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**TOWN OF WENTWORTH  
MINUTES FOR**

**THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
FEBRUARY 7, 2012  
7:00 P.M.**

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The **Wentworth Town Council** held its regular monthly meeting on **Tuesday, February 7, 2012**, at **7:00 p.m.** in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

**Council members present:**

Mayor Dennis Paschal, Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner, Councilwoman Iris Powell, Councilman Robert Aswell, and Councilman Dennis Paschal, III.

A quorum was present.

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

**ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Dennis Paschal**

**ARTICLE II. INVOCATION: Councilman Dennis Paschal, III.** gave the invocation, asking for a moment of silence for the family of Troy and LaDonna French, fatalities of a home invasion.

**ARTICLE III. Approval of February 7, 2012, Town Council Agenda**

**A. Requests & Petitions of Citizens**

**Mayor Paschal** advised that no one signed the Speaker Register to address Council and made a motion, *“That we approve the Agenda as written.”*

**Councilman Robert Aswell** seconded the motion. There was no discussion and all voted in favor.

**ARTICLE IV. Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes for January 3, 2012**

**Councilwoman Iris Powell** made a motion to, *“Accept them as written.”* **Councilman Aswell** seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

**ARTICLE V. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Update on Status of Repairs to Lobby Floor**

**Mayor Paschal** advised Council that he and the Town Attorney, along with the Town Administrator, met with Mr. Steve Auffinger, “the engineer we hired to give us a second opinion.”

“We now have his opinion and would like to go back to Alley Williams, Carmen and King, to talk with them and get their response. I will let Council know what is going on, hopefully, within the next 30 days...maybe we can have something at our next meeting.”

**ARTICLE VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. “Community Programming” / Kim Proctor, Director,  
Rockingham County Historical Society, Museum, & Archives**

**Mayor Paschal** invited **Mrs. Proctor** to address Council.

**Mrs. Proctor** thanked Council for letting her share an update on the (Rockingham County) museum. She referenced a handout—a floor plan of the exhibit space planned for the museum, pointing out that the first floor is the target area for restoration and construction, or Phase 1.

“Right now, we are in the process of minor demolition inside,” **Mrs. Proctor** said. “We have taken down a lot of the non-load-bearing walls to open up the gallery spaces, making them more comfortable for visitors and excellent frames for display. We have also taken out bathrooms and sink units, to open up some space.”

**Mrs. Proctor** continued, “We are now pursuing a grant strategy to have the up-fit done. We have all the estimates in, and have estimated the rooms by space and will be selling sponsorship packages to community businesses in hopes that they will support us.”

**Mrs. Proctor** referenced some “behind the scenes” tours that will be coming up and said she hoped council would be interested in a tour.

**Town of Wentworth  
Town Council Meeting  
February 7, 2012**

**Page 3**

She referenced the exhibit floor plan again and noted that the blue colors designate gallery spaces, and orange is for an art gallery which the Arts Council will be using to display local arts and crafts.

**Mrs. Proctor** advised that the red space is to be the reception area, "...but for the Smithsonian (exhibit) and the opening, we need every inch for exhibit space, so that space will be used for the exhibit. We will have the Great Wagon Road exhibit in there. Kitty Williams, who has done mural work for Reidsville and Eden, is doing a mural for us of the Great Wagon Road, to show visitors the immigration to Henry County and down into Rockingham County, exactly as it was, with full size ox cart and all the things folks would bring with them as they were coming in."

"Volunteers and local folks have helped us all along the way. Every change that has been made at the courthouse has been made by local people. Every job that has been done was by local businesses. We intend to use local people to help stimulate the economy."

"In addition to the Smithsonian Exhibits, and there are six," **Mrs. Proctor** explained, "each one of these rooms is designated...and they are large and wonderful, and spacious, and bring the Smithsonian name and marketing. You are going to be seeing banners and postcards, and posters and all manner of information about Journey Stories in Rockingham County, right here in Wentworth. We are on a map the Smithsonian put out. There are six big stars in North Carolina, and Wentworth is right there in the middle..."

