
**TOWN OF WENTWORTH
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
APRIL 5, 2011
7:00 P.M.**

The Wentworth Town Council held their regular monthly meeting in the Town Hall Council Chambers, on **Tuesday, April 5, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.**

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

A quorum was present.

Staff Present: Brenda Ward, Town Administrator - Town Clerk / Yvonne Russell, Finance Officer / Fred Baggett, Town Attorney / & Wentworth Deputy, Travis Loftis

Article I. **Mayor Aswell** called the April 5th, 2011, Wentworth Town Council Meeting to order.

Article II. **Councilman James Belcher** gave the **Invocation.**

Mayor Aswell welcomed Boy Scout Troop 701 and their leader, Tom Felder, to the Town Council meeting.

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

A. Requests and Petitions of Citizens

Mayor Aswell advised that no one signed the Speaker Register and made a motion, *“to approve the Agenda as presented.”*

Councilman James Belcher seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

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

A. Town Council Meeting – March 1, 2011

Regarding approval of the Minutes, **Councilwoman Iris Powell** made a motion, *“That the Minutes stand approved as written.”*

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

Article V. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Revisions to the Town of Wentworth Planning and Zoning Ordinances / Chapter 2

**- Frankie Legaux, Assistant Director
Rockingham County Planning Department**

1. Article VI. – A request to adopt revisions *to exclude private hunting and fishing leases, pick-your-own operations, and on-site sales of farm produce, from Agritourism Development Guidelines*

Mayor Aswell invited **Frankie Legaux** from the Rockingham County Planning Department to review the ordinance amendments.

Ms. Legaux commented, “I know we have a lot on the Agenda tonight, so I will try to be as brief as possible.”

She continued, “We have three revisions to the ordinance. The first one is to Chapter 2, Article VI, to specifically exclude private hunting and fishing leases. As you’ll see under the Agritourism activity, the only thing we would be adding is a sentence that is in italics that will say, ‘This term shall not include private hunting and fishing leases, pick-your-own operations, and on-site sales of farm produce.’”

Ms. Legaux noted that council could vote “...at the end to approve all three (amendments).” She asked if anyone had any questions concerning the first change.

There were no questions. She moved on to the next amendment.

2. Article IX. – Section 1.

A request to *adopt revisions to “Off-Street Parking Standards” to add parking requirements for additional uses, update various parking standards, alphabetize the Standards Table and clarify parking requirements when stated in terms of employees.*

Ms. Legaux reminded Council, “We had discussed at our (joint) meeting about revising parking standards and to add some parking standards for items that you have in your Table of Permitted Uses, but that you don’t have a parking standard for.”

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Article V. PUBLIC HEARING – (Continued)

Ms. Legaux continued, “You will note you have one version that shows what we are striking out, and then the italics for what has been added. We alphabetized the whole list so it would be easier to find things. This is something we discussed at our meeting and also with the Planning Board several months ago.”

Ms. Legaux asked if anyone had any questions.

Councilman Dennis Paschal asked if existing businesses would be considered out of compliance with the new standards, or “would they be grandfathered...?”

Ms. Legaux replied, “No, your ordinance states that businesses already there are grandfathered with what they have. But if someone already there goes out of business for more than a year, it loses its grandfathered status for the existing number of parking spaces. Any new business that went in would have to meet the parking standards according to the kind of business it is.”

“Also,” **Ms. Legaux** added, “if it is an approved use in the zoning district and there is a change of use that is still on the approved list for that particular zoning district, there is a section in the ordinance that says if there is a 10% variance, we don’t worry about it.”

“That’s what I was going to ask,” **Councilman Paschal** said. “The combination gasoline/convenience store...you have 1-1/2 spaces for each gasoline pump, and the one down the road here with 4 pumps on each side...that would require 12 spaces if I’m looking at that correctly. They just don’t have that much room and I was trying to envision how large it would have to be to have 12 spaces plus the (traffic) flow...”

