



TOWN OF WILLISTON

Brett Williams, Mayor
Michael Beasley, Town Administrator
Kayla Jerkins, Town Clerk

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Williston Town Council
Regular Meeting
February 13, 2023
6:30 PM

Notice of this meeting was posted at the Williston Town Hall and provided to the People Sentinel Newspaper at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting under the SC Freedom of Information Act.

The February meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm. The following officials were present: Mayor Brett Williams, Councilmember Annie Tyler, Councilmember Eric Moody, Councilmember Adadra Neville, and Councilmember Scott Valentine.

Councilmember Kurt Odermatt was not in attendance.

The Town Administrator Michael Beasley and Town Clerk Kayla Jerkins were in attendance.

Jonathan Vickery from the media was in attendance. Attorney Thomas Boulware was in attendance.

Mayor Williams called the meeting to order, and he stated there was a quorum.

Councilmember Moody led the invocation.

Councilmember Tyler the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Williams welcomed everyone to the Regular Meeting.

Attorney Boulware swore in the newly elected councilmember Alyson Collins. Alyson Collins took an oath of office.

Mayor Williams asked for a motion to approve the agenda, with the addition of Item #13A African American Parade Request. Councilmember Valentine made a motion to approve the agenda, with the addition of Line Item #13 A. Councilmember Tyler seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Mayor Williams asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of January 9, 2023. Councilmember Neville made a motion to approve the Minutes of January 9, 2023. Councilmember Moody seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Mayor Williams asked for a motion to approve the Financial Reports for January 2023- Information Only. Councilmember Moody made a motion to approve the Financial Reports for January 2023- Information Only. Councilmember Valentine seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Under Public Comment:

Margo Huggins said the litter clean up event is still scheduled for this Saturday the 18th at 10am. Participants are meeting at Folk's Funeral Home. The April litter clean up event that was scheduled for the 15th is being moved to the 22nd at 10 and participants are to meet at Folk's Funeral Home.

Harper, representing the Country Club Neighborhood residents, speaks on people using the roads as a racetrack. The previous administrator put up a speed limit sign. Harper said people from all ages 8 months to 80-year-olds like to walk in the neighborhood, but don't feel safe because of the UPS, Fed- EX, the mail lady, and others speed down the roads. Harper is asking for help to find a solution because so many people walk the roads and the school's cross-country team runs the neighborhood.

A resident from the audience commented that she called the police because the cars were riding around with their lights off and she was worried that they were going to come speeding in her house.

Mayor Williams said the police chief who is present at the meeting is taking in their comments.

Next Under Public Comment:

Ms. Holmes said she wanted to pick up where she left off from last time. She said she hasn't gotten a response back with helping with the Recreation Department.

Mayor Williams said the Administrator will be in contact with her this week.

Under Line Item #10: Council Recognition: Police Officer Dalton Peeples (Academy Graduate).

Mayor Williams thanks Officer Peeples for his sacrifice and says they are proud of his accomplishments. Mayor Williams and council congratulates Officer Peeples.

Under Line Item # 11: Garden Club Request:

Annette Burnette and Dana Byrd are representing the Garden Club. Burnette gives out a handout about the blue bird population and related facts. Burnette says that blue birds are only found in North America. Their population is decreasing because of civilization and sparrows. Burnette asks the council if the Garden Club can have approval to place bird boxes from Crane Way toward the Town.

Mayor Williams asked if the council had any questions.

Councilmember Neville asked if they would be in the wooded areas.

Burnette said they would be in around the open areas and into the pines. The boxes will be on a pole and sit about 5ft off the ground.

Councilmember moody says he want to see exactly where they want to put the boxes.

Mayor Williams asked the council if they want to vote for the approval for the Garden Club to set up the boxes.

Council wants to vote.

Mayor Williams said all in favor of the boxes being put up then council raise hand.

All were in favor by a raise of hand.

Under Line Item # 12: Barbra Christian, Barnwell County Trap, neuter, vaccinate, and return program.

Christian thanks the council for letting her speak. Christian says she is the co-chair of the trap, neuter, vaccinate, and return program. They have been doing the program for two years. They have been receiving grants to keep the program running. Christian says that a community cat is a cat that no one is liable for. The program's main objective is to lower the population of cats that go into the shelter and get euthanized. The flyer that Christian passed out a flyer to help answer any potential questions and some of the county ordinance. When a person calls dispatch, dispatch gives the caller the Barnwell County Trap, neuter, vaccinate, and return program's number. The program is only for Barnwell County. If someone doesn't want the cat to be returned to where the cat was caught, then the program works on deterrents to detour the cat away. In Aiken County the kill rate for cats as at a 96% kill rate, in seven years they now have a 5% kill rate.

Christian is asking for help to educate and train animal control on how to help give their number out.

