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**TOWN OF WENTWORTH  
MINUTES FOR  
THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
NOVEMBER 8, 2012  
7:00 P.M.**

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The Wentworth Town Council held its regular monthly meeting on **Thursday, November 8, 2012**, at **7:00 p.m.** in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

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

**A quorum was present.**

**Staff Present:** Brenda Ward, Town Administrator-Town Clerk / Yvonne Russell, Finance Officer - Deputy Clerk / Attorney Tom Terrell, and Deputy Bob Terry.

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

**ARTICLE II. INVOCATION: Mayor Paschal**

**.ARTICLE III. Approval of November 8, 2012, Town Council Agenda**

**A. Requests & Petitions of Citizens**

Regarding approval of the meeting agenda, **Mayor Paschal** advised, "We have an item here to add and I want to make a motion *that we add Item E under New Business, Recognition and Presentation of Community Pride Awards, to John and Faye Hudspeth, 401 Whip O Will Way, and Michelle Roberson Paschal of 7993 NC Hwy 87 North.*"

**Mayor Paschal** noted also that no one signed the Speaker Register to address Council.

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

**ARTICLE IV. Approval of Minutes**

**A. Town Council Meeting: October 2, 2012**

**Councilwoman Powell** made a motion, "*That they be accepted as written.*"

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

**ARTICLE V. OLD BUSINESS**

➤ **Update on Post Office**

**Mayor Paschal** noted that Council members have a summary of the “Post Office Meeting yesterday, provided by the Town Administrator.”

(NOTE: Post Office Update Summary is attached hereto as part of these Minutes— Attachment 1.)

He asked Mrs. Ward if she would like to comment on anything specific.

**Mrs. Ward** replied, “Some of the people here tonight were there for the meeting, but if anyone would like a copy of the summary, there are some at the door on the table. There were two people there representing the Postal Service and their names are listed (on the summary). We had approximately 50 people in attendance. They provided a sign-up sheet but I noticed that some of the people present did not sign it.”

“As they put it, the good news is that our post office will stay open. Unfortunately, though, it will only be open from one to five o’clock in the afternoon. We were told that they will re-evaluate the situation every so often...based, not necessarily on retail sales, but on the actual number of transactions and pieces of mail. If you go in and purchase six books of stamps, that is still considered only one transaction. Mrs. (T.) Butler asked if she should just plan to go in six different times, purchasing one book each time.”

“People did ask questions, and when he mentioned something about *continuing* the 24-hour access, several folks quickly reminded him that we do not have 24-hour access to our mail. He seemed very surprised at that... you could tell.”

**Mrs. Ward** continued, “Several folks explained to him that because the mail truck leaves bags of mail inside the post office lobby, where people’s mail boxes are, the door to the post office remains locked, for security reasons.”

“I mentioned the Town’s offer to build something for lease to the Postal Service, but he said he didn’t know anything about that. He did say that he will take that information back to his office, and would check on the 24-hour access, and the time-sensitive mail issue that Clerk of Court, Mark Pegram, pointed out.”

**ARTICLE V. OLD BUSINESS - Continued**

➤ **Update on Post Office**

She explained, “Mark felt that opening the post office at 1:00 p.m. will be a problem because they advised that the mail would probably not be up (in the boxes) until around 3:00 p.m. Mark said this is too late in the day for the Clerk of Court and/or the Register of Deeds to arrange to pick up their mail, much of which must be date/time stamped, and in many cases, must be acted upon by them on the same day.”

“There was some discussion on the ‘blue box’ outside as far as maybe changing the pick-up time, but the gentleman indicated that those blue boxes definitely could not be changed...that there was nothing he could do about that...right Iris?”

**Councilwoman Powell** replied, “That’s what he said, but those two people were very ill-informed. They didn’t know anything about the situation at Wentworth (post office).”

**Mrs. Ward** concluded, “A lot of people did ask about a Wentworth address. He told them he didn’t know how to go about that, but as I noted on the bottom of the report here, *we do know* how to put that in motion, if and when you decide to do that.”

**Mayor Paschal** asked Mrs. Ward when the people at the Greensboro office were going to get back to her concerning the Town’s offer.

**Mrs. Ward** said they told her to check back with them in mid-November, which she thought could have something to do with the elections. She commented, however, that when she mentioned that at the post office meeting (yesterday), she was informed that politics had nothing to do with the postal service decisions.