Ms. Legaux replied, “Your spaces are generally 9 x 18 and you have to have one handicapped space per 25 spaces. That space has to be 16 x 19, and has to be paved, concrete, asphalt, or some smooth surface so they can exit the van or car and be able to roll...in a wheelchair or walker or...”

Councilman Paschal asked, “It says, ‘not to include the driveway entrance’...like down here (convenience store west of Town Hall) would the circle drive around the store be considered part of the driveway?”

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Article V. PUBLIC HEARING – (Continued)

Ms. Legaux replied, “If the driveways are one way, they only have to be 10 feet wide; if they are two-way, they have to be 20 feet wide, so we would calculate how much there was, and if there was room for perhaps slanted parking...or even, if there is 10 feet and room for parallel parking, too, we could count those spaces.”

Councilman Paschal commented, “So probably, at a new convenience store you would have to have a larger area to get your parking spaces, than what they have down here.”

“Right”, replied **Ms. Legaux**, “and you can also approve a variance for the number of parking spaces; for example, if they needed 20 parking spaces and for some reason or another, they could only get 15, they could request a variance. Some ordinances, yours doesn’t, but some do allow Staff approval of up to a 25% variance in parking spaces. Since your ordinance does not, you would have to go through the variance process.”

“But that would give us some legal ground, though,” **Councilman Paschal** said.

“That is correct,” **Ms. Legaux** replied.

Article V. PUBLIC HEARING – (Continued)

3. Article XV. – A request to adopt revisions to add a new Section 3, entitled “Sidewalk Design Standards”

Ms. Legaux advised, “The third item...we have also talked about—sidewalk design standards—and **Mayor Aswell** had given me some guidelines from Greensboro, and those guidelines are exactly what is in the North Carolina Department of Transportation’s Roadway Design Manual. I did talk with the folks at DOT and they said that any sidewalk within the NCDOT right-of-way would have to meet those standards anyway. So, if we reference that...I think you have a copy of the standards DOT has...and it does include what was in Greensboro’s design manual. There is both the written section...and also, diagram drawings, too. So we are just referencing them—that the sidewalks have to meet those standards.”

Ms. Legaux asked if council had any questions about the proposed Sidewalk Design Standards.

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Article V. PUBLIC HEARING – (Continued)

3. Article XV. – A request to adopt revisions to add a new Section 3, entitled “Sidewalk Design Standards”

There were no questions for **Ms. Legaux**, so she suggested Council may want to go ahead and vote on the three amendments prior to the next Public Hearing item.

Councilman Paschal made a motion, *“That we approve the ordinance text amendments and adopt the statements listed, showing compliance with the Town of Wentworth Land Use Plan, as required by NCGS 160A-382(b) and 160A-383.”* (**Note:** See Attachment A for Consistency Statements.)

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

Article V. PUBLIC HEARING – (Continued)

B. Request to set aside 10% of the acreage in the Dan River (Eden) Watershed, located in the town of Wentworth, to be reserved for Special Intensity Allocations. This would allow the Board of Adjustment to approve an increase in impervious surface coverage of up to 70% within the watershed area for the set-aside acres.

1. Adoption of Resolution to Establish the Number of Acres Allotted for Special Intensity Allocations by the Town of Wentworth

Ms. Legaux moved on to the second part of the Public Hearing:

“You have already, in your Watershed Ordinance...you have set up the Special Intensity Allocations; however, we could not find any record where you had actually reserved that ten percent, so that’s what we want to do tonight. This will allow the Board of Adjustment to approve an increase in impervious surface coverage for up to 70%, within the watershed area for the set-aside acres.”

“You have, I believe, 643 acres that you could set aside for any special projects. For instance, if they were just now proposing to build the new courthouse, you could allow the Board of Adjustments to grant them “X” number of acres...to increase the impervious surface coverage.”

