

Town Board Meeting

February 9, 2021

The Town of Pink Hill Board meeting was held on February 9, 2021 in the town hall board room. Present for this meeting were Mayor Carol Sykes, Commissioner James Quinn, Commissioner Penny Murphy, Town Attorney George Jenkins, Fire Department Chief Tony Heath, Police Chief Michael Hoffman, Public Works Supervisor Timmy Kennedy, Town Clerk Crystal Heath, and Public Works Assistant Phillip Swinson. Absent from the meeting was Commissioner Mike Hill.

Visitors present were Dr. Jennifer Murphy.

Mayor Sykes said I would like to call this meeting to order and I welcome everyone to the February 9, 2021 meeting. I would like to ask everyone to please turn your cell phones off. Mayor Sykes asked Attorney George Jenkins to lead everyone in saying the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Everyone stood and said the pledge of allegiance. Mayor Sykes said I need the approval of the agenda and the amendments, read the amendment through please so we can have a motion and second. You don't have to read it out loud just read it and then someone second the motion. Commissioner Murphy said I make a motion to approve three and four. Commissioner Quinn seconded the motion. Mayor Sykes said any discussion, all in favor say "aye, motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Sykes asked Dr. Jennifer Murphy to come forward. Ms. Murphy said as all of you know we have done an annual egg hunt until last year when COVID hit we had to cancel it last year. So, we had tried to get together to figure out a COVID friendly Easter egg hunt and we have come up with something that is kind of close to our past Easter egg hunts that we would like to propose. Let us do an Easter bunny car hop it will be the same principal like we did for Halloween. It will be like the trunk or treat style we did in October but different organizations and people will have their trunks with their little Easter gifts that will be given out. They will be masked, gloved, and we are going to put bunny footprints six feet apart so that the little pods of people stay six feet apart. At the end we will have one game where they can win the bigger prizes, because to be honest with you, my clinic is full of Easter stuff, two years' worth. The games will be for kids 10 and under the game is simple thing where they will reach and grab one thing and if they have that color they will be given a prize. We can do it one at a time so that we can keep that all organized and distanced. We had about 500 children I think for Halloween, we had no problems, everyone stayed in their little groups, they went through orderly and had absolutely no problems other than we did not have enough candy. We would like to have it on April 3rd which is the Saturday before Easter which would be traditionally when we did the egg hunt, we like to do it at the same time, and we did the egg hunt which is 10 to 12. We would need Pine Street cut off from Broadway, not counting Broadway starting at First Citizens through Macon. Generally that is all the space we need we can always use a little bit of Walnut if we need to, but we usually don't have to. We have plenty of space to keep the cars and we do it zig zag so that we have plenty of space. If there is any questions I would be happy to answer. The older kids we are hoping to give ear buds, chargers, and headphones to help with their social schooling. Mayor Sykes said alright amend to accept we need a motion to accept. Commissioner

Murphy said I make a motion to accept the Easter bunny car hop on April 3rd. Commissioner Quinn seconded the motion. Mayor Sykes said is there any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously. Ms. Murphy said anyone who would like to donate just let me know. Mayor Sykes said what all do you need donated? Ms. Murphy said candy, prizes, and people to hand out whatever. Anybody that would like to hand out just let me know so I can put them on the list the sooner the better. Ms. Murphy thanked them. The board thanked Ms. Murphy for her assistance.

Mayor Sykes said the next item on the agenda is the Pink Hill Library roof and you know we have been talking about that for a while. It has been leaking, so we have finally got an estimate on it, and the guy with the construction company has insurance that is required to do work for town stuff. Sirius Construction Company, guy that will be repairing the roofs name is Mike Rackley, who lives in Duplin County. Town Clerk Crystal Heath said the bid and the pictures is in your packet. Commissioner Quinn said is it going to be a metal roof and all that? Mayor Sykes said yeah the one that is on there was done in 2014, I don't know if there was a warranty. Ms. Heath said you'll find several pictures in your books to show you what is wrong with the roof. Public Works Assistant Phillip Swinson said where the last contractor did the flash on the roof where the metal joins the walls and stuff like that they didn't properly flash it like they should have done it's leaking and causing issues; I mean when they put it in first they probably caught it and probably held it for a while now we are having issues. He went on to say that as far as the roof, it is in good shape. Mayor Sykes said Phillip and Mike both said it wasn't a good job done the last time, they didn't do their job like they should have, and steps weren't taken care of to insure the roof wouldn't leak. The figure is \$3,450.00. Mayor Sykes stated, and I contacted Melanie, Lenoir County director of Libraries, but before I called her the County Manager, County Commissioner, and Vice Chair came to see me and I also told them we had to have it fixed and before they wouldn't do anything to help the town with the expenditures on the building. Mayor Sykes said she stated to the county manager, county commissioners that we didn't want to hear a no from them not to help with the expenditures because Town of Pink Hill barely ask the county for any money, we pay taxes here to the county and y'all pay every year and raise the taxes. I told them that I thought it is time you help us out. I called the County Manager the next day and told him \$3,900.00 because I looked at figure b, didn't subtract the figure A estimate. Anyways, he said he would talk to the board, so I then called Melanie and I told her we didn't have a lot of money in our budget for the repair. Melanie and I came to the conclusion that we had to have it taken care of before the leak made the roof develop into worse shape that what it is now. I also told her that I had talked to the County Manager Michael James to see if the county would possibly help with the expenditures but that we don't know how that might go. Melanie has agreed to pay half of the invoice for the repairs on the roof. I need a motion to accept their bid and get it done. Commissioner Quinn said I make a motion to accept the bid for the repair of the roof at the library and for Mike Rackley with Sirius Construction to complete the job as soon as he is available. Commissioner Murphy said I second that motion so we can get our library back in shape. Mayor Sykes said is there any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously. Mayor Sykes said this really makes me feel better that we are going to get that taken care of for our library because the employees have done a lot to

improve our town's library. We don't have much money for the library and I am just glad Melanie helped.

Mayor Sykes asked for the fire report. Chief Heath said I don't have a copy of the report that was given to you, but you should have a copy of it. We have had some increase on fire calls, but not to where we used to be being we still have suspended all EMS calls. Commissioner Quinn said I thank you and your department for all you guys/gals do. Chief Heath said the next item is that we received an email from the Department of Insurance we are going to be re-inspected June 1st for our insurance rate, we will make sure that all of our documentation is ready for when the inspectors come. If we require some documents to be filled out by the town I will get with Crystal and get that completed. The next item I have is and this is just preliminary, I would like for you to look at and review if you have any questions, comments, or feedback. We are implementing an exposure policy due to the Coronavirus and any other type of infection/diseases that my member's may come in contact with, this will cover us as a department, personnel, citizens, and cover us financially, the town and fire department. If you will just review it. Mayor Sykes said can you just kinda go over it? Chief Heath said basically what it is if we get dispatched to whatever the incident may be and one of our members gets exposed to anything contagious or harmful that I want to be notified immediately, they need to be sent to the hospital to get whatever required test and they will then be medically evaluated and the incident will be covered under workers comp. I am trying to eliminate the financial responsibility from us being financially responsible for their two weeks quarantine or of their finances reason for this new protocol. I don't want the fire department or the town, even though we respond we know are volunteering, I don't want someone saying well I went to your fire call and got the coronavirus or whatever and now have to be quarantined or miss work. Mayor Sykes said let me ask you this, when ya'll respond to a call do ya'll wear your masks? Chief Heath said when we go in homes, businesses, offices it is extended the offer to make sure you are wearing your face mask cover and protected but as you know I can't make grown people do something they may not wish to do. Mayor Sykes asked Attorney George does anything need to be done on his end legally. Attorney George Jenkins said in looking at this policy, this is well written. We just need to make sure to implement other risks it's not just COVID, you have COVID, acid, explosives, anthrax. You're covering everything here and I hope that's what you wanted to do. Chief Heath said yes sir that is the intent. Mr. Jenkins said I think what you have typed up is great, the only question is are you gonna have each member of the department to sign it. Chief Heath said once we get each member of the town board to approve it, once it is implanted, each member will get a copy of a total packet SOG's and they will be asked to sign and turn back in for our files at the fire department that they indeed received a updated copy of SOG's and are aware that they are responsible for the risk that they potentially may put their selves in. Mr. Jenkins said and acknowledge it? Chief Heath said exactly. Mr. Jenkins said I think it would be wise to have them sign this page as well as the package. Mayor Sykes do you think most of them wear masks, I mean what you think? Chief Heath said yes ma'am but it's not just the coronavirus that has brought on the reason for the exposure contract, Mayor Sykes asked Chief Heath if his department knows that if they go into a home that they are required to wear a mask when they go into the home? Chief Heath said in writing no but it will be in this policy. Mayor Sykes said but I mean with this policy I just want to make sure everything is in it that it

would cover us so that we don't have to put any financing like you said. Chief Heath said we suit up with our PPE, this has become a standard now, suit up and social distance, and wear a mask when on a fire call but it is not in writing. Mr. Jenkins said but when you go in most of the time you are wearing a mask. Chief Heath said correct. Mayor Sykes said and the reason I am saying is because you know some people are picky, well they didn't wear a mask and we got COVID from them. Chief Heath said Ma'am that is the reason why I have presented this, I want your input on it. Pink Hill Police Department Chief Hoffman said when you put a signature page on the back and the members themselves signs it that will relieve the town's and the departments on any issues. Mr. Jenkins said I think you need to put that in here that at all times on call the fire department business members are required to wear masks. Chief Heath said I am not going to put masks I am going to put appropriate PPE because it covers all. Mayor Sykes said okay, whatever I just want it stated in there because people will get sick and blame it on not having a mask on, but I do think you are absolutely right about implementing this and I appreciate you doing this. Chief Heath said the last item I have is that we are applying this year again for a grant and it closes this Friday, and I logged in the information we should know something by fall; with that being said we did apply for another grant that is 100% granted if we were to be awarded that. February 5th which was last Friday, our annual truck payment came out. When we, Timmy and I took over the position, six or seven years ago, we inherited a debt that was previous to our position as Chief. It included, at the time I believe a \$150,000 or \$160,000 dollar debt on one of our engines, we have since made double payments for the last four or five years and helped get this truck paid off sooner than 2022. We have a \$50,000 plus CD that we would like to relinquish out of the CD and transfer over to our general account. Once transferred we will then take that transfer and pay that truck off. The outstanding remainder of that balance is \$69,000 give or take. Town Clerk Crystal Heath said after the payment ya'll just made on Feb. 5th, it is now \$59,000. I got the exact amount and interest rate in my office on my desk if you all want me to I can go get it. Ms. Heath said Timmy already spoke to Steve at First Citizens Bank and he is going to waive the maturity fee for the fire department. Chief Heath said with that being said we do have a front line engine that is over 20 years old –Timmy said it is a '94 model. Mayor Sykes said is there any grant money you can apply for? Chief Heath said I am going to be looking for a federal grant next year for that purpose getting appropriated or funded for it is the hard part when you are asking for a half a million dollars. Mayor Sykes said well we need to hold our representatives in Lenoir County. Chief Heath said any persuasion would be greatly appreciated. Mayor Sykes said I will make an effort to talk to them you when we see their name in the paper aiding the county they are doing something right. Mayor Sykes thanked him and the fire department.

Mayor Sykes asked for the police report. Chief Hoffman stated you all have a copy of our report for this past month, we have been very busy. Mayor Sykes said what is going on with the police car? Chief Hoffman said so the insurance already has the vehicle that I am aware of. Mayor Sykes said but I don't think it has never been mentioned in the meeting and I want our commissioners to know of the incident with the police car. Chief Hoffman said yes ma'am I thought all were aware the incident occurred in November, the same night that one of the Lenoir County deputies was shot out on a call. Lenoir County requested that I go out in assisting with apprehending the suspect that was hiding out, when they ceased the manhunt, I was on my way home on Liddell Road, several deer came out and it was horrible, I hit one of them and ending up

in a ditch but I fortunately was not injured. The insurance adjuster deemed that my police car was a total loss. Mr. Jenkins said how much did they total it out, how much was the money? Ms. Crystal Heath said we received a check from the insurance company for \$23,000 and some change. Chief Hoffman said more then what the car cost when purchased. Mayor Sykes said how much did the car cost? Chief Hoffman said \$22,000, at the end of the day it sucked, it was terrible. Commissioner Quinn said you sure you didn't get hurt? Chief Hoffman said absolutely not, Commissioner Quinn said that is good. Chief Hoffman said the county had called me out because we were covering the entire west side because every deputy was on call. We have not even looked for another vehicle yet. Mayor Sykes said I just wanted them to know and be in the loop of everything we talked about. Chief Hoffman said first of all to start off you should have a copy of totals of report. We are for our crash date Pink Hill Police department are 100 percent compliant. Also with our NCLEA form we did not have to change our policy, but we had to update it to where we made sure there were no chokeholds in our policy. We had to make sure they knew they were not supposed to do that. Lacy McFay the program manager has written me a North Carolina accreditation program as in compliance. I have Officer Weaver in here tonight our Fire Department and Police Department works together and we have a good working relationship. Officer Weaver did an outstanding job on a call, it was 01/14/2021 of this year myself and Officer Weaver responded on Pineview Avenue and when we got there, there was a person that was unresponsive and cold. Before EMS got there Officer Weaver and myself had performed life saving measures on the patient and we succeeded in getting a pulse and him breathing. Actually EMS got there he ended up refusing ambulance transportation, when we got there we thought he was gone. I would like to at least recognize Officer Weaver and have a memorandum on his folder, with your consent to go ahead an order a pin for that incident. If I had not had his help that night I don't know if it would have turned out like that. Mayor Sykes said is a pin, Chief Hoffman said yeah it is a pin and a letter of recognition is going in his file. Mayor Sykes said do we need a motion for the pin? Mr. Jenkins said to commend him for a job well done and to order the pin put award in his personal file. Commissioner Murphy said I make a motion to order the pin and recognize Officer Weaver and his outstanding dedication. Commissioner Quinn seconded the motion. Mayor Sykes said any discussion, all in favor say "aye", motion carried unanimously. Chief Hoffman said one of the last things I want to say is if we are going to have this bunny hop extravaganza the corner of Walnut and Pine needs to be cleaned. Mayor Sykes said needs to be cleaned? Chief Hoffman said it looks like you've taken empty trash bags and it's everywhere where the house has been burned at. Mayor Sykes said I was going to mention IGA and call Jimmy Jackson, have ya'll seen that there are mattresses out there? Chief Hoffman it should be against the law, they should be fined for having such a mess, it looks horrible as many people that has come by and seen it. I urge every one of you to go and see it. Mayor Sykes said it's not like we don't want to do something, but when you talk and talk to them what kind of law do we have? Chief Hoffman said don't we have some kind of ordinance of cleanliness of property? Mr. Jenkins said the health department can declare like mattress vermin can use that as nests. Chief Hoffman said if I can call somebody –Mayor Sykes said I can call the health department and see what we can do. Mr. Timmy Kennedy said if we do start sending out something there's another house that needs to be cleaned. Chief Hoffman said really and truly it needs to be cleaned and would love for us to be able to do something. Mayor

