

TOWN OF MAIDEN

October 15, 2018

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

The Maiden Town Council met on Monday, October 15, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. for their regularly scheduled meeting, held in the Council Chambers at the Maiden Town Hall.

Present for the meeting were Mayor Robert L. Smyre, Mayor Pro-Tem Max Bumgarner Jr, Councilmembers, Trina Michael, Marcus Midgett, Danny Hipps and Ronnie Williams.

Also, present were Town Manager Todd Herms, Town Attorney Scott Conrad and Town Clerk Elizabeth Krige.

Others attending: See attached sheet.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Robert L. Smyre.

The invocation was given by Councilmember Ronnie Williams.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Ronnie Williams.

4. Approval of Agenda

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMEMBER TRINA MICHAEL AND SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEM MAX BUMGARNER TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Citizens Requests and Comments

Mr. Herms wanted Council to be aware of several upcoming dates. October 20th is the Truck or Treat in front of Mae's Coffee Shop. On October 31st, Main Street will be shut down from 5:30 to 8. Mr. Herms notified Council he would be at training in Williamsburg the weekend before Halloween and would return to town on October 31st. The Christmas Parade will be held on November 24th at 3 pm. For those Councilmembers wishing to ride on the float, please arrive at 3:15 and park at Maiden Middle School; transportation will be provided to get you to the parade route.

The Town Christmas Party is December 6th at 6:30 and the Merry Maiden Festival will be held December 13th at 5:30. The Luminary Service is also in December. Mr. Herms said the Rec Advisory Committee is considering having the Luminary Service the same night as Merry Maiden Festival next year.

Councilmember Ronnie Williams wanted to thank all who were involved with the Fall Festival. He said it was well-organized and was glad to see some many who attended. Councilmember Hipps said he wanted to echo what Mr. Williams said. Mr. Herms said that we plan for everything and all staff members assist in making the festival a success.

Councilmember Michael thanked Councilmember Hipps for suggesting Lake Electric be contacted to participate in the Trunk or Treat on the twentieth. Mayor Pro Tem Max Bumgarner Jr was pleased to see the large crowd who came to see the Cosmic Cowboys Band at 3 Hermanos on October 6th. Councilmember Michael said we should keep that in mind when we plan events in the future. Mr. Herms said there were several things we could learn from the Cosmic Cowboy Event; both positives and negatives, before we host an event downtown.

Councilmember Michael asked about the manager and Mayor's trip to Valdese. Mayor Smyre said it was informative. Mayor Smyre said Valdese has a different situation than Maiden.

Councilmember Midgett asked if the Town could provide bleachers for next year's tractor pull. Mr. Herms said more research is needed but Mr. Rogers, the Recreation Director has said that if bleachers are moved, they must meet code. Mr. Rogers will ask for code compliant bleachers in the next budget.

Police Chief Ledford announced the Safe Communities Call In date was Thursday, October 18th. Mr. Herms reminded the Council of Walk to School a partnership with Safe Kids of Catawba County, to be held on October 16th at 7:30.

Councilmember Ronnie Williams said several officials will visit Tuttle Elementary to hear presentations about the Town.

6. Approval of the Minutes (10/01/18 Regular Meeting and Closed Session):

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMEMBER RONNIE WILLIAMS AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER DANNY HIPPS TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING AND CLOSED SESSION MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 1, 2018 MEETING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. Consent Agenda-Finance Officer's Report September

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMEMBER MARCUS MIDGETT AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER DANNY HIPPS TO ACCEPT THE FINANCE OFFICERS REPORT FROM SEPTEMBER. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. Old Business

A. 201 W Main Street

Mr. Herms recommended demolishing the old Police Department. This would increase the amount of parking in the downtown area. The building is in bad shape. The current estimate for demolition is \$19,200. Councilmember Michael and Mayor Smyre agreed it was the best course of action. Mr. Herms needed to make sure there were no Councilmembers against this plan. No members voiced opposition.

9. New Business

A. Pay Study Presentation

David Hill of HRE Consulting presented his findings on the Pay and Classification Study he completed for the Town. Mr. Hill described the methodology of the study which included a twelve-page questionnaire and interviews with each employee. Mr. Hill's presentation is attached.

Some of the important data points were that 43% of employees were hired in the past five years. The average length of service for employees is 9 years.

Average length of time in current position is six years, which is typical of other local governments. There are 3 options and a hybrid option before you. Option I is to bring everyone to the minimum or their current salary whichever is greater. Mr. Hill stated he does not recommend this option.

Option II is to adopt the new pay plan, plus giving a 5% increase over the minimum. It does not address salary compression.

Councilmember Ronnie Williams asked how benefit packages influence the pay. Mr. Hill said it is very difficult to compare polices. None of this information was considered in this study. Mr. Herms said we have a very good health care plan, but our other benefits are in line with other municipalities.

Mr. Hill said his first recommendation was to extend the range from minimum to maximum salary. The current range was 29% and the proposed pay plan would extend that to 50% from minimum to maximum.