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Article V. PUBLIC HEARING – Special Intensity Allocations (Continued)

“In the watershed that you have, which is mostly on the south side of NC 65 and NC 87—it turns that corner and goes south this way—you are limited to 24% impervious surface coverage if you have curb and gutter, and 36% without curb and gutter. If you want to increase your coverage in non-residential zoning districts...say, you had a store or something coming in, and you felt it was worth allotting some of this acreage that you have set aside, then you can do that.”

“The other option they have is going through the process to request a watershed variance, but with the watershed variance, it is limited...they cannot go up to the 70%.”

“Some of them are approved at the local level, depending on how much they requested. Other watershed variances are approved at the State level. You would make a recommendation at the local level and it would have to go on to the Department of Water Quality for actual approval. With this set-aside, you will approve it right here.”

Ms. Legaux asked Council if they had any questions for her.

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher inquired, “The amount of land would be determined on an as needed basis, and it could be up to the 70%, or is it that we look at a map and decide beforehand, prior to ever being approached for it...?”

Ms. Legaux replied, “You can allot it in any way you like. You can choose to allot it as people request it...or you can choose to allot it only for special projects, but you can only go up to 70%. So, if you had 10 acres, all you could allot them would be enough to get to 7 acres total. You don’t have any choice about that, but it would give them more than what they could get if they requested a variance. Also, they would not have to go through the State either, so the approval time would be much faster. But it is up to the local government in this special intensity allocation. It is something you have, that you are allotting out of the acreage that you have set aside.”

She explained, “What would happen...let’s say you have allotted so much...say it was 10 acres, then that 10 acres would be deducted from your 643 acres...”

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Article V. PUBLIC HEARING – Special Intensity Allocations (Continued)

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher remarked, “I’m sorry to interrupt, but what if, out of the ten acres, we allotted them the use of 5 acres as opposed to seven, then the whole ten acres would come out of the 600 or so that we set aside...?”

Ms. Legaux answered, “It is based on what the lot size is, so if the lot size is ten acres, you would have to (subtract) the whole ten acres. If the development size is 7-1/2 acres, you would have to take that away. We thought it was the other way, and that’s the way we were calculating it and that’s the way Reidsville was calculating it, but DENR just recently has said, ‘no, you have to take the development size of that whole lot and subtract it.’”

She added, “But y’all are well within...you still have over 600 acres...I think there was a variance done for the courthouse and...”

Councilman Paschal said, “But once we use that up, we’re done as far as being able to approve anything here...”

“Right,” replied **Ms. Legaux**, “You might not want to do it for small projects, you may want to reserve it for larger projects that come in, but it is entirely up to you how you will allot that.”

“So there are no specific guidelines on how to allot this...” asked **Mayor Pro Tem Belcher**.

“Only very general guidelines,” replied **Ms. Legaux**, “It is really up to you...you have the choice of how you want to do it, but it is not mandated how you do it.”

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher made a motion, “*That we adopt the Resolution to Establish the Number of Acres Allotted for Special Intensity Allocations by the Town of Wentworth.*”

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

Mayor Aswell thanked Ms. Legaux for her assistance.

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Article VI. OLD BUSINESS

**A. Update: Solution / Options for Town Hall Lobby Flooring /
Foundation Problem**

- **Jeff Johnson, Engineer
Alley, Williams, Carmen, and King, Inc.**

Mayor Aswell asked Jeff Johnson to address Council

Mr. Johnson thanked the Mayor and Council, and commented, “It’s so good to see the scouts here...I love this. I was a scout leader for 20 years and I hope some time in the near future to see all of you at the Eagle banquet.”

Mr. Johnson continued, “To bring you up to date on what we’re doing out here—we have actually removed a couple of tiles and, of course, put them back in, so we could take a look at the slab underneath to see what kind of movement we had, and there is no movement. The joint is still tight, and there has been no vertical or horizontal movement.”

“We have talked with the American Tile Institute and given them the situation and how it is, and what they suggest is what we talked about several months ago, and that is to put in an expansion joint at that point. They have given us information on what they recommend and how to do it, and it is going to require replacement of those broken tiles with half-tiles and the joint would be right down the middle of that.”

