

Town of Pink Hill
7:00 PM

The Town of Pink Hill Board meeting was held on April 12, 2022 in the town hall board room. Present for this meeting were Mayor Mike Hill, Commissioner Penny Murphy, Commissioner James Quinn, Commissioner Pete Fantini, Town Attorney George Jenkins, Town Clerk Crystal Heath, Police Chief Michael Hoffman, Fire Department Chief Tony Heath, Public Works Supervisor Timmy Kennedy, and Public Works Assistant Phillip Swinson.

Mayor Mike Hill said I would like to call this meeting to order and I welcome everyone to the April 12, 2022 meeting. I would like to ask everyone to please turn your cell phones off. Mayor Hill asked everyone to join in the pledge of allegiance. Everyone stood and said the pledge of allegiance. Town clerk, Mrs. Heath, called out each name for roll call, present were Mayor Hill, Commissioner Penny Murphy, Commissioner James Quinn, Commissioner Pete Fantini, and attorney George Jenkins.

Visitors present for the meeting were Dr. Jennifer Murphy, Mrs. Cierra Dunham, Josh Dunham, Rodney Scott with East Carolina Broadband, Mrs. Carolyn Whitfield, Paige Marshburn, Brandon Marshburn, J.W Stallings, Maranda Heath, Debbie Heath, Rhiley Marshburn, Daniel Hines, and Julie Herring.

Mayor Hill asked for a motion to approve the minutes for the March 2022 meeting. Commissioner Fantini made a motion to approve the March minutes. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Mayor Hill said any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously. Mayor Hill asked for the approval of the agenda and two amendments to the agenda 8A and 11A. Commissioner Fantini made a motion to approve the agenda and the two amendments 8A and 11A. Commissioner Quinn seconded the motion. Mayor Hill said any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously.

The first item on the agenda was a vote on mixed beverages. Commissioner Fantini said I make a motion to put the liquor by the drink on the ballot for November 8th. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Mayor Hill said any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was presented by Timmy Kennedy regarding the regulations for the grant. The town is applying for two grants with Stroud Engineering. One is the Wastewater Grant and the other one is Storm water Grant. Mr. Kennedy stated that the state has been allotted 350 million to distressed utilities which the Town of Pink Hill is a distressed utility. That amount of money will be split in between fall and spring cycle. The town is applying to install a poxy liner in the existing terry cotter sewer lines so that there is no inflow infiltration. A resolution is needed so that Mr. David Tuten can apply for the grant for the Town of Pink Hill. Commissioner Murphy said I make a motion to approve the resolution for us to continue with this grant. Commissioner Quinn seconded the motion. Mayor Hill said any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously.

