

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

December 17, 2021

MINUTES

8:33 a.m.

The Spring Lake Board of Aldermen held a special meeting in the Grady Howard Conference Room of the Spring Lake Municipal Building with Mayor Kia Anthony presiding.

Board Members Present: Mayor Pro Tem Robyn Chadwick
Alderwoman Sofia Cooper
Alderman Marvin Lackman
Alderman Raul Palacios
Alderwoman Adrian Thompson

Others Present:

Samantha Wullenwaber, Interim Town Manager
Jonathan Charleston, Town Attorney
Melissa Pereira, Town Clerk
Banard Lemon, Audio Visual Coordinator
Zefrim Lewis, Interim Parks and Recreation Director

1. Call to Order

Mayor Kia Anthony declared a quorum and called the meeting to reconvene.

2. New Business

c. Miscellaneous Board Training

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber introduced the Parks and Recreation Department presentation.

Mr. Zefrim Lewis provided details about the programs that the Recreation Center offers. He also gave details about the hours of operation and facility needs. Mayor Anthony asked about shortcomings that the Recreation Center might need. Mr. Lewis stated staffing is the biggest issue. Alderwoman Cooper expressed thanks and appreciation for the Swearing-In Ceremony. Alderwoman Cooper informed Mr. Lewis that there are funds available to help upgrade the exercise room. Mr. Lewis gave details about needing a maintenance person to repair equipment and staffing seasonal workers. Mr. Lewis stated they need security cameras throughout Mendoza Park due to vandalism. Mr. Lewis stated the hours of operation is a concern regarding sports programs and activities because the Recreation Center closes at 7:00 p.m. Alderman Lackman stated he knows someone who would teach a salsa dance class, upstart business class, and start a webpage class all for free. Alderman Lackman asked how many service the Boys and Girls Club. Mr. Lewis stated approximately 50 kids, and before Covid it was 90 kids. Alderwoman Thompson provided details that a lot of children don't have transportation to participate with Recreation activities, and in the future, if possible, the town could provide transportation for children who want to participate in the programs the Recreation Center offers. Alderwoman Cooper stated the sandwich boards need to be placed around town for advertising the town's events.

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber introduced the Town Clerk presentation.

Ms. Melissa Pereira provided information regarding the open meeting laws, public records, and writing minutes. Mayor Anthony stated the Board wants the agenda to be alphabetized. Ms. Pereira stated she would correct the agenda letterhead. Alderwoman Cooper informed Ms. Pereira that training would be a benefit to helping the Board. Alderman Lackman expressed his concerns with adding people to the Sunshine List so there can be more engagement with town events. Ms. Pereira stated yes. Alderman Palacios questioned how do our departments communicate. Ms. Pereira stated when there is an event, the Recreation Department emails me, and then she forwards the events to the Board. Mayor Anthony asked what's the greatest challenge in the clerk's office. Ms. Pereira stated staffing is the greatest challenge.

The Human Resources Department Presentation

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber gave a brief overview of the Human Resources Department. She stated Mr. Terry Hock is the Human Resources Officer and Payroll. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated the town has a very old payroll system. She stated we are looking into upgrading the payroll system. Mrs. Wullenwaber provided information regarding human resources duties and responsibilities. Alderwoman Cooper explained the demographics play a part in salaries and benefits across other towns. Alderwoman Cooper expressed concerns regarding posting positions too early, and not responding to applicants during and after the hiring process. Mrs. Wullenwaber agreed. Alderman Lackman questioned the number years Mr. Hock has been employed with the town. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated 6 years. Mayor Anthony asked what hardship is Mr. Hock experiencing. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated the payroll software is the issue. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated the software compares to the old DOS system.

