

Town of Hertford
Work Session Meeting (In Person/Facebook)
Monday, August 28, 2023 – 6:00 PM
Horace Reid Community Center, 305 W Grubb Street

The Council of the Town of Hertford held a Work Session Meeting at the Horace Reid Community Center (also by Facebook) on Monday, August 28, 2023, at 6:00 PM.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Earnell Brown, Mayor
Sandra Anderson
Jerry Mimplitsch
Ashley Hodges, Mayor Pro Tem
Connie Brothers

STAFF PRESENT

Janice McKenzie Cole, Town Manager
Gina Durante, Town Clerk

A quorum was present.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The invocation was given by Councilwoman Brothers followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilman Mimplitsch to approve the agenda with an amendment to add Indian Summer Festival Road Closure Ordinance as 6c under Continued Business. Mayor Pro Tem Hodges seconded the motion and it passed unanimously, 5-0.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Hodges made a motion to approve the two Ordinances for Street Closures, Halloween Trunk or Treat and the Christmas Parade, on the Consent Agenda and Councilwoman Anderson seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT

Mr. Bo Coughlin of FYBE addressed Council regarding the use of fiber optics in place of cable for internet connection. FYBE currently services six nearby counties. Mr. Coughlin

explained the advantages of fiber versus cable regarding speed, cost, and distance limitations. Fiber optics internet would be available to residents, businesses schools, Town/County offices, and provide public Wi-Fi in designated locations. He also explained that service will be free to residents that qualify for certain programs, such as the school lunch programs. The projected date of FYBE operating in Hertford is 2024.

Mayor Pro Tem Hodges made a motion for Manager Cole to work with Mr. Coughlin to identify the locations/facilities in Hertford town limits that would benefit from the use of fiber optics (before a pole agreement is signed). A second was made by Councilwoman Brothers, and the motion carried 5-0.

CONTINUED BUSINESS

- a. **Updated Town Strategic Plan** – Manager Cole asked Council if they had any comments or objections to the Strategic Plan draft that was updated during their retreat earlier this year. A final copy will be given to Council for approval prior to posting on our website.

- b. **System Development Fee Study**– Manager Cole advised Council that by law the Town is required to have an analysis done of the system development fees that the Town could impose on a new housing development/subdivision for extending the infrastructure to that location. Three companies capable of performing that analysis have provided proposals and sample reports. Council discussed the proposals, company profiles, and projected time frames to complete the study. Manager Cole and Public Works Director, David Forsythe, both recommend Willdan.

After discussion, Mayor Pro Tem Hodges made a motion to select Willdan as the company that will provide Hertford's analysis of system development fees. Councilman Mimplitsch seconded the motion and it passed unanimously, 5-0.

- c. **Indian Summer Festival Street Closures** – Manager Cole explained to Council that due to the high turnout of vendors for the Indian Summer Festival, Market Street must be closed between Church and Covent Garden. Mayor Brown asked for a motion to approve the street closure ordinance for Saturday, September 9. Councilman Mimplitsch made the motion and Councilwoman Brothers seconded it. The motion passed 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Updated Purchasing Policy** – Manager Cole and Council discussed the revisions to the Purchasing policy updating credit card procedures. These changes align with our Internal Controls Policy.

Councilman Mimplitsch made a motion to accept the updates to the Purchasing Policy and Mayor Pro Tem Hodges seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

- b. Selection of Contractor for Rural Transformation Grant** – Hertford was approved for the Department of Commerce, Rural Transformation Grant. Council and Manager Cole discussed the two RFQs that were received. Council considered and talked about presentation/format of each proposal, detail provided, statement of capacity, conflict of interest, and company reviews.

Mayor Pro Tem Hodges made a motion to select Regeneration by Design and Councilwoman Brothers seconded that motion. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

- c. Withers Ravenel Task Order #9** – Withers Ravenel has identified a grant for stormwater improvements for the Town. Withers Ravenel's fee will be \$2,500 to write the grant for us,

Councilwoman Brothers made a motion to accept Task Order #9 and Mayor Pro Tem Hodges seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

- d. Budget Amendments** – Manager Cole presented Council with two budget amendments. Budget Amendment #5 is to purchase a quality sound system for Church Street so that speakers can be heard on Church and Market Streets. She is requesting \$15,310 from the fund balance to purchase it. Budget Amendment #6 is for the cost of Rent Fun Kayak Rentals that Council approved at the August 14th Regular Meeting. Manager Cole is requesting \$26,000 from the fund balance.

Mayor Pro Tem Hodges made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #5 & 6. Councilman Mimplitsch seconded the motion and it carried 5-0.

e. Manager's Update

- Manager Cole noted that the System Development Fees would apply to subdivisions, any construction, any change in existing structures, and any extension in the use of land which includes the need of service.
- Task Order #8, approved at the August 14th meeting, requires a Public Hearing. Due to the advance notice the local newspaper requires to publish the Public Hearing Announcement, the Public Hearing will be scheduled for Thursday, September 14, 2023 at 6:00 PM.
- Manager Cole is still working on the ABC Board merger with Perquimans County. Manager Cole was advised that new ABC stores outside of the Hertford town limits but within Perquimans County could be opened if the merger happens, and that could mean additional profit to the Town of Hertford.
- Wednesday, August 30th at 4:00 PM, there will be a presentation regarding the Hope 6 Main Street Grant. This grant is available for commercial buildings not in use to convert them into affordable housing.

This grant does require a match, and property owners would be responsible for that match. If there is enough interest in this grant, a grant writer will be hired. The meeting will be at the Horace Reid Community Center at 4:00 PM, Wednesday, August 30th.

COUNCIL REPORTS/CONCERNS

Mayor Pro Tem Hodges stated that fiber optics would have a great impact on our Town and FYBE providing public connectivity at their cost will be very beneficial. He also commented on the lengthy Strategic Plan and how far we have come in a year – how many things have happened or are happening, goals that are now in RFP stages or work is being done or completed. Mayor Pro Tem asked when the Wastewater Merger Study will be completed, and Manager Cole responded that we are expecting it in Spring 2024. Lastly, Mayor Pro Tem Hodges commented on the big turnout for the Indian Summer Festival, 100+ vendors are great. He thanked Stacey Layden, TDA Board, sponsors, and all those working on the ISF.

Councilman Mimplitsch encouraged all to come out for the great music provided by Night Years at the Indian Summer Festival on Friday, September 8 at 6:30 PM. Councilman Mimplitsch asked if there were any updates on the Harbor Town ferry boats. Manager Cole told Council that they are still awaiting approval from the Coast Guard.

Councilwoman Brothers lunch provided for the teachers and staff at the convocation on August 21. She thanked Rhonda Waters, Sara Winslow, Councilwoman Anderson, Mayor Pro Tem Hodges, Keith Rouse, Diane Stallings, Patricia and Keith Throckmorton and the ministry for helping out with the event. Following that, lunch was also provided for the sheriff's department, EMS and a group in Perquimans County – 300+ lunches were served. Councilwoman Brothers thanked Manager Cole for all she does for the Town of Hertford.

Councilwoman Anderson thanked Council and Manager Cole and those who showed up for the meeting.

Mayor Brown addressed parking on North Church Street at the Airbnb location near the S-Bridge. NCDOT has authority over Church Street, so they may need to be contacted to post No Parking signage. On Saturday, August 26th, school supplies and clothing were distributed to approximately 65 families. The Back-to-School event took place at the Hertford Fire Department.

Council and Manager Cole discussed the signage on the bridges addressing and enforcing the hours of fishing off the bridges and public interest in fishing off the old S-Bridge truss. Fishing is allowed on the north side of the bridge where the sidewalk runs. Signs need to be reposted indicating the hours fishing is permitted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Brown read the announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Brown asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Brothers made a motion to adjourn, and Councilman Mimplitsch seconded. The motion carried, 5-0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 PM.