
**TOWN OF WENTWORTH
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
November 9, 2006
7:00 P.M.**

The Wentworth Town Council held their regular monthly meeting at the Town Hall meeting room in the National Guard Armory, on **Thursday, November 9, 2006, at 7:00 p.m.**

Council members present: Mayor Dennis Paschal, Pro Tem Evelyn Conner, Councilman Nathan Hendren, Councilwoman Iris Powell, and Councilman Robert Aswell

Staff Present: Brenda Ward, Town Clerk / Fred Baggett, Town Attorney

A quorum was present.

Article I. Mayor Dennis Paschal called the meeting to order.

Article II. The Mayor gave the **Invocation.**

Article III. Discussion / Revision and Adoption of Agenda

A. Requests and Petitions of Citizens

Mayor Paschal noted several amendments to the Agenda, the first being a motion to, *“add Richard Capps and Larry Terrell to the Public Comments section.”*

Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Mayor Paschal made a motion to, *“Remove the Public Hearing (Article V) from the Agenda, due to a glitch in the public hearing advertisement (incorrect date advertised).”*

Councilman Nathan Hendren seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Councilman Hendren made a motion *“That we reschedule the Public Hearing for December 5, 2006.”* **Councilman Robert Aswell** seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

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Continuing, **Mayor Paschal** made a motion to, “Add an item under *New Business—Temporary Contract with Lee Templeton to speak at the Farm Forum regarding the Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinances, at the same rate paid by the County.*”

Councilman Hendren seconded the motion. In discussion, **Mayor Pro Tem Conner** asked, “If we paid the county, say, \$28.00 an hour (for Ms. Templeton’s services), that allows for overhead (benefits, etc.), so if we contract with Lee (direct), should we ask for a cheaper rate?”

Mayor Paschal replied, “We’re just using her for this one instance, a temporary basis, and for it to be conducive for her to come, I think we would be better off to offer her what we were giving the County.”

The **Town Clerk** said, “Most people hired on a consulting basis would build some benefits, health insurance for instance, into their rate anyway.”

Mayor Pro Tem Conner said she did not have a problem with the rate, but was just wondering, “...should we take the County’s overhead into consideration.”

There was no further discussion and **Mayor Paschal** noted that this addition to the Agenda would be Item C under New Business. Council voted in favor of the Mayor’s motion to add this item to the Agenda.

Mayor Paschal continued. “*I would also like to amend the Agenda to add Item D under New Business—Discussion on Future Planning and Zoning Leadership for the Town of Wentworth.*”

Councilman Hendren seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article IV. Approval of Town Council Minutes for October 3, 2006

There were no changes or corrections to the minutes. **Councilwoman Iris Powell** made a motion, “*We accept them as they are.*”

Councilwoman Conner seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Presentation: PROSPERITY 2010 - Rockingham County
Partnership for Economic Development
– Bob Johnson, Project Manager

Mayor Paschal asked if Mr. Johnson was present. The **Town Clerk** advised that Mr. Johnson was scheduled, "...to come a little later, after the Public Hearing. Of course, he didn't know we would cancel the Public Hearing. He was speaking to a council in the western part of the county and planned to drive here immediately after that presentation. I told him that we could end up having a short meeting and that I couldn't promise that you would wait for him."

Mrs. Ward also noted that she included Mr. Johnson's power point presentation in their packets and that her memo provided some background information on the fundraising project.

Mayor Paschal made a motion, "*That we table Item A (New Business), either until Mr. Johnson arrives later tonight or until he contacts us about coming at another time.*"

Councilman Aswell seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

B. Consideration of Resolution in Support of the Rockingham County
Partnership – Brenda Ward, Town Administrator

Mayor Paschal asked **Mrs. Ward** if she wanted to go ahead with the Resolution without Mr. Johnson. **Mrs. Ward** asked if Council needed, "...to hear what he has to say beforehand. If not, I can go ahead with it."

Councilman Aswell made a motion, "*That we table that until we hear the other.*" **Councilwoman Conner** seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

C. Consideration of Temporary Contract with Lee Templeton to Speak at the Farm Forum regarding the Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinances.

Mayor Paschal noted that the Farm Forum would be, “next Tuesday morning.”

Councilwoman Powell made a motion, “That we contact Lee (Templeton) and offer it to her at the same rate we paid the County.”

