

Town of Spring Lake  
Regular Meeting of the Board of Aldermen  
Municipal Building  
300 Ruth Street  
Spring Lake, NC 28390

January 25, 2021

MINUTES

6:00 pm

The Board of Aldermen held a regular meeting in the Grady Howard Conference Room of the Spring Lake Municipal Building with Mayor Larry G. Dobbins presiding.

**Board Members Present:** Mayor Pro Tem Taimoor Aziz  
Alderwoman Soña Cooper (excused absent)  
Alderwoman Jackie Jackson  
Alderman James O'Garra  
Alderwoman Fredricka Sutherland (via Zoom)

**Others Present:**

Adam Lindsay, Interim Town Manager  
Jonathan Charleston, Town Attorney (via Zoom)  
Catherine Bamba, Attorney (via Zoom)  
Jose Coker, Charleston Group Attorney (via Zoom)  
Keisha Harris, Charleston Group (via Zoom)  
Jaimie Walters, Cumberland County Joint Planning (via Zoom)  
Justin B. Hembree, Mid-Carolina Council of Governments  
Tonny McNeil, Economic Development  
Earnie Pearson, ED Attorney (via Zoom)  
Gay Tucker, Finance Director  
Jonathan Richardson, Interim Fire Chief  
Debora Johnson-Hudson, Town Clerk  
Melissa Pereira, Deputy Town Clerk  
Banard Lemon, Audio Visual Coordinator

**2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Alderwoman Jackson gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Alderwoman Jackson made a motion to add G.S.143.-314.11 (a)3 – Attorney Client Privilege and G.S 143-318.11 (a)6 – Personnel to Closed Session.

**Action:** Approval of the January 25, 2021 Board of Aldermen Regular Meeting.

**Motion by:** Alderwoman Jackson

**Second by:** Mayor Pro Tem Aziz

**Vote:** unanimous

#### **4. Approval of Consent Items**

**Action:** Approval of consent items for December 14, 2020 work session minutes.

**Motion by:** Alderwoman Jackson

**Second by:** Alderman O'Garra

**Vote:** unanimous

Alderman O'Garra had concerns about a phrase that was voiced by Mr. Charleston in the minutes. Ms. Hudson answered and told Alderman O'Garra that the phrase was discussed in closed session.

#### **5. Public Comment**

Mr. James Christian expressed his appreciation for the rehiring the Fire Chief. Mr. James Christian had concerns about hiring a financial team.

#### **6. Presentation – Tracee Moore -Free Little Library -No Show**

#### **7. Public Hearing**

Mayor Dobbins opened the Public Hearing for Case P20-53: Rezoning of 1.21+/- acres from M2 Heavy Industrial to C(P) Planned Commercial or to a more restrictive zoning district, located of the west side of NC 210 (Lillington Highway), south of Lake Park Drive, submitted by William S. Wellons Jr. On behalf of Wellco Contractors Inc. & Florence C. Wellons heirs (owner). Mayor Dobbins asked three times if there were any comments or concerns.

No comments or concerns were addressed. The public hearing was closed by Mayor Dobbins.

**Action:** Approval to close Public Hearing for Case P20-53.

**Motion by:** Alderman O'Garra

**Second by:** Mayor Pro tem Aziz

**Vote:** unanimous

#### **8. New Business**

Case P20-53: Rezoning of 1.21+/- acres from M2 Heavy Industrial to C(P) Planned Commercial or to a more restrictive zoning district, located of the west side of NC 210 (Lillington Highway), south of Lake Park Drive, submitted by William S. Wellons Jr. On behalf of Wellco Contractors Inc. & Florence C. Wellons heirs (owner). Mayor Dobbins asked three times if there were any comments or concerns.

Ms. Jaimie Walters explained Case P20-53 to the Board, and asked if they had any questions.

**Action:** Approval of Case P20-53. Rezoning of 1.21+/- acres from M2 Heavy Industrial to C(P) Planned Commercial or to a more restrictive zoning district, located of the west side of NC 210 (Lillington Highway), south of Lake Park Drive.

**Motion by:** Alderman O'Garra

**Second by:** Mayor Pro tem Aziz

**Vote:** unanimous

Alderman Sutherland had concerns about the residential areas and the zoning restrictions. Ms. Walters explained about the commercial industrial site plan. Ms. Walters explained the land could be used as industrial use but the site plan will not be used for industrial.

#### **Board to consider authorizing the Town Manager to enter into an agreement with Mid-Carolinas and Triangle J Council of Governments**

Mr. Lindsay introduced Justin Hembree with Mid-Carolinas and Triangle J Council of Governments to discuss how they can assist with the town's finances. Mr. Hembree discussed the interlocal agreement briefly with questions from the board. Mr. Hembree said there are 16 regional governments across the Carolinas. Mr. Hembree stated they would assign a person to work with Mr. Lindsay and the Finance staff to help the town with the financial audits. Mr. Hembree stated Ms. Nancy Medlin would be assigned to help and that she is a retired Finance Director and Assistant Manager. Mr. Hembree explained Ms. Medlin would be an employee of the Council of Governments and on their payroll, but through this agreement we would bill the town for her services at \$72 an hour. Alderman O'Garra stated he is glad that we have help. Mayor Pro tem Aziz asked how many hours a week Ms. Medlin would work? Mr. Hembree said more hours would be needed at first and then it would taper off eventually. Mr. Lindsay stated we can expect more hours at first. Mr. Hembree reiterated the price is \$72 per hour, not \$75. Alderman Sutherland asked how many personnel will be working? Mr. Hembree stated only one, Nancy Medlin. Alderman Sutherland had concerns about the duration of the agreement and about the dates going until June 30th and December 30th. Mr. Hembree stated he does not foresee this extending after June 30th

**Action:** Approval of authorizing Mr. Lindsay to enter into a local agreement with Triangle J Council of Governments.

**Motion by:** Mayor Pro tem Aziz

**Second by:** Alderman O'Garra

**Vote:** unanimous

#### **Assistance to Firefighter's Grant**

Interim Fire Chief Richardson requested the Board approve AFG which will replace their mobile radios. Alderman O'Garra stated as long as it comes out of their budget. Interim Fire Chief Richardson stated that they would only need around \$1,600 from the Town, and the rest of the funds would come from the firefighters grant. Alderman Sutherland reiterated on the cost of the grant if fully awarded would be approximately \$31, 500 and the grant would cover 95% of the cost, in addition, the town would pay the other 5% which equates \$1,575. Interim Fire Chief Richardson stated that's correct. Alderman Sutherland wanted to thank the first responders.

**Action:** Approval of Assistance to Firefighter's Grant.

**Motion by:** Mayor Pro tem Aziz

**Second by:** Alderman O'Garra

**Vote:** unanimous

#### **Town Manager Contract**

Mayor Dobbins discussed Mr. Lindsay's contract as the Interim Town Manager. Alderman O'Garra stated Mr. Lindsay has been working for a month without a contract.

**Action:** Approval of Mr. Lindsay's contract as the Interim Town Manager.  
**Motion by:** Alderwoman Sutherland  
**Second by:** Alderman O'Garra  
**Vote:** unanimous

### Oath of Office

Mayor Dobbins administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Adam Lindsay.

### Resolution (2021) 1, Bank Signature Card Change

Ms. Gay Tucker presented Resolution 2021(1) and stated all checks must have two signatures from the town. Ms. Tucker requested the board approve changes to the Bank Signature card adding Mr. Adam Lindsay to the account and deleting Mr. Daniel Gerald.

