

TOWN OF COLUMBIA BOARD MINUTES

April 1, 2024

The Board of Aldermen of the Town of Columbia met in regular session at 7:PM, Monday, April 1, 2024 in the meeting room of the Columbia Municipal Building. Attending were: Alderman Lloyd Armstrong, Sandra Owes, Lynda Mastronardo and Bryan Owens. Mayor James W. Cahoon conducted the meeting.

After calling the meeting to order and prayer by Alderman S. Owens, Mayor Cahoon announced a scheduled 7:PM Public Hearing to receive comments on a proposed amendment to the 2019 CDBG-NR Project. After describing the proposed changes, he asked Mike Barnette of McDavid & Associates to describe the project and efforts to secure State approval of project changes. Mr. Barnette said this would use unexpended funds to renovate or relace another sub-standard house and allow construction of a small neighborhood park. With no comments from the public Mayor Cahoon closed the Public Hearing.

Upon motion of Alderman Armstrong and unanimous vote the Board voted to make the proposed amendment changes.

Mayor Cahoon presented two Resolutions of Respect. Upon motion of Alderman S. Owens the first resolution was unanimously adopted in memory of William C. Harrell, long-time Columbia Town Manager. attachment # 1

Upon motion of Alderman Mastronardo with unanimous vote a resolution honoring the memory of former Alderman Bertram Davenport was adopted. Both resolutions were presented to family members attending the meeting. attachment # 2

Upon motion of Alderman Armstrong the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved. This included:

1. Minutes of Monday, March 4, 2024, Board of Alderman Meeting
2. Water/Sewer downward adjustments –

GSM Properties	\$251.36
Hollie Basnight	\$ 46.56
H.T. Davenport	\$ 46.75
Jacqueline Evans	\$ 72.31
Ty Fleming	\$240.76
Torene Webb	37.00

Mayor Cahoon announced the Public Comment Period and invited the audience to speak. Mr. Owens spoke on behalf of cleaning up Rail Road Street through the woods. He picks up trash in the area and said some large trash cans would be helpful. Mayor Cahoon asked if he could be provided with trash bags and the Town Manager said they will be available.

Sheriff Kevin Sawyer presented the March Law Enforcement Report.

Mayor Cahoon announced that NCDOT has decided to keep the Fonsoe Street Bridge across the Grindel Hill Canal operational. The replacement cost is estimated at \$1,400,000.

Town Manager Rhett White reported that a budget for planned repairs is awaited from Cross Trails Outfitters, prior to the State transferring the Free 'n Easy property.

Upon motion of Alderman B. Owens and unanimous vote a \$5,000 deposit was approved to Park Boats for a new Pontoon Boat.

Town Attorney Will Crowe was asked to work with the Manager and Partnership for the Sounds to develop an agreement for Partnership for the Sounds to operate the pontoon boat. Alderman Armstrong asked that the agreement include insurance, operations, responsibilities and recognition.

The Manager reported that Peter Tompson informed him that Applied Adventures team is still working to attract a ZIP Line operator to the Town of Columbia.

Mayor Cahoon reported that the Columbia celebration of the Harbor Town Ferries will take place Wednesday, April 24th at noon. The public is being invited. He also reported that a new dinner boat has been purchased by the Harbor Town organization.

A possible Social District was discussed. Alderman B. Owens indicated he sees such a district as a plus for the town that can spur new restaurant development. Mayor Cahoon said he does not look favorably on a social district. Aldermen Mastronardo, S. Owens and Armstrong want to know how Sheriff Sawyer stands on the issue. More discussion will be scheduled for the next meeting.

Tax Collector MaryAnn Hassell announced that the delinquent tax list will be advertised in the Coastland Times during the week of April 8th. She reported that collections stand at 81.29 % verses 77% at the same time last year.

Monica Mauffray, Fiscal Officer, reported that General Fund collections are at 82% of expectations while expenditures are at 67%. She noted the Water/Sewer Budget has collections at 93% of budgeted amount while expenses are at 71%.

Upon motion of Alderman Armstrong the Board unanimously approved the 2024 Audit contract with Jeff Best CPA, not to exceed \$28,000.

Several American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) Resolutions of Acceptance were unanimously approved. These included:

Water System Asset Inventory - \$120,000, motion by Alderman S. Owens

Water System Improvements, water well - \$1,597,500, motion by Alderman B. Owens

Water System Refurbishments & Replacements - \$6,130,000, motion by Alderman B. Owens

Sewer System Asset Inventory - \$280,000, motion by Alderman Armstrong

Sewer System Refurbishments/Replacements -- \$7,080,000, Motion by Alderman Mastronardo

The Manager reported that a request has been made to the NC Department of Adult Corrections for \$113,362 to cover the USDA sewer system debt service.

The Manager reported that budget preparation is underway, the Inner Banks RV Park has the necessary permits to begin work, Columbia Crossing is set to reopen while Debbie Olson continues work on her restaurant and retail venture. He reported that arrangements to remove three pilings at Ms. Olson's boardwalk easement are being discussed. He said Albemarle Engineering is working on possible ways to address the flooding on Bridge Street.

Attorney Will Crowe said he will work on the pontoon boat agreement.

Alderman Armstrong said the TVFD is pleased with the grant to build a helipad near Tyrrell Hall.

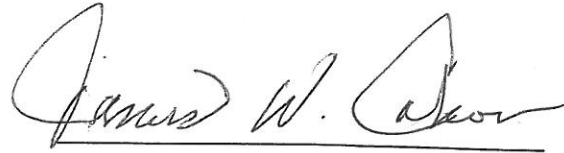
Alderman S. Owens asked if the Dollar General property can be cleaned up. She also said loose debris is scattered all over the Royal Farms construction site.

Alderman Mastronardo asked if the digital sign at Columbia Crossin can be turned off at night. She also voiced concern that the sewer manhole cover on Bridge Street behind the library is overflowing during high stormwater incidents.

Mayor Cahoon announced the April 17th 4-H Livestock Show and Sale and the April 24th Harbor Town Ferry Celebration.

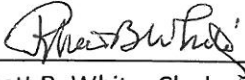
With no additional business and motion by Alderman S. Owens, the vote was unanimous to adjourn. Mayor Cahoon adjourned the meeting.

This the 1st day of April, 2024.



James W. Cahoon, Mayor

ATTEST:



Rhett B. White, Clerk