**Mrs. Ward** said she plans to check back with the Greensboro office later next week.

**Councilwoman Powell** reiterated, “That man said he had not even heard of an offer to build a building.”

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**Councilman Paschal** commented, “As far as availability and access to mail, obviously our post office, currently, and once they close, will not be open so that you can get in to pick up your mail, right?”

**Mrs. Ward** and **Councilwoman Powell** answered, “Correct.”

“So,” **Councilman Paschal** continued, “if you wanted to get in there before 1:00 p.m. to get your mail, there is no way that someone could come by and unlock the door for you to get your mail...”

**Councilman Paschal** added, “If I’m not mistaken you can get into the Reidsville Post Office other than during that 8:00-4:30 window.”

“They have 24-hour access,” **Councilman Aswell** replied.

“That’s what I thought,” said **Councilman Paschal**.

“And the reason we can’t do that at Wentworth is because there is no secure place for the truck driver to leave those bags of mail, other than in that small lobby where all the customer boxes are,” said **Mrs. Ward**, “and as I said earlier, he seemed shocked that we do not have 24-hour access to the mail.”

**Mayor Paschal** said he remembers that the personnel he talked to, “...in Greensboro back in August, almost argued with us that we have 24-hour access at our post office, but we told him different.”

“If we did...build a facility, we would *have* 24-hour access, correct?” asked **Councilman Paschal**.

“Yes,” replied **Mayor Paschal**.

“I told the gentleman that if they gave the approval for us to construct a new building for the post office, the 24-hour access problem would be taken care of,” said **Mrs. Ward**.

**Kay Hammock**, in the audience, mentioned that although they said it would be 3:00 p.m. before the mail was in the boxes, “...it could be even later than that.”

**ARTICLE V. OLD BUSINESS - Continued**

➤ **Update on Post Office**

“That’s right,” said **Mrs. Ward**, “because it would depend on the volume of mail she has to sort through, and also on how many interruptions she has at the window for service.”

**Councilman Paschal** commented further, “So there is a two-hour window for her to get the mail up...and the Courthouse and Governmental Center may not even want to get their mail at the Wentworth Post Office if that is the case.”

**Mrs. Ward** added, “That’s why I am glad that the folks were there from the Courthouse and the Governmental Center...so everyone could hear from them. Mr. Fenley, the Field Representative from Senator Burr’s office was there also, and I had an opportunity to talk with him afterwards, as did several others.”

**Mayor Paschal** asked Mrs. Ward, “Did you hear anything else about the communication that went out about the museum folks being concerned that they would lose the revenue they get from leasing the space in the Wright Tavern to the post office...if we build something and the post office moves out, that will affect their contract.”

**Mrs. Ward** said, “I just replied with an email and tried to explain that the broader issue is what is best for the Town, and the surrounding community as a whole. There are lots of folks who use the Wentworth Post Office, even though they may not get their mail there. Also, the museum is eventually going to have to make it on its own, anyway, and I tried to make those points and commented that the Town has been very supportive of the museum and that we would appreciate their support in this effort.”

**Councilwoman Powell**, who serves on the Executive Board of the Rockingham County Museum and Archives, commented, “They talk out of...one time they are worried about the money they may lose and the next time they are saying they will be glad when the post office is gone. None of them were there to support us except Dr. (Lindley) Butler.”

“We’ll just have to figure all that out once we hear from the Postal Service...,” said **Mayor Paschal**. “We really can’t move ahead with anything until we know for sure.”

**Article V. OLD BUSINESS – Continued**

**B. Update on Land Purchase**

**Mrs. Ward** advised that she tried to obtain a new plat for the Campano property on Peach Tree Road, showing the utility easements as the mayor requested, but had no luck. She said she spoke with the Planning Department who pulled up their information, but they did not show any utility easements either.

She said everyone seems to agree that these may not exist until someone is ready to develop the property.

**Mayor Paschal** said the map that was emailed, “...was fuzzy and you couldn’t even read most of what was written on there, so I just wanted to be sure there was nothing on there we needed to see.”

**Mayor Paschal** moved along to New Business.

**Article VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Financial Report for First Quarter—July-August-September—  
of FY 2012-2013**

- **Yvonne Russell, Finance Officer**

**Mrs. Russell** explained, “The Financial Report and the Budget Amendment, I could just go from one right to the other, is that okay? There is one part of it that I could just discuss in both and do it altogether.”

