



**MEETING MINUTES**  
Regular Meeting of the  
**WENTWORTH TOWN COUNCIL**  
September 6, 2016  
7:00 pm  
Wentworth Town Hall

The regular monthly meeting of the Wentworth Town Council was scheduled for Tuesday, September 6, 2016, at the Wentworth Town Hall at 7:00 p.m.

**Council Members Present:** Mayor Dennis Paschal Jr., Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner, Cheryl Moore, Dennis Paschal III, and Iris Powell

**Council Members Absent:**  
A quorum was present.

**Staff Present:** George Murphy, Town Administrator  
Yvonne Russell, Clerk/Finance Officer  
Patrick Kane, Town Attorney

**Article I. CALL TO ORDER**  
Mayor Dennis Paschal Jr. called the meeting to order.

**Article II. INVOCATION**  
Mayor Paschal gave the invocation.

**Article III. APPROVAL OF TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA**  
A. Requests and Petitions of Citizens  
B. Approve/ Amend Agenda

**Mayor Paschal** made a MOTION, *“To add Sheriff Sam Page to the agenda as a speaker”*.

**Councilmember Dennis Paschal III** seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

**Article IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**  
A. Town Council Meeting – July 5, 2016  
B. Town Council Meeting – Aug 2, 2016

**Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner** made a MOTION, *“The minutes be approved as written”*.

**Councilmember Iris Powell** seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

**Article V. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**Article VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Recognition of Appearance Awards** *(Appearance Committee)*

1. Bobby & Frances Martin – 300 Franklin Road
2. Mickey & Faye Grose – 2330 Ashley Loop Road

**Yvonne Russell, Clerk/Finance Officer** noted that the Appearance Committee could not attend the meeting and she presented Mickey and Faye Grose with a certificate and a gift. She advised Council that Bobby and Frances Martin were not able to attend and would be given their certificate and gift after the meeting.

**Article VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**B. Consideration of Supporting the Work Ready Community Certification Initiative**

(Shawn Gorman, Deputy Director/Small Business Manager for Rockingham County Economic Development / Tourism)

**Mr. Gorman** addressed Council. He gave a brief overview of the Work Ready Community Certification Initiative and asked Council to consider being listed as a supporter on the Work Ready Community Certification Initiative website.

**Mr. Gorman** explained, “What that will mean is essentially two things, and I will explain both of these in just a minute. The first thing is, that you basically essentially understand what the principle of the initiative is all about, and secondly that you will consider one of two very simple requests when considering hiring a new county employee, and I’ll explain what that simple request is.”

He continued, “By agreeing to this you will be added to the 28 employers in Rockingham County that have already agreed to this, and we are targeting to add a minimum of 87 employers in the county”.

**Mr. Gorman** noted that a work ready community is “a national program where counties have an opportunity to achieve this certification in work force readiness”.

He explained, “In economic development, we consider this essential for attracting and helping businesses locally here to expand and grow new jobs whether you’re talking small businesses or larger businesses. The reason for that is, we’ve had a workforce development group working with the community college and Goodwill for many years and this program has been part of that overall effort. What we’re trying to do is really ramp that up and get greater participation from our workforce.”

**Mr. Gorman** continued, “So, to become certified, we are giving goals in our county and these goals are similar goals for every county in the nation. They’re based on demographics, and they are basically five goals. The number of people who hold career readiness certificates in five categories of work force. One is the emerging workforce, which would be high school graduates and college graduates entering the workforce. Another category is existing workers, people who are currently employed here in the county. The third category is what they call the transitional workforce, which are people who are seeking jobs. What we have to do to achieve this certification is basically certify an additional 400 job seekers and help them achieve a career readiness certificate. We already have met the goals for the emerging and the existing workforce.”

“To get an additional 400 job seekers with career readiness certificates, we need the assistance of employers throughout the county to know and understand what this program is all about and encourage our workforce to seek qualifications and certifications as part of their career preparedness. The Community College, Goodwill, and Workforce Development boards currently train and test individuals who are job seekers, as well as the school system, and tests for career readiness certificates. To achieve a career readiness certificate, you have to achieve a level of proficiency in three categories: reading for information; finding information, which is interpreting graphs and charts, how to read rulers, how to deal with fractions; and then applied mathematics. These are all categories that have been proven to help workers be more trainable and help them grow and develop in their existing jobs as well as getting prepared for jobs.”

**Mr. Gorman** explained, “The other half of our program is to get employers to basically recognize this program. Here are the requirements, in a nut-shell: Basically by agreeing to support career readiness certification you would be saying that we understand the program as I’ve just outlined, essentially the principles of it...and that if someone were to come to you and apply for a job with the Town of Wentworth, that you would do one of two things in principle...one is, either you would recognize what a career certification was if they presented it to you and you would understand that that’s a credential; or that you would recommend they bring a career certificate with them as part of applying for the job.”

