



TOWN OF WEBSTER
June 2, 2021 Public Hearings and Board Meeting Minutes

Members/Staff Present: Mayor Tracy Rodes; Commissioners Leigh Anne Young, Allan Grant, and Danell Moses; Town Clerk Debbie Coffey; and Attorney Will Morgan

Members Absent: Commissioners Kelly Donaldson, and Allen Davis

Public Present: None

2021-2022 BUDGET PROPOSAL PUBLIC HEARING

The Webster Board of Commissioners met remotely on June 2, 2021 at 5:10 p.m via Zoom for a Public Hearing to entertain public comment on the 2021-2022 Budget Proposal.

The Budget Proposal and Budget Summary Letter have been posted at Town Hall and on the Town website for review. No written or oral comments were received prior to or during the meeting. Mayor Rodes noted that written public comment could be submitted by email or dropped by town hall for the next 24 hours. The Board will review any additional comments before taking action.

***MOTION:** Commissioner Young moved to adjourn. Commissioner Grant seconded. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.*

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

The Webster Board of Commissioners met remotely on June 2, 2021 at 5:15 p.m. via Zoom for the regularly scheduled monthly board meeting.

Call to Order/Ethics Statement: Mayor Tracy Rodes called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. and read the ethics statement. No board member expressed any conflict of interest.

Approval of Agenda:

***MOTION:** Commissioner Young moved to approve the agenda, amended to include discussion of the Land Use Plan and Ordinance updates for 160 D compliance. Commissioner Moses seconded. Motion carried.*

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the May 5, 2021 Meeting were emailed prior to the meeting for review.

***MOTION:** Commissioner Moses moved to approve the Minutes. Commissioner Grant seconded. Motion carried.*

CONSENT AGENDA

Financial Report:

April financial statements were provided prior to the meeting. May transactions currently include income of \$2,090.57 and expenses of \$8,012.33. Current account balances as of today are:

\$ 94,661.03 - Checking
\$ 85,476.98 - Elite Plus Money Market

***MOTION:** Commissioner Moses moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Young seconded. Motion carried.*



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mayor's Report:

- Mayor Rodes attended a Zoom meeting this morning with Jackson County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) Director, Nick Breedlove, and TDA Sustainability Committee Member, Dale Collins, concerning a parking area in Webster for anglers and others seeking river recreation. Mr. Collins mentioned that the number of anglers fishing the 3 mile stretch in Webster approaches the number of users of the Greenway. Private property has been suggested that may be conducive to a parking area, but is located in the floodplain and floodway and would first need an engineering study before any development was done. Mr. Breedlove said a map of nearby public restrooms and a "Sportsman's Pledge" will be included in the updated Visitor's Guide. Mayor Rodes clarified that a graveled lot with public parking signage for river access was the priority, rather than adding public restrooms. Mr. Breedlove noted that the TDA could not enter negotiations for lease, easements, or development of a parking area. He did note that grant funds will be available on July 1 for projects such as litter pickups, and that \$50,000 is included in the TDA's proposed budget's capital improvement line item for shovel-ready grant projects on a reimbursement basis. He noted that CIP grant funds will be a highly competitive application process for projects, and that due diligence such as flood studies, engineering studies, detailed plans, and permitting must be submitted with the grant application to be considered as shovel-ready.
- Officers Yopp and Hawkins reported 11 interactions for the month of April. Timesheets for May have not been submitted yet.
- The North Carolina Senate did not take up SB 349/HB 401. The bill, which has bipartisan support, would limit municipal zoning authority and allow for middle housing, such as duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, townhouses, and accessory dwelling units in areas currently zoned for single family residences.