**Action:** Approval of Resolution (2021) 1, Bank Signature Card  
**Motion by:** Mayor Pro tem Aziz  
**Second by:** Alderman O'Garra  
**Vote:** unanimous

### Appoint two board members to serve on Audit Committee

Mayor Dobbins stated at the November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020 board meeting that two board members will need to volunteer to serve on the audit committee. Mayor Dobbins asked who is volunteering. Alderwoman Sutherland volunteered to serve on the audit committee. Mayor Dobbins asked Mr. Charleston didn't the LGC recommend this committee? Mr. Charleston said the audit committee was for the board to have proper oversight over the finances and audits, and not for this to take the place of the finance director. Mr. Charleston discussed what the LGC suggested was to assure that the board is in compliance with the statues. Mayor Dobbins asked again for one more board member to volunteer. No other board member volunteered. Alderman O'Garra stated in order to keep us on track, we need to put the Finance Director under the Town Manager. Alderman O'Garra stated the way the charter is setup is antique.

### Discussion of the hiring process for new Town Manager

Mayor Dobbins discussed the procedures to hire a new town manager. Mayor Dobbins discussed letting Mr. Durham provide his services to aid in hiring a new town manager. Mayor Pro tem Aziz asked Mr. Lindsay's opinion on this process. Mr. Lindsay stated he strongly recommended to do so. Mayor Dobbins said we are behind the timeline as far as the hiring process that Mr. Durham had laid out. Alderwoman Jackson had concerns of hiring Mr. Durham at \$15,000 and \$195 an hour and asked can we afford that cost? Alderwoman Jackson stated the cost to hire a new town manager is a lot. Alderman O'Garra stated we should look for another company. Alderwoman Sutherland stated she did ask Mr. Durham if the cost was negotiable, and he said yes. Alderwoman Jackson stated we need to find out the final cost and the dollar amount. Mr. Charleston discussed bringing Mr. Durham back to discuss what the town would consider paying. Mr. Lindsay discussed allowing the Mayor and him to work with Mr. Durham to get clarity on what this means. Mr. Lindsay stated that \$195 an hour is reasonable. Alderman O'Garra stated Mr. Zell helped us the last time hiring a town manager, and it didn't cost us \$15,000. Mayor Pro tem Aziz stated the town is in a pretty unique situation and he believes this small-time investment would benefit the town to get a town manager. Mayor Dobbins stated we will table this item. Alderwoman Jackson asked will there be a contract? Mr. Lindsay stated yes. Alderwoman Sutherland

suggested that we table this until we call and talk with Mr. Durham.

9. **Closed Session** G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4) – Economic Development  
G.S. 143.318.11 (a)(3) – Consultation with Attorney  
G.S. 143.318.11 (a)(6) – Personnel

Action: The Board approved a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4) Economic Development, G.S 143- 318.11 (a)(3) Consultation with Attorney and G.S 143.318.11(a)(6) Personnel.

Motion by: Mayor Pro tem Aziz  
Second by: Alderwoman Jackson  
Vote: Unanimous

Mayor Pro Tem Aziz made a motion, seconded by Alderman O'Garra, to reconvene in open session.

Action: Mayor Pro Tem Aziz made a motion to authorize the Mayor to reinstate Chief Williams, seconded by Alderwoman Sutherland.

Motion by: Mayor Pro tem Aziz  
Second by: Alderwoman Sutherland  
Vote: 2-2

Yes	No
Mayor Pro tem Aziz	Alderwoman Jackson
Alderwoman Sutherland	Alderman O'Garra

Mayor Dobbins broke the tie by voting yes to reinstate Chief Williams.

Alderwoman Jackson stated for the record that the board has no authority to do this.

10. Adjournment.

Action: There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Motion: Mayor Pro tem Aziz  
Second by: Alderwoman Jackson  
Vote: unanimous

*Larry G. Dobbins*  
ATTEST:

Larry G. Dobbins  
Mayor

*Melissa Pereira*  
Melissa Pereira  
Deputy Town Clerk