"An amazing find," said **Mrs. Proctor**, "is a woman named Carol M. Highsmith. I have provided you some links that will show you some of her works and her biography. She was born in Leaksville (NC), raised in Madison, and then she went away and became one of the most renown American photographers in the nation. Her work is in the top six collections of photographs at the Library of Congress. The exhibit that she is helping us build will be part of the digital exhibit at the Library of Congress. It will say, 'The MARC (Museum & Archives of Rockingham County) in Wentworth, North Carolina'. This is the way we intend to protect history."

**Town of Wentworth  
Town Council Meeting  
February 7, 2012**

**Page 4**

**Mrs. Proctor** said that **Ms. Highsmith**, “who was born here,” explained to her that she was on her way to Alabama to help save a textile mill they are about to take down. She said there will be coverage of this on C-span, and that she provided a link for Council if they would like to log-on to C-span to find out more.

**Mrs. Proctor** said that Ms. Highsmith, “...educates on Historic Preservation, and as for her photography, she is compared to Matthew Brady, the Civil War photographer. She is incredible.”

Referring to **Ms. Highsmith’s** comments, **Mrs. Proctor** related, “She says to me, ‘If it weren’t for the summers all of my life, at my grandmother’s house in Leaksville, I would not be who I am today. I would not have started this. I would not have gone on this journey, and it is important to me that I come back and help. If I am going to go out here and help these people to whom I am not related, I am certainly coming home.’”

**Mrs. Proctor** continued, “She is going to be here the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> (February). She is bringing a collection of sixty hand-picked photographs. Seventy-five percent of them will be Rockingham County specific. They will involve Rockingham County landscapes, structures, and families.”

“So when visitors, when you, come to the museum, you will see that exhibit and those photos, and you’ll find something that relates to you.”

**Mrs. Proctor** said that when Ms. Highsmith visits Wentworth, “Our own Roy Sawyers will be doing a video interview for us. She also brings her own video-photographer. He follows her everywhere she goes and you can find those videos all over the internet.”

**Mrs. Proctor** expressed, “...what an amazing, exciting, opportunity this all is for the County and the Town of Wentworth.” She thanked Council for their continued support of the museum and all the efforts made to that end.

**Town of Wentworth  
Town Council Meeting  
February 7, 2012**

**Page 5**

Moving to the next item of her “Talking Points,” **Mrs. Proctor** said she would like to talk about the Wentworth Historic Preservation Committee, and remarked, “We initiated the County Home Cemetery marker and clean-up. As you know, with Bob Carter’s help and working with a Scout, we were able to make this happen. We are going to be asking them to help maintain this over a period of time, because it is right here in our town and we want to keep it attractive for visitors in search of their ancestors.”

“We (the committee) were also aware that people do not know what to do with their (historic) structures, and things were being torn down. The committee wants to be able to help with these types of situations. We believe historic districts could be developed if people were more aware of what their options are and how to apply them...”

“Part of what we talked about was a Historic Preservation Awareness event, where we bring in speakers from historic preservation groups across the state and address some of these things.”

“We brought in Mark Pegram, Clerk of Court, to one of our meetings to find out exactly what people do when they come in relative to cemeteries and the preservation of cemeteries. We have always been strong and understood our task related to historic preservation.”

**Mrs. Proctor** said, “Our connection with Carol Highsmith, and her interest in what we are doing here will elevate that, so in committee, we continue to work on that.”

“We also continue to work on our project to GPS all the cemeteries in Wentworth. You will recall that we got a map of the entire county and inventoried the cemeteries that were on that map. Then we consulted and brainstormed, and made a list and plotted them on the map. The next step is to GPS those locations. Our chairman, **David Hoagland**, is arranging for a loan of the equipment from the county to go out and do that GPS with the end product being a layered map of Wentworth that shows cemeteries, historic sites, as well as businesses, and whatever the Town wants to make it.”

**Town of Wentworth  
Town Council Meeting  
February 7, 2012**

**Page 6**

**Mrs. Proctor** commented, “As I have mentioned before, the only outside organization I have joined is the Town of Wentworth’s Historic Preservation Committee. I cannot give it nearly the time I want but I can keep it connected, and I think that is an important thing to do right now.”