“So, that is their recommendation,” **Mr. Johnson** concluded, “and obviously, is going to be ours as well. I’ll be working with the Wright Company to get this scheduled and to try to find some tile that matches...which is going to be the biggest...”

“What size expansion joint do they recommend?” asked **Councilman Paschal**.

“It will be about the size of one of the grout joints,” **Mr. Johnson** replied. “We’ll look at it to see if we need to make it the same color as the grout or the tile, and I think the best thing to do is to match the grout. It is one of those things that, since we have talked about it, we’re all going to know it’s there and we’re going to see it every time we come in, but nine out of ten people are going to walk in, walk right across it and never notice that it’s there.”

Article VI. OLD BUSINESS – (Continued)

**B. Update: Solution / Options for Town Hall Lobby Flooring /
Foundation Problem**

Mr. Johnson added, “This is something I don’t like to have to do, but I think it’s going to be the only solution to keep that from cracking again.”

Mayor Aswell commented, “The biggest thing is going to be that you’ll have half a piece of tile on each side of the joint.”

“And, of course, we’ve got that right now, but it’s on each side of the crack,” **Mr. Johnson** replied. “But this will be a little neater crack.”

“An engineered crack,” remarked **Mayor Pro Tem Belcher**.

Councilman Paschal asked, “And they say there hasn’t been any movement since you took the tiles up...?”

“No,” replied **Mr. Johnson**, “We took a couple of tiles up and we looked underneath there and there has been no movement. That joint is as tight as it has been all along. We checked the elevation and there is no up and down movement, so it’s doing what it is supposed to do...it is preventing the slab from cracking, but now we have the crack in the tile and we need to take care of that. I think this will be the best way to go, Dennis.”

Mayor Aswell thanked Mr. Johnson for the update.

Article VII. NEW BUSINESS

**A. Update from Rockingham County Partnership for Economic
Development**

- Graham Pervier, President

Mayor Aswell invited Mr. Pervier to address Council.

Mr. Pervier thanked the mayor and council for letting him come, “to give a brief update of who we are and what we do.”

“The Partnership is not a governmental agency. We are a non-profit corporation housed in the County Governmental Center. They furnish us the space because that is where the former County EDC was located before we created the new non-profit partnership.”

Article VII. NEW BUSINESS – (Continued)

A. Update from Rockingham County Partnership for Economic Development

Mr. Pervier referred council members to the handout he provided, noting, “You will see on the inside front page that we have a Board of Directors of 22 voting members and six ex-officio non-voting members. We have nine public member directors representing the county and each of the municipalities, as well as the community college, and the tourism development authority. Then, there are 13 private member directors elected to represent different geographic areas of the county. They are elected by the members of the corporation, and the members of the corporation are an individual or a representative of anyone who contributes to our financial support.”

“You will see that we have some Administrative Committees and some Operating Committees. Also, if you turn the page, you can see who the current investors are, and on the opposite page you will see our annual budget—about \$571,000—approximately a hundred thousand dollars of that is contributed by the 36 private-sector members. You can see the amounts that the county and the municipalities have contributed, and we have not requested an increase from the county or the municipalities for many years.”

“In fact, our budget is probably adequate to do the things that we can do. If we had additional money, we would need millions of dollars to acquire and develop some sites or take options on some good sites, but in terms of what we are able to do, otherwise, I think our budget is about right.”

Mr. Pervier pointed out, “This year we are spending about \$50,000 of funds that Duke Energy gave us, and you can see below there, how we have been using that this year. A couple of years ago, as part of the negotiations for incentives on improvements to the Dan River Steam Station, Duke gave us \$200,000 that we can use for the kinds of things that you see we are doing here this year.”

“If you will turn the page again, and drop down to the bottom of that page where you see listed, ‘Three Key Things to Know.’ These are the three things I always tell people to remember about how Economic Development really works...”

