

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

September 11, 2023

MINUTES

6:00 pm

The Spring Lake Board of Aldermen held a regular 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 Soñia Cooper
Alderman Marvin Lackman
Alderman Raul Palacios
Alderwