



TOWN OF WENTWORTH
MINUTES
OF
THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
WENTWORTH, NORTH CAROLINA
February 6, 2024
7:00 p.m.

The regular monthly meeting of the Wentworth Town Council was held on Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at the Wentworth Town Hall at 7:00 p.m.

Council Members Present: Mayor Dennis Paschal Jr., Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner, Daryl Crowder, Cheryl Moore, Dennis Paschal III

Council Members Absent:
A quorum was met.

Staff Present: Yvonne Russell, Town Clerk/ Finance Officer
Hunter Wilson, Accounting Clerk/ Deputy Clerk

Others Present: Ellis Martin, Attorney - Town of Wentworth

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

There were no Requests or Petitions of Citizens. Sheriff Sam Page was at the meeting, and Mayor Paschal asked if he would like to address Council. Sheriff Page said he would.

Article III. APPROVAL OF TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA (Continued...)

B. Approve/Amend Agenda

Mayor Paschal said he would like to add Sheriff Page to the agenda under Public Comments and add an Update for the Cafeteria at the Wentworth Consolidated School to the agenda under New Business.

Mayor Paschal made a **MOTION**, *“To add both of those to the agenda and approve the agenda as amended.”*

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

Article IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Town Council Meeting

1. January 2, 2024

Mayor Paschal made a **MOTION**, *“We approve the minutes as written.”*

Councilmember Daryl Crowder 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. Discussion of Additional Shelter at Wentworth Park

Mayor Paschal said Jeff Johnson with Alley, Williams, Carmen & King has checked into costs to add another shelter to the park, and he estimates the cost will be around \$100,000.

Mayor Paschal said, “If we go ahead and put it in action where he’s working on getting it done, we might could put it out for bids next March and maybe the prices will drop down after the election year. Who knows, we might be in better shape, but shoot for starting next year to get the bid out and getting the information back to us in January or February...”

Mayor Paschal asked for Council’s thoughts. **Councilmember Paschal** said, “I think it would be great.”

Mayor Paschal made a **MOTION**, *“We let Jeff start putting some figures together on a new shelter to have for us by our January meeting and we’ll put it out for bid sometime after that.”*

Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner and **Councilmember Cheryl Moore** seconded the motion. **Mayor Paschal** asked for discussion.

Councilmember Paschal asked, “Is there some reason we’re going to wait until January?”

Mayor Paschal replied, “Yes, hopefully prices are going to go down beginning next year. They’ve kind of ebbed a little bit. They’re bouncing around right now, but they may go down after the election. Sometimes they do, you never know. They could go up, it’s a shot, but there’s a chance they may go down.”

There was no further discussion. **Mayor Paschal** asked for a vote. **All voted in favor and the motion carried.**

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS

B. Update on Cafeteria at Wentworth Consolidated School

Mayor Paschal informed Council that LOT 2540, Inc. (Rockingham United mobile market) is losing their space near Mayodan and has inquired about space at the Wentworth Consolidated School. A representative of LOT 2540 looked at the coolers in the cafeteria space at the school and deemed them to be in good shape.

Mayor Paschal said LOT 2540 may be interested in repairing the doors and floors in the cafeteria space, so he asked Josh Guy (Stonewall Construction) to get some prices because that is information the Town will need regardless of who may or may not lease the space.

Mayor Paschal also mentioned that others have approached him about leasing or using some of the space in the school for reunions and other things.

Councilmember Moore asked, “Is 2540 just wanting to open the cafeteria and not do what they’re doing now, the business part of it?”

Mayor Paschal replied, “I’m not sure. We can’t change the occupancy on the school. The reason we’ve been able to update everything without completely bringing it back up to code is because we’re keeping the occupancy the same. The Fire Marshal said that was a cafeteria so it may be a mix of occupancy in there, so she’s going to check on that.” **Mayor Paschal** continued, “I told him (LOT 2540) that there might be a problem with the cafeteria, he said he could do his dry goods and coolers, the frozen stuff, down there and do the food....”

Councilmember Moore said, “I’m talking about the shopping part.”

Mayor Paschal said, “That’s what he was talking about putting the dry goods down there, or the shopping part in there.”

Mayor Paschal said LOT 2540 is looking at two or three other locations as well. He will keep Council updated on any activity or further discussions with LOT 2540.

Article VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Paschal called Sheriff Page to the podium to address Council.

Sheriff Page began, “I just got back from Washington D.C. I serve on the National Sheriff’s Association for Border Security Committee. As you know, that is a big topic right now. We also know most of our fentanyl and dangerous drugs come through our southern borders and also human trafficking and even smuggling. We address those issues with our committee. Right now there are no additional issues with Congress. I don’t believe we are going anywhere on the current border bill that would affect those flows that we’re trying to keep from getting into the United States and our communities.” He continued, “I will tell you this, we lose about eleven (11) people a day to fentanyl poisoning in North Carolina. About every seven (7) minutes in America somebody dies due to fentanyl poisoning. Over 100,000 persons last year. What we’re doing to combat that problem locally is, we just got it approved, we went to a Town Hall in Northern Guilford last year...to their school system with one of our school board representatives, and we asked our Superintendent to consider allowing us to do a program for fentanyl awareness and we started that in our high schools, so we are reaching out to our high schools and doing “Town Halls” with our high school kids. I’d like to see it extended to the middle school kids also to educate about the dangers and about how you cannot experiment with drugs because it could contain fentanyl and it could take your life. More people between ages 18 and 25 lose their lives in America every day due to fentanyl. My understanding with the number of deaths we have from last year in North Carolina, we had more people die due to fentanyl poisoning and overdosing than we did to gun violence. It’s a very dangerous situation.”

Regarding the Project SAFE program **Sheriff Page** said, “Councilmember Daryl Crowder will be coming off of the program and we appreciate his dedication to the program. It’s a safe streets initiative, reducing gun violence and other types of violent activity in our communities. Wardell Williams will be coming on as the Director behind Councilmember Crowder, and he’s got some shoes to fill.”

Sheriff Page also mentioned a new program, ‘Veterans Court’. He explained, “We’re using proceeds from our canteen account to help fund the part time position for the Coordinator, and we’re going to be working with Veterans in our court system that have fallen into a situation where they’re in the court system and try to help them get their lives back on track and get them back where they need to be.”

Mayor Paschal thanked Sheriff Page for the update. He also noted that Council has copies of possible changes to the Planning & Zoning Ordinances that Jesse Day has been working on, which will be discussed at the March 5, 2024 Council meeting.

Article VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Paschal gave the following announcements:

- The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Planning Board** is scheduled for **Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 7:00 pm** at the Wentworth Town Hall.
- The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Town Council** is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at 7:00 pm** at the Wentworth Town Hall.
- **Funding Requests for Fiscal Year 2024-2025** are **due by February 24, 2024**. Applications can be downloaded from our website www.townfowentworth.com.

Article IX. ADJOURN

Mayor Paschal made a **MOTION**, “*To adjourn*”.

Councilmember Moore asked if Council was going to discuss the memo from the Clerk regarding suggestions that have been made for the Wentworth Park.

Yvonne Russell, Town Clerk said, “That was just for you all’s information...just letting you know. We have a section on our website where people can make suggestions and since we had a suggestion for the park through that and then someone else made a suggestion on our Facebook page, I just wanted to pass that information along to you.”

Mayor Paschal said thank you. **Councilmember Moore** said, “But will we talk about it at the next meeting?”

Ms. Russell replied, “That is up to you all if someone wants to add it to the agenda.”

Councilmember Moore said, “I think it should be discussed. I want to add it to the next agenda.”

Ms. Russell asked which item/suggestion did she want to add to the next agenda, and **Councilmember Moore** said she thought all of the suggestions in the memo should be addressed.

There was no further discussion, **Mayor Paschal** repeated his motion to adjourn.

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

Respectfully Submitted by: _____
Yvonne Russell, NCCMC
Town Clerk

Approved by: _____
Robert Dennis Paschal, Jr., Mayor