Councilman Aswell seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

D. Discussion on Future Planning and Zoning Leadership for the Town of Wentworth.”

Mayor Paschal advised that the County Planning Director, **Tom Wiggins**, talked with the Town Administrator a couple of times, “and mentioned the possibility that they (County) may cut back their staff and may not be able to do Wentworth’s planning any more.”

“The County Manager, **Tom Robinson**, called Brenda the evening of the County Commissioners’ Meeting (November 6th) and advised that they would be taking it up that night. As far as an official notice from the County, we didn’t receive anything in writing. It wasn’t on their Agenda, but they took it up in closed session because it was a personnel issue.”

“I talked with **Chairman Jerry Owens** and **Co-Chair Harold Bass**. I don’t think **Co-Chairman Bass** was aware of all the information as to what we were paying and the hours being spent. **Chairman Owens** was looking into it for me, because I asked questions about it not being on the Agenda and being taken up in a Closed Session, and I asked if they actually voted for that. **Chairman Owens** advised, ‘No,’ they didn’t vote to do away with the contract, but they voted to do away with Lee (Templeton) who was tied to Wentworth. So, in his understanding and Tom Wiggins’ understanding, that meant they were doing away with the Planning and Zoning for the Town of Wentworth. In the past, they would just bring in someone else and who would be assigned to Wentworth because it didn’t involve that many hours.”

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“Evidently,” **Mayor Paschal** reasoned, “he doesn’t think they can do that anymore. The last thing the **Chairman** talked to me about was some of the projects we have done, the last of which was the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Brenda and I looked at it, and since January, the last invoice we had for Lee’s services was through May, for fourteen and some odd hours at a total of \$319.00. So, we haven’t been using her a whole lot. And, she attends some things as a citizen, in her spare time, not on County time.”

Mayor Paschal concluded, “What I need to know from Council is whether or not you want me to contact the rest of the commissioners and talk to them to see if they had all the information, and if in fact that is what they meant to do, was to do away with their contract with the Town of Wentworth. **Chairman Owens** is telling me this is the case, but at the same time, I did get some mixed signals from **Harold Bass**, that he did not realize the Contract was tied to Lee Templeton (her position). He also was not aware of the extra money we had been paying.”

The **Mayor** said he would, “handle this anyway Council directs me to.” He added, “I asked Commissioner Owens about being on the December Agenda and that is when he said, ‘maybe you don’t need to pursue this.’ But I’m not sure that all the commissioners realize what was going on. I don’t think it was my decision to make alone, but I will go in whichever direction Council sends me.”

Councilman Hendren said, “I feel that since they may not have been aware of everything, they should be made aware of it.”

Councilwoman Powell said she would second that motion.

Councilman Hendren said he didn’t put it in the form of a motion, and was only expressing his opinion.

Councilman Aswell said he *would* put it in the form of a motion, “*To talk to the rest of the Commissioners and make them aware of it and the way it’s been handled and the situation, too.*”

Councilwoman Powell and **Mayor Pro Tem Conner** seconded the motion.

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Mayor Paschal asked if there was any further discussion.

Councilman Hendren said he would just like to add, "I think everyone on Council will agree that Lee (Templeton) has done an excellent job in planning matters for us."

"She has," said **Mayor Pro Tem Conner**.

All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Paschal invited **Mr. Richard Capps**, who resides on Richardson Drive in Reidsville, to address Council.

Mr. Capps thanked the Council members for letting him speak and said that he was acting as the liaison between children and parents and would even act as liaison on behalf of the Town Council if he needed to, to address the County Commissioners regarding a need for a Parks and Recreation Department in the area.

Mr. Capps continued, "What I would like to bring to you tonight is just a few things to think about. The towns and cities already have their own recreation department. Some of them, Reidsville for instance, has an excellent Senior Citizens Center. There are some cooperative efforts within the county and I don't think the County wants to take over what anyone else is already doing. I do think there is a need for the County and maybe Wentworth to partner and have your own niche."

Mr. Capps said this idea came to him accidentally, while he was involved in coaching a Rockingham County youth football league this year. He said, "I can speak specifically about that little niche I mentioned, because there were 200 kids who suited in football uniforms and several hundred kids who did not because we just did not have room for them. The cities do not have room for them, and to be honest with you, I was floored when I started doing some investigating and discovered the statistics. There are 36,000 households in Rockingham County and out of those, 30% of the people in those households are under 18 years of age."