Cub Scouts was up to speak next regarding the Soapbox Derby, but no one came forward to speak. No specific date was given. Commissioner Fantini made a motion to approve the Cub Scouts Soapbox Derby when they come in and tell the date. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Mayor Hill said any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Jennifer Murphy came forward to speak about requesting to close off Walnut, Pine, and Macon Street for the small children for the Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday. Commissioner Murphy made a motion close the streets for the Easter Egg Hunt. Commissioner Quinn seconded the motion. Mayor Hill said any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Cierra Dunham came to discuss the growth of Pink Hill. She first thanked the board members, Mayor, and its employees. Mrs. Dunham is the owner of H&H Farm Supply, Rinse and Repeat, and E & E Mini Storage. She came in to address some concerns that her and several people have. Mrs. Dunham said that as you know we do not have a Chamber of Commerce several years ago we tried and failed creating the Pink Hill Business Alliance. Even though that fell apart we did a few great things, new town welcome flag installed throughout the two, Christmas on the Hill event, and also had a fundraiser to order for the light poles. She states everyone should have enough respect for each other to better the town. Mrs. Dunham said she wants people to feel welcome when they come into their store and when they come into town. She hopes the town is enticing enough that people want to come back to town. Mrs. Dunham said whatever happened to the big pots of flowers that were lined on our streets, at the corner of some of our streets, if I'm not mistaken those were planted by the Pink Hill Garden Club. There was a conflict about how, when, and who should be watering them. Are we that petty that we are going to let them go? Now there are big empty pots lined in the streets and it looks awful. She understands that the past meetings the board has addressed the piles of dirt, but asks what about the houses that are falling down or has trash in the front yard that is hazardous. She said that the town owns a building, the old police department, that has broken windows, missing door, and the door is partially covered with a piece of plywood. It probably is not the best first impression when people come to town from Beulaville. She suggests on that corner to put a “Welcome to Pink Hill” sign. She took the time and asked Richlands about their welcome sign that took about a year, but they told her they got them for free through a grant from DOT. She states she turned that information over to former Mayor Mrs. Carol Sykes, but nothing was done with it. Cleaning up the town she states she checked out Trenton and Pollocksvilles’ website and they have a leaf and limb pick up the second Saturday of each month for the town residents. The town comes by and picks up bagged leaves and branches less than 36 inches it is not a bad idea for people to clean up their yard. She addressed the need for the town staying up to date with technology. She said she is not sure who oversees the website or social media. She highly suggests someone be appointed to it. Town of Pink Hill’s Facebook page has not posted since 2018 which in her opinion is a great resource that is not being used. The town website has not updated its local businesses page that is on the website. She thinks there should be some sort of guidance on how often it is updated. She said on the website it would be nice to have more history about the town everything up there has not been updated in a really long time. The town meeting schedule still shows all the meetings for 2021 no one knows the schedule for 2022. She addresses the closing of First Citizens Bank in Pink Hill. She said that several other residents have reached out to First

Citizens hoping they would keep a couple tellers so that businesses can deposit money and employees can cash their checks. She asks who is going to escort the businesses to Beulaville or Kinston, feels it is not safe. She said I do not know if the town has reached out to the bank, but they should have any incentive to give them. She wishes when IGA closed down there would be some sort of incentive, if it weren't done, like waive property taxes, waived water bills for an amount, because now there is only one grocery store. She understands there is no Chamber of Commerce, but is there anything we can do to recognize new businesses to welcome them to the town, or on social media to recognize businesses anniversaries. The next thing she addressed the needs of the community surrounding Pink Hill. She said she has no access to high speed internet and no timeline as to when it will come. It is frustrating for her and as a family who has school aged children. She has reached out to Spectrum and Eastern Carolina Broadband. Spectrum has no options for us and our community at this time, Eastern Carolina Broadband has a few options we can do. The easiest and best option to service is by accessing the Pink Hill water towers. She states she has read the town board meetings lately and is embarrassed that it is obvious Pink Hill chooses not to support the people here in town. January 2017 through June 2017 Eastern Carolina Broadband (ECB) founded by Rodney Scott, Susan Myers, and Al Rachide petitioned to rent the water towers, several offers and options were presented several times. The mayor at the time, Mrs. Carol Sykes, was open for it in the first two months. I am not sure what happened after that, but during the March 2017 meeting the Mayor was determined it needed to be \$10,000 to rent the towers. The back and forth continued with no resolution in sight. After reading through all the minutes I have several issues she said. Commissioner Quinn you recused yourself from the discussion only four out of the six time during the 2017 meetings, however you still participated in discussion during those meetings. Commissioner Murphy, I know you personally have an issue with Susan and Al and possibly Rodney it is clear in the minutes you are against this from the beginning. You had zero questions or comments in the January or February meeting, in the March meeting you only asked if you were not making a commitment tonight, but you did second a motion to have a trial hearing as long as there was no commitment. In the April meeting no questions or concerns, in the May meeting the only questions you had was opting out of contract and stating Duplin County isn't comparable to Pink Hill. In June meeting you finally had some questions about the number of possible employees and customers, but never seconded the motion. Mrs. Dunham asks if she had already made up her mind before it started and how could she have so few questions, or already knew she was going to let the contract go. Mrs. Dunham goes and addresses the town attorney, George Jenkins, and is unsure if he didn't review the contract, didn't show it to the board, or gave it to the board a month later and believes it is still happening in 2022. She thinks it will take less than a month for a review of the contract and finds it unacceptable. She says Mayor Hill is the only one acting in good faith as Commissioner and Mayor. She goes on to address the October 2021 meeting regarding the Distribution American Recovery Act money. She said Mayor Hill stated he was supposed to give \$5,000 to broadband to help them. There was a discussion whether or not if it was fiber optic not. Mayor Hill was proposing to give broadband the money towards helping ECB build a new tower. Commissioner Murphy was against it stating, she had the same issues she had four years ago. Mayor Hill asked if he could impose on what was stated. Mayor Hill said the money was to only go to fiber optics. Mrs. Dunham states it was not in the minutes and I can only go on what is in

