

**TOWN OF MAXTON, NORTH CAROLINA
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TOWN MEETING
August 2, 2023, 2:00 p.m.
Minutes**

The Board of Commissioners of Maxton, North Carolina met in formal session in the meeting chambers of the Town of Maxton Town Hall located at 201 McCaskill Avenue Maxton, North Carolina at 2:00 p.m.

Attendees: Mayor Paul Davis (absent), Mayor Pro Tem Virgil Hutchinson, Commissioner Toni Bethea, Commissioner Elizabeth Gilmore, Commissioner Paul McDowell, and Commissioner Victor Womack.

Staff Present: Town Manager Angela Pitchford, Town Clerk Cynthia Encinosa, Finance Director Myra Tyndall and Ursula Goins.

Call to Order- Mayor Pro Tem Virgil Hutchinson

Invocation- Commissioner Victor Womack

Does any member have any known conflict of interest and appearances of conflict with respect to any matter coming before the board today? If so, please identify the conflict and refrain from any participation in the particular matter involved. (No known conflicts)

Adoption of Proposed Agenda:

Mayor Pro Tem Hutchinson requested a motion to approve Proposed Agenda. Commissioner McDowell made the motion, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Bethea. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Old Business:

- a) Recreation Committee

Chairperson Jamie Smith stated that they wanted to issue a level of respect for the board, originally it was said that they should do this meeting in a town meeting. Jamies stated that she told her team that she didn't like that, and she felt like they were a little better than that. She stated that we definitely represent the town of Maxton as well, so instead of feeling like we threw you under the bus we wanted to do it and make it a little more personal. (Inaudible) For someone that may not know we have a responsibility a lot on our shoulder to make sure that the community has some type of recreation for all ages. Ms. Smith stated that it is not an easy task at all.

Jamie Smith: One of the hardest for me is balancing budget, balancing numbers, because things have changed and change often. So for us we don't want to waste any more time we want to be

able to take more of the time that we spend trying to figure out what the numbers are and where the money is and actually plan the events. The other purpose of this meeting is for us to meet you in the middle. It's not just about what you've done or (INAUDIBLE). Is there's something that we're doing incorrectly, it's about feedback, and it's about opportunities for everybody because that's how we grow. So I want to say that disclaimer before we get started because it's not an attack on anybody. What we do is for the whole town of Maxton and it's not personal. With that being said I'm going to start out of order for a second because I just want to bring everybody up to where we understand recreation as of right now. As of right now the last town meeting, when there was a motion carried that we now can carryover with donations. I need somebody to clarify that for me. When I spoke with Ursula on Monday, I was told that, that is not the process as per her conversation with Myra. So I need somebody to clarify that to make sure the recreation team is on the same page, to make sure if we receive a donation that it can be carried over.

Myra: If that was approved, I was not in that meeting and I don't know anything about it.

Commissioner Gilmore: Well, may I? I was the one who made the motion. DO yall remember that?

Commissioner McDowell: And I second it.

Commissioner Gilmore: And my motion was that these committees or volunteers who work so diligently for the town of Maxton, if they have donations that come in and they do not use all of the funds before the end of the year, the beginning of the new fiscal year, that it be rolled over to whatever contributions that the town gives them. All that was not said but the thing was the rollover their contributions, their donations, and that included fund raising, donations from companies, monies that's given to them in their names. That was my motion, and it was second by Commissioner McDowell.

Jamie Smith: is there any way that we can go back because I think the minutes from that meeting and we can pull that either edit or adjust it to reflect that, because Monday the conversation for me was a little bit different. I asked Ursula again let's wait until we get to the meeting because she has one piece of information and I have another. The concern that I have again that's the finance team, so I assume if it's dealing with finance that they would have received the communication. So it's like a back and forth all the time and that is what is really frustrating. If there is a way that if you tell me okay this needs to go to finance, I would even take that on I just want to make sure that when we questioning something that it doesn't look like we are someone something that they don't know about. The other question is that we have requested records for since fiscal year 2022 and there are a lot of I don't know'. We sent an e-mail, so in 2022 when we were doing Juneteenth, we received a lot of money for books and ads and we understand that we didn't have a budget for the event, but there was a lot of money taken in. It's hard to compare the year or even a year over year if you don't know what you did, when you don't know it's hard to forecast to say we want to do something different. We didn't do the books for this year, we understand there's a cost, but we also need to know what was received in. We have some records however after the event there were of course other purchases. We don't have all that, we were not the only people that were receiving. In June of 2022 the conversation