Sykes said I know what I can do is I will go and talk to him and tell him. Chief Hoffman said I can go by and see them.

Mayor Sykes asked for Timmy Kennedy to provide the water report. Mr. Kennedy said we spoke about this the tank maintenance thing probably two or three times. One of the ones that I kinda laid over to the side, because I didn't think they were doing enough in the first five years came back and gave me a Chuck D pointed out to me in the contract that if at any time extra work needed to be done he would come back and take care of it. This is actually the company Southern Corrosion they are the ones that has got the cheapest. After we did the presentation and all that this is are who we are with now SUEZ he came back and said he would drop it ten percent for the next three more years. When we started this we are trying to save the town money and if we are doing that these guys are the cheapest. I have not given them a chance yet because they have not done anything for the two. We would not have any raise in said price for three years, but we have sign the contract for five. Mayor Sykes said they have been mighty good for us. Commissioner Quinn said my opinion is who do you want? Mr. Kennedy I am ok with staying with who we are because we are locked in for the next five years. Commissioner Quinn said are you okay with that? Mr. Kennedy said I am. Mayor Sykes said I need a motion. Commissioner Quinn said I make a motion to continue with the contract of SUEZ for the water tank maintenance. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Mayor Sykes any discussion, all in favor say "aye", motion carried unanimously. Mr. Kennedy said the only thing I have is we are supposed to get the motors we have two motors that were bad. Whenever we get that bill it's probably going to complete my budget. I just wanted you to know that the motors ready. Mayor Sykes do we have it in the budget right now. Mr. Kennedy well right now we have the budget, but maybe later on we have to dig into our savings. We had the beaver man from USDA they have been setting traps on Cherry Tree Creek and I am going to let Phillip give that. Mr. Phillip Swinson said he's got the ones in Park Circle the beavers have been taken care. The ones in the old plant he thought he had them all, but there is one beaver left so he is going to come back and take care of that one. The biggest issue we are having right now is the sewer right of way of Deep Run it is on the Pink Hill side of Deep Run. He is going to have to go to start on John Green Smith and come all the way through and has found serious of dams. Mr. Kennedy said just so you know that sewer line runs along the creek path whenever beavers dam the water up all that water runs right into our manholes, which we have to treat that water. Mr. Swinson said he said he is going to have to make a couple of visits down to take care of them, there may be one dam that he may have to blow. Every time they come and visit is 25 dollars, generally he will not blow anything close to the sewer lines.

Mayor Sykes asked if Mr. George Jenkins had any remarks. Mr. Jenkins said I have nothing to say. Mayor Sykes said we need to go into closed session, Mr. Jenkins said you can't go into closed session without a reason. Chief Hoffman said it is from a concerned citizen. Mr. Jenkins said that is not a reason for a closed session. Chief Hoffman said can these gentleman step out it is from a CI. Mr. Jenkins said well when you say that, that is appropriate for closed session if you talk to me before the meeting I can tell you how to bring it. Chief Hoffman said it will just take a second. Commissioner Quinn said I make a motion to discuss a criminal investigation. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Mayor Sykes said any discussion, all in favor say "aye", motion carried unanimously. The board went into a closed session.

The board came back from a closed session. Mayor Sykes adjourned the meeting.

Typed by Diana Rodríguez, town clerk assistant

verified by Town Clerk, Crystal Heath