the minutes for everyone to read. Mayor Hill said it was only supposed to go to fiber optics that's the reason the money didn't go towards ECB. She goes on to address Commissioner Quinn stating he recused himself but asked questions. She states Mayor Hill answered her question and they, ECB, were not eligible? Mayor Hill said correct it has to be fiber optic to the house. In fact there is a company North of Kinston putting it in coming south, I think it may be Spectrum. Mrs. Dunham said we can't get them to come here, we have already called and asked they will not be coming to our road we all live on? Commissioner Fantini said right now what is going on Lenoir County has a 30 million dollar grant for them to get it and whether that 30 million dollars last for them to bring it here. Mrs. Dunham says okay and then addresses December 2021 meeting when Mr. Rodney Scott presented, again, renting the towers for Eastern Carolina Broadband. ECB has been in business since 2017 and has several employees and partners. She said Commissioner Murphy you replied that the lease isn't justified with the amount people in this town do not need internet and I just think what you are offering is ridiculous. Cierra then asks is it ridiculous that the town will not support the public and are missing out on the opportunities. She then pulls out a big drawing of a map of Pink Hill stating the two water towers would be a good asset for several people to have internet. She believes it would save the town \$3600 per year on internet access and thinks the town would save not only \$3600 per year, but an additional \$500 in revenue. That money could help put up a welcome sign, Christmas program, or speed limit signs for the police department to put up. ECB has offered to give free internet to the town, water towers, gym, and library. She states she has spoken to the Mayor of Beulaville and Duplin County and both are pleased with the service that ECB has given them. She asks Commissioner Quinn if he has been told by his employee not to have a say in this or required. She asks Commissioner Murphy how she as a former teacher can deny local students. She understands she does not live within town limits and she feels the town is denying them. She wants to know what each board member is most proud of as Commissioner. She is asking as a business owner in need of technology to reconsider in supporting ECB by doing so the town will help many families. There is grant money that would end in June of this year that would help ECB. She feels the town has hindered ECB and personally if the town hindered her business she would have left the town. She hopes prejudice and pride be put aside and everyone work together.

Mayor Hill says I want to address a couple things stated by Mrs. Dunham. Mayor Hill said Rodney Scott came in this meeting just handed us the contract wanting to us to sign it and we had not seen the contract. We need enough time to review the contract. Mrs. Dunham states and again I am just going off information based on the minutes. Mayor Hill said he had not emailed the contract to any board member. Mrs. Dunham said she believes it was emailed to Crystal, town clerk. Mayor Hill said no contract was given by email. Mayor Hill said the attorney was sick for a while and he could not help that. Attorney, George Jenkins, said he is just given you facts. Mrs. Dunham said I am just going on what is in the minutes. Mrs. Carolyn Whitfield said the same thing. Mayor Hill said they should have been coming into the board meetings every time and I am glad you came to talk to us. Commissioner Murphy said while you are reading the minutes I want you look back, not sure how many years ago, Ben Knight sat in the corner and asked if there was not some way we can sit down and work this out to everybody's satisfaction. If you look back I can find it for you. We agreed to a public hearing about a week later and within two days they called and cancelled the public hearing. Mrs.