Christian said the euthanization rate went down from the year 2020, there were 479 cats brought into the shelter and 278 were killed. In the year 2021, there were 643 brought into the shelter and 372 were killed. In the year 2022 there were 537 cats brought into the shelter and 168 were killed. In 2022 was the year the program was started. So far in 2023, there have been 11 cats brought into the shelter and none have been killed. Since the program has been running there have been a decrease in complaints, an increase in positive perception, a decrease in non-live outcomes at the shelter, and increase in feral health in vaccination and a decrease in the acceptance at the shelter. The program representatives are asking for support for the TNVR program. Their grants have been coming from California and they gave them \$30,000.

Under Line item #13: Jo Owens: Approval of vender event for September or October.

Owens said they would like to use in front of Meeting on Main to the end of First Baptist Church. The date is October 21st with a rain schedule date for October 28th. They haven't put out any flyers yet. Last year they had about 50 venders, but not a lot of shoppers.

Administrator Beasley said the property change doesn't make a difference in donations because both are the Town's property. The donations will be for the Recreational Department this year.

Mayor Williams asked everyone that was in favor of the event to show by a raise of hands. All were in favor by a raise of hands.

Under Line Item #13A: Approval of the 10th Annual African American Heritage Parade on February 26th at 4pm.

Mayor Williams ask for a motion to approve the 10th Annual African American Heritage Parade. Councilmember Tyler made a motion to approve the 10th Annual African American Heritage Parade. Councilmember Neville seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Under Line Item #14: Update on the Fire Department: Chief John Melton.

Chief Melton said that they updated their software. There have been 15 calls so far in February. Chief Melton speaks on the various calls that have been run. The ARPA spending money bought the extrication tools software, monthly truck checks, and they have bought a new bay door.

Mayor Williams asked the council if they had any questions. No questions were asked.

Under Line Item # 15: Justin Outz, Turnip Seed Engineers, and Brooke Morris, LSCOG: Update and Modification of Grants.

LSCOG is administrating two grants for the Town of Williston. The water line grant will be to upgrade the asbestos transmission lines and backwash. There was a big discrepancy in the grants vs. the bids. The grant is around \$1.3 million while the bids are around \$3.3 million. It is best if the bids are redone so the focus can be on the filtration system and eliminate the transmission systems. It was approved today by commerce that the bids will be 15 days long instead of thirty.

Administrator Beasley says that LSCOG have been working hard and he applauds them for their hard work.

The council thanks Morris.

Under Line Item # 16: Approval of Partnership with Retail Strategies: County Wide Program for the Municipalities and County (\$2,500).

Administrator Beasley said the program started for the surrounding areas they conduct training with municipalities to recruit areas in marketing. Administrator Beasley said that he went through the training in Blackville, and it was a good program. Administrator Beasley said that he thinks it's a good thing for the Town.

Mayor Williams asked if the council had any questions. No questions were asked. Mayor Williams asked for a motion to Approve the Partnership with Retail Strategies. Councilmember Moody made a motion to partner with Retail Strategies. Councilmember Valentine seconded the motion.

Under Line Item #17: Approval to set up credit payments for water bills: A 3% charge for the customer to use a credit card.

Administrator Beasley said it would be a convenience for the customers. Mayor Williams asked for a motion to approve the credit card payment system. Councilmember Neville made a motion to approve the credit card payment system. Councilmember Valentine seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Under Line Item #18: Approval of contract for Elko Demolition: Chaplin and Sons Clearing and Demolition Inc.

Administrator Beasley said the contractors didn't fulfill his responsibility in the past and a new contractor has been approved. Morris said the new contractor is reputable. Councilmember Tyler asked when he would be able to start. Morris said as soon as he sends in his insurance and the council approves him. Mayor Williams asked for a motion to approve the contract for the Elko Demolition. Councilmember Neville made a motion to approve the contract for the Elko Demolition. Councilmember Valentine seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Under Line Item #19 Approval to request for Council Chamber use for Healthy Lifestyle Line Dance/ Health Education Workshops to the Citizens of Williston and Surrounding Communities.

Mayor Williams said that the council approved the event last year. Mayor Williams asked for a motion to approve the request for Council Chamber use for Healthy Lifestyle Line Dance/ Health Education Workshops to the Citizens of Williston and Surrounding Communities. Councilmember Neville made a motion to approve the event. Councilmember Moody seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Under Line Item #20: Discussion of Town Parks Enhancements.

Administrator Beasley asked about the direction that council wants to go with the Disc Golf course on Academy St.

Councilmember Collins said that the park needs new playground equipment.

Councilmember Tyler said that a fence needs to be put up on Academy St.

Mayor Williams said that Coach Hewitt asked for a fence and a backstop. Mayor Williams is not sure about the baseball quantity. Mayor Williams said the original agreement is for them to practice on their field and they have games on ours. Mayor Williams said that Coach Hewitt recommends a backstop on both fields, so they can practice. The temporary ones didn't work because they blew over.

