January 12, 2016

7:00 P.M.

The Town of Pink Hill held its monthly board meeting on Tuesday, January 12, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the town hall board room. Present for the meeting were Mayor Carol Sykes, Commissioners Mike Hill and Donald King, Town Attorney George Jenkins, Police Chief Joey Thigpen, Public Works Director Timmy Kennedy and Town Clerk Kimberly Mitchell. Commissioner Grady could not attend the board meeting.

There were no visitors present at the meeting.

Mayor Sykes called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Commissioner King then led everyone in the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Hill made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Commissioner Hill made a motion to approve the consent agenda including December 8, 2015 regular board meeting minutes. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The first item on the agenda was the U.S. Cellular Ground Lease. Mr. Michael Doran with U.S. Cellular was not able to attend. Commissioner Hill made a motion to table this item until the February 9, 2016 meeting. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was curb & gutter/street paving. Timmy stated that he called at least two contractors to come out and give prices and both of them told him that they were really busy because of the holidays and things like that and they were catching up. He said one of the contractors finally came last Friday and he has not given him any prices yet. Timmy let the board know which streets they are looking at and where they are located:

1. Intersection of New Street and South Central Avenue which is by Cordset.
2. Macon Street which is in front of Council on Aging building. It has a really bad hole there and it is going to be a pretty good size patch. Timmy said when Ricky with Barnhill was here looking at it he recommended that Timmy or someone else do a lot of shoulder work before the paving is done. Timmy said that would be up to the board if they want him and his guys to do it or have someone else to do it.
3. Jones Furniture sidewalk and parking lot area.
4. Asphalt curbing on Elizabeth Drive in Park Circle.

Timmy said Garris Paving was the other company that he called and they did a really good job for us last year. He tried to come last Thursday and Friday, but he wanted to come at the same time as the other guy and Timmy put him off. Timmy said the man from Garris Paving said he would be here on Monday morning but he did not show up. Commissioner Hill made a motion to table this issue until the February 9, 2016 meeting. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was Appointment of Commissioners & Mayor Pro Tem. Mayor Sykes stated that she was going to appoint Commissioner Mike Hill as the Mayor Pro Tem for the next couple of years and also appointed him as the Water/Sewer and Streets Commissioner. Mayor Sykes then appointed Commissioner Donald King as the Police Commissioner; and Commissioner Debra Grady as the Fire Commissioner.

The next item on the agenda was WASA Report. Commissioner Hill stated they have not met since November because of the holidays. He said he was going to invite Harold Herring to come to the February 9, 2016 meeting to discuss the future of WASA with Pink Hill. Timmy stated he would have to say since the problem that they found on Deep Run Water’s side, our residuals are holding very constant. He said they have one tank that is offline. He stated with our larger lines in the ground we have too much storage. Timmy said we had a lot of extra storage in the ground plus we had our tanks, so he took one tank offline and that has pretty much taken care of it. We are not having to put half as much water on the ground to keep residuals up. He stated he is still running his well a couple of days a week to boost up on the south end of town and that is working. He said he runs it maybe 6 hours two days a week and they are doing a minimum of flushing and that is working. As long as we get consistent water at the vault which is 2 parts to 2 ½ parts it tends to work. Timmy said talking with Harold Herring if they can guarantee and they should be able to guarantee that we get consistent water at the vault because that is what we are buying from them. Commissioner Hill said one thing that Timmy might want to discuss with Harold Herring about is if there is any growth in the future this way is putting a booster station down here.

The next item on the agenda was Police Updates. Chief Thigpen stated since the last meeting on December 8, 2015 they have had 9 reported incidents, 2 accidents, issued 9 citations with 14 charges, and issued 11 warning citations. He said that the black dodge is messed up. Chief Thigpen said he thinks it is the brakes but is not sure. Mayor Sykes asked if the car was under warranty and he replied no. He said he took it to Randy Burd last Thursday and something smells like it is burning in it. Chief Thigpen said Randy Burd said he could not figure out what was going on so he still has the car because something is killing the battery also. He said they have that issue with the battery and also he thinks the rotors because one of the wheels got real hot. Randy Burd said it might take a while.

The next item on the agenda was Appointment of 2016 Fire Department Officers. Timmy said he will report on that in the Fire Department Report.

Mayor Sykes said the next item on the agenda was the Fire Department Report. Timmy stated since their last meeting they have had 9 EMS calls, 2 fire alarms, 1 vehicle accident, 1 service call, 1 strange odor in a structure, and 1 brush fire.

Timmy said what he would like to say about the fire department is that his plate is pretty full with family life and just work right now. He stated he called a meeting with the officers and he wanted to give his position up as Car 1 because he doesn’t feel like it is fair for someone to hold the Car 1 position and not do 100 percent. The officers told Timmy that they would back him up if he would keep the Chief position but he does not feel like that is right. Tony Heath is Car 2 right now and he has not given him or anyone else a definite answer. Timmy said Tony wants to have a special meeting in the next week or so with the officers and let them know what he expects and he did want the blessing from the board if he does step up and Randy Byrd would be Car 2. Timmy said he told them if they would move up that he would take Car 3 and try his best to continue doing with Kim’s help, keeping the fire department budget in line. Mayor Sykes stated she would most definitely want that to happen being he is bonded. Timmy said personally he does not feel like anybody else on the fire department would be able to do it without a lot of extensive training and explanation; as far as take care of what he takes care of on a day to day basis for the fire department which is looking after the bills and things and keeping the budget in line. Mayor Sykes asked Timmy when he thought the meeting would be scheduled and Timmy replied he did not know at this time.

Timmy said that he, Tony and about five other guys have worked really hard on a Federal Grant that they have put in for. He said if they get the grant it will give them 40 suits of turnout gear and somewhere around $112,000 worth of turnout gear and that would be 5 percent that they would have to pay. Timmy said it would take about a year to find out if they get the grant or not. Mayor Sykes asked Timmy where did he send the grant information to and Timmy replied to FEMA because it is a federal grant.

Commissioner Hill asked Timmy what was Tony’s last name. Timmy replied Heath and said that he has been on the fire department for 20 plus years and has been an officer pretty much the whole time he has been on the department at least 15 out of the 20 years. Mayor Sykes stated she would like to go to the meeting when they have it scheduled. Kim asked if the meeting was just for the officers. George stated isn’t it an open meeting and anybody can go if they want to. Timmy said it would be just the officers and Tony is going to be heading it up and he is going to let them know what he expects. George asked if they do closed session. Commissioner Hill stated they should just like we do on personnel. Mayor Sykes said she did not have to go, she just wanted to go to encourage. Commissioner Hill said in his opinion they could go ahead and send Tony a recommendation stating yes we want him. He said if this is what you (Timmy) want, then this is what we (the board) want. Timmy said Tony is proofreading that federal grant so we can go ahead and get it sent in before Friday and that is the reason he is not here tonight. Mayor Sykes said you can tell that Tony is a good person. Timmy said he is a hardworking family guy. Mayor Sykes said that Tony Heath has the boards blessing to be the fire chief. Mayor Sykes said she does still say that Timmy needs to be Car 3 or whatever it is so he can help Kim with any of the budget transactions. Timmy stated it would be to Tony’s discretion because he is the chief and he can call the shots but what he asked of him is to be administrative assistant chief. Mayor Sykes said they have to approve all of that and if he gets somebody else we might not approve it. She said Timmy is bonded and we do not have to go through all of that again. Commissioner Hill said Randy Byrd will do a good job too and Timmy stated he has been there just shy of 15 years and an officer for 13 of those 15 years. Mayor Sykes said we just have a good group and that is all there is to it. Timmy said if there is anything going on both Tony and Randy are there and that is showing leadership qualities. Mayor Sykes said the board thanks Timmy for accepting the administrative part and thank you for all of your years.

The next item on the agenda was Water/Sewer Report. Timmy stated that everything is pretty much going well. He said they found a few issues up on Deep Run Sewer. Timmy said he thinks it is the guys that are mowing and he does not know if it is state, contractor, or someone else but when our guys went up there to check some stations just general checks, they found some manholes that were mowed off or knocked off. He stated nobody called them to let them know. These have never been hit before and the guys got them fixed yesterday. Mayor Sykes asked if anyone had called DOT and Timmy said no not yet. Timmy said they did get a sewer plant inspection today from their state regional office and he will be sending a report. We were in compliance. Timmy stated the only issue they had was that there nitrate level was a little high on one of his monitor wells and we got a notice of violation which will not cause us to pay a fine or anything like that just something that had to be given out to us. This particular well is where a house used to be. That is the piece of property where the monitor well is so there used to be a dwelling there. It is possible that there is a septic tank there. Timmy said he had to send an email back when he got the NOV to tell why I thought maybe the nitrate levels were high or anything like that. There is a humongous black walnut tree that has got to be over 100 years old that is near that monitor well also and there is no telling how deep it is. Timmy said his explanation was accepted. He said he was told that the plant looked great for the minimum amount of help that we have and how large the plant is compared to a lot of the other plants that he goes to.