Mr. Hill stated there needs to be a one-time adjustment to bring some salaries in line with the market. This is based on the bell curve and length of service to the Town. Mr. Hill said it is important to keep with Cost of Living Adjustments to make sure the pay plan stays current.

Councilmember Hipps asked about a slide in the presentation- he wanted to know if it was stating employees should not receive a raise in their first two years with the Town and Mr. Hill said that the slide took into account the 5% probationary completion raise.

Councilmember Williams asked about Cost of Living Adjustments and Mr. Hill said the plan would be updated every year to account for the adjustment.

Mr. Herms said when he was hired ten years ago, the Council was in the middle of conducting a pay study. At that time the Town was having a hard time recruiting for open positions. That pay study addressed starting salaries, it did very little for veteran employees which resulted in a lot of compression.

Mr. Hill presented the Options for the Pay Plan. Option #1 is doing no more than adopt the Pay Plan only. Mr. Hill said he would not recommend this option. This will do nothing to address salary compression.

Option #2 Adopt the new pay plan, provide the 5% adjustment or leave employees at their current salary whichever is greater.

Option #3 Mr. Hill stated he hoped Council would consider this option. This option would adopt the new pay plan, move all employees 5% of the minimum and provide a one-time adjustment based on years of service. This prevents brand new employees from earning as much as long serving employees.

The cost of Option 1 is \$35,901. The cost for Option #2 is \$82,770 and the cost for Option #3 is \$271,456. Another option is to split up Option #3, implementing part in January and the rest in July. There may need to be an adjustment due to changes in the market over that 6-month period.

At this time Mr. Hill entertained questions from the Manager and Council. Mr. Herms asked about the employees who Mr. Hill said had higher salaries than the study recommended. Mr. Hill said most are newer employees.

Councilmember Ronnie Williams, if we hire someone to do the exact same job as someone who has been here seven years how do you justify not paying that man the same salary. Mr. Hill said it goes back to pay philosophy.

Mr. Herms said when we hire someone with a lot of experience, we look at the salary range and offer something competitive. Mr. Herms said this often occurs when hiring Police Officers. An officer with experience and a four-year degree is offered a higher salary than those who no experience and only a BLET certificate.

Councilmember Williams said this can lead to morale problems and proposed offering more vacation.

Mr. Herms said at one time that policy was in place, when the recession hit, cuts had to be made. The Longevity Policy is \$100.00 per year of service. Mr. Herms said this longevity plan is popular with employees.

Councilmember Hipps said he wanted to hear from employees. Mr. Herms stated that he is not part of the pay study; his recommendations are for employees and the organization. Councilmember Williams said we should implement as soon as possible and delaying implementation would only cause salaries to lag behind. He also supported the hybrid option being split over January and July. Mr. Herms said most departments would be able to come up with these funds. Mr. Herms told Council staff could come up with some numbers to be presented at the next meeting.

Councilmember Williams said he would like to see the figures on Option #4. Councilmember Midgett asked how many departments would need budget amendments and Mr. Herms said not many departments would need amendments. Councilmember Hipps said he would like to see the entire plan, Option #3, implemented January 1. Mr. Herms said he would provide figures on both Options 3 and 4. Councilmember Michael said we need to take action.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMEMBER TRINA MICHAEL AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER DANNY HIPPS TO DIRECT STAFF TO PROVIDE NUMBERS AND PLAN TO IMPLEMENT OPTION #3 PRESENTED BY DAVID HILL FOR THE PAY PLAN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Storm Water Improvement Project-East Pine Street and Micol Road

Mr. Herms told Council that both roads are flat and when repaving occurs storm water runoff is going to flood several homeowners if the Town does not install curbing. Mr. Herms said he has received numerous complaints about run-off at Pine Street. Both situations will require a survey, angling and a certain drop to get the water away from these houses. Mayor Smyre said going forward the Town needed to make sure the builders and developers take responsibility for storm water run-off.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMEMBER DANNY HIPPS AND SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEM MAX BUMGARNER JR TO ACCECT THE STORM WATER IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR EAST PINE STREET AND MICOL ROAD. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

10. Resolutions

A. Resolution for Baker's Mountain to Become a State Park

Mr. Herms said Senator Wells asked all the municipalities in Catawba County to pass a resolution in support of Baker's Mountain becoming a state park. The City of Hickory also passed this resolution. This would be the first state park in Catawba County.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMEMBER RONNIE WILLIAMS AND SECONDED COUNCILMEMBER TRINA MICHAEL TO PASS RESOLUTION 3-2018 IN SUPPORT OF BAKERS MOUNTAIN BECOMING A STATE PARK. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

11. Closed Session

A. NCGS 143-318.11 (5)

MOTION WAS MADE BY RONNIE WILLIAMS AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER DANNY HIPPS TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION FOR PROPERTY ACQUISITION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mayor Smyre announced a public hearing was to be held on November 5th.

With no further comments...

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMEMBER TRINA MICHAEL AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER RONNIE WILLIAMS TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:19 PM. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully Submitted:

Elizabeth Yokley-Krige, Town Clerk

Robert L. Smyre, Mayor

ATTEST:

Elizabeth Yokley-Krige, Town Clerk