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Mr. Capps continued, “There are not enough good things for kids to do this day and age. We need to keep them busy and active and have places for them to go. We have more than enough facilities nearby. Within a mile of where I stand right now, there are five gymnasiums. We have the middle school, the high school, the college, the old elementary school and the new elementary school.”

He added, “We are losing revenue and we are losing kids and activities to other areas. We have a Hispanic population that loves to play soccer and does pick-up games on Sunday in any field they can find.”

Mr. Capps said there is a great need for someone to come up with a source to address the needs, “...be it through Wentworth or the County, or a cooperative effort.”

Mr. Capps passed out some information to Council saying, “This is who I am professionally. It doesn’t tell you about me as a person, but I am a very analytical person. I have worked on this for only three weeks, and I have gathered a lot of information. I thought about printing out some of it for you, but I know you have enough before you right now without having to wade through more.”

Mr. Capps added, “What I wanted to do is just plant the seed, see if there is anything I can do for the Town Council, if we can work together to get started in the right direction to see what is available, what needs can we meet.”

“I also went on the internet and found Ms. Kathy White who helped start the Madison Parks and Recreation Department. Sometimes when you venture out on a project, you find that it is not always what you wanted it to be. Obviously, I would like for Wentworth to have a Parks and Recreation Department, but it may not be that way, it may have to be a joint effort funded by both the County and the Town Council.”

“I found out that there are grants available for recreation, greenways, walking trails. There is the potential for many recreational activities in Wentworth, but right now, on the website, the only thing listed is the Veterans’ Park. I know that the county and the town can offer more than that.”

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Mr. Capps concluded, “As I said, I just wanted to plant the seed, see if you have any interest in my assistance to try to make something happen.” He said he would be glad to answer any questions.

Mayor Paschal commented, “We tried a number of years ago to go in with the school system, to use some of their fields and have a recreation department, but that didn’t work out. A former county manager told me at one time, that the county wasn’t in the recreation business. That may have changed now. We recently approved a resolution establishing a Recreation Committee and we have run some ads but no one has applied or signed up to date. The Town’s role would be to provide some funding for that, once we get it off the ground, so we are looking in that direction. We’re just trying to take our time and make sure whatever we put together is sustainable and not put together one year and then gone the next. If we can get a recreation committee started within the Township and then the Town work with them on some of the things they need. We might could build a ball field, rent some of the fields and the gym down here...we have looked at it in the not-so-distant past.”

The **Town Clerk** said the ad has run “...two or three times, but either it’s not big enough or people are afraid to volunteer...”

Mr. Capps said that he had not seen the advertisement. He mentioned Coach Lenny Stadler at Rockingham County High School, saying, “He took it upon himself to start the Rockingham County Youth Football League for these kids out here in the county. It is an overwhelming task on him, I can tell you, to do what he is doing. He made a comment to me, that he wished someone would take this up.”

Mr. Capps said that he understands what the mayor is saying—“I don’t like to fail at anything either, so if I do something, I want to do it right. And like you said, we need to find something that will grow, will last, not to take anything away from the programs around us.”

“Right now, we need a park of soccer fields, not one, but maybe four fields in one area so you could have multiple games going on at one time. The Bethany community does their own little thing at basketball season and little-league baseball. Wentworth is doing their own little thing at football season. There are also adult activities that are desirable here as well.”

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Mr. Capps said, "I am a visionary. I think Wentworth is going to continue to grow. If we need a Recreation Committee put together, it would be a venture for me and require some learning and patience on my part, but if you tell me what needs to be done, how you want to handle it and what a person needs to do to make it work, I will volunteer my time to find out what needs to be done."

Mayor Paschal advised that one of the guidelines established for committee members is that they have to reside in the Town of Wentworth. He commented, "It's a pretty big area, so there are bound to be some people out there who are probably involved in some of your programs already. I think it should be a well-rounded program, basketball, soccer, baseball. To pick out one particular sport and say we're only going to do that wouldn't be quite right, I don't think. But I think we do need to look at running our ad again."

Mrs. Ward said, "But I think what Mr. Capps is saying is that you have to start somewhere to begin organizing it."

Mr. Capps said, "That's right. You have to find that starting point and then, as the movie says, 'if you build it, they will come.' It will be a co-op program, just like your arrangement with the county for sheriff's protection, etc. There are grants out there and there are ways to make it happen."