The Public Services Presentation

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber gave a brief overview of Public Services. She stated the town's public services are comprised of fleet maintenance, sanitation, streets, and public buildings. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated Mr. David Vandergriff is the director, and he's been employed for 5 years with the town. Mrs. Wullenwaber provided information regarding trash and recycling. She stated GFL Waste Industries picks up the trash and recycling. Mrs. Wullenwaber gave details about amending the town's Ordinance for bulk pickup because most towns don't pick up as much as this town does. She stated this is wear and tear on the machines, and we need to increase our efficiency. Mrs. Wullenwaber provided details regarding public buildings. Alderman Lackman questioned the street miles in town. Alderman Lackman asked about the number of town vehicles in the fleet inventory. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated she will provide the Board with those numbers. Alderwoman Thompson suggested taking household items to the landfill on Manchester Road. Alderwoman Cooper stated because we don't pay the County it excludes us from taking items to the dump. Alderwoman Thompson stated she knows they won't take household items, but Ann Street Dump does. Mayor Anthony suggested the town minimize the items we pick up due to the wear and tear on the town's equipment, and add a small fee for picking up furniture. Alderwoman Cooper suggested the loose-leaf collection should have a specific date, and scheduling pickup instead of the town's vehicles driving daily to pick up bulk items. Ms. Pereira provided details about issues with the trash and recycling. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated she would schedule a meeting with Waste Industries.

Alderman Lackman had concerns about the number of trash containers and cost for each household. Mrs. Wullenwaber gave details regarding the trash and recycling. She stated the cost is \$308 annually, and it was adopted in the Rate and Fee Schedule. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated people can pay for more. Alderman Palacios asked how does work get contracted out with the street department. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated we contract

out if water and sewer have a main break. Alderman Palacios questioned how we know how much to budget if something major happens. Mrs. Wullenwaber explained the street department has maintenance funds they budget. Alderwoman Cooper suggested the town needs to conduct an inventory on trash and recycling cans.

Mrs. Wullenwaber provided details about the town's new website and its capabilities.

The Inspections Department Presentation

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber gave a brief overview of the Inspections Department. She stated the town only has one employee that serves as the Inspections Clerk. Her name is Mrs. Lynn Hickmon. Mrs. Wullenwaber gave details that Mrs. Hickmon duties are planning, zoning, permits, inspections, and code enforcement. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated we have contracted a part time inspector, and code enforcement. Mrs. Wullenwaber gave details that the town uses Cumberland County Planning Department at a budget of \$34,000 annually. Mayor Anthony asked about current land use. Mrs. Wullenwaber provided information about the Open House Land Use Committee and the high numbers in participation. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated it's a comprehensive plan. Alderwoman Thompson questioned annexation for residents who have a Spring Lake address but don't receive services like the residents within city limits. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated involuntary annexation is longer allowed. Mrs. Wullenwaber gave a brief overview of the different types of annexations. Mrs. Wullenwaber provided details on the strategic comprehensive plan for the town. She stated there hasn't been one completed in over 20 years. Alderwoman Cooper asked if the Board could get map of Spring Lake regarding town and county area boundaries. Mayor Anthony stated Ms. Lynn Hickmon does have the maps.

The Council- Manager Form of Government Presentation

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber introduced to the Board the Council-Manager Form of Government presentation. Mrs. Wullenwaber provided information regarding the chain of command with the Town of Spring Lake. Mrs. Wullenwaber gave a brief overview of the general statues regarding the council and manager duties and responsibilities. She stated the manager runs the day-to-day operations of the town. Mrs. Wullenwaber provided an organizational chart of the town. She proposed to hire an executive assistant to support some departments. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated all departments are equally important. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated the town manager and town clerk work for the Board.

Mrs. Wullenwaber gave a brief overview of the fiduciary responsibilities, ordinances, land use decisions, and town committees. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated all decisions are made with the entire Board, not individually. Mrs. Wullenwaber explained to the Board the only personnel involvement is the position classification plan excluding the town manager and town clerk.

The Board of Aldermen took a 10-minute break.

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber gave the Board situational questions to answer. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated the Board did a great job.

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber provided information on communicating to the Board. She stated email is the best option or telephone calls. Mrs. Wullenwaber provided details regarding training for the Board. Mrs. Wullenwaber provided information about the various resources the Board can use, such as, UNC School of Government, NC League of Cities, and Listserv. Alderwoman Cooper recommended Cumberland County Listserv. Mrs. Wullenwaber gave a brief overview of communication priority. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated

every Friday she emails the Board important information. She stated she will email the Board if there's a crime or accident immediately. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated she would like to meet with each board member every month.

