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**TOWN OF WENTWORTH  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES  
April 1, 2008  
7:00 P.M.**

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**The Wentworth Town Council** held their regular monthly meeting in the Town Hall meeting room at the National Guard Armory, on **Tuesday, April 1, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.**

**Council members present:** Mayor Dennis Paschal, Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner, Councilwoman Iris Powell, Councilman Robert Aswell, and Councilman James Belcher

**A quorum was present.**

**Staff Present:** Yvonne Russell, Finance Officer / Town Attorney, Fred Baggett, and Deputy Sheriff Clarence Cheshire

**Town Administrator/Town Clerk, Brenda Ward,** was out of town.

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

**Article II. Councilwoman Iris Powell** gave the **Invocation.**

**Article III. Discussion / Revisions / Adoption of Agenda**

**A. Requests and Petitions of Citizens**

**Mayor Paschal** made a motion to, *“Amend the April 1, 2008, Town Council Agenda to add Bonnie Dickens to speak for the Funding Request for ReDirections, Janet Rakestraw to speak for the Funding Request for World Changers, and Brittany Easter to speak for the Funding Request for the RCHS SADD Club.”*

**Mayor Pro Tem Conner** seconded the motion. There was no discussion, all voted in favor, and the motion carried.

**Article IV. Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes**

**A. Town Council Meeting – March 4, 2008**

**Mayor Paschal** asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting for March 4, 2008.

**Councilman Robert Aswell** made a motion, *“The Minutes stand as written.”*

**Councilwoman Iris Powell** seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

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**Article V. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Update on New Post Office for the Town of Wentworth Town Hall**

**Mayor Paschal** referenced a memo from the Town Administrator, explaining that Attorney Bailey King is still working on trying to get some answers from the appropriate postal personnel, regarding the U.S. Postal Service's decision not to build a new post office in the Town of Wentworth.

**Mayor Paschal** asked Council for any comments or discussion regarding the contents of the memo and/or the situation with the post office.

**Councilwoman Powell** commented, "If you can show them how they can save money by putting a post office out here, and taking two routes from Reidsville...it would take someone doing a study...someone who knows the routes in Reidsville. They have about eleven (11) routes and some of them crisscross. It just seems that with the gas situation like it is now, we would have a good argument."

**Mayor Paschal** asked **Town Attorney, Fred Baggett**, if he has spoken with Attorney King about the situation. **Mr. Baggett** replied, "I only know what Bailey has told y'all...but that makes sense" (Councilwoman Powell's suggestion)...

**Councilwoman Powell** added, "That's the only way the Post Office will work...if you can show them where they are losing money or how they can save money."

"I don't think that particular angle has been pursued," **Mr. Baggett** remarked, "but I wouldn't spend any money on an independent study." **Mr. Baggett** said he would suggest it to Mr. King.

**Councilwoman Powell** said that no one currently working in the post office could be involved..."because they would lose their jobs. But if you could find someone in the Reidsville Post Office who is retired, who knows how the routes are run and everything..."

**Attorney Baggett** said, "I'll see what Bailey and I can run down about that."

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**Council** discussed various folks they know who are retired from the post office—Carol Johnson and Ralph Hundley were mentioned.

**Mayor Paschal** asked **Attorney Baggett** if he would, "...check into that for us and between now and the next meeting, we'll talk to Brenda about it, too, and see if we can come up with somebody who used to work there."

**Mayor Paschal** added, "The last person who got the ball rolling for us, before they actually came and told us the post office had been approved, ... Brenda has her name...she was a numbers cruncher and had looked at it and said they would save money by having this post office out here. We were at a stalemate then...but after the approval, it was pulled again...you know the rest of the story."

**Attorney Baggett** said, "Mayor, for some reason, somebody from the Reidsville Review called me today and I talked to them and tried to explain the reasons Wentworth deserved a new post office, and about the donation of the land and that the Community is growing. I explained that even if the Census figures showed that the population wasn't growing, that the entire area is heavily populated during working hours. I don't know what will be in the paper, but I feel that I painted a favorable picture."

**Mayor Paschal** said someone also called him and, "...asked about the groundbreaking (for new town hall) and said they may want to do a story on the post office later on."

**Attorney Baggett** said he also advised the reporter, "...the Town has contacted their Congressman and the two U.S. Senators, trying to solicit their help as well."

**Mayor Paschal** said again, "We'll look at it and try to get something together for the next meeting and pursue it."

**Article VI. New Business**

**A. Consideration of Purchasing a Commemorative Brick (Paver)  
for the (New) Rockingham County Courthouse Sculpture  
Project – (\$500.00)**

**Mayor Paschal** turned this item over to **Mayor Pro Tem Conner** for explanation.

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**Mayor Pro Tem Conner** explained that Rockingham County is conducting a fundraiser to pay for a sculpture project at the new courthouse, by selling brick pavers for the entrance to the courthouse. She noted the three different size pavers that can be engraved, and recommended that the Town purchase the larger one (8" x 8") with the Town Seal engraved, at a cost of \$500.00.

**Councilwoman Powell**, co-sponsor of this agenda item, added, "The sooner you get your order in, the closer it (paver) will be to the courthouse entrance."

After some discussion, **Mayor Pro Tem Conner** made a motion, "*That the Town purchase the 8" x 8" brick paver with the Town Seal and reactivation date on it.*"

**Councilwoman Powell** showed a picture of the sculptures that will be done for the new courthouse, and explained the tedious process involved.

**Mayor Paschal** seconded the motion by Mayor Pro Tem Conner and asked for additional discussion. There was none.

All voted and the motion carried by a vote of 4-1 (Councilman Belcher opposed).

**Article VI. New Business - Continued**

**B. Consideration of Funding Requests**

**(1) RCHS SADD CLUB                      \$2500**

**Mayor Paschal** invited Brittany Easter to address Council regarding the funding request for RCHS SADD Club.

**Ms. Easter** thanked Council for their funding of previous Prom Breakfasts, explaining that door prizes are given as well as T-shirts, with parents volunteering to cook breakfast. She said the event was a big success with lots of students attending, and asked for Council to consider helping the SADD Club again this year by funding the Prom Breakfast.

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**Mayor Paschal** asked if there were any questions from Council.

**Councilwoman Powell** asked, “Will this be the same as what you did last year?”

**Ms. Easter** replied, “Yes. It will be held at Golden Corral...for breakfast...it is some place for them to be after the prom, so they are not out doing something else...”

**Councilman Aswell** asked about the time of the breakfast. **Ms. Easter** advised that the prom breakfast is held from 12:00 midnight until 2:00 a.m.

**Councilman Belcher** commented, “Haven’t we always funded this in the past and done it through the Public Safety line item?”

**Mayor Paschal** replied, “Yes, and Brenda talked with me about it beforehand and noted that this expenditure would be considered in the Budget Work Session (for FY 2008-2009).

**Councilwoman Powell** asked, “Won’t they need this money before we meet again to approve the budget?”

**Mayor Paschal** asked if the request is for this year’s prom or next year’s prom breakfast.

**Finance Officer, Yvonne Russell**, explained, “They are asking for this year’s money. We did allocate for that this year. We budgeted for it for 07-08 and that’s what they are asking for. They’re not asking for next year.”

**Councilman Robert Aswell** made a motion, “*That we give them the \$2500 and see if we can get all the members of Town Council to participate in it...cook and help clean up.*”

**Councilwoman Powell** seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

**Mayor Pro Tem Conner** asked about the Prom Breakfast T-Shirts. **Ms. Easter** said the T-Shirts she brought are from last year’s prom and that they would be ordering new shirts.

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Prior to Mayor Paschal's introduction of the next item, **Ms. Russell** noted, "The next two (funding requests) are for next year."

**Article VI. New Business - Continued**

**B. Consideration of Funding Requests**

**(2) ReDirections \$15,000**

**Mayor Paschal** invited **Bonnie Dickens** to address Council on behalf of ReDirections. **Ms. Dickens** passed out some information to Council and thanked them for their past support.

**Ms. Dickens** introduced others on the ReDirections staff—**Ms. Alexey Ferrell**, the Executive Director, and **Debbie DuRee**, "our Miss Everything. Debbie is our training statistics manager, school mediation coordinator and Debbie and her husband, Ken, are our key parts to the school training programs. Debbie designs the training and Ken, Alexie, Debbie, and myself go into the schools to do the training."

**Ms. Dickens** reviewed the information update given to Council on the training results thus far for FY 07-08 (*Note: See Attachment A, included hereto as part of these minutes.*)

One of the things **Ms. Dickens** pointed out about the ReDirections Mediation Training program, is that the students have to write a five-hundred (500) word paper entitled, "How I Can Make My Community A More Peaceful Place." She advised that some of the student papers are included in the information provided for Council. (*Note: Part of Attachment A referenced above.*)

When **Ms. Dickens** concluded her presentation, she asked if anyone had any questions about the program and/or the funding request.

