

## TOWN OF COLUMBIA BOARD MINUTES

OCTOBER 7, 2024

The Board of Aldermen of the Town of Columbia met in regular session at 7:PM, Monday, October 7, 2024 in the meeting room of the Columbia Municipal Building. Aldermen attending were Clydette Overton, Hal Fleming, Sandra Owens, Lynda Mastronardo and Bryan Owens. Mayor James W. Cahoon presided.

Mayor Cahoon called the meeting to order and welcomed Alderman Overton to the Board. He asked Alderman B. Owens to offer a prayer for the Board. He also welcomed those attending the meeting.

Upon motion of Alderman Fleming and unanimous vote the Consent Agenda was adopted. This included:

Minutes of September 3, 2024 regular Session Board of Alderman Meeting  
Minutes of September 16, 2024 Recessed Session of Alderman Meeting  
Tax Release – W.C. Harrell heirs \$192.28

Mayor Cahoon announced the Public Comment Period and invited comments from the audience. Sara Phelps provided information on a planning grant being submitted by the Tyrrell County Tourism Development Authority and asked for a letter of support from the Town. Upon motion of Alderman S. Owens and unanimous vote the Board approved sending a supporting letter. Mayor Cahoon thanked Ms. Phelps for putting the grant application together. Ms. Phelps thanked John McCann for his help and support. Sheriff Kevin Sawyer was not present to present the September law enforcement report.

Eric Roughton, President of the Tyrrell County Chamber of Commerce presented that organization's recommendations for spending the town's share of the Harbor Towns Ferries funding. This followed a letter to the Board on September 23, 2024. Mayor Cahoon thanked Mr. Roughton for his suggestions.

The municipal building proposal by Scott McLaughlin was next on the agenda. After discussion, and request for reconsideration of a previous vote, Mayor Cahoon asked for a vote on whether to move forward with the proposal or maintain the existing building at 103 Main Street. On a 4 to 1 vote with Aldermen Overton, Fleming, S. Owens and Mastronardo voting no and Alderman B. Owens voting yes, the new building proposal was rejected and will not go forward to the ad hoc work group.

Alderman B. Owens said "I resign" and exited the meeting at 7:27 PM.

It was reported that an \$8,000 quote to demolish the old shop building behind the Municipal Building had been received. It was noted that the Town needs to build another garage/storage building before demolishing the existing building. Upon motion of Alderman Fleming the vote was unanimous to move forward with quotes on a new building and demolition of the old structure.

Town Manager Rhett White reported that the three pilings hindering dockage by the Dinner Cruise boat have been removed by A.R. Chesson Construction using Harbor Towns Ferries funding and under CAMA minor permit, also secured by A.R. Chesson Construction.

There were no reports on the ZIP LINE, the Ferry schedules or the proposed Social District. Mr. White reported that he is still awaiting action by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission on transferring the Free 'n Easy property to the Town.

MaryAnn Hassel, Tax Collector, reported that tax bills are out and collections are at 7.71% compared 13.69% at the same time last year. She noted there were delays in getting the tax information from Tyrrell County. Ms. Hassell explained information from the State concerning changes in notification to delinquent taxpayers, such as signs posted.

Monica Mauffray, Finance Officer, reported that expenditures and income is in line with expectations at this time of year. She noted that general Fund income is at 21% of budget while expenditures are at 29%. She said the Water/ Sewer fund stands at 31% of expected income with expenditures at 31%.

Ms. Mauffray asked the board to approve five ARP/AIA budget resolutions for sewer and water projects and Resolutions for related work. Upon motion of Alderman Fleming the vote was unanimous to approve Budget Ordinances for five water, sewer and well projects. attachment # 1

Upon motion of Alderman Mastronardo the vote was unanimous to approve four acceptance documents. attachment # 2

Upon motion of Alderman S. Owens the vote was unanimous to approve all Engineering Agreements as presented. attachment # 3

Upon motion of Alderman S. Owens the vote was unanimous to approve a final grant acceptance letter. attachment # 4

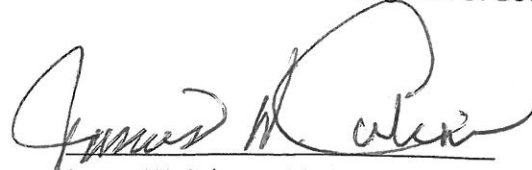
The Board delayed appointment of a representative to the Tyrrell Volunteer Fire Department Board of Directors.

Mr. White presented the Manager's Report, reminding members of the Annual Meeting of the Southern Albemarle Association, noted the Town has signed off on a CAMA Major Permit for the Black Dirt Café to add boat slips on the waterside of their property, acknowledged that standing tide water continues to be a major flooding problem, reminded members of the Scuppernong River Festival and parade and the scheduled Tyrrell County Schools ribbon cutting.

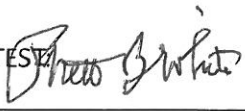
Upon motion of Alderman Fleming and unanimous vote, the Board went into closed session under G.S. 143-318.11(c) 3, Attorney Client Privilege, at 8:02 PM. The meeting returned to regular session at 8:20 PM without any report.

With no other business and motion by Alderman Fleming, the vote to adjourn was unanimous. Mayor Cahoon adjourned the meeting.

This the 7<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2024.

  
James W. Cahoon, Mayor

ATTEST

  
Rhett B. White, Clerk