July 14, 2015

7:00 p.m.

The Town of Pink Hill held its monthly board meeting on Tuesday, July 14, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the town hall board room. Present for the meeting were Mayor Carol Sykes, Commissioners Mike Hill, Donald King and Debra Grady, Town Attorney George Jenkins, Public Works Director Timmy Kennedy, Police Chief Joey Thigpen, and Town Clerk Kimberly Mitchell.

Visitor present for the meeting was Bill Turner.

Mayor Sykes called the meeting to order. Mayor Sykes welcomed everyone to the meeting. Commissioner King then led everyone in the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Hill made a motion to approve the agenda and amendments if needed. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Commissioner Hill made a motion to approve the consent agenda which included the minutes of the Neuse River Hazard Mitigation Plan Public Hearing, FY 15-16 Budget Public Hearing and the June monthly board meeting that were held on June 16, 2015. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The first item on the agenda was Discussion of Tar Heel Drive. George stated that he has talked with Charles Watson and he said he had signed it back in the 1990’s. George said he does not know why it is not on the books. Mr. Watson told George that he would sign another one if someone would get it to him because he is out of town at Topsail Beach. George said he has to go to Onslow County next week and he will just go over to Topsail from there to get Mr. Watson to sign it.

The next item on the agenda was Fire Department Report. Timmy said since the last meeting they have gotten all of their equipment installed and it is in working order. He said between he and Kim and a couple of more they have got the paperwork sent off to hopefully get half of their money back. Timmy stated they have had 8 EMS calls, 1 structure fire, and 1 automatic alarm since the last meeting. He said everything else seems to be going well.

The Water/Sewer Report was next on the agenda. Timmy said they have had trouble with their GRIT chamber at the old plant and when he finally got it cleaned out the GRIT pump had to be sent off. They kept it about two weeks and Timmy said they have just got it back in the ground. The man said after he redone it that it may last just a little while or it may last a year but he told Timmy that he would not never do another rewind on that one. Timmy stated he would love to go ahead and buy one. He said the price he got for one was $5,800 and he wanted to let the board know. Timmy said he would hate for the pump to go out and it take a month or so to get a new one.

Timmy stated that he spoke with Mayor Sykes about Dean Rouse. Mr. Rouse would like a right of way and his property is too wet to try to put a road in. Timmy said it would be out of the spray field and out of the fenced in area. Mr. Rouse wanted to know if it was even feasible to gain a right of way to his property across the drier part. Commissioner Hill suggested that Timmy call the state to check with them. Timmy said Commissioner Hill was probably right about contacting the state before letting the procedure go too far. Commissioner Hill said as long as they stay out of the spray field then it should be okay. Timmy said the buffer zone should be inside the fenced in area. Timmy said Mr. Rouse was going to build a road to access his property. George said that Mr. Rouse would need to pay for a survey putting it on the ground. Timmy asked if grant money brought that property. Commissioner Hill stated yes. Timmy asked if that would bind us in anyway. Mayor Sykes stated it could and that is why he needs to ask the state. Mayor Sykes told Timmy to contact Dan Boone at the Wooten Company and if he didn’t know he could direct Timmy to who he needs to call. Timmy said that he would check with the state and bring back to the board the information.

Mayor Sykes asked Timmy to look at some of the street signs that have been hit by trucks making turns and see about getting them repaired. Timmy said there is about $500 budgeted for street signs. Commissioner Hill thanked Timmy and his boys for their hard work.

The next item on the agenda was Discussion of H.J. Building. George passed out a paper for everyone to have. He stated legislature passed a law that says they set out conditions for demolishing nonresidential buildings. He said the information that he gave the board last time was about residential buildings and we have done a number of those in another community that he is aware of. George said for nonresidential buildings the law is pretty steep. The first thing is that we can do what we need to do. Mayor Sykes asked George how long this law has been in place. George stated this law was amended in 2008. He said the first thing we have got to do is appoint a public official who can inspect. The inspection does not have to be like a building inspection. The public official just has to look and see that the minimum standards for the Town of Pink Hill are not met in a nonresidential building. He then would file a complaint and serve it on the owner of the property and the complaint requires that there be a hearing. The hearing is before the same public official. It doesn’t say who the public official has to be so it can be anyone like Timmy or Joey but not an elected officer. Mayor Sykes asked George if they could use the building inspector who has already condemned the building. George stated yes if he will do it instead of appointing someone. He said the public official has to hear the matter not less than 10 days after the papers are served on the owner and not more than 30 days after, so he has a 20 day span in there. He makes a determination if the cost of repairing the building is going to be 50 percent of the value of the building or more. If the cost of repair is more than 50 percent, he has the right to order that the building be removed or demolished. Then the owner is told to fix it up and if he doesn’t within 30 days the town goes in and fixes it on the town’s dime and puts a lien against the property for the actual cost involved. The lien is then collected as past due property taxes though the town has the right to also collect against any property that the person owns within the town’s city limits except his principle residence. If the building is demolished by the town, the public official has to offer for sale any recoverable materials from the property and any personal property or fixtures or pertinences that were in or on the building and then has to credit the proceeds of those sales to the cost of the demolition. George said we also have to have an ordinance that says the minimum standards in Pink Hill are the same standards that the county enforces. Kim said she has had another complaint about the building on Friday because the boards have come down around the actual windows on the front and when it was windy the other day the glass was moving. The complaint was what if the glass falls out with kids walking by there and someone gets cut or hurt. George said that the statute says one of the things that the public official should consider is whether the building is in a condition that it is a danger to children. George asked the board if the owner was going to complain about the building being torn down under the circumstances that you have talked about. Mayor Sykes said he should not have a problem with it. George said that Vance Wade needs to agree to do it and he will draw up the complaint for him. Commissioner Hill asked could we use the ordinance that the county has. George said if the property owner appealed the demolition and the charges and if he has waived that, then let’s just go under the county’s ordinance. Mayor Sykes said she would call Vance Wade tomorrow and then call George so that he can get the paperwork ready. George said we do not need to do the waiver until the property owner has been served with the papers. Commissioner Hill made a motion to appoint Vance Wade to be the public officer. Commissioner Grady seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Kim asked if Vance Wade does not want to do this then what would we need to do. George stated that we would have to appoint another public officer.

The next item on the agenda was the WASA Report. Commissioner Hill said that WASA is trying to buy 100 acres of land adjacent to their property because they have the land apply sludge out of the lagoons and the farmer that they have been working with has not cooperated for the last 2 years. He said they are trying to buy that property so they can land apply the sludge any time that they want to and get a farmer that will plant the crops that they need out there.

The next item on the agenda was Police Updates. Chief Thigpen said his report is from April 15, 2015 to present. He stated they have had a total of 13 incidents with 16 offenses reported, 4 arrests with 5 charges, 3 accidents, issued 22 citations with a total of 26 charges, and they served 1 criminal process. He said they did have some incidences that were not reported. They had some gunshot reports three days in a row. They had some feuding with some of the guys on Pineview Avenue and some from Duplin County. He said the first one came in on a Sunday evening and Officer Hoffman took it but nobody would cooperate with them or give them any information. Then it extended in Duplin County off Kitty Noecker Road and Officer Hoffman went to assist them where a fight had happened. A guy was beat up and had to be put in the hospital in Greenville but he would not tell the police anything. Chief Thigpen said they couldn’t do a report because nobody would cooperate. He said when he worked that Monday night about 10 o’clock they had somebody go into the Short Stop and report shots fired up here at Hunter Street. Chief Thigpen said on Tuesday morning Officer Ronnie Ferris was working and there were shots fired again at the Short Stop during the daytime. The lady in the Short Stop said at that time that she did not hear the gunshots but later on admitted that she did but did not call. Officer Ferris pulled the tape to see who was in the Short Stop at that time and found out it was one of the boys from Duplin County so that is how they went and made contact with him and got an interview from him. He did not give them much detail though. Mayor Sykes asked if it was gang related. Chief Thigpen said no, what they had determined was that it was over a fight. He said he wanted to let the board know what had happened. Chief Thigpen said other than that the other incidents were minor. He said since then they have not had anything.

Chief Thigpen said they have had to take the Dodge Charger back to the Dodge place again and it has been there two weeks. This is the fifth time taking it. Commissioner Grady asked when does the warranty run out on the car. Chief Thigpen said it is supposed to be 12,000 miles. He said he does not want them to just patch it up and then when they hit 13,000 miles the motor go out in it. Mayor Sykes said that she would call the owner of the dealership and see what she could find out.

Chief Thigpen brought up about the golf cart ordinance. He said in his opinion he thinks due to what has happened at the Rose Festival and the parade coming up, he thinks the town needs to do a clause for these events. Because people are using them for these events and unless the town wants to stick to it and wants to make these people pay their fee for one day and insurance he foresees it being a problem. Kim said he is talking about the fire department members having to get a tag and put insurance on their golf carts for that one day. Commissioner Grady said since they are a part of us why do they have to have one and can they be exempt. Chief Thigpen said if they are involved in the event but not to just ride up and down the road. He said they need something in the ordinance to designate that those golf carts are used as an event cart. Chief Thigpen said they could let us know how many carts they are going to have at these events and we could put a certain sticker on them. George said to let him check on this and report at next board meeting.

Chief Thigpen informed the board that Ronnie Ferris has made detective with the county so he has kind of quit working for the town. He has not turned his stuff in but says he is not going to work as much. Mayor Sykes asked if he had anybody else in mind yet. Chief Thigpen said he had thought of John Weaver. He can work but he just got out of training with Kinston and he is on his own and they require him to work 6 months probationary before he can work a secondary employment. Chief Thigpen said he is going to try to hold off and just let him and Officer Hoffman handle it until John Weaver can possibly come to work part-time.

The next item on the agenda was Budget Amendments if needed. Kim said there were transfers but no budget amendments at this time.

Remarks by Town Attorney was next on the agenda. George stated that he was just happy to be in Pink Hill.

The next item on the agenda was Comments by the Board. There were no comments by the board at this time.

The next item on the agenda was Public Comments. There were no public comments at this time

The next item on the agenda was Closed Session. There was no need for a closed session at this time.

With there being no further business to be discussed the meeting was adjourned.