with me and Myra is that the books of course had to be reconciled and we had to wait, and we waited. So from June 2022 to April 13th the e-mail that I sent to Myra reads as such “Good afternoon Myra, I hope all is well I am following up on some previous conversations regarding (inaudible) and donations for Maxton Recreation by the way to the town of Maxton. First there was a request to wait until the numbers were reconciled before we review the expenses and the monies received for the Juneteenth festival for June 2022. Are the finances for Juneteenth 2022 reconciled and ready to review? Also the donation for the class of 1965 needs to be added to the 2023 budget, these funds were left at the town office. Second all events for the budget year 2022-2023 need to be reconciled to ensure all amounts are correct and all expenses are paid. Can you print a summary and itemized report for the year? Third per our budget meeting from last year which was 2022 so two years ago we requested that left over funds be transferred to this budget year which would have been 2022-2023. Have those funds been transferred yet? Fourth there were funds left at the town office for three events Juneteenth 2022, Cancer Walk 2022 and Heart walk 2023. Have these funds been receipted yet? Lastly, when do you need the budget proposal for the 2023-2024 budget year, please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. I provided my e-mail and my phone number and that was an e-mail sent April 13th, 2023. Since then we had a meeting, we came to the budget meeting we did our proposal for our request for what we thought the town needed. Also in that meeting we were seeking; I remember Myra saying that the town was negative, and we didn’t have any revenues and I referenced that e-mail sent. My second question to everyone is, if we have a budget how does that work when we don’t have the revenues coming in? I make sure that we don’t overspend, I also take into consideration the taxes even though the town should not be paying taxes. My question is what happens to recreation when the revenues are not coming in, what happens to our budget. Is our budget for the new year based on the revenues received?

Commissioner Virgil Hutchinson: Can you answer that Myra?

Myra: When the budget is prepared, I have no idea if all the revenues are going to come in. I estimated it the best that I can. If we don’t meet our revenues, I cannot say that everybody can spend what we budgeted you have to have a balanced budget. If you say you’re going to get ten dollars and you only get five dollars you have to cut some spending somewhere. What department gets cut, I wouldn’t think that recreation is just going to be picked on, but some things are more necessary than others. I don’t know if we have actually cut anything out of your budget, you haven’t even spent your budget 100%. Right now I do not remember the percentage of revenues that have come in. If we get 80 % revenues, I would say you only spend 80% expenses.

Jamie Smith: The reason that we have the money left is because this year we made an announcement at Easter time that we were going to have a spring festival. A lot of community partners and we came to do it and were told that Myra said we could not spend. We had to cancel the event, give us the process to avoid this in the future.

Myra: Did you have revenues coming in for that event?

Jamie Smith: No it was already budgeted. So before we do any event there are three people contacted, the town manager to see if we can have the event. We check with the PD for safety issues, then we come to finance. Once we get the greenlight then we plan it, we don't plan in advance. My team is suspended now until after this meeting, because that is bad business, we line up a lot of partners and people commit to coming out, we waste a lot of people's time. Don't give us a yes, and then in the middle of planning we have to cancel that's an issue.

Myra: If your planning on raising money for a special project or event, you probably need to come to me first and let's set-up a line item just for that event to receive those funds in that so we be sure, if they put it different line items, I can't give you a true record.

Jamie Smith: You said they, who is they?

Myra: Anybody taking payments.

Jamie Smith: I don't have control over someone inputting data.

Myra: you could tell the individual to put the line item on the check

McDowell: Asked was the Easter Event budget?

Jamie Smith: It was.

There was discussion on the cancellation of the Easter Event/Spring fling between Commissioner McDowell and Jamie Smith. Jamie Smith then proceeds to state that she was told they could not spend.

Myra asked who told her that she could not spend, and she stated that she believed that the conversation came up between the town manager and finance director. Myra stated that if its in the budget she did not tell her that she could not spend.

McDowell states that it appears to be some miscommunication, Myra agrees, states that she hasn't really talked to Jamie Smith.

Jamie states that she brings this every time, sometimes she will bring her old budget vs actual. Jamie states that there is things that are done before she begins to plan. Jamie states that Myra said the funds were frozen shortly after the state representatives come down.

Town manager states that she wants the recreation board to move forward only with the finance director moving forward, so that she can be removed from the situation and there will be no further confusion. Manager advised recreation chair to e-mail concerns or questions moving forward. There was further discussion concerning being informed that recreation was not able to spend and had to cancel not just the Easter event, but other events.

Myra stated that she has not told anyone that they could not spend, and that she has not talked to anyone about an Easter event. States that if someone asks her about the budget she looks at the entire budget not just the department. States recreation needs to come ask her specifics so that she can give them the correct answers.

Commissioner Womack asked why recreation couldn't get their own account and whatever the town budgeted be put in that account. Myra states that she would have to speak with the local government concerning this matter because she does not think that it will be legal.

McDowell states that boards have to get funds through the town.

Gilmore asked the question if the town can designate the funds under the umbrella of the town and the town give the boards the money and they bring back the receipts.

Mary McNeill stated that they are called subledgers.

There was further discussion on the reasons why Jamie comes to the town manager, is because she feels that she does not get a clear answer from Myra when she asks questions and does research. Jamies complained that there is disrespect that comes out of the finance office, and she asked that the finance office and the recreation board can come to a resolution. What can the recreation board do better?

Myra asked if any donations that come do they want it to a specific event or just under recreation? If it's designed for a specific event, then the customer service clerks need to know where they can put the payments.

Gilmore asked the recreation board to think about what Myra asked before they make the statements.

Mary McNeill stated that subledgers can be done, it's not that difficult, in the end you do budget amendments, and it would make it much easier.

The town manager is reminding everyone that the clerks are new and if they are not told what the donations are for, then they won't know where to input the monies.

Sandra McCallum states that she feels that the clerks have not been trained and cannot be blamed. The finance directors need to train the clerks where to input the donations.

Town manager Pitchford states that the clerks are trained, and that she will no longer be trying to everything in the office.

Commissioner McDowell stated that we can't go back, we need to move forward with what we need to do concerning the line items and the finance department training the clerks.

Commissioner Gilmore stated that when she came to ask the finance officer Ursula Goins could not give her a report that she requested, she had to go to the town manager. Everything that she says is that she has to find out from Myra.

Commissioner Gilmore stated that we have a problem commissioners and we need to straighten it out. Commissioner Womack stated that the supervisor over the clerks need to research and have a working relationship with Jamie Smith moving forward.

Commissioner Gilmore stated not just recreation but other departments. Don't just wait until a year later and tell the committee that your receipts were not received, and the monies must come out of the new budget that's not fair, and unacceptable. Commissioner Gilmore states that we

have a problem and like the town manager says she can't do it all we need to start doing something. We have received complaints from citizens, and we need some professionalism downstairs, you cannot talk to citizens anyway. I want to thank the recreation team for all they have done, you have helped so many citizens.

Womack states that if people get paid to do a job, they need to do their job or allow someone else to do the job.

Hutchinson I think we are dealing with two different things we need to understand that, what is budgeted, and donations received. Doing budget review in quarters may help, so that boards get a better understanding of what they have to spend.

Myra asked that they are informed when donations come in so that they understand what's going on.

Myra will then work with accounts payable to make sure that they come out of the correct account. There was a small discussion concerning the commissioners voting in the June meeting to add capital project line items for special events for different boards, recreation, beautification, and tree board.

There was concern that Ursula was at this meeting but did not inform Myra of what the board decided, there is also concern about Ursula being in training for nine months and not yet sure of her duties or being able to do anything without approval or confirmation from Myra.

Myra stated that she preferred that Jamie Smith come to her concerning all finances for recreation.

Jamie asked about the funds that they asked about before June 2023 year end, and would the funds be able to transfer over. Myra stated that the year has already been closed out and you cannot go back. We will have to find out from the Local Government Commission, of what can be done. Jamie continued to voice that recreation asked for the funds to be transferred before the fiscal year ended and were told to wait until it reconciled. Now the year is closed, but the request was made before it was closed and that's the frustration. Myra stated that she will have to speak with the Local Government Commission because she is not 100 hundred percent sure, she has to follow NC general statutes this is not a regular business.

Commissioner Gilmore stated that the commissioner voted on this issue, and the funds should be carried forward as requested. Myra stated that she will inform the LGC that the commissioners voted on the carry overs and get some direction on whether this can be done.

Commissioner Womack read the minutes from the June meeting where the commissioners voted to add the line items for the capitol projects to put donations in to be carried forward for each committee.

Myra asked how many committees do we have?

The Town Manager named recreation, beautification, and tree board, planning and zoning.

Commissioner Womack stated that this was acted on and approved by the board.

Jamie Smith stated that she still has a question about what to do about the donations that were requested to move forward.

Myra states that she cannot answer the question until she talks to the state because the year has been closed.

Commissioner Gilmore asked if the internal revenue would come in here and wanted to go back five years, Myra agreed the IRS could go back, however the state make the rules that revenues and expenditures wash every year. "Those are state rules, not mine." Myra stated that she would check and find out, but she could not answer the question at this time.

Commissioner Gilmore stated that as a board they could research themselves. Myra stated that they could contact Sharon Edmunson or Tiffany Anderson with the state and ask questions because they are over the financial part and would be the ones who could answer any questions.

Commissioner Hutchinson advised that we do some research and find out what we can or cannot do.

Commissioner Gilmore asked if the recreation board would have to stay on hold. Myra stated that she has not asked the recreation board to be on hold, it was made by Chairperson Jamie Smith.

Jamie Smith stated that she did that because she does not want to have to cancel any events, which is what they say has been happening.

Commissioner McDowell asked if she felt that it has to be on hold now, after the meeting.

Commissioner Bethea stated that Myra stated that if the money is in the budget then you can have your events.

Myra stated "That's fine accept towards the end of the fiscal year, maybe in May you may need to out how much money is left" "If you order something at the end of June and finance does not receive the invoice in time before we close the books then it causes the issue that the beautification board had when they did an order at the end of the year as Commissioner Gilmore has stated."

Jamie Smith states before she leaves, standing up here takes a lot because we are on the same time, we did not want to be indifferent. What I do is for the town of Maxton to make Maxton better not to be disrespectful. I said several times what can I do or the team do different.

Myra asked Jamie can they sit down and discuss some of the events so that they can be set up correctly, the meeting will be set up and discussed.

Commissioner Bethea requested that the ladies in the clerk's office be included so that they will understand where to put the donations correctly.

Jamie Smith will text Myra to set up a definite date and time for the meeting. Myra also stated that she would probably need to meet with beautification as well. Commissioner Gilmore stated that they would let her know.

Commissioner Hutchinson thanked Chairperson Jamie Smith and her team for all that they do for the community and ended the Recreation Committee meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Hutchinson requested a motion to go into Closed Session. Commissioner Gilmore made the motion, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Bethea. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

CLOSED SESSION

Closed session G.S. 143-318.11(a) (6)-to discuss personnel issues only and consult with Town Attorney. **Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11. Closed sessions.**

(a) Permitted Purposes. **(6)** To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee.

Discussion: Angela Pitchford: ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW DISCUSSION

Mayor Pro Tem Hutchinson requested a motion to come out of Closed Session. Commissioner McDowell made the motion, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Womack. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

ADJOURN

Mayor Pro Tem Hutchinson requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner McDowell made the motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Bethea. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.



Paul Davis, Mayor



Michael D. Cousar, MBA