Administrator Beasley said the pickleball court to build would cost about \$60,000 for four courts. They can look into asking Axis 1 for a grant like the Town of Blackville did. Administrator Beasley doesn't know how many The Y is going to build. Two pickleball courts would cost \$30,000.

Harper said that Garcia is supposed to be the pickleball guru and maybe he can help.

Mayor Williams said that the basketball court is not in regulation and the goals are raggedy.

Councilmember Tyler said the courts need lights.

Mayor Williams said they don't know if they can be put on a timer or if they could switch operated.

Councilmember Moody asked what the use for lights if the ordinance closed after dark.

Councilmember Tyler said when it gets dark at six, we need to accommodate.

Councilmember Neville said fencing needs to be put up at the main park.

Administrator Beasley said he is meeting with the Disc Golf Club because they want to help.

Councilmember Moody said they are supposed to maintain crush-in-run for the Spring Fling. The electric panel needs to be addressed.

Mayor Williams asked if everyone agrees with the fence for academy.

Councilmember Neville said that baseball is the priority since it's in season.

Councilmember Collins asked if new playground equipment can be looked into.

Mayor Williams said that they need to set a date for a workshop.

Under Line Item # 21: Approval of Sponsorship for DIG Festival.

Mayor Williams said the town usually sponsors the festival. Mayor Williams asked for a motion to approve the sponsorship for the DIG Festival. Councilmember Tyler made a motion to approve the sponsorship for the DIG Festival. Councilmember Moody seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Under Line Item #22: Executive Session: Pre- Contractual negotiation of Town property; Kennedy House.

Mayor Williams asked for a motion to enter into Executive Session. Councilmember Neville made a motion to enter Executive Session. Councilmember Valentine seconded the motion. The council entered Executive Session at 7:51pm. All were in favor and the motion carried. Mayor Williams asked for a motion to exit the Executive Session. Councilmember Moody made a motion to exit Executive Session. Councilmember Tyler seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried. The council exited Executive Session at 8:18 pm. No action was taken in the Executive Session.

Under Line Item #23: Administrator's Report.

Administrator Beasley said that he commends Chief Melton on the fire department spending the money wisely. Administrator Beasley commends the police department. Administrator Beasley said the staff meetings are going great. Kayla takes the notes at the meeting. Administrator Beasley is sending the employees when they come up. Administrator Beasley is working towards the goals that the council set to complete them. The topic of beautification and Administrator Beasley would like a councilmember to be on the committee to create scenes and mini parks

around the town. Administrator Beasley said if they set goals, he wants to strive to reach them. Administrator Beasley commends the office staff getting structured. Administrator Beasley said that Kayla has been updating forms and working on the website. Administrator Beasley said the partnerships we have are great and a full meeting is positive.

Mayor Williams asked if anyone had anything for Administrator Beasley.

Councilmember Moody asked Administrator Beasley if he had a roofing contractor in mind yet. Councilmember Moody referred to the previous months Regular Meeting Minutes asking about the drainage by NBS.

Councilmember Moody said he was fine with the bird boxes, but he wanted to see where Ms. Burnette wants to put them just to make sure they won't interfere with anything else.

Councilmember Moody said he knows a certain young lady called the Town Hall and a Town Hall worker told the young lady that she could not play because she did not live in the Town limits. Mr. Moody said that the Town has a out of town fee and an in-town fee and asked Administrator Beasley to look into it.

Under Line Item # 24: Mayor's Report: Mayor Brett Williams

Mayor Williams asked the council to try and go to the town's litter pick up. Mayor Williams said he was going to try and go and asked the council to spread the word. Mayor Williams said the lights are going to be replaced at the town's baseball fields and David Hall was handling it. The police chief has someone in the department to write the grant for the radios. Mayor Williams said there are two board vacancies, Lianna Orr stepped down from the planning commission because of her new position and the BZA board has a new vacancy because Alison Collins is taking the council seat position.

Administrator Beasley said he would put it on the agenda for approval.

Mayor Williams said that any day next week is a good time for a workshop.

Councilmember Valentine said he would be out of town from Wednesday to Wednesday.

Mayor Williams asked if February 23 at 6:30 would be a good time.

Administrator Beasley asked the council to look at the goals that were approved at the beginning of the year that it is going to take some time and Administrator Beasley asked Town Clerk Jerkins to put it as a topic in the staff meeting.

Councilmember Moody asked if Councilmember Collins could serve on the Recreation Board.

Administrator Beasley said Councilmember Collins could be on the board.

Line Item: #25 Adjournment:

Mayor Williams asked for a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting. Councilmember Valentine made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting. Councilmember Neville seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 pm.

TOWN OF WILLISTON, SC

Brett Williams, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kayla Jerkins, Town Clerk

Date