Council Members' and Clerk's Reports:

Commissioner Young noted that the Jackson County Trails and Greenways Committee is continuing to meet and is currently working on developing a trail map for the county. The map would include information on trail length, accessibility, and skill level and would be available for virtual download.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Apartment Rental:** The annual lease agreement expired on July 31, 2020, and an informal extension was offered to the tenants through May 30, 2021. Mr. Simpson moved from the apartment prior to that date and Mr. Bonen-Clark was given a verbal agreement to extend his lease until June 15, 2021. Mr. Bonen-Clark is currently applying for teaching jobs for the 2021-2022 school year and would like to extend his lease through July 31, 2021 until he finds permanent employment. Under the conditions of the original lease, the rent for one tenant will revert to \$700 per month. The board voted to set the rent at \$750 per month beginning in July in anticipation of the apartment being vacant for the month of June. Mayor Rodes has interviewed an interested party that is willing to sign a one year lease based on \$750 per month, with internet not being included in the provided monthly utilities.

MOTION: Commissioner Moses moved to extend the verbal lease agreement through July 31 and give Mr. Bonen-Clark the first right of refusal on an annual lease beginning August 1, 2021 based on \$750 per month with internet service not provided in the utilities. Commissioner Young seconded. Motion carried



2. **Increase Clerk Hours to Administer ARPA:** The process to receive ARPA funds has been started, but will involve additional hours per month to administer. The clerk is meeting with Carolina LaFrienier with the Southwestern Commission tomorrow to help submit necessary documents to the NCPRO portal.

MOTION: Commissioner Moses moved to increase clerk hours by 10 hours per week as necessary to administer ARPA funds. Commissioner Young seconded. Motion carried.

3. **JC Municipal Grant Update:** The final report was submitted on May 26 for \$3,983.84.
4. **Short Term Rentals:** One negative effect of the STR market is a decrease in available inventory for affordable and workforce housing. This is one possible contributing factor to an increase in homelessness in our region. As tourism and the demand for STR's continue to grow, the town may consider ordinances to limit them in the future.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Historic District Designation:** Commissioner Moses and Mayor Rodes will research pros and cons of applying for a historic district designation for the town. This designation may provide some protections for local zoning authority in response to proposed SB 349/HB 401.
2. **Approval of FY 2021-22 Budget Proposal:** Projected revenue and expenses are \$125,650 based on a 15 cent per \$100 ad valorem tax rate. As part of the *Act to Aid to North Carolinians In Response to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Crisis*, (S.L. 2020-3, SB 704), section 4.31 of the new law includes provisions for remote public meetings held during a declared state of emergency. Guidelines provided by the NC SOG confirm that public hearings held electronically must allow for written public comment for 24 hours following the adjournment of the public hearing. Therefore, a vote to approve the 2020-2021 Budget Proposal will be held following a recess of this meeting to allow for an additional 24 hours to receive and consider public comment before taking action.
3. **Approval of the FY 2021-21 Audit Contract:** Burleson and Earley has provided the audit contract with little change in terms from last year. The cost is \$5,300 for auditing accounts and \$150 for preparation and submission of the AFIR report to the LGC.

MOTION: Commissioner Moses moved to approve the 2020-2021 Audit Contract. Commissioner Young seconded. Motion carried.

RECESS

MOTION: Commissioner Young moved to recess the meeting until Wednesday, June 9, 2021 at 5:15 p.m. via Zoom. Commissioner Grant seconded. Motion carried. The meeting recessed at 6:40 p.m.

RECONVENE

Members/Staff Present: Mayor Tracy Rodes; Vice-Mayor Leigh Anne Young; Commissioners Allen Davis, Kelly Donaldson, and Danell Moses; Town Clerk Debbie Coffey; Attorney Will Morgan

Members Absent: Allan Grant

Public Present: None



***MOTION:** Commission Moses moved to reconvene the recessed meeting at 5:15 p.m.. Commissioner Young seconded. Motion carried.*

2021-2022 Budget Proposal: The clerk reported that no written public comment was received during the 24-hours following the Public Hearing for the 2021-2022 Budget Proposal.

***MOTION:** Commissioner Davis moved to adopt the 2021-2022 Budget Proposal. Commissioner Moses seconded. Motion carried.*

***MOTION:** Commissioner Young moved to adjourn. Commissioner Moses seconded. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.*

Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 7, 2021 at 5:15 p.m. in person at Town Hall

Tracy Rodes, Mayor

Debbie Coffey, Town Clerk