

Town Board Meeting

September 14, 2021

The Town of Pink Hill Board meeting was held on September 14, 2021 in the town hall board room. Present for this meeting were Mayor Mike Hill, Commissioner James Quinn, Commissioner Penny Murphy, Commissioner Pete Fantini Town Attorney George Jenkins, Police Chief Michael Hoffman, Chief Tony Heath, Town Clerk Crystal Heath, Public Works Supervisor Timmy Kennedy and Public Works Assistant Phillip Swinson.

Visitors present for the meeting were Carolyn Whitfield, Sherri Casias, Jennifer Murphy, Derrick Remer, Trina Patrick, Ted Byrd, Ann Wiggins, Linda Stroud, Sue Hamilton, and Kenny Hamilton.

Mayor Mike Hill said I would like to call this meeting to order and I welcome everyone to the September 14, 2021 meeting. I would like to ask everyone to please turn your cell phones off. Mayor Mike Hill asked everyone to join in the pledge of allegiance. Everyone stood and said the pledge of allegiance. Mayor Mike Hill said I would like a moment of silence prayer for the soldiers in the military that were killed a couple weeks ago. Mayor Mike Hill said I need the approval of the agenda, any amendments, consent agenda and the minutes from the last meeting. Commissioner Quinn said I make a motion to approve the agenda, any amendments, the consent agenda, and the minutes from the last meeting. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Mayor Mike Hill said any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Quinn said I make a motion to approve amendment for the police car that was ordered to replace the police car that was totaled for 2020-2021. Commissioner Pete Fantini seconded the motion. Mayor Mike Hill said any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Mike Hill asked for Derrick Remer from Duke Energy to speak about the franchise agreement with Duke and Town of Pink Hill. Mr. Remer introduced himself as the District Manager for the region. The agreement is between the Town of Pink Hill and Duke to allow them to install light poles, change fixtures, without having to come to the town regarding an easement or going into the property. Mr. Remer said if someone runs into a pole you are not liable and protects the town. It provides you with 365 days 24/7 coverage. I ask you today to approve the first reading of this. If all goes well, I'll be back in October and do a second reading. Commissioner Murphy said I make a motion to accept this agreement on the first reading. Commissioner Quinn seconded the motion. Mayor Mike Hill said any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Quinn made a motion to go into closed session for personnel purposes at 7:06 PM. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Mayor Mike Hill said any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously.

The board came back from a closed session at 7:13 PM.

Mayor Mike Hill introduced the new full time police officer John Weaver. Commissioner Murphy made a motion to approve John Weaver as a full time police officer for the Town of Pink Hill. Commissioner Fantini seconded the motion. Mayor Mike Hill said any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously. Officer John Weaver was sworn as a police officer for the Town of Pink Hill.

Mayor Mike Hill said the next item on the agenda was to talk about a monument for Mayor Carol Sykes and John Worthington. We were thinking of naming a street for John Worthington for his service in the military. The GIS people said it would be a long process. I was thinking about doing a monument right out here by the flag pole and direct a plaque for him and dedicate it to Mr. Worthington. If it is alright with the board to change it from renaming a street to doing a monument for him out here. While we doing that we are thinking of changing the flag pole to a 30 foot and were going to contact Woodmen and see if they will donate one. We will try and see if they will. The other thing is Jeff Turner called me and he wants to do a plaque for Carol at his cost. I talked to Crystal, who also spoke to Leigh, about putting a picture of Carol in the foyer out there with a plaque for her dedication to the Town of Pink Hill and service. Commissioner Quinn said I make a motion for the plaque of Mr. Worthington and a plaque for Mayor Carol Sykes. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Mayor Mike Hill said any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously.

The next item was the Kinston Community Health Center who would be coming out here once a month to do checkups including COVID tests. Mayor Mike Hill said I talked to them, and Crystal and I are going the 22nd to get a tour of their mobile unit. We will probably set up a date of when they are going to come and probably have it behind Town Hall. Commissioner Quinn said that would be great for the public to come out here and get tests or screenings they would want done.

Dr. Jennifer Murphy came up to the board to speak about the Trunk or Treat. She said we would like to do the Trunk or Treat the same as we did last year. It will still be the same rules COVID friendly. We did change the footprints to glow in the dark by 7:30 PM it gets dark. It was tremendously successful we had about 400-500 children that came out last year. It was all cleaned up and done by 8:30. We are requesting Pine Street be cut off or shut off for about 5 until 8:30 that night. We would start off in Broadway, but no interrupting Broadway to Macon. We want to finish about the same time the Fire Department starts their haunted house. Commissioner Murphy said I make a motion for them to close the streets Pine and Walnut Street and hope they have a successful trunk or treat as last year. Commissioner Fantini seconded the motion. Mayor Mike Hill said any discussion, all in favor say “aye”, motion carried unanimously.

Chief Tony Heath was asked to be provide the fire report. Chief Heath said since our last meeting we had 14 EMS assignments, 4 vehicle accidents, 1 structural fire, 1 electrical fire, that was over 20 calls throughout this last month. It has been a more increase with EMS calls as of right now we are operating under normal procedures. If there is an increase of COVID that may change in the next weeks depending on what the county regulates. As you know in February we announced that we were going to be inspected by the Department of Insurance. August the 30th

of last month we received our letter from Office of State Fire Marshall and Department of Insurance. It would lower owner's home insurance rates. That information will be published from the Department of Insurance and will begin in effect December of this year. Please take a look at this and make sure that it covers us in the—we have a self-contained breathing that generates air for us for our SEBAs. Few years back we purchased a new one that was not mobile, the one we have is a mobile one it replaced it. There is a department in need of one and we are looking to relinquish the one we have, and pass it on to them and help them out in their district. That being an item that generates air for them to breath in a fire situation I just wanted the lawyer to look it over make sure it is correct to relieve the fire department and the town from any liabilities once they hook it up. Mr. George Jenkins said their insurance would cover it not ours. Mayor Mike Hill and the board thanked them for what they do.

Chief Michael Hoffman was asked to provide the police report. Chief Hoffman said for our monthly report several things have gone down. We've got more patrols and are also covering more for Duplin and Lenoir County. The shortening of officers is still apparent and in so we have been asked by both agencies our patrol, especially outside the city limits. Also in front of you, we have implemented three new forms we have never had before. I think that now is a good time as any with the call volume as any and spoken with animal control. These forms are going to carry us through to expedite the situation. Mayor Mike Hill thanked him for the job his department does.

Public comments were the next item on the agenda. Mrs. Linda Ray was asked to come forward and speak. Mrs. Ray said there is something both Anne and I would like to talk about the property between my florist and her house. We have tolerated it for some time, but things have gotten really bad. Not only is it an eyesore when you get into town, but now it's beginning to get worse. Anne here she has experienced snakes coming into her house from the debris up there. There is rats running out there and it's just not a good situation. I am asking is there anything the town can do we would certainly appreciate it. Mayor Mike Hill said I just found out that the bank has it in foreclosure. We are trying to find out what bank, but we also heard it got sold to the guy who bought the trailer park, but we don't know. We are trying to find out what bank—Mrs. Ray said I got that information. Mayor Mike Hill said provide that to Town Clerk Crystal Heath. We are going to call the bank and tell them to clean it up. We also can assess it to their taxes right George? Mr. George Jenkins said correct. If the town has to hire somebody to clean it up it will be an asset on to the taxes of the property. It is an eyesore and I agree. Mrs. Ann Wiggins said that she felt similar to Mrs. Ray. She states there are rats, mice, roaches, insects, and last week there was a snake in her house. She said she has spent money to clear out all the rats, insects, and snakes. Mrs. Wiggins said a cleaning company came out and saw the job was too big for them to come out. There was dog poop all over the house, food, and said hazmats would have to be called in or a house would have to be condemned. Animal control is very familiar at that house because of the animals. Mrs. Wiggins said I tried to find out some information from the mortgage company, but was told legally they could not tell me anything. They said they had to go through the foreclosure procedure. It would be cleaned up, sign would be put up on the front yard with the realtors name and number, and I could call them for an asking price. No sign has ever appeared in the yard. However as you stated, we are hearing rumors that it's been said to a

man who bought the trailer park. If it is true how would he do that if they would not give anybody information. I am asking for help and advice from all us in the neighborhood. Mayor Mike Hill said if you could give us the name of the mortgage company, George you're the attorney, is there anything we can do besides send them a letter? Mr. Jenkins said it depends on the foreclosure process, if the foreclosure sale has happened, it's basically a sale at the courthouse door. Mrs. Wiggins does it have to appear in the paper foreclosure locally, well it has not been in the Free Press that it was in foreclosure. Mr. Jenkins said it has to appear either in the Free Press or La Grange Gazette. Mrs. Wiggins said could someone purchase it regardless of the foreclosure procedure? Mr. Jenkins said if the owner of the property sells it, meaning the last human being living there. Mrs. Wiggins said they are both dead. Mr. Jenkins said their heirs could sell it. Mrs. Wiggins said I do know the taxes are being paid, and I know its two and a half years past due. Mr. Jenkins asked for the address of the house. Mrs. Ray and Mrs. Wiggins said its 702 N Kinston Blvd. Mayor Mike Hill thanked them for coming forward to speak on their concern and would try help them out.