Mayor Paschal said, "If you get a group of people in the area who want to work together on this, we will be glad to listen. We wanted to begin by setting up the Recreation Committee, and I think that is the route we need to go; and then, any thing that we do in the future with the county or state as far as grants, etc. we would look at it at that time. But for the time being, the vehicle we have in place, although it's not moving yet, all anyone has to do is come in and get an application for the Recreation Committee and we'll start there."

Councilman Hendren asked Mr. Capps if he could move to Wentworth. **Mr. Capps** said he owns a house in University Estates. The **Town Clerk** said she would send Mr. Capps a copy of the committee application and criteria for membership in case he runs into someone who is interested.

Mayor Paschal thanked Mr. Capps for coming. He then acknowledged **Larry Terrell**, Peach Tree Road, who also signed the Speaker Register to address Council.

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The **Town Clerk** advised council that they have copies of Mr. Terrell's email in their packets.

Mr. Terrell began by saying, "I've been passing by the Town property every day on my way home. I understand that the building has been put on hold for a while and I am in agreement with that, but I would like to encourage the Council to investigate going ahead and clearing the property of the buildings and some of the small trees. It's more or less a nuisance or an eyesore for the county, for the Town of Wentworth, and also, the buildings are caving in. They are a liability for us. Luckily, we haven't seen anyone hanging out in the buildings, but there are kids across the road."

Mr. Terrell said he could be wrong but asked, "Isn't there a well in the kitchen or is it filled up? I know the floor (over the well) is caving in."

Councilwoman Powell said, "No, it's filled in." **Mayor Paschal** agreed. The **Mayor** and **Town Clerk** asked **Mr. Ken Stafford**, the Town's Engineer/Architect who was at the meeting, if that was not what his findings showed.

Mr. Stafford said he thought he remembers that the well is filled in, but he didn't have the report with him. He added, "You do have some asbestos in those buildings, though, that would have to be removed by someone who knows what they're doing. You can't just go in and doze them down."

Mayor Paschal asked Mr. Stafford if he had any idea what it would cost to take care of it. **Mr. Stafford** said he is "shooting from the hip," but that it would not surprise him if demolition costs are as much as \$25,000.

He added, "I think it would make sense to have someone come in to take care of all of it, and take both buildings down at once, because mobilization is going to be a big part of the costs. It would probably also make sense to put some kind of bid package out there so you can get some local folks who may be interested in doing it, and give you some competitive pricing. The biggest player in the piedmont for demolition is D.H. Griffin out of Greensboro. We've always found them to be real competitive, even against local folks, so I would recommend that they get a shot at it too."

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Mr. Stafford said again, "I just want to remind you of the asbestos. You need to make sure you get someone who knows the procedures to go through to contain that. It will have to be disposed of properly and not just put in a dump. The landfills have regulations they have to follow as well."

Mayor Paschal asked Mr. Terrell to continue. **Mr. Terrell** said he wasn't sure if he was finished or not.

Councilman Hendren asked Mr. Terrell, "Could this be a training burn?" **Mr. Terrell**, a volunteer fireman, said he was sure that with the asbestos, it would be a problem. He added, "How y'all get rid of it, I don't care. I just think it would be advantageous, even if this council is not around to do it (town hall), we can have it done and it would be cheaper to do it now. We won't have to pay his ten percent or his architectural/engineering fee if we go back to it later on."

He continued, "When we (Town Hall Committee) walked through the property to try to site the building, and get the footage from the road, there were little shrubs and trees in the way everywhere. The Town is paying this guy how much money to mow, and basically all he is doing is weed eating around some trees, he ain't mowing nothing."

Mayor Paschal replied, "He is mowing around some of the trees, because there are some wide enough spaces to get a mower through."

Mr. Terrell said, "But don't you think it would be better to have all of them gone?"

Mayor Paschal said, "Well, yeah, it would be better if we had something built out there, and I think we need to look at that and possibly while we have equipment out there, go ahead and do some grading, too, knocking it off flat in a couple of spots."

Councilman Hendren said, "It might be a good place to start a park with some walking trails or something, while we're trying to figure out if we're going to build a town hall."

Councilwoman Powell asked, "If you do that, where are you going to put our building?"

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Mayor Paschal said, “We’ve got all those big oak trees down in there where we could put walking trails...”

Councilman Hendren added, “That’s what I’m saying...it would be a good spot for that and even at the point of construction at a later date, it would serve a purpose for the citizens prior to that time.”