**Councilman Belcher** said he did not have any questions about the program itself, but added, "Since I have children in school currently, I have asked both teachers and administrators about the ReDirections program and without a doubt they have all given a good report saying it is very beneficial. They say they can see good results and the difference it has made..."

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**Mayor Paschal** asked if anyone else had comments or questions.

**Councilwoman Powell** commented, "It sounds like they are doing a good job."

**Councilman Belcher** said he would like to make a motion, "*That we approve their request for funding in the amount of \$15,000 for ReDirections.*"

**Mayor Paschal** said, "I thought we were going to discuss this one and the other request in the Budget Work Session."

**Mayor Pro Tem Conner** added, "Yes, they're requesting it for next year, 08-09, so we'll want to discuss it tonight (Budget Work Session)."

**Councilman Belcher** said, "We'll put it in the budget for it to be approved."

**Councilwoman Powell** seconded the motion.

**Mayor Paschal** asked for discussion, saying, "I would like to look at this amount during the Budget Work Session, since we have some additional things to look at regarding the new town hall. Yvonne was talking to us about debt service and things like that, so I would like to look at this in our discussion and be sure we can afford this."

**Council** discussed the amounts budgeted for ReDirections in previous years. **Mayor Paschal** said he thought last year's amount of \$15,000 was a one-time, special-needs request. He added, "I think it is a good program but I would really like to look at it during the work session."

**Mayor Paschal** noted that **Councilman Belcher's** motion to approve the request for \$15,000 and the second by **Councilwoman Powell**, remained on the floor and called for a vote.

The vote was a majority of three (3) opposed and two (2) in favor—the motion did not pass.

**Councilwoman Conner** commented to Ms. Dickens, "Nothing against the program, we just wanted to look at the money."

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**Ms. Dickens** replied, "I understand. I didn't think you were going to make any decisions tonight anyway. I was just making my presentation."

**Article VI. New Business - Continued**

**B. Consideration of Funding Requests**

**(3) World Changers of Rockingham County      \$6,000**

**Mayor Paschal** invited **Ms. Janet Rakestraw** to address Council.

**Ms. Rakestraw** said, "I know that you all have given your support of the (World Changers) project earlier, when I spoke to the Rockingham County League of Governments...and I appreciate that. So, most of you have seen the video."

**Ms. Rakestraw** explained, "For those of you who don't know, "World Changers is an organization that sends groups of young people out to a hundred and one different sites to work on housing projects throughout the United States."

She said the projects for Rockingham County came from the County Manager's office and that approximately 300 students will be arriving in the County on July 5<sup>th</sup>, and will be housed at Rockingham County High School.

The students will live in the community for one week and will be working on 25-30 homes throughout the County and in each of the six municipalities. **Ms. Rakestraw** explained that churches in the area will host a team of workers and will provide lunch for them during the week (July 5 – 12).

**Ms. Rakestraw** said, "It takes about \$2,500 to \$6,000 per house for the renovations...they do roofing, they do siding...the young people are middle school, high school, and college age and they are providing the labor. We have construction coordinators who will be coming in with the young people. This is something I started doing when my kids were in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. I've done it for ten summers and this will be my eleventh summer. I have been working on this project for two years, to bring World Changers to Rockingham County."

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**Ms. Rakestraw** noted that the World Changers project has the support of the County Commissioners, the League of Local Governments, and the School Board.

She continued, “One of the things that we had to come up with in order to get them to come here is the funding. We have a \$40,000 HUD grant to provide part of the costs. We have approximately 288 young people who are paying a fee of \$260 to come here and work for a week. The Rotary clubs and local banks are giving toward the construction costs of the projects. Currently, there are two houses here in Wentworth that will be part of the project. Later on in May, I’ll be able to identify where those homes are.”

**Ms. Rakestraw** said she would like Council to consider sponsoring one or two homes, and referred them to the information in their packets.”

**Mayor Pro Tem Conner** asked, “Do we need to make a motion to consider it tonight?”

**Councilman Belcher** replied, “We can handle it the same way we did the last one (ReDirections Funding Request)—talk about it during the budget work session.”

**Mayor Paschal** agreed with Councilman Belcher, and thanked Ms. Rakestraw for coming.

**Article VI. New Business - Continued**

**C. Consideration of Applications for Town of Wentworth Committees**

**(1) Historic Preservation Committee**

**- Dr. Lindley S. Butler**

**(2) Recreation Committee**

**- “T” Butler**

**- Dottie Talley**

**- James H. Talley**

**- W.A. (Bill) Ward**

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**Mayor Paschal** referenced the **Town Administrator's memo** and said, "Basically, we just want to consider adding these people to the respective committees."