Carolyn Whitfield said who is they? Commissioner Murphy said Eastern Carolina Broadband and we had it without them. Mrs. Dunham said she is not here for ECB, but is here because she needs internet at her house. Commissioner Murphy said she is just explaining to her how not everybody is working in good faith to work this out. Rodney would go to talk to one board member and someone would go talk to another board member. What we were hoping is that everybody could sit down at a table and address all our concerns and work it out to everybody's satisfaction. If that meeting had been held with all parties involved four years ago you would probably have internet right this minute. Mrs. Dunham said she disagreed and the contract did not start this year. Commissioner Murphy said that makes it at least three or four times we have been presented with the contract at the meeting that night and expected to read it, vote on it, and I am not going to yay or nay something I have not had a chance to read. Mr. JW Stallings said if it was not documented it did not happen and personal vendettas are hurting this town. Mayor Hill said we have tried to work it out. Just like the compost piles all I did was sit down with Susan and worked it out. All I ask if you have concerns come here and ask for me. We cannot have the whole board and that is considered a meeting. Mrs. Paige Marshburn, visitor, said your meetings are not in the minutes. Mayor Hill said we do not have verbatim minutes that means everything that is said in the meetings. We have who made a motion, who seconded, and if it was passed. Commissioner Murphy said the meeting we are talking about is long. Mayor Hill said if anyone has a problem call Mrs. Heath and we can set up a meeting. Mrs. Dunham said well are you willing to work with them. Mayor Hill said we got the contract, read it, put in things we want, and now it is up to them. Mrs. Dunham asked if the town let ECB know they were on the agenda tonight. Mayor Hill said yes they know. Mrs. Heath said he knew about it a week ago. Mayor Hill said he understands their point and hopes the issue is resolved one way or the other. What is hurting us is he can give us internet access, but the speed is not high enough for town hall and the boys have to have the iPads out on the field. They have to use cellular service to use it. Mr. Stallings said think about the children who need internet in their homes. Mr. Fantini said besides ECB there's a couple things you said and I know where everybody stands. Your comments are important, but what I need you to understand there is only four of us. We have talked about ECB for months and believe me we are trying to get it resolved. There is a lot of things in this town that can be absolutely beautiful, but you have to understand we are trying.

The next item on the agenda was the contract discussion with Eastern Carolina Broadband and Rodney Scott. Mr. Scott said he did not know what he was up for. Mayor Hill said your contract. Mr. Scott said the only thing I have seen is what I brought up to you all. Mayor Hill said you didn't get a copy of it back. Mr. Scott said I have not heard or seen from anybody. Mr. Timmy Kennedy, Water/ Sewer Supervisor, said I hand delivered it to your office and you were off that day. Mr. Scott said do we know when it was? Mr. Kennedy said it was about a week and a half ago, I don't know what date. Mrs. Heath said more than a week and a half ago and I can go look at it in my computer. That contract is in everybody's folder. Mayor Hill said how long we have to advertise for a special meeting? Mrs. Heath said 15 days. Mayor Hill said how about we have a special meeting and you review the contract and then we can sit down. That will be the only thing on the agenda one way or the other. Mrs. Marshburn asked where the public hearings are advertised. Commissioner Fantini said this will not be a public hearing, this is a special meeting. Mrs. Heath said the Kinston Free Press. Mr. Stallings said what