**Mrs. Proctor** said that Council is always welcome to attend a (committee) meeting, but that the committee would try to give regular reports to council.

Regarding the next item in **Mrs. Proctor’s** “Talking Points,” she advised Council that she has a program development request—“I want to ask your permission for Brenda and I to develop a proposal for a 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration here in Wentworth, and to bring that proposal back to you at the March meeting.

She explained that the RCHSMA Program Committee wants to plan a 4<sup>th</sup> of July event at the museum, and that, “...in talking to Brenda (Town Administrator) about this, and what we could have over here, and fireworks there, and games over here, we began to really brainstorm about pulling this off.”

Following are **Mrs. Proctor’s** comments to council, as listed on her “Talking Points” handout:

“Permission for Brenda Ward and I to develop a proposal for a 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration involving a partnership between the Town, the Museum, and RCC in Wentworth, for your consideration at the March Council Meeting and to put in the back of your minds as you work on the 2012-2013 budget.”

“Our vision is of an old-fashioned 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration that includes the reading of the Declaration of Independence, musket and canon fire (instead of fireworks), a homemade ice-cream making contest (with samples for the crowd), and a panel of judges. There will be lemonade, cotton candy, food for sale, a pie-eating contest, a hot-dog eating contest, sack races, horseshoes, tug-of-war, bounce houses, Revolutionary War re-enactors and people in period costume.”

**Town of Wentworth  
Town Council Meeting  
February 7, 2012**

**Page 7**

**Mrs. Proctor** explained that in thinking further about the location for a celebration, she remembered that Dr. Helmick at Rockingham Community College had expressed the desire to bring the Historic Village on the RCC campus back to life. As she and the Town Administrator discussed the event, she said Mrs. Ward reminded her that the college used to host a Folk Festival on the grounds around the college.

**Mrs. Proctor** said they felt the RCC venue would be better for parking, is located in Wentworth and easy to find, and that the Historic Village is something Dr. Helmick wants to promote. She also said that since the museum area may be undergoing some work in preparation for the grand opening and Smithsonian exhibits, the timing may not be good for a July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration at The MARC.

“We like it because it brings Dr. Helmick and RCC to the partnership table with us,” said **Mrs. Proctor**. “We want to do muskets and canons just like they would have done following the Declaration of Independence reading, and we want to *have* a Declaration of Independence reading. We want people in the community to read parts of that so that we can all hear it again.

**Mrs. Proctor** said that because this would be an afternoon event, it should not interfere with other celebrations in the county, “...and when we’re done and everyone is all tired out, they can get into their automobiles and travel over to watch the fireworks in a neighboring city.”

“We would like to bring back to you, something concrete, if you’ll let us develop it. Have I convinced you?” **Mrs. Proctor** asked.

She added, “We also want you to think about this when you are considering your budget. As you can see, in our savvy nixing of the fireworks at the very beginning, we are very cognizant of expenses and that we will need the help of all our partners.”

**Mayor Paschal** and **Council** thanked Mrs. Proctor for her presentation and asked the Town Administrator what Council needs to do, “at this point in time.”

**Mrs. Ward** said, “I think she just wants your okay for us to proceed with a proposal for your consideration.”

“We can look at a proposal,” said **Mayor Paschal**, “and see what the cost will be. I know there may be outside vendors who will come in and there is cost associated with that.”

**Mayor Paschal** then made a motion, “*That we let them come up with a proposal for a possible 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration and we’ll take it up at our March meeting.*”

**Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner** seconded the motion. **Mayor Paschal** asked for discussion.

**Councilman Paschal, III** said, “I think it sounds great.”

All voted in favor and the motion carried.

## **ARTICLE VI. NEW BUSINESS - Continued**

### **B. Town Administrator’s Report**

**Mayor Paschal** acknowledged the **Town Administrator** for her report to Council.

**Mrs. Ward** called attention to the outline she made for Council, “...so you can ask questions if I skip over something you want to know more about. I thought I would just cover the high spots. I certainly don’t do this at every meeting because most of the time I try to keep you informed by email.”

“Some of the member organizations and meetings that I try to attend are listed there. The Piedmont Triad Regional Council of Governments—you know that is the new name after the merger of the two COG’s. They meet in Kernersville, and I do try to go to those. They meet once a quarter.”

