computers within their vehicles. Century Link was contacted and their research revealed a potential problem with the town's wireless router. Cost to replace the router, if needed, will range between \$80 and \$300 depending on the quality of the router purchased. Mayor Hale said that the current router is a less expensive one that is approximately 6 months old. Greta Lint suggested a contractor to

come in to evaluate the current system and make recommendations. Mayor Hale recommended that the contractor come in to provide suggestions as to a satisfactory solution to the problem. Commissioner Edmonds made a motion to accept the recommendation which was seconded by Commissioner Hewitt. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Hale then announced that the current budget did not allow proceeds for installation of Christmas lights. However, he had spoken with Ken and Kevin Hill, who have agreed to handle installation of the lights on 23 light poles around town with their manpower and equipment as well as to handle increased utility costs associated with the lights up to \$500. Ed Blake will check and repair the lights on the wreaths so that all will be in good working order. Commissioner Hewitt made a motion to accept the Hill's offer and to have Clerk Knowles prepare a letter of thanks to the Hills for their generosity. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Edmonds and passed unanimously.

A second item of old business presented by Mayor Hale was regarding the Seagrove Pottery Festival to be held the weekend prior to Thanksgiving. He was presented a check for vendor's fees resulting from the festival from the Museum of Traditional Potters.

Mayor Hale then mentioned the need for the community to alert him about streetlights in town that are out. The last time he conducted a check he found 22 lights out. Assistance from the community would be helpful in alerting him, the Clerk or Council about lights that are out. Please include the pole number so that repair efforts can be more efficiently targeted by the power company. Commissioner Edmonds asked about the cost of replacing damaged lights with LED lights which provide better lighting with less energy use. Mayor Hale will check with Progress Energy about this.

D. New Business/Discussion:

Mayor Hale introduced Bryan Heilig from the Community Development Planning Department to discuss the program. Mr. Heilig is with the County Building Inspections Department and handles the Community Development Block Grant Program for the county as well. He explained the overall Community Development Block Grant Program which is for housing, infrastructure and small business. The county is involved with the Scattered Site Housing Grant and provides assistance for low income, elderly, or handicapped applicants to make improvements to their home. Seagrove has elected to participate in the program and help spread information about the program within the community. Applicants are directed to Mr. Heilig and his department handles the application process. Mr. Heilig said that the county is currently accepting applications for this year. He provided application forms and eligibility requirements to be made available to local citizens who wish to apply. Applications will be cut off in December. Applications are reviewed and those meeting the requirements are forwarded to a site selection committee for final approval.

Mayor Hale introduced Mr. W.E. Hunt to discuss his request for sub-division of his commercial property known currently as the Seagrove Video Express. Mr. Hunt discussed the history of the property and former uses of the facilities. He is looking to house two separate businesses within

the building with separate electrical meters. The county inspections department is requiring approval by the town in order to have the second meter installed. After consultation with Planning & Zoning Chair Coltrane, the request was deemed within existing ordinances and thus approved. Commissioner Hewitt made a motion for Clerk Knowles to provide a letter to the county inspections department conveying approval for the separation of the spaces and electrical meters. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Edmonds with unanimous approval.

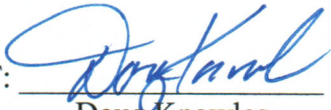
Mayor Hale then reintroduced his proposal for a town Beautification Program. He outlined his proposal to generate competition among businesses and residences for recognition on the town website. There would be alternating business and residence of the month selected. A committee headed by Commissioner Edmonds will make the selections each month. Pictures of the winning sites will be posted on the website which will include information only provided by the property owners. After discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Luther to have Commissioner Edmonds form a committee and try the Beautification Program beginning in 2013. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hewitt. Motion passed unanimously.

E. Public Discussion:


Emily Coltrane inquired as to the status of the contract with the Seagrove Volunteer Fire Department. The contract has not yet been executed. She suggested that a portion of the budgeted proceeds distributed to the Fire Department be redirected to the Police Department for the purpose of hiring a full-time officer. She presented a report on the calls made by the Fire Department inside and outside the town limits thru 9/30/12. She reviewed the information included within the report for Council which reflects that 89% of the calls are made outside the town limits. As a taxpayer, she feels that Council should consider reducing the amount of distribution to the Fire Department with redirection of the proceeds toward the Police budget. Mayor Hale stated that the budget for the current fiscal year 2012-13 had already been set but Council will have to take this into consideration for the next fiscal year while monitoring the situation. Commissioner Hewitt thanked Ms. Coltrane for taking the time to prepare the report for Council. Commissioner Edmonds asked what percentage of the town budget was distributed to the Fire Department. Mayor Hale answered that 25% of the ad valorem and vehicle tax collected by the county is allocated to the Fire Department. Commissioner Edmonds stated that this needs to be reviewed further to ensure that town residents are not being required to subsidize fire protection of county residents. Commissioner Hewitt stated that the contract update process has been going on for months and needs to be completed. Commissioner Luther asked about the effect that fire protection has on insurance rates. Mayor Hale stated that one thing that helps to lower rates within the town is the availability of fire hydrants. Commissioner Edmonds said that the available firefighting equipment in town affects rates also. Ms. Coltrane inquired about the budget of the Fire Department and what expenses the department has. No budget or report has been presented to Council and Commissioner Latham is working toward this objective.

There being no other business to address, motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Luther and seconded by Commissioner Hewitt. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

ATTEST:


Doug Knowles
Town Clerk

TOWN OF SEAGROVE


Allen Hale, Mayor