**Councilman Aswell** made a motion, "*That we add these people to the respective committees.*"

**Mayor Pro Tem Conner** seconded the motion.

**Councilwoman Powell** said, "I would like to say that when these new committees met, they had an excellent meeting and did some good work."

**Councilman Belcher** commented, "I think we are very fortunate to have some of these people wanting to be on these committees—Mr. and Mrs. Talley, Mr. and Mrs. Butler, and Brenda's husband as well."

**Attorney Baggett** asked if terms have been established for the committees.

**Mayor Paschal** replied, "There are guidelines and bylaws for each committee. **Ms. Russell, Deputy Clerk**, confirmed that terms were established in the bylaws.

**Councilman Aswell** reviewed the term lengths in the bylaws for Council, but **Mayor Paschal** suggested that the terms could be assigned at another meeting. He said the new members could say how long a term they would be willing to serve.

There was no further discussion and **Mayor Paschal** asked for a vote on **Councilman Aswell's** motion to approve the applications for Town Committees.

All voted in favor and the motion carried.

**Article VI. New Business - Continued**

**D. Consideration of Dates for Groundbreaking Ceremony/Reception for New Town Hall:**

- **Thursday, May 1<sup>st</sup> (10:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m.)**
- **Thursday, May 15<sup>th</sup> (10:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m.)**

**Mayor Paschal** said he asked Yvonne if the groundbreaking could be done on a Saturday and that she said it wouldn't be a problem. **Mayor Paschal** said that doing it during the week could be a problem for those who work, since they would have to get off work or take vacation.

After discussion, **Mayor Paschal** made a motion to, "*Set the ground breaking for Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 2:00 p.m.*"

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

Referring to the Town Administrator's memo, **Councilman Belcher** commented, "We will need to identify these people to send out invitations to." Council, however, did not offer any further comments or discussion on the list of names provided.

**Article VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Mayor Paschal** noted that everyone who signed the Speaker Register has already addressed Council.

**Article VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Mayor Paschal** made the following announcements:

- The next regular meeting of the **Town of Wentworth Planning Board** will be held on **Tuesday, April 15, 2008**, at **7:00 p.m.** in the Town Hall Meeting Room at the National Guard Armory.
- The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Town Council** will be held on **Tuesday, May 6, 2008**, at **7:00 p.m.** in the Town Hall Meeting Room at the National Guard Armory.

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**Mayor Paschal** made a motion, *“That we have a five-minute recess before we go into our Budget Work Session.”*

**Mayor Pro Tem Conner** seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**Article IX. BUDGET WORK SESSION**

**Following are notes from the Finance Officer on the Budget Work Session:**

**TOWN HALL:** Council agreed on a loan for \$400,000 for a ten-year term, with the intention of paying it off early. Appropriate \$500,000 from Fund Balance. Transfer \$215,000 from Capital Reserve Fund. This totals \$1,115,000. The estimated construction cost is \$1M.

\$1,115,000 would allow for a 10% contingency, plus some. Town will budget \$50,000 for debt service (for 08-09).

**MAYOR/COUNCIL STIPEND:** I explained that I requested the same amount as in 07-08 (\$10,000) because I didn’t know what they wanted to budget for this line item. At the last work session, Robert had mentioned that he thought Council should get paid for any “extra” meetings they attend.

**Mayor** said that we could put some other amount in that line item, but that would be something Council would have to bring up in a meeting and vote on. Council never suggested an alternative amount for this line item.

**ROAD PAVING:** James suggested getting a quote for Foch Farm Road (in process of being paved) to see if we could budget less than \$75,000 for 08-09.

**PUBLIC SAFETY MISC:**

ReDirections	Council agreed to budget \$10,000
SADD	Council agreed to budget \$ 2,500
Fire Dept.	Council agreed to budget \$11,000
Miscellaneous	Council agreed to budget \$8,000 (\$6,000 to World Changers; \$2,000 for Miscellaneous)

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**Article X.        A D J O U R N**

**Mayor Paschal** asked for a motion to adjourn.

**Councilman Aswell** made a motion, "*That we adjourn.*" All voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.

**Respectfully Submitted By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Brenda Ward, Town Clerk**

**Approved By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Dennis Paschal, Mayor**