“You have your memo for the Financial Report and like I said, there is nothing of any significance, nothing out of the ordinary to report. I did want to mention that our 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration was originally budgeted out of last year’s budget, but there were several items that were acquired and paid for after June 30<sup>th</sup>, so that was out of the current budget. That’s where the Budget Amendment comes in. We want to replace what we spent out of that so we will have what we originally budgeted for the Christmas Parade.”

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**Mrs. Russell** continued, “The checking account balance is \$126,797.00. Our NC Capital Management Trust balance as of September 30, was \$668,372.00 approximately.”

“If you have any questions about any specific line items, let me know...if not, it’s pretty self-explanatory and I’ll move on.”

**Councilman Paschal** asked Mrs. Russell, “I just have one question about the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event. Is that the amount that we spent or is that the total amount of the event, period?”

“That’s what we spent,” **Mrs. Russell** replied.

**Mrs. Russell** asked if anyone had any questions about the Budget Amendment. There were none.

**Article VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**B. Consideration of Budget Amendment No. 2 for FY 2012-2013**

**Note:** (October Meeting: Response to Funding Request from Rockingham County High School...\$1500.00)

- **Yvonne Russell, Finance Officer**

**Mrs. Russell** moved along to the Budget Amendment explaining, “...as I said earlier, we replaced what was spent on the July 4<sup>th</sup> event after June 30<sup>th</sup>, so that we have what we originally planned to budget for the Christmas Parade.”

“The other item I wanted to mention was the response to the Funding Request from Rockingham County High School, the Renaissance Committee. We wrote a check for \$1500.00. That was the average we got in the response from Council.”

There were no questions from Council.

**Mayor Paschal** made a motion to, “*Approve the Budget Amendment No. 2 for Fiscal Year 2012-2013.*”

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

**ARTICLE VI. NEW BUSINESS – Continued**

**C. Update on 2012 Christmas Parade**

**Mayor Paschal** asked Mrs. Russell to continue on to the next item of business regarding the Christmas Parade.

**Mrs. Russell** said, “This will be our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Parade. We have, so far, about 37 entries and I know there are more coming in. People are contacting me and we usually get several in as it gets closer to the parade.”

“One of those entries is the Easy Street Cruisers, and they have fifteen cars in the parade...most of them are the classic cars.”

“Miss North Carolina—her name is Arlie Honeycutt and she is from Garland. She is going to be in our parade and she will also be at the Town Hall after the parade to sign autographs.”

“We will have the Jamestown Pipe Band to play the bagpipes and drums during the parade, and Santa Claus will be in the parade as well. He will be on the float, like last year, and he will come to the Town Hall after the parade to visit with the kids, take pictures...and we’ll have hot chocolate just like we did last year.”

**Mrs. Russell** continued, “There are a couple of things I need to know from you—number one is the Grand Marshal. Does anyone have any suggestions other than our suggestion of Miss North Carolina?”

**Councilwoman Powell** said, “I thought last year we decided to have **Irene Scales** as our Grand Marshal this year. She is the oldest Black lady in Wentworth.

**Council** talked about what they did last year in selecting a Grand Marshal, and remembered they did not have a Grand Marshal, but instead declared the parade to be in memory of Deputy Clarence Cheshire.

The consensus of Council was to contact Ms. Scales and see if she would agree to be the Grand Marshal. (**Note:** *Town staff and Councilwoman Powell visited Ms. Scales and she graciously agreed to be the Grand Marshal for the 2012 Wentworth Christmas Parade.*)

**ARTICLE VI. NEW BUSINESS – Continued**

**C. Update on 2012 Christmas Parade**

**Mrs. Russell** said the second thing she needed to know concerned the Council float... “What do you want to do there?”

**Councilman Aswell** responded, “I think the tractor and trailer works out well.”

**Mayor Paschal** agreed, commenting, “If we ride in cars we can’t throw candy...it would be hard...”

Council agreed, too, that they need more candy this year.

**Mrs. Russell** suggested they use a little less, since most all the other entries also throw out candy.

**Mrs. Ward** commented, “We will need to check with Scott’s Tractor to be sure we can use their John Deere.”

**Mrs. Russell** agreed, and said she did not have anything else for Council.

**D. Consideration of Employee Evaluation for Yvonne Russell,  
Finance Officer / Deputy Clerk – Recommendation from  
Personnel Committee**

**Mayor Paschal** advised, “Brenda (Town Administrator) completed Yvonne’s evaluation and we had a two percent (merit) increase in the budget. Of course, with Brenda’s pending retirement sometime in the future...out there somewhere... Yvonne is going to have to start taking over some more responsibility...and we (Personnel Committee) felt like it would be proper if we gave a little bit more. The two percent ended up being about \$776.00 per year, and the Personnel Committee is making a recommendation that we give her four percent (4%)...for a total of \$1,543.40. This would bring her salary to \$40,128.60.”

**Councilman Paschal** said, “I think Yvonne does a great job and I am comfortable with the Personnel Committee’s recommendation, so I make a motion *that we give Yvonne Russell a four percent (4%) pay increase in her annual salary, to approximately \$40,128.60.*”

**ARTICLE VI. NEW BUSINESS – Continued**

**D. Consideration of Employee Evaluation for Yvonne Russell,  
Finance Officer / Deputy Clerk – Recommendation from  
Personnel Committee**

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

*(Note: After the meeting, **Town Attorney Tom Terrell** asked the Town Clerk about the effective date of Mrs. Russell's increase, as he did not hear this mentioned in the motion. The Town Clerk said she believed Council's intent was to follow her recommendation for the increase to be effective as of Mrs. Russell's anniversary date, September 15<sup>th</sup>, but to include an additional two percent for a total increase of four percent, as stated in the motion.*

*The **Town Clerk** met with the Personnel Committee immediately thereafter to clarify their intentions. **Mayor Paschal** and **Mayor Pro Tem Conner** stated they meant to follow through with my (Town Administrator's) initial recommendation to make Mrs. Russell's pay increase retroactive to September 15<sup>th</sup>. This information is therefore included as part of the Minutes.)*

**ARTICLE VI. NEW BUSINESS – Continued**

**E. Recognition and Presentation of Community Pride Awards**

- 1. John & Faith Hudspeth / 401 Whip O Will Way**
- 2. Michelle Roberson Paschal / 7993 NC 87 North**

**Beth Robertson**, Chairman of the Appearance Committee, along with committee members, **Kellie Meador** and **Anthony Hearn**, presented gifts donated by "The Cat's Meow" on Business 29, and by Matthew Cassell in Wentworth ("True Colors").

**Mrs. Robertson** acknowledged **John & Faith Hudspeth** and thanked them for their efforts to make the community more attractive.

**Michelle Paschal** was also recognized and complimented as well for the neat appearance of her yard and the hard work required.

Each winner also received a certificate and the applause of Council and the audience.

**Councilman Aswell** commented to the Appearance Committee, "I don't know if y'all have noticed it or not, but the DOT (NC Department of Transportation) has done a lot of work around their location (NC 65) and they would probably be deserving of an award, too."

The **Town Administrator** agreed, and commented that the committee did not select a business this quarter, but said she felt sure they would consider the Department of Transportation the next time around. **Mrs. Ward** said that previous Appearance Committee members, along with Councilman Aswell, were instrumental in convincing the DOT to add the trees and landscaping around their building.

#### **ARTICLE VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Mayor Paschal** noted that no one signed the Speaker Register.

#### **ARTICLE VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Mayor Paschal** made the following announcements:

- The **Wentworth Planning Board** is scheduled to meet on **Tuesday, November 20, 2012, at 7:00 p.m.** in the **Town Hall Council Chambers**.
- **Rockingham County Pathways Open House** will be held at the **Town Hall** on **Tuesday, December 4, 2012, from 6:00-7:00 p.m.** *prior to the Town Council Meeting.*

*Attendees will hear about potential trail projects and opportunities, and will be able to sound their opinion on the Rockingham County Pathways Plan.*

- The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Town Council** will be held in the **Town Hall Council Chambers** on **Tuesday, December 4, 2012, at 7:00 p.m.**

**Note:** *In celebration of the Christmas Holidays, refreshments will be available.*

- The **Town of Wentworth Christmas Parade** will take place on **Saturday, December 8, 2012, at 11:00 a.m.**

*(Note: Parade Entry Forms online at [www.townofwentworth.com](http://www.townofwentworth.com) or at Town Hall)*

- The **Wentworth Volunteer Fire Department** is selling long sleeve and short sleeve T-shirts with the Breast Cancer logo, "Join the Fight." Proceeds benefit community citizens battling cancer. There are samples on the coat rack back there...\$15.00 for a short sleeve shirt and \$20.00 for a long sleeve shirt."

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

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

There were two seconds and all voted in favor. The meeting adjourned.

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

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