**Mr. Gorman** said, “We believe by having as many employers we can get to recognize this and be listed on our website and listed on the ACT website, the creators of this program, it will help us stimulate and inspire workers to get this certification.”

**Mr. Gorman** informed Council, “On October 3<sup>rd</sup> we will be hosting an event over at the community college where we will have 50 of the top employers, the Town of Wentworth will be represented as well as, all of our Town employers will be, and we’ll be engaging them in discussion and dialog about how we can advance our efforts in workforce development”.

**Mr. Gorman** noted, “Employers across the board say the people that I have working for me now are very qualified and I’m very satisfied, but the pipeline of workers coming to them require far more work to get them prepared to meet the needs of today’s workforce”. He added, “That message needs to get to our workers, in particular each batch of graduating high school seniors and those that come back to the county after they get their college degree.”

**Mayor Paschal** asked if any of the other municipalities in Rockingham County were participating.

**Mr. Gorman** said Madison and Mayodan are already on the list but he has not had a chance to approach Eden or Reidsville formally. He said the County is also listed as a supporter.

**Mayor Paschal** asked, “Whether you recognize or recommend that someone has a certificate, does that in any way bind your hands on hiring the person you want to?” He explained, “I’m kind of a people person. When I’m talking to people and interviewing people...personality comes in to play along with everything else, so I’m wondering does it in any way bind our hands on hiring whoever we want to hire in the end.”

**Mr. Gorman** said, “No it does not obligate you in any way. It simply is a way of indicating that you would recognize it like you would recognize a high school diploma or any other credential.”

**Councilmember Powell** asked, “What does it do where it says many employers are using a career readiness certificate as a requirement for hiring?”

**Mr. Gorman** replied, “We’re way short of ever getting to that level. There’s a company very actively going down that path, Pine Hall Brick. They have implemented this program fully across the board.” He added, “You cannot *require* the certification unless you have profiled the job. We’re not advocating that. That is up to every employer’s discretion, but we believe it is important for the work force to at least understand that this is a voluntary credential that could differentiate them where employers have the knowledge of what it means and what it could mean to them in terms of making the best choice.”

**Councilmember Paschal III** said, “It sounds like there is a big push in the county, I would assume from the Economic Development Department, to see businesses or local agencies do this”.

**Mr. Gorman** explained, “This is at a statewide level. We were required to make an application to the NC Department of Instruction. In that application, we had to have a committee that represented a county commissioner, an employer, an economic development head, chamber of commerce head, workforce development, college and high school. So we had representatives in each of those “functions” if you will, that are part of a chairing team. What this program does for us, and the real benefit I think we’re going to get ultimately in Rockingham County is it’s pooling the various factions that are trying to employ the work force and bring the work force to a higher level...we’re working together in a much more cohesive way.”

**Councilmember Paschal III** asked what would be the big picture benefits of this program.

**Mr. Gorman** replied, “The downside if we don’t get certified and adjacent counties are certified, then by comparison it will look like we’re not as proactive. All of the counties immediately north of Rockingham County are already in the program and certified. The entire state of South Carolina is certified. The entire state of Georgia is certified.” He explained, “As a regional area, if we’re recruiting industry to the county and we don’t have this credential, we will stand out as being behind and economic development officials are beginning to look at this credential as a standard metric for work readiness. So, it’s almost an unavoidable certification.”

**Councilmember Paschal III** asked, “Are we, as a county, proactive in the sense that we’re making some kind of training available through RCC or through other avenues to help train people who might need this certification?”

**Mr. Gorman** answered, “There’s two active programs and unfortunately they’re not well publicized. Goodwill runs nine classes per year. They are designed to help people pass this test. Then, the community college actually proctors the test.” He continued, “The other vehicle is a work ready center in Madison. They have computer aided, self-paced programs.”

**Councilmember Cheryl Moore** noted that she is familiar with the test because she was required to take it as an employee with the Rockingham County Consolidated School System.

**Councilmember Paschal III** asked, “Communities that have implemented it, do they see a growth in terms of attraction of industry and business as a result of implementation?”

**Mr. Gorman** did not have that information; however, he said, “I look at it as a disadvantage if you don’t have it”.

**Councilmember Paschal III** asked if the classes mentioned are free.

**Mr. Gorman** answered, “If you’re displaced, if you’re not working, you can go through the Employment Security Commission and get registered in their system and they will pick up the fee. There are other programs where occasionally the fee can be waived.” He added, “I think with this particular approach, if we decide to expand this...we could find the funds to cover it. It’s about six dollars (\$6.00) per test and eighteen dollars (\$18) total for the three tests, so it’s affordable.”

**Councilmember Powell** asked, “What about the next page where it says ‘what will this program mean to Rockingham County’...that sounds to me like they’re working to be recognized instead of being sure that people get a job because a lot of people out there, you can’t push them into doing things. So, they’ll just be passed over although they’d be good workers.”

**Mr. Gorman** replied, “What we’re trying to get at is certainly getting the County with the credential has some merit, but in my mind and most of the professional people that work in this category, it’s not really the gold ring. The gold ring is changing the climate of awareness of what it means to continually develop yourself and work continually on your education.” He further explained, “What we’re asking the employers to do is to recognize what it means for someone who brought a certificate to them in terms of the work they had to do to get that certificate and to prepare themselves, and that would be a differentiator like any other work experience or other certification.”

**Councilmember Paschal III** said, “Even if we recognized it...we wouldn’t have to make it a requirement that they have the certificate, but it would be just like saying if someone applies for this job and we see that they have a college degree, then we recognize what that college degree means, that they’ve had education and training, but it doesn’t mean that we have to hire someone with a certification.”

**Mayor Paschal** said, “We were strong in tobacco and textile for a lot of years but as we all know, a lot of those jobs have gone overseas. You have a lot of people out there that may not be strong in mathematics and that type of stuff but still would work. I think this is a good idea, I don’t want to belittle it, but I would also like to see something that helped people out there that are willing to work, with a good strong back, people that have a good work ethic...some way to retrain those folks that may not be as strong in mathematics and those other skills because that’s where you run into a lot of your joblessness...I wish at some point in time we would start reaching out and try to figure out a way to get these people up and help them also.”

There were no further comments or questions.

**Mayor Paschal** made a MOTION, “*We support the Work Ready Community Certification Initiative at the recognition level, which means we would recognize that if anyone came in with that certificate that we would take that into consideration.*”

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

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS

C. Consideration of Constitution Day and Citizen Day, Constitution Week Proclamation (Mayor Paschal)

After reading the proclamation, Mayor Paschal made a MOTION, "We adopt the proclamation".

Mayor Pro Tem Conner seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried. (Note: The Constitution Day and Citizen Day, Constitution Week Proclamation is herein incorporated and made a part of these minutes.)



## PROCLAMATION

### PROCLAIMING

### CONSTITUTION DAY AND CITIZENSHIP DAY CONSTITUTION WEEK 2016

**WHEREAS**, our Founding Fathers, in order to secure the blessings of liberty for themselves and their posterity, did ordain and establish a Constitution for the United States of America; and

**WHEREAS**, at the culmination of months of deliberation, debate, and compromise, on September 17, 1787, the Constitution of the United States of America was signed; and

**WHEREAS**, September 17, 2016, marks the 229th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution of the United States of America by the Constitutional Convention; and

**WHEREAS**, through all its changes over the years, the Constitution's foundation has endured and adapted; and it is the supreme law of our land; and

**WHEREAS**, Constitution Day and Citizenship Day are celebrated on September 17<sup>th</sup> each year during the celebration of Constitution Week, September 17<sup>th</sup> through September 23<sup>rd</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the adoption of the Constitution and the independence guaranteed to American citizens, whether by birth or by naturalization, should be celebrated by appropriate ceremonies and activities during Constitution Week.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, R. Dennis Paschal, Jr., Mayor of the Town of Wentworth, do hereby proclaim September 17, 2016, as Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, and September 17 through September 23, 2016, as Constitution Week. I encourage governmental leaders, as well as leaders of civic, social, and educational organizations, to conduct ceremonies and programs that bring together community members to reflect on the importance of active citizenship, recognize the enduring strength of our Constitution, and reaffirm our commitment to the rights and obligations of citizenship in this great Nation.

**FURTHERMORE**, I urge all citizens of the Town of Wentworth to reflect during this week on the many benefits of our Federal Constitution and the responsibilities and privileges of American citizenship.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand this 6<sup>th</sup> day of September 2016.

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R. Dennis Paschal, Jr., Mayor

Town of Wentworth, North Carolina

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS

D. Introduction of Deputy Brad Wilson as Wentworth Deputy (Sheriff Page)

Sheriff Sam Page introduced Brad Wilson as the Wentworth Deputy appointed to replace Bob Terry.

Article VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

Article VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

After announcing that the Rockingham County Sheriff’s Office will hold a 9/11 Memorial on Monday, Sept. 12 at 9:00am, at the flag pole in front on the Sheriff’s Office located on Justice Center Drive, Mayor Paschal made the following announcements:

- The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Planning Board** is **September 20, 2016, at 7:00 pm** in the Town Hall Council Chambers.
- The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Town Council** will be held on **Tuesday, October 4, 2016, at 7:00 pm** in the Town Hall Council Chambers.
- A **Special Meeting** of the **Wentworth Planning Board & Board of Adjustment** to continue the public hearing for Case #W2016-001, a request for WS-IV Watershed-Protected Area Minor Variance, will be held on **Wednesday, September 7, 2016 at 7:00 pm** in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Article IX. ADJOURN

Mayor Paschal made a MOTION, “We adjourn”.

Councilmember Paschal III seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Yvonne Russell, NCCCM  
Town Clerk

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Dennis Paschal, Jr.  
Mayor