Article VII. NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

A. Update from Rockingham County Partnership for Economic Development

- About 80% - 85% of all inquiries we get are for existing buildings.

“There aren’t a lot of green-field projects these days, and that 80-85% is as true for Greensboro and Winston-Salem as it is for us. The thing about it is, if you don’t have the size building they need with the ceiling height they need, then you’re not going to get the project. They are going go to someone who has that building size. This is because existing buildings are faster and cheaper for a company that wants to get started quickly. Sometimes, they will build new, but we haven’t seen a lot of build-new projects in a while...since the ones over in the Reidsville Industrial Park. And again, that is as true for Greensboro and Winston-Salem as it is for us.”

“If they are looking for a site, they want one that is flat and free. They really want a ready-to-go site. If they say they need a hundred acres, you can’t show them a hundred, wooded acres. They mean a hundred acres that has been cleared and graded and is properly zoned for what they want to do, and has water and sewer and gas near by...”

- We usually don’t find the companies, they find us...

“In the old days, a company that wanted to expand or relocate would consider what area of the country they wanted to come to, and they would call a local chamber of commerce and ask for information, but they don’t have to do that any more. Now, they call the Department of Commerce in whatever state or states they’re interested in, and let them do the dirty work. Most of them will also hire consultants who will contact the departments of commerce for them.”

- “Quality of Life” is seldom a factor.

Mr. Pervier continued, “This is another factor that everyone is surprised by. While we are proud of our community, glad that we are living here, and think it would be attractive to others, these are cold, hard, business decisions based on reducing their costs, and quality of life is generally not a factor...”

Article VII. NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

A. Update from Rockingham County Partnership for Economic Development

“Where quality of life is important,” said **Mr. Pervier**, “ is that a good quality of life generally attracts more people, sometimes better educated and better qualified people and as a result of having those folks here, we will be better able to attract higher-tech industry and so on. So, I don’t mean that quality of life is not important. It is important to us and it is important in economic development, but not short term in these kinds of decisions.”

Mr. Pervier reviewed the “Program of Work” listed in the pamphlet he provided for council, and discussed the 2009 and 2010 Projects. He noted that sometimes people view the “expansions” as not important, but he said he advises them that all of these companies have plants in other parts of the United States or the world, and could easily pick up and move to one of their other locations, as well as competing locations in Virginia.

Mr. Pervier added, “The traffic is not what we had hoped. Right now, things have picked up a little bit...we have five projects, and we don’t call them projects unless somebody has actually been here to Rockingham County to see a building or a site. If all five projects came, it would be \$82 million in investments and 448 jobs. I am comfortable about two of them, representing a little over \$12 million and 158 jobs in the next five years or so. I am hopeful about another company that would be a \$50 million investment and 150 jobs, but I’m not sure where we stand with the other two.”

“We have about eleven other outstanding proposals where we have submitted buildings or sites that seem to us to be a really good fit for what the company wanted. Some of these are really big projects and if they all came it would be \$377 million and 2300 jobs; however, I am not optimistic at all about three of those that represent 1300 of those jobs. I am pretty certain of one that is \$5 million and 150 jobs, and I’m not sure about the others.”

“In addition, we have had a big data center ask us to submit information. There is a site in Eden that is particularly suitable for a data center and these could be investments anywhere from \$500 million to a billion and a half dollars.”

Article VII. NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

A. Update from Rockingham County Partnership for Economic Development

Mr. Pervier continued, “You may know that Google looked at this sight, Yahoo and Microsoft looked at this site and at a lot of other places in North Carolina and Virginia. The Yahoo project actually wound up in New York, due to the cooler weather conditions there. So, there is some activity out there.”

“I really appreciate you bearing with me while I talked about how this really works, because there are people out there who think I need to sit by the phone all day and cold-call companies in New Jersey and tell them how nice it is down here, but that’s just not the way the process works.”

