

*Invocation: Commissioner Johnson gave the invocation*

**Minutes  
Town of Benson  
Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, March 12, 2019  
7:00 PM**

The Board of Commissioners of the Town of Benson met at the Conference Center at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, March 12, 2019. Mayor Jerry M. Medlin presiding.

In addition, present at the meeting were:

**Mayor Pro Tem Casandra Stack**

**Commissioner Maxine Holley  
Commissioner Dean McLamb  
Finance Director Kimberly Pickett  
Media Coordinator Tyler Douglas  
Parks and Rec Director Matt Smith  
Public Works Director Tim Robbins  
Fire Chief Alan Johnson  
Loretta Byrd, Chamber of Commerce**

**Commissioner Jim Johnson  
Commissioner Max Raynor  
Commissioner William Neighbors  
Town Manager Matt Zapp  
Town Attorney R. Isaac Parker  
Police Chief Kenneth Edwards  
Isaac Panzarella, NC State University  
Planning Director Erin Joseph**

**I. Call Meeting to Order** (*Mayor Medlin*)

Mayor Medlin called the meeting to order at 7 PM.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance** (*Mayor Medlin*)

Mayor Medlin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. Approval of the Agenda** (*Mayor Medlin*)

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner McLamb made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

**IV. Consent Agenda** (*Mayor Medlin*)

- A. Consider February 12, 2019 BOC Minutes**
- B. Consider Reserve Fund Update**
- C. Board Retreat Expenses**
- D. Consider Evaluation Expense**

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner Holley made a motion to approve the consent agenda: February 12, 2019 BOC Minutes, Reserve Fund Update, Board Retreat Expenses, and Evaluation Expense.**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

**V. Public Comment**

**A. Individuals wishing to address the Board are asked to provide their name and address for the record.**

With no one coming forward to speak, Mayor Medlin closed the Public Comment period.

**B. Chamber of Commerce 2018 Report (*Loretta Byrd*)**

Loretta Byrd gave a “State of the Chamber” presentation; a summary of activities completed by the Benson Area Chamber of Commerce in 2018. Byrd spoke about Mule Days, Citizen of the Year Breakfast, Leadership Johnston, and partnerships with local businesses as well as the Johnston County Public School system. She also shared the Chamber’s theme for 2019, “Growing with Tradition,” as well as their goals for the year.

**VI. Department Reports**

**A. New Employee Introduction**

Scott Tart was introduced as the new Human Resources Associate for the Town of Benson.

**B. Fire Department Annual Report (*Chief Alan Johnson*)**

Chief Alan Johnson gave his 2018 annual report for the Benson Fire Department. Fire calls increased by 17% and first responder calls increased by 4% for 1,192 calls in 2018 compared to 1,075 in 2017. Johnson also gave statistics about average response time, and future debt payments and equipment needs.

**VII. Public Hearing (*Mayor Medlin*)**

**A. SUP-2019-02-Strickland: Request for a Special Use Permit for placement of a manufactured home at 11314B US Highway 301 South within the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the Town of Benson. Tax ID 01F10010F. Owner: Judy Raynor. Applicant: Linwood Strickland and Judy Raynor Strickland.**

Erin Joseph presented the special use permit request to the Board. Both Planning Staff and the Planning Board are recommending approval.

**Mayor Medlin opened the public hearing at 7:23 PM.**

*Linwood Strickland 11314B US Highway 301 South, Benson*

Linwood Strickland spoke in favor of the special use permit. Strickland is the applicant, and asked Board to approve the request.

**Mayor Medlin closed the public hearing at 7:25 PM.**

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner Holley made a motion to approve SUP 2019-02 for placement of a manufactured home at 11314B US Highway 301 South within the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the Town of Benson.**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

- B. SD-2019-01: Subdivision preliminary plat consisting of 31.63 acres divided into 44 lots at Tarheel Rd. and Woodall Dairy Rd. located within the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the Town of Benson. Tax ID 01E08019E and 01E08019. Applicant: RP Wellons Land & Development. Property Owner: Neta L. Grady**

Erin Joseph presented the subdivision plat to the Board. The developer was requesting three waivers as it deviates from Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) requirements in the following areas: cul-de-sac regulations due to land type, second access point, and sidewalk requirements.