changes were made on the contract can the public know? Mayor Hill said yes—Mrs. Heath said this public hearing, April 12th, was put on the website, utility bills, and newspaper. Mayor Hill said I want Rodney to review the contract and then we discuss. Mr. Scott said I do have one question from what I heard before. Mike you mentioned earlier tonight in your comments that ECB was not fast enough to town hall? Mayor Hill said that is right we have to have at least 100 megabytes and IPADS has to have cellular service when they are out on the field. Mr. Kennedy said when we are out on the field it doesn't work, and when we are here we use the Wi-Fi. Mr. Scott said I'll look into this, but will mention to you we just to a new business in town we just sold them off of our flagpole 100 by 100 so I am not sure who in ECB told you. Mayor Hill said we were looking at the website and it did not say 100. Also in regards to that business they are looking at natural gas and we are looking at getting a grant for natural gas. Commissioner Fantini asked if Mr. Scott and ECB could do a speed test. Mr. Scott said that ECB could do it. Mayor Hill said I need a motion to have a special meeting for May 3rd. Commissioner Fantini said I make a motion to do a special meeting on May 3rd at 7:00 pm just for Eastern Carolina Broadband. Commissioner Quinn seconded the motion. Mayor Hill said any discussion, all in favor say "aye", motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Hill said the next item was the Ruth Miller trailer park, but that grant was long ago George cannot pull it up on his computer. So we are going to skip over that.

The next item on the agenda was the tile across Carol Drive. Mayor Hill said in talking to and looking into these grants Blue-line Stream Grant. The lady that came out with me and Timmy said that the creek makes so many curves they are going to straighten it out. One was to put another piece of tile across Carol Drive. I was thinking about getting the tile in before the road is paved so we would not have to cut it. I have looked at and we have enough money in the Powell Fund to do it. David Tuten, Wooten Engineering, told me he would work into putting it in the grant when he wrote the grant out. The money we spent to have it done, and I have a price of \$12,000. They are going to inspect it when they come through there. Commissioner Quinn said I make a motion to replace the tile. Commissioner Fantini said what would another option be push it off to do another road first or wait for the grant money to come in? Mayor Hill said we can wait for the grant money. Commissioner Fantini said the money we have is it marked for something else. Mayor Hill said no it is for streets, Powell Fund is for streets. Commissioner Fantini seconded the motion. Mayor Hill said any discussion, all in favor say "aye", motion carried unanimously. Mr. Scott, visitor, asked if the paving or any of the work would address the amount of water that comes from the top of the hill down to the stream. He said there is a tremendous amount of water from H&H and up there. Mayor Hill said when they all start working and done repaved, they are going to clean the ditches. The water will supposedly go to the other side where the state dug that ditch back years ago that goes into the creek. Based on what the girl told me blue-line stream, which we have two in Pink Hill, are owned by the state. They go through private property, but the state still owns them. They can go back there and clean those streams out. What she said they are going to clean the sediment out back to its original stream bed. Bill Creek starts on Bill Sutton Rd and Old Pink Hill Highway it's a split then goes together back there by Glen Mitchells, comes through into Cherry Tree by Highway 11. All that and 15 foot on each side will be cleaned out. All that debris laying on the ground, all the trees in

the way will be cut down and hauled out, there will be no dirt, and all the sand coming out the creek will be hauled out. Nothing will be in the back that wasn't there. Mr. Kennedy said I was going to talk about that, but 4.2 billion dollar is what we are asking in the grant monies. The monies that has been allotted by the state and we have applied to it because we are in need. We had four days to get the grant in and we got it in.

The next item on the agenda was the oak tree at the corner of Broadway and Central Avenue. Mayor Hill said I had a lady from agricultural and look at and she said it needs to come down it is diseased and rotten from the inside of it. I haven't gotten a price on how much to take it down, but it is something to look at. We just might need to table it in until we get a price on it. Mayor Hill asked for it to be motioned until they got prices. Commissioner Fantini said I make a motion to table in the oak tree until the next meeting. Commissioner Quinn seconded the motion. Mayor Hill said any discussion, all in favor say "aye", motion carried unanimously.

The next item was the Rural Water Conference. Mayor Hill said the Rural Water Conference is May 9th through the 12th and Timmy wants to send Jason to take his class to get on the schedule to take the state test for city distribution. I need a motion for Jason to go to Rural Water Conference. Commissioner Quinn said I make a motion for Jason to go to Rural Water Conference. Commissioner Fantini seconded the motion. Mayor Hill said any discussion, all in favor say "aye", motion carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to change the May meeting date from May 12th to May 17th. Mayor Hill asked if anyone had an issue to it. He was asked to be an ambassador to the Rural Water Conference. Commissioner Fantini said I make a motion to change the meeting to May 17th, and have the town clerk make a notification that it has been moved. Commissioner Quinn seconded the motion. Mayor Hill said any discussion, all in favor say "aye", motion carried unanimously.