Mr. Ted Byrd was also asked to come forward regarding any public comments. Mr. Byrd said he has some concerns. The town just made aware about three weeks ago that they do have an easement behind my property. Easement was signed in 2003 and as the paper stated the town cleaned it for the first couple years. Since then nothing has been done to it. Now three weeks ago the town has been made aware of that it was still their easement. Timmy and his crew did their best to clean it up, but there is still problems there more than the vegetation. That is the amount of water that comes off Circle Drive. We are getting a lot of water on Edwards Avenue, Potters Hill, and Pink Hill highway. There is a solution, but not an overnight or cheap solution. I would like for the town to look for a grant to increase the size of that culvert that crosses Edward Avenue. We are getting over washed there. Further down the back of my lot and the lot of Circle Drive it is completely caved in where you don't have a ditch there. Now the water is coming up in my yard. Being in construction for 26 years I would know what the solution would be putting a culvert in there and then do something to take care of that service. Like I said it is not an overnight solution and not cheap, but would like for the town to look for some grants and fix the problem. I think Timmy would tell you it is going to be a problem every year. Mayor Mike Hill said all we can do is start the process and talk to an engineering firm and come out here in look for any type of grants. Timmy Kennedy said I would like to say Ms. Pauline's, the part that you tiled, we went and put a camera and it is open, it is doing the best it can do. Mr. Byrd said one more thing Mike I had to change my water heater, three weeks ago, it wasn't because the elements were bad, thermostat was not dead, but the threads bottom of the pipe had been eaten away and would not seal. It kept leaking so the only solution was to change the water heater. I am going to pass it around so you can see, but it looks like iron rust on the pipe. I commend Timmy and he called NC Division of Water Resources out of Little Washington. They were looking at it and gave me an assessment of what they thought might have caused it. I was thinking it the rust we were getting from WASA. I am still not completely satisfied Timmy with what was said, because I am familiar with rust. I'll have his results back in three weeks. Again I commend Timmy for acting quickly on that. Mayor Mike Hill said we are going to try and look into it.

Timmy Kennedy was asked to come forward to provide the water report. Mr. Kennedy said I got a bid for concrete work for the overflowing. The headwalls on Edwards Avenue and Park Circle. In the last meeting you all agreed that if it was less than 5,000 that was just a number I came up with. It was 4910.00 and you should have a copy. I don't want to put a cement across the top of that headwall if we are going to end of changing the size of that top. Mayor Mike Hill said just hold on it until we talk to the state and see if they can do anything. I'd hate to spend that money and someone comes and tears it all out. If we don't get any answers then yes go and do it. What do y'all think? Commissioner Quinn said I think it sounds like a good idea. Mr. Kennedy said update on North Central culvert, as you know we have a wash out there, after the last meeting we decided to send out a letter to see what kind of response they got. They are working on a response, and they have come out on two occasions since our last meeting. They took some measurements. They are going to send a response back to the company and send us a copy. We are waiting response back from the Wooten Company. I am still waiting for somebody come and fix, and I think they should stand on that one year warranty that we had on the project. Since our last meeting I made contact with Mr. Gerald Kornegay. He is going to come thin the 19 spray irrigation trees that were put in the ground in 2005. I found out from last time if you wait too long to thin they will start dying on their own. So I kind of want to be proactive in getting them done. The ones we put in 1995 I spoke to the same logger about clear cutting those and he said he could do them all at the same time. I only went with one logger if you would like to get more price sheets let me know. Mayor Mike Hill said you are going to have to go back and replant right? Mr. Kennedy said have it cleaned up and sprayed with arsenal, which kills everything, so that whenever we put the sealants back in the ground so the trees will take off before. We are going to spend a little bit of money to get back in order. I was trying to get some prices for the spraying and replanting, but haven't got anybody to come out yet. I've made contact they put me on the list. I also made a call to NC Department of Quality to make sure we are still in compliance clearcutting, spraying, and as long as I am not spraying on dirt. Mayor Mike Hill is Kornegay the one over here in Duplin County, he's probably the closest one around here right? Mr. Kennedy said the reason that I only did one logger, was because Mr. Dean Rouse has a decent property, connect to towns, he's trying to get Mr. Gerald to come out and do his. Gerald would not come this way because 20 acres is too small so I asked him to come do some work for us. Mayor Mike Hill said it is up to you all to make a decision. Commissioner Quinn made a motion to spend for the spray fields, clear cut, and receding. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Mayor Mike Hill said any discussion, all in favor say "aye", motion carried unanimously.

No comments from the attorney or the board. Mayor Mike Hill said he was going to set Commissioners for each department. Commissioner Murphy was assigned for the care of the streets. Commission Quinn is assigned as police commissioner. Commissioner Fantini is assigned as fire commissioner. Mayor Mike Hill also assigned Commissioner Murphy as Mayor Pro-Tem. The board meeting was adjourned.

Typed by Diana Rodriguez, Town Assistant Clerk

Approved by Crystal Heath, Town Clerk