Joseph reported that the Planning Board did not recommend approval due to concerns about storm drainage. The Planning Board requested that the plat be remanded back to the Planning Board for further technical review, and staff concurs with this recommendation. Joseph stated that the plat would again be considered at the April Planning Board and Town Board meetings.

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner Holley made a motion to remand requested subdivision approval for SUD 2019-01 back to the Planning Board for technical review.**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

**VIII. New Business (Mayor Medlin)**

**A. Consider advisory board appointments. (Mayor Medlin)**

**1. Parks and Rec Board**

- a. Resident (1 vacancy remains)**
  - i. Idesha McDougald (Resident)**
  - ii. Forest Seaton Pope (Resident)**
- b. Non-Resident**
  - i. Stephanie Raynor**

**2. Remaining Vacancies**

- a. Museum -- 6**
- b. Adjustments -- 2 alternates**
- c. Parks and Rec -- 1 non-resident**
- d. Historic Preservation -- 2 resident and 2 ETJ**
- e. Library -- 1 resident**
- f. Planning -- 1 ETJ**
- g. Police -- 2 (District I and District III)**

Commissioner Neighbors recommended sending the two resident applications back to the advisory board committee for consideration.

There was further discussion about the state of advisory board vacancies, and how the Town can continue attracting qualified applicants.

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner Neighbors made a motion to appoint Stephanie Raynor the Parks and Rec Advisory Board, and send the two resident applications back for committee review.**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

**B. WWTP Solar Farm Partnership with NC State University** (*Matt Zapp and Isaac Panzarella, NC State University*)

Isaac Panzarella with the NC Clean Energy Technology Center at NC State University presented a feasibility study regarding a possible solar farm at the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP). The NC Clean Energy Technology Center has collaborated with other municipalities and power providers on similar projects in the past.

The proposed project at the WWTP would encompass 1.5 acres on property adjacent to the plant. The goal would be to provide nearly all of the WWTP's power needs by charging a power supply ahead of the meter. The proposed system would provide approximately 980,000 kWh of electricity per year. This would also reduce demand on the Town of Benson power system producing positive effects beyond the WWTP.

Panzarella outlined various funding options including a NC Clean Water act revolving loan fund, and a USDA rural utilities loan. Panzarella estimates that the solar farm project could provide around \$58,000 per year in savings accounting for an annual loan payment.

**C. Consider approval of January 2019 Financials** (*Kim Pickett*)

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner Holley made a motion to approve the January 2019 Financial Report.**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

**D. Consider approval of Budget Amendment #9** (*Kim Pickett*)

1. **Approval from BOC to move \$35,000 from the Library Reserve Fund in the November Meeting**

**No action. Item deferred for future consideration.**

**E. Consider Proposal to establish and post speed limits in the Eastwood subdivision.** (*Chief Edwards/Tim Robbins*)

1. **Recommended speed limit in Eastwood Subdivision is 20 mph**

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner McLamb made a motion to establish and post a speed limit of 20mph in the Eastwood Subdivision.**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

**F. Purchase orders over \$10,000**

1. **Ezzell Electric Components, Inc. -- \$16,146.30** (*Matt Zapp*)
  - a. **Utilize Hurricane Florence insurance funds.**
2. **Clearwater, Inc. -- \$28,324.00** (*Matt Zapp*)
  - a. **Use of FEMA Proceeds**
  - b. **Pumps and Check Valves**
3. **Greenlife Insulation LLC -- \$16,808** (*Matt Zapp*)
  - a. **Utilize Insurance Proceeds from Hurricane Florence**
4. **LED Lighting Installation at the Benson Fire Department**

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner McLamb made a motion to approve the Purchase Orders with Ezzell Electric Components, Clearwater, Greenlife Insulation, and the LED lighting purchase.**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

**G. Consider approval of Fire Hydrant Bids (*Tim Robbins*)**

- 1. Consider awarding contract for installation of Fire Hydrants to Water Worx Services, Inc. in the amount of \$45,500**

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner Raynor made a motion to approve the fire hydrant bid with Water Worx Services, Inc.**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