Mr. Terrell concluded, “I just want to encourage you to think about it, investigate it, see what it would cost, and then *if* we do build a town hall, that would be one project out of the way. Maybe if we do it now, we can get a cheaper rate since there is no timeframe involved. Maybe a local person can remove the buildings at a cheaper rate, too.”

Mayor Paschal said, “But we’ve got to handle the asbestos correctly, too.”

Mayor Paschal thanked Mr. Terrell and asked Mr. Stafford if he could get some figures together on what it would cost to take the buildings down.

Mr. Stafford replied, “We’ll take a real close look at it for you, but I would like to say one thing about saving money. If you do it as a separate contract rather than waiting for your building contractor to do it, all he is going to do is turn around and sub-contract and tack his ten percent on the construction costs, so I think you’re going to save money by taking it out early rather than letting it be part of the building contract.”

Mayor Paschal said, “Right, and as soon as you can, December or January, bring us back some figures on it if you will.”

Mayor Paschal noted there was no additional business and moved on to the announcements.

Article VIII. Announcements

- There will be a FARM FORUM in the Town Hall Meeting Room on Tuesday, November 14th at 8:45 a.m. We want to introduce to Wentworth farmers the farm and Agritourism ordinances that have been adopted. Several speakers covering various topics will also be on the Agenda.

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Article VIII. Announcements – Continued

- There will be a JOINT MEETING / WORK SESSION for the Town Council and Planning Board on Tuesday, November 14th at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room at the National Guard Armory, concerning the Central Business District.
- The Rockingham County League of Local Governments Quarterly Meeting will be hosted by the Town of Stoneville on Monday, November 20, 2006, at the Vera Holland Community Building located on Highway 770 East in Stoneville. The social will begin at 6:00 p.m. and dinner will be served at 6:30.
- The next regular meeting of the Wentworth Town Council will be on Tuesday, December 5, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall meeting room at the National Guard Armory.
- The next regular meeting of the Wentworth Planning Board will be held on Tuesday, December 19, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall meeting room at the National Guard Armory.

Mayor Paschal asked if anyone had additional announcements before the meeting adjourned.

The **Town Clerk** said she realized Council tabled action on the Resolution in Support of the Economic Development Partnership, but said she would like them to, “reconsider and take it up tonight.”

She said, “The full board meets next Wednesday and they were hoping that all the municipalities would have acted on it.”

Councilman Hendren asked, “Don’t we need to see this presentation first?”

Mrs. Ward replied, “The power point presentation has to do with the fundraising efforts and the statistics related to economic development. It is about soliciting contributions from the *private* sector, not the public sector.”

Mayor Paschal said he “...really didn’t have a problem with it. I just thought we would wait to see if he (Bob Johnson) showed up. The part I did have a problem with, I think you have changed in the Resolution.”

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Mayor Paschal pointed out the last paragraph, saying he wanted the Town's continued support of the Partnership to be contingent upon a change, "...giving everyone a vote in the executive sessions, all the towns." He said he believed this to be, "part of the problem that brought everything to this point."

Mayor Paschal said, "If council agrees, we can go back to the item of New Business, Article VI-B...which was temporarily displaced."

He reiterated, "The change (in the Resolution) had to do with each town having a seat on the Partnership Board, with full voting rights. I really didn't have a problem with the Resolution as long as it had that wording in it. So, if council is willing to look at it...it is contingent upon having all those matters worked out, so it wouldn't be a carte blanche approval for just anything they did."

There was no opposition from Council, and **Mayor Paschal** made a motion, "*That we pass the Resolution.*" **Councilman Aswell** seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article IX. A D J O U R N

Mayor Paschal made a motion, "*That we adjourn.*" **Councilman Hendren** seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Brenda Ward, Town Clerk

Approved By: _____
Dennis Paschal, Mayor

Note: Let the records show that **Mr. Bob Johnson** came in after the meeting adjourned, and stated his regrets for not making it to the meeting sooner. **Mr. Johnson** told Council he would be glad to answer any questions about any of the information in the PROSPERITY 2010 notebook he left with the Town Clerk, or on the presentation itself.

The **Clerk** told Mr. Johnson that the Council adopted the Resolution of Support, with some changes in wording to address voting rights of the municipalities. **Mr. Johnson** was very appreciative and thanked council for their time.