“The RTPO, Rural Transportation Planning Organization—I do not attend all those meetings because **Councilman Aswell** is the representative for all the municipalities in Rockingham County, and he always goes to their meetings.”

“As for the Rockingham County Partnership for Economic and Tourism Development, **Mayor Pro Tem Conner** is the Town’s voting representative, and both of us usually attend those meetings.”

**Town of Wentworth  
Town Council Meeting  
February 7, 2012**

**Page 9**

“The monthly meetings I attend are the Rockingham County Municipal Managers’ Meetings once a month, and there is also a county-wide managers and mayors Dinner Meeting.”

“You will notice at the top of your page, the heading, “Promoting the Town of Wentworth,” and that is mainly why I attend these meetings, is to keep Wentworth in the mix of all the conversations, planning, and networking that goes on.”

“The annual meetings are the Rockingham County League of Local Governments, and I’ll say more about that later on; also, the Partnership’s Annual Meeting in January. I took Yvonne (Russell), our Finance Officer, as my guest and we attended that meeting at the Penn Civic Center.”

“I attended the Reidsville Chamber of Commerce Awards Luncheon in January. I attend the Reidsville Area Foundation meetings, when possible, and the Rockingham County Pathways or Trails group has been meeting as a result of the Reidsville Area Foundation’s grant for the County to do a Master Plan for trails. We held a meeting for the public one evening here at the Town Hall, and some of you also attended that meeting.”

“Of course, there are always meetings with citizens and others. Dr. Helmick, President of RCC, stopped by the other day to discuss some of the things the college wants to do, and ways that we can support each other for the good of the community.”

“I have had lots of conversations with NCDOT personnel lately, and of course, Mrs. Proctor and I are in constant communication about the museum, and the Town’s Historic Preservation Committee. She took me on a tour of the courthouse/museum today, and I nearly froze to death, so let’s hope they will have heat when they need it.”

“Other than Town responsibilities, the community organizations that I am a member of are the Historical Society, on their Executive Board, and I am a member and Chairman of the Betsy-Jeff Penn 4-H Educational Center Advisory Board.”

**Town of Wentworth  
Town Council Meeting  
February 7, 2012**

**Page 10**

“As for Schools and Continuing Education, Yvonne and I recently attended the Annual City and County Clerks Academy and Institute. They refer to it as an *academy* now, and not *school*.”

**Mrs. Ward** pointed out some of the topics that were studied, and said that the Finance Officer will also be attending classes related to accounting and finance, later in the year.

“Under ‘What’s Happening,’ and an update on the NC 65/87 intersection extension at the Judicial Center, the emails I have been getting lately from the county manager are sounding more and more like they are reconsidering their commitment to this project.”

“Today, I finally sent an email and told Mr. Metzler I thought the professional thing to do would be for the county to send a letter to us, since we have publicly committed funds, and tell us, officially, that they intend to drop this project. I also explained that there are other parties involved who need to be advised—NCDOT and Mr. Thompson, for instance. It just seems like the commissioners have decided they aren’t going to spend any more than they have already spent...and of course, that’s just money out the window, I guess.”

“As for an update on repairs to the lobby floor, the mayor covered that tonight, and we’ll still be working with the architects and engineers on that.”

“We recently met with USDA Rural Development Representatives, **Allen Hart** and **Lynn Straughan**. Yvonne and I met with them and felt like it was very worthwhile. I think it would be good for them to come and talk with Council as well. They answered a lot of questions for us.”

“As far as our Town Committees, we have the Historic Preservation, Appearance, and Recreation Committees. I am asking for your help in finding citizens to volunteer for these committees. You know a lot of people and as you are in contact with them, talk to them about our committees. We really need some help. We have a good number on our Historic Preservation Committee, and they are working hard, but we could use members for the other committees. I normally advertise in the newspaper for these committees about twice a year, but that can be expensive. I think the best way to let people know is just by word of mouth. We had some people during elections, to say they want to be more involved in the community, so go back to them and give them an application.”