**H. Consider approval of Lee Street HVAC Bid (*Tim Robbins*)**

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner McLamb to approve the Lee Street HVAC bid.**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

**IX. Town Manager Report (*Matt Zapp*)**

**A. Upcoming Board of Commissioners Meetings**

- 1. March 28 -- Board of Commissioners Budget Focused Meeting 7 PM**
- 2. April 9 -- Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting 7 PM**
- 3. April 25 -- Board of Commissioners Budget Focused Meeting 7 PM**

**B. Upcoming Transportation Plan Steering Committee Meetings**

- 1. March 11 -- 7 PM**
- 2. April 8 -- 7 PM**
- 3. May 13 -- 7 PM**

**C. Town related events and meeting reminders:**

- 1. April 6 -- Keep Benson Beautiful Annual Clean Up Day 8:30 AM**
- 2. April 7-13 -- National Library Week**
- 3. April 8 -- Pajama Story Time 6 PM**
- 4. April 13 -- Easter Eggstravaganza 2 PM**
- 5. April 19 -- All Non-Emergency Town Facilities Closed for Good Friday**

**D. 2019 Board of Commissioners Retreat Review**

- 1. Immediate action task list determined on February 23, 2019**
- 2. Renewal of the Council Priorities for 2019**
- 3. 2019 Council Goals established on Feb 23, 2019**

**E. Chamber of Commerce Sponsored Events**

- 1. April 12-13 -- Classic Antique Farm Heritage Days**

**ACTION**

**Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Stack made a motion appoint Commissioner Neighbors, Commissioner McLamb, and Town Attorney Ike Parker to a committee to create a new Town of Benson Vision Statement**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

**X. Town Attorney** (*Isaac Parker*)

**A. Update on all signed and unsigned utility easements for Main St. utility replacements.**

- 1. Location, property owner, and requested payment to be approved by Board of Commissioners.**

Ike Parker gave an overview of outstanding easements needed to complete the Main Street utility replacement. Some of the property owners have made a monetary request, but no final numbers and/or agreements have been reached. Any compensation requests by the property owners will be presented to the Board for approval.

**XI. Board of Commissioners Report** (*Commissioners*)

No reports.

**XII. Mayor Report** (*Mayor Medlin*)

**A. Update on Jimmy Capps Celebration**

- 1. Book signing and reception on Friday May 10, 2019 at Benson Baptist Church at 6:00 PM**
- 2. Jimmy Capps recognition concerts at 2:00 PM and 7:00 PM on Sat May 11, 2019 at Crossroads Church**
- 3. Placement of a historical marker, identifying the birthplace of Jimmy Capps, at 216 West Church Street**
- 4. Dedication of West Church Street in Benson as Honorary Jimmy Capps Parkway**
  - a. Placement of permanent signage on 200 block of West Church Street near the US 301 intersection.**

Mayor Medlin presented the proposed schedule for the Jimmy Capps celebration scheduled for May 2019, and asked the Board for any feedback or concerns they had.

Commissioner Neighbors reported that he had heard concerns about renaming Church Street, and about using taxpayer money for this event. Mayor Medlin reported that the proposal was not to rename Church Street, but to place an honorary sign within view of US 301.

**XIII. Closed Session** (*Mayor Medlin*)

**A. NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (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.**

**B. NCGS 143-319.11(a) (3): To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged.**

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner McLamb made a motion to enter closed session at 9:08 PM pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (6) and NCGS 143-319.11 (a) (3).**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner Raynor made a motion to enter open session at 9:55 PM.**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

**XIV. Honeycutt vs. Town of Benson settlement agreement (*Ike Parker*)**

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner Neighbors made a motion to ratify the settlement payment as required by the Town Charter based on the insurance carrier's sole decision in the sum of \$125,000 of insurance company funds to the Plaintiffs in the Renee Hood**

**Honeycutt/Brian Honeycutt civil claim and to direct the Finance Director to tender the deductible payable under the Town's applicable liability insurance policy upon presentation and demand by the insurance carrier incidental to said matter.**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**

**XV. Adjourn the Meeting (*Mayor Medlin*)**

**ACTION**

**Motion: Commissioner Raynor made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10pm.**

**Vote: Approved 6-0**