The fire report was the next item on the agenda provided by Chief Tony Heath. Chief Heath said there is correction from what I submitted earlier. There were sixteen EMS assignments, two vehicle accidents, three structure fires, one fire alarm, six brush fires, and two service assignments for a total of 30 calls for the last thirty days. The metal building we had ordered is scheduled to be delivered the 18th and should be ready for a few days. They are asking for a cashier checks, but to pay the remaining balance they need a cashier's check. This past weekend we did go to Florida and get the new fire truck that we have been working on for the past year. Thank you for your assistance and effort in acquiring it. Mayor Hill and the board thanked the department.

The police report was the next item on the agenda provided by Chief Michael Hoffman. Chief Hoffman said as you see on the report we did have few more larcenies. We are assisting agencies, but our larcenies are picking back up. We are also having a right good amount of counterfeit money coming through. They were counterfeiting 50s and 100s, but now what they are doing is counterfeiting one dollar bills. What I am going to be doing is contacting businesses and explaining to them to get a marked pen and start using them. If they come across any

counterfeit money to not give it back, we come and collect it, and find the suspect to charge them. Mayor Hill and the board thanked their department for their work.

Water/sewer report was the next item on the agenda provided by Timmy Kennedy. Mr. Kennedy said the biggest issue I have is my small tractor which I have mentioned in the previous meetings, we sent it to get fixed, but we got it back and it is still not fixed it will not stop. The other tractor that we have was blowing out of the dipstick today. Mr. Dan Kennedy is working on it and we just have to wait and see. We are both tractors down right now and we still need to cut the grass. I was asking in leasing or renting some piece of equipment until we can get a budget because the new budget starts in July. Mayor Hill said you know how much a lease would be on one? Mr. Kennedy said the tractor just gave out today so I haven't gotten the price on it yet. Mayor Hill said I need a motion to have Timmy lease a tractor until ours is fixed. Commissioner Fantini said I make a motion lease a tractor until one of ours is fixed or replaced. Commissioner Quinn seconded the motion. Mayor Hill said any discussion, all in favor say "aye", motion carried unanimously.

No attorney comments. The next were public comments if any wanted to address anything. Mr. Rodney Scott from ECB said he had some questions if there was anybody he could contact because he had some questions. Mayor Hill said he just needed to call and they would meet to discuss. Commissioner Fantini said the Spring Fest there are ten vendors so far and the car show trophies have been paid, and has done a petition/permission for a beer tent by the ABC board. If we do have a beer tent the town has to carry insurance since we don't have a budget, and I paid for the trophies so I think we need to wait until next year. Mrs. Cierra Dunham said they would be sponsors, H & H Farm Supply, for the band and would do \$1,500. The board thanked her for sponsoring the band. Commissioner Fantini said it is May 21st and would start off at 10 AM alongside the fire department. Mayor Hill said if anybody did not know it we will honor Mr. John Worthington May 1st at 2:00 PM and have a dedication right here by the flagpole with a monument. If anybody did not know Mr. Worthington was a WWII veteran, one of the first man into the City of Paris in WWII, three purple hearts, bronze star, and came to Pink Hill as an FFA teacher. He helped start the Rurtian Club in Pink Hill and was on the town board at one point. I recommend everyone come out and support. Mr. Jenkins, town attorney, said we previously talked about the change of the street we need to have a special meeting do you want to wait? Mayor Hill said let's wait since we already have one for next month.

No other questions or comments were made. Mayor Hill adjourned the meeting.

Typed by Town Assistant Clerk, Diana Rodriguez

Approved by Town Clerk, Crystal Heath