**Town of Wentworth  
Town Council Meeting  
February 7, 2012**

**Page 11**

“As for the Town website, I’ve been talking with Mr. Sawyers over here, from Rockingham Update. These are some ideas he has come up with and we’ve talked about. I would like some feedback from you on those, at some point in time.”

“**Mr. Sawyers** is willing to do maybe 15-20 minutes of video once a month, with the mayor, or a council member, and put the link on our Town website, so the public could view them. I have listed some of his comments for you.”

“He is also looking into ways to stream *live* the County Commissioners’ Meetings over the internet, and once he gets that ironed out, he would be willing to do that for us as well so that citizens who cannot attend would be able to view the meetings as they are actually happening.”

“In addition to the *live* stream, the County is considering placing the Commissioners’ meetings on Channel 2, RCC’s TV channel. Once those details are resolved, our meetings can be televised there as well. When Dr. Helmick came by, he also mentioned wanting to use the TV station more for community information.”

“**Mr. Sawyers** has given us some references for contact, as to his experience in managing and updating websites, if we decide we want to make some changes. Of course, we would give Jonathan City, who has been managing the website for us, an opportunity to express his interest in continuing that.”

**Mrs. Ward** continued, “As far as our Personnel and Office things, the employee evaluation for the Finance Officer has been done and given to the Personnel Committee.”

“Every time we start a new year, we have to purge our files and move things to the storage room to make room for the new year’s files. Thinking about that, we are almost to the point where we need to consider disposing of files as permitted by the State Records Retention and Disposition Schedule. Of course, that is always your decision to make. I know we have always wanted to hang on to everything, but eventually we will get to the point where we may need to dispose of some of our records.

**Town of Wentworth  
Town Council Meeting  
February 7, 2012**

**Page 12**

“We have accumulated several maps in the last 13 years or so, and we finally ordered some storage units for those.”

“Perhaps I should not have put this on here at this time, I don’t know, but unless something unforeseen happens to change my mind...health or financial issues, or death or whatever, I do plan on retiring somewhere around my anniversary date, next April, so you may want to be thinking about that, because you will probably have to hire 5 people, right Yvonne?”

“In closing, as for your council photos, you should be getting a link from Misty’s Photography so you can order the photos you want, personally. She will be sending us the one you all selected for the wall here in the council chambers.”

“We want to make sure that you are okay with the date for the Christmas Parade. The second Saturday is December 8<sup>th</sup>.”

Council agreed to keep the date on the second Saturday in December.

**Mrs. Ward** reminded Council there will be a Budget Work Session at the March Town Council meeting and said new banners for the Town should be considered.

“Also, it is our turn to host the Rockingham County League of Local Governments Meeting. The date is September 17<sup>th</sup>, and we will need to decide *where* we want to have it. In talking with Kim Proctor, Yvonne and I think that the museum may be a good place. I looked around when I was over there today and considered possible table arrangements, and the fact that the Smithsonian exhibit will still be there...we just think that would be a great opportunity for everyone to see what is there, and that would be our program for the night. We’ll think about that and see if they are far enough along with things and could accommodate us.”

**Mrs. Ward** asked if there were any questions.

**Councilwoman Powell** said she liked the idea of having the League Meeting at the museum.

**ARTICLE VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Mayor Paschal** noted that no one signed up to speak.

**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, February 21, 2012**, at **7:00 p.m.** in the Town Hall Council Chambers.
- The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Town Council** will be held in the Town Hall Council Chambers on **Tuesday, March 6, 2012**, at **7:00 P.M.**

**NOTE:** There will be a **Budget Work Session** at this **Town Council Meeting**.

- There will be a **Joint Meeting** of the Town Council and the Town of Wentworth Planning Board on **Tuesday, March 20, 2012**, in the Town Hall Council Chambers at **7:00 p.m.**
- There will be a **“Garden Tour of Wentworth”** on **Saturday, April 28**, from **9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.** Tickets are available at the Town Hall. All proceeds will be donated to the Arthritis Foundation.

**ARTICLE IX. A D J O U R N**

**Mayor Paschal** made a motion, *“The meeting be adjourned.”*

**Councilman Paschal, III** seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.

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

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Dennis Paschal, Jr. Mayor**