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber introduced to the Board the Code of Conduct presentation. Mrs. Wullenwaber gave a brief overview of professionalism in the workplace. She stated she expects staff to be professional at all times especially to the public and each other. Mrs. Wullenwaber asked the Board to adopt a professional code of conduct policy. Alderwoman Cooper expressed her concerns regarding staff training with difficult customers. Mayor Anthony suggested to sign a pledge for the Board to work together also. She stated this would hold us accountable as well. Alderwoman Thompson suggested quarterly training for staff. Mrs. Wullenwaber provided information that she has spoken to Fayetteville Technical Community College to conduct training to the town and community. Alderman Palacios stated he agrees with following the chain of command and holding the board accountable. Alderman Palacios stated the Board should be accountable to each other.

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber introduced to the Board the town meetings presentation. Mrs. Wullenwaber gave a brief overview of the time and date the meetings convene. Mrs. Wullenwaber gave details regarding the agenda items. Mrs. Wullenwaber asked the Board where would they like the public comment to be on the agenda. Mrs. Wullenwaber discussed the procedures and policy regarding public comment. Alderwoman Cooper recommended the policy be read before they speak. Mayor Anthony suggested she will announce the policy before public comment. Alderman Lackman recommended public comment to be placed at the end of the meetings because some citizens leave early. Mrs. Wullenwaber asked for a consensus to put public comment at the end of the Board's agenda. All board members agreed. Mrs. Wullenwaber provided details regarding public hearings, and asked for a consensus to place public hearings right after the new business cases. All board members agreed. Mrs. Wullenwaber provided information about agenda items including closed sessions and the general statues. Mrs. Wullenwaber gave a brief overview about agenda prep.

Mayor Anthony recommended the invocation be taken off the agenda because not everyone in the community is of Christian faith. Mayor Anthony suggested to open it up or completely remove it. Mayor Anthony stated we need to be inclusion to all religions. Mayor Anthony provided information regarding religions could be seen as bias because the military recognized Satanism as a religion. Mayor Anthony stated we have to be open to everybody or remove it completely. Ms. Melissa Pereira stated she spoke with a couple of town clerks and they said they have different religious affiliates come to their meetings. She suggested a moment of silence might be appropriate. Alderwoman Cooper agreed that the town has to be open to every religion, and the moment of silence as an option. Alderman Palacios expressed his concerns to remove the invocation because at board meeting's it can come across as hypocritical. Alderman Lackman stated he would like to keep the invocation. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated the Board would have to vote in open session to remove the invocation item.

Alderwoman Cooper suggested the Public Records Request form be discarded. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated there needs to be record of the request. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated she would work with Ms. Pereira to find another way for internal record keeping. Mayor Anthony suggested the form be on the website.

Ms. Melissa Pereira stated the closed session minutes can be made public but not personnel. She stated personnel under closed session cannot be released according to the Record Management Regulations. Ms. Pereira gave details about lawsuits and economic development in lieu of settlements and closings.

of Governments as the Interim Town Manager for the Town of Spring Lake. She opened the floor for each department to give a brief overview of their daily operations.

The first briefing was conducted by the Customer Service/Revenue Billing and Collections. Mrs. Renee Robinson explained to the Board the operations of the Water Department. Mrs. Robinson gave details about the departments meter readers, billing invoices, trash collections, and retiree's health insurance. Mrs. Robinson informed the Board about customer services they provide daily. She stated customer service generates invoices for new services and transfers. She stated they also collect payments for water bills. Mrs. Robinson stated they're currently working with various resources such as assistant utility programs to help customers who need help paying their monthly water bills. Mrs. Robinson stated the meter readers read approximately 4,700 meters a month, and 2,600 meters are read manually, whereas, the other 2,100 meters are read with a wand. Mrs. Robinson stated disconnections start around the 26th of each month, and then illegal usage. She stated around this time the Meter Readers start reading again. Alderman Lackman asked about illegal usage. Mrs. Robinson explained the individuals who are residing at a residence and haven't started water service. She stated the meters readers have to go out and turn the meter off. Mayor Anthony asked about making meter reading more efficient. Mayor Anthony asked about the cost. Mrs. Robinson stated \$1.5 million to install an automated system. Alderman Lackman questioned what areas will the automated system effect. Mrs. Robinson stated the whole town. Alderwoman Cooper questioned the town's outsource billing method. Mrs. Robinson stated the town does the billing, but a part of our bills are outsourced. Alderwoman Cooper asked how much do we pay. Mrs. Robinson stated \$1,900 a month for outsourcing. Alderman Lackman asked about the life cycle of the automated meters. Mrs. Robinson stated the life cycle is 10 to 12 years. Alderman Lackman questioned how accurate are the meters because the town citizens' concerns are with the inconsistent prices on their monthly water bills. Mrs. Robinson explained holidays and weather play a part in the fluctuating monthly billing cycle. Mrs. Robinson stated if customers call with concerns, we will reread the meter to ensure accuracy, and monitor the meter for 30 days.

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber introduced the Water Treatment Plant presentation.

Mr. Tim Garner presented to the Board the operations of the Water Treatment Plant. Mr. Garner gave details about the infrastructure and its resources. Mr. Garner explained the Water Treatment Plant encompasses three different divisions, and they are water operations, water collections, and stormwater. Mr. Garner stated the water operations takes care of approximately 67 miles of watermains, 70 miles of sewer mains, and the meter lines. Mr. Garner provided information regarding environmental water sampling. He stated they test the water daily, monthly, and quarterly. Mr. Garner stated we have an interlocal agreement with Cumberland County to service the OverHills sewer system, Cedarwood Shopping Center, a mobile home park, and two in the Overhills area. Mr. Garner stated the town uses around one million gallons of water a day. Mr. Garner provided details about the town's stormwater division. Mr. Garner provided information regarding the State Distressed Utility List. He stated the town is on the list due to the town's financial situation. Mrs. Wullenwaber added there will be training to attend on this matter. She would like a board member to volunteer to attend the training. Mayor Anthony had concerns regarding the town only having 500,000 gallons of excess in the water supply. Mr. Garner explained the State's cutoff is 75 percent. Alderwoman Cooper asked how much does the town use. Mr. Garner stated between 58 to 65 percent. Alderwoman Cooper questioned the funding that is available to repair the infrastructure. Mr. Garner stated yes, they are looking into the funds that are available. Alderman Palacios asked with the new housing development going on Odell Road is that factored in the amount of the town's water supply. Mr. Garner stated yes, the average home uses 100 gallons a day. Alderman Lackman questioned the frequency of water main breaks and the infrastructure declination. Mr. Garner stated ninety percent of our service is water service lines, and main service lines are ten to twelve a year.

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber introduced to the Board the on-boarding process. Mrs. Wullenwaber gave a brief overview and provided the Human Resource Department's information.

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber introduced to the Board the budget process. Mrs. Wullenwaber provided all board members the Budget Ordinance. Mrs. Wullenwaber gave a detailed overview regarding the general fund, water/sewer fund, and revenue fund. Mayor Anthony questioned the Spring Lake Acquisitions under general fund. Mrs. Wullenwaber explained there are not funds budgeted to pay for the Spring Lake Acquisitions.

Mayor Anthony asked if the Board could do a Meet-and-Greet with the departments. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated yes.

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber provided details about the water/sewer plan and stormwater plan. She gave a brief overview of the town's contracts and services. Alderwoman Cooper asked about training being budgeted this year. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated we can research. Mayor Anthony suggested finding the funds to help pay for training.

The Board took a break for lunch.

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber gave a brief overview of the town's financial stability. Mrs. Wullenwaber stated we have policies and procedures that will help ensure we follow and hire qualified individuals to enforce these guidelines. Mrs. Wullenwaber discussed the town's committees and bylaws. Alderwoman Cooper recommended we discuss these committees at a board meeting. She expressed her concerns about the committees being suspended until staff and board members receive the proper training.

Mrs. Samantha Wullenwaber gave a detailed overview about the budget meetings that will began in March 2022. Mrs. Wullenwaber asked the Board if they had any questions before adjourning the meeting. Mayor Anthony asked the Board if they had any closing thoughts. Alderman Lackman expressed his thanks and appreciation for exposing the truths in the town. Alderwoman Thompson expressed her thanks and appreciation as well. Alderman Palacios expressed his thanks and appreciation to the town and employees. Alderwoman Cooper expressed her thanks and appreciation to the staff, employees, and Mrs. Wullenwaber for an outstanding job as the Interim Town Manager.

Mayor Anthony expressed her thanks and appreciation. Mrs. Wullenwaber expressed her thanks and stated she is here if anyone needs her help.

4. Adjournment.

Action: There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 1:01 p.m.

Motion: Alderman Lackman

Second by: Alderwoman Thompson

Vote: Unanimous



Kia Anthony
Mayor

ATTEST:



Melissa Pereira, CMC
Town Clerk