Timmy said he had one more issue that came to his attention at 4:50 p.m. today and maybe he can take some pictures to bring to the next board meeting if they want him to continue with it. He said the issue is on Hwy 55 right at Moss Hill Elementary School heading west from the school. Our sewer line as you are heading back towards Kinston is a 4 inch force main and it is on the right hand side of the shoulder of the road, actually it is over the ditch bank in the field. He said the right of way must be really wide there. According to the guy that gave Timmy the call, there was 400 feet of sock drain tile that was put out there. If you know the area there is a pond that is a little ways off the road there plus at least a 3 story house. It is a real nice looking area and the guy keeps it immaculate. The guy that called him told him that the tile got tore up whenever they were putting that line in the ground. Timmy said he explained to him that we kind of inherited the whole project from the county and the county was in charge of all the lines when they were put in the ground, so if anything got tore up at that time it should have fell back on the county. The guy told Timmy to see what he could find out. Timmy told the guy that it was perfect timing because he had a board meeting tonight. The guy said the spot is washing and the sock drain that was tore up at that time is causing the water to back up and that the line is exposed there. Timmy said it is washed out 4 feet deep. Timmy said the minimum is a 30” cover on any line and those lines are put in the ground. Mayor Sykes asked Timmy what happened to tear up the lines. Timmy stated when they were putting the line in they tore up that 400 feet of sock drain tile. Mayor Sykes asked Timmy if the problem has just begun and Timmy stated he was not sure about that. Timmy said the line was put in the ground to the best of his memory in October 2008. George asked Timmy if this was a gradual thing. Timmy said the guy told him that there is water standing in spots where the sock drain should be taking care of it. He said one question he didn’t ask him was how long the sock drain had been in the ground before it got tore up. If it has been in the ground 10 years or a little longer, it probably needs replacing anyway. George said he did not know what the statute of limitations would be, if it would be 3 years, 5 years, or 8 years but if he put it in at about the same time that the sewer line was put in, the statute of limitations might have run. George asked Timmy if the guy’s sock drain tile has been exposed or our sewer line has been exposed or both. Timmy said a little bit of both. He said that Gary Jenkins, the guy who he spoke with, originally put the drain there for the person that hired him which is the man that owned the property. George asked if a couple of loads of rock and topsoil will cure. Timmy replied no. He asked the guy what was he expecting of the town if they proceeded with anything. The guy said replacement of 400 feet of sock drain tile 4 inch. George advised the board to refer this to the county. Commissioner Hill made a motion to refer this issue to the county. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Timmy said they did attempt to run their old well and it would not pump water. He said they tried several different ways that he knows how. Timmy stated he just wanted to see if it would pump water and it would not. It has lost its prime. The motor did run which was a plus.

The next item on the agenda was Budget Amendments if needed. Commissioner Hill made a motion to accept the General Fund and Water Fund Budget Amendments as presented. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was Remarks by Town Attorney. George said he wanted to quote something. He said he is pleased to be the attorney for “the small quaint town of Pink Hill that has a sense of community and friendship.” George stated he was quoting from the resume of our Mayor in the Stars Dance for the Arts.

The next item on the agenda was Comments by the Board. George said he was just looking at where Kim had told him that they are talking about maybe putting the cell tower rather than putting down behind the old stable, and he thinks she has a whole lot better idea than what they had. Timmy said when he met with the US Cellular guy he loved that spot at the Old Miller’s Trailer Park. He told Timmy that he would make it work and that he knew what he was doing and he was going to make it work. Timmy said he did express that the town was very interested in doing whatever we had to do to get him to come on a piece of our property. Commissioner Hill said he was going to suggest one of the vacant lots at the sewer plant if he did not like the other places. Timmy said the US Cellular guy was wanting to keep it in town and is trying to go to the center of town if he could. George said when he and Timmy had looked at it before and they talked about the measurements of it, if they use 50 foot wide then that would block off the access behind wherever they put their 50 foot wide because that lot is only 50.5 feet wide. Timmy said the tank is pretty much covering the width of it and there is very little on either side of it. George said and who knows what pipes and lines are underneath it. Timmy stated he has 8 inch water lines on one side which is Broadway Street and 8 inch sewer lines on Clay Street side. George asked Timmy if there were any underground obstacles at the trailer park. Timmy replied no, all the old water lines are not hooked up anymore. George asked if there were any septic tanks out there. Mayor Sykes stated probably so. Timmy said there was a surveyor crew on that piece of property yesterday. Timmy had a question about the property being it was done with a CDBG grant. Mayor Sykes stated that grant is closed being it has been over 2 years. She said the property is the towns. Timmy said he had texted Tony Heath and asked him if he would be opposed to Mayor Sykes being present at his special call meeting. He said he also let Tony know that he did have the board’s approval if he wanted to accept the position of Fire Chief. Timmy stated that Tony said he welcomed the Mayor to come on whatever date that she is available in the very near future. Mayor Sykes said for him to let her know what date is good.

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.