“And besides that, there are 14,000 state and local economic development agencies in the United States, so these companies would probably get tired of taking calls if that was the way we all did business. But as you know, these are strategic business decisions that these companies are making and they are going out and looking on their own terms, and they are usually looking with these site selection consultants who can really, really grind you. The idea is, if you are one of the five or six they are looking at, to be the last man standing and be the one that they ultimately select rather than the one who gets eliminated for some reason.”

Mr. Pervier thanked council for their time, and noted their busy agenda, offering to come back at some other time to answer any questions they might have.

Mayor Aswell and **Council members** thanked Mr. Pervier for coming.

Article VII. NEW BUSINESS

B. Consideration of Funding Requests:

- (1) Rockingham County Sheriff’s Department - \$8,944.81
- Sheriff Sam Page**

Mayor Aswell moved to the next item of New Business and asked Sheriff Sam Page to address Council.

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Sheriff Page thanked the Town Council for the opportunity to come before them to, “make this funding request which will help support our Special Response Team and the Wentworth Town Deputy for officer safety-related equipment.”

“Over the past 12 years, our Special Response Team has been called upon to intervene in situations within the county, requiring expertise in the area of tactical response and deployment dealing with barricaded and armed subjects, armed mentally ill persons threatening harm to themselves and others, and also area searches for armed and violent individuals.”

“As you know,” **Sheriff Page** continued, “in the past 12 years, I have had three deputies shot in the line of duty. We do a lot of training in the area of Special Response Team work, and I wanted to mention, too, that in May, if you see any of these black helicopters flying over, we will be working with the Army National Guard in some interdiction work with them, so it will be a joint exercise. We are going to try to sell a little fuel over at Shiloh airport while they’re here.”

“During the past 12 years, we responded to over 30 call-out situations that were deemed dangerous to our citizens who we serve here in Rockingham County. This does not include all high-risk warrants served and drug-related tactical assistance not listed in this request.”

“The Wentworth area has become a high concentration of citizens during the day time hours, through government-related activities, the community college, and local elementary, middle school, and high school activities. With the new construction of the Justice Center and Sheriff’s office, I feel that we will see additional increases in populations and activities, and calls for service in the central area of the Wentworth Township. With this increase in activities, I also look at possible threats in the area that could affect the local township, and our response to these threats.”

“In the past few years, our Sheriff’s Department line items have been cut and the area of Special Response Team reduced and cut down. Each year, I try to re-supply the items that are needed for the 16 member team, and this year the special unit has received special training to work with paramedics in tactical trauma response, dealing with situations where people have been shot and learning how to deal with those situations. Because, as with the SWAT team members, we know that sometimes we may get shot and have to look after ourselves.”

Article VII. NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

A. Update from Rockingham County Partnership for Economic Development

Sheriff Page made a comparison with the shooting situation in Tucson, Arizona, saying, "If we had a situation where we had a mass shooting, at least three to four guys on our teams who respond from patrol division, are SWAT team members, trained in trauma response. So again, that may be an additional benefit also, in that area, because they recently completed a forty-hour course in that area of training."

"In conclusion, the Wentworth Town Council has been extremely generous in the past in providing financial support to the Rockingham County Sheriff's Office and also to our Wentworth Deputy and our Special Response Team requests. I thank you tonight for any response in the areas we have requested. I will answer any questions you might have on any of the equipment."

Mayor Aswell asked if anyone had questions for Sheriff Page. There were no questions from Council.

Mayor Aswell advised Sheriff Page that Council would consider his request during their Budget Work Session.

Article VII. NEW BUSINESS – (continued)

B. Consideration of funding Requests:

(2) Consideration of Funding Request from Rockingham County Arts Council - \$2,000

- Kathryn Gauldin, Executive Director

Mayor Aswell invited **Kathryn Gauldin** to address Council concerning the Arts Council's funding request.

Ms. Gauldin passed out some information for **Council** and thanked them for taking time to look through the literature. She explained, "We are looking for support to help us reopen the Dan River Art Market and Gallery, just up the road from here. We have had some very positive response and have started having some regular events on the third Thursday of each month. Some are workshops and some are opening receptions for the artists who are exhibiting with us."

Article VII. NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

B. Consideration of funding Requests:

Ms. Gauldin continued, “What we are looking for is support to help us with some display equipment. I hope you have had time to look through the request...I don’t want to repeat myself, but I’ll be glad to answer any questions.”

“So you have already reopened the art gallery?” asked **Mayor Aswell**.

“We have,” replied **Ms. Gauldin**. “We had an initial exhibit in the Fall of 2010 with two very young artists. Then, we had a Holiday Open House in December and had a very good response to that. The exhibit we have up right now is ‘I-Heart Art’ and it is just pieces of artwork that are especially important to the artists who brought them.”

“Our next reception will be on Thursday, the 21st of April. We have had several workshops there so far, and most of them have been more focused on helping artists develop themselves professionally. We had a workshop offered by a photographer on digital imagery and recently had a workshop with Melanie Golter who presented, ‘How to get your BEST Work to a Gallery’—things like framing, how to present your work, printed materials, etc. We have a few more workshops coming up in May.”

Councilwoman Powell asked, “Is this different from the way the Arts Council operated before? I see where you have to be a member to exhibit.”

“Yes,” replied **Ms. Gauldin**, “and we have reduced that membership fee...it is only \$25.00 for the whole year. It helps us with the receptions and it helps us secure our workshop leaders, and gives people more of a commitment to the Arts Council, I think.”

Councilwoman Conner asked, “You have asked for \$2,000 and the amount needed is \$4,000. From what other source will the difference come?”

Ms. Gauldin replied, “I’ve been writing grant proposals for some of the local businesses—Duke Energy has given us some funding, Wells Fargo has given us some funding, Waste Management has, and we have some others who have not committed yet.”

Mayor Aswell asked if any other municipalities have given funds.

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Article VII. NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

B. Consideration of funding Requests:

**(2) Consideration of Funding Request from Rockingham County
Arts Council - \$2,000**

- Kathryn Gauldin, Executive Director

Ms. Gauldin replied, "The City of Eden gives us \$2,000..."

Mayor Aswell asked if anyone else had questions for Ms. Gauldin. There were no additional questions, and **Mayor Aswell** advised that Council will consider the funding request at their Budget Work Session.

Article VII. NEW BUSINESS

**C. Consideration of a Resolution in Opposition to Closing the Upper
Piedmont Research Station and Chinqua-Penn Trail**

- Lee Templeton, Representing "Friends of Chinqua-Penn Trail"

Mayor Aswell asked Ms. Templeton to address Council.

Ms. Templeton began, "As I am sure you all have heard, and from the information that was included in your packets, you are aware that an effort has been launched by the Friends of Chiniqua-Penn Trail, and Joe French, Director of the Upper Piedmont Research Station, to keep our research station from biting the dust in the Governor's budget."

"If you have any questions, I'll try to answer them, but the Resolution we are hoping you will agree to tonight is asking that the State legislature not close our research station in particular, but any of them across the state."

Councilwoman Powell remarked, "Representative Bert Jones mentioned in his Town Hall Meeting Saturday, that everyone should write the Governor about this."

Ms. Templeton said that anyone who would like to be heard on this issue, should also email their senators and representatives. She noted that there is information on the table by the door of the Council Chambers with email addresses for the elected representatives and senators.

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Mayor Pro Tem Belcher added, “Didn’t Representative Jones say that agriculture remains the number one economic contributor to the State, but I think he also said it is larger than the next three as well...”

Ms. Templeton said, “I think he said it was larger than the next three combined. One advantage that our research station has over any other research station in the state is that this past year, they received \$140,000 in operating costs from the State—that’s not counting salaries, but operating costs. And, they made \$100,000 through sales of Burley tobacco and through cattle sales. So, their actual cost to the State of North Carolina for operating costs was only \$40,000.”

“There are several unique aspects about this research station,” **Mayor Pro Tem Belcher** said, “that the other research stations do not have.”

Councilman Paschal commented, “There is always a tendency when everyone is tightening their belts, to not want to cut something in your own back yard, but this is such an important thing to Rockingham County, us being a poor county, and I think it has been an asset to the county over the years and would continue to do so.”

Ms. Templeton added, “And Mr. French said that the research station actually puts about \$1.2 million back into the economy in Rockingham County, if you consider the salaries paid, feed purchased, for example, and in general...”

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher said he would like to make a motion, “*To approve the Resolution in Opposition to Closing the Upper Piedmont Research Station and Chinqua-Penn Trail.*”

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

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher said he would like to encourage everyone to contact their representatives regarding the possible closing of the research station and trail.

Article VII. NEW BUSINESS – Continued

**D. Consideration of “Temporary Spending Policy” to Address
Budgeting for Capital Expenditures**

- Brenda Ward, Town Administrator

Mayor Aswell asked Ms. Ward to present the last item of business.

Ms. Ward reminded council that they asked her to put something in place to enforce their decision not to budget for any Capital Expenditures for a three-year period. She said that although the word “moratorium” was mentioned, she talked with Town Attorney, Fred Baggett, and decided that a “Temporary Spending Policy” “would address this, but would still allow for exceptions, emergencies, or whatever. This is to apply to future spending, not what is already budgeted...”

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher reiterated, “Yes, future *capital* spending...I think it was our desire to send a strong signal that we want to be very fiscally responsible...”

Councilman Paschal added, “And anything that is considered an emergency or that you thought we may need to look at, you would bring it before council.”

Ms. Ward advised Council that Mr. Baggett has reviewed the policy.

Mayor Aswell asked Mr. Baggett if he agreed with the policy.

Mr. Baggett replied, “Well, the idea is yours, council’s...it’s not for me to say whether I agree with it or not, but I think it captures what I heard y’all talk about...that you intend not to make any capital investments for a three year period. The end of that three-year period would put you right where you are now in the budget cycle, which is about right; and, there is leeway for Brenda or one of you to see a need and bring it forth for consideration, even with this policy in place. If a need arises unexpectedly, you could address it.”

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher made a motion, “*That we approve the Temporary Spending Policy.*”

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

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Article VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one signed the Speaker Register to address Council.

Article IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Aswell made the following announcements.

- The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Town Council** will be held in the Town Hall Council Chambers on **Tuesday, May 3, 2011, at 7:00 P.M.**
- The **Wentworth Planning Board** will not meet in April. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on **Tuesday, May 17, 2011, at the Town Hall.**
- **“Keep Rockingham County Clean and Green”** has joined forces with the **Environmental & Engineering Services Department** to plan for an annual **“Clean Up Week”** from **April 11 - April 16, 2011**. To encourage residents to clean up around their property, **tipping fees will be waived at the Rockingham County Landfill** during **“Clean-Up Week”**.
- **May 4, 2011 is NCLM Town Hall Day - Quorum Center in Raleigh, NC**
- **FIVE MINUTE RECESS** - *Council will take a five-minute recess prior to our Budget Work Session. Anyone who would like to stay for the work session, is welcome to do so.*

Mayor Aswell thanked Boy Scout Troop 701 for coming out and asked if any of them had any comments. They did not.

Mayor Aswell made a motion, *“to take a five-minute recess prior to the Budget Work Session.”*

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

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Article X. BUDGET WORK SESSION

Council reconvened in the Council Chambers. Finance Officer Yvonne Russell reviewed the line item changes made in the last work session.

Council also discussed the two funding requests received at this Town Council meeting.

(Note: See ATTACHMENT "B"—Summary of the Budget Work Session on April 5, 2011, for Fiscal Year 2011-2012.)

Article XI. A D J O U R N

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher made a motion, *"To adjourn the meeting."*

The motion was seconded by **Councilman Paschal**. All voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Brenda Ward, Town Clerk

Approved By: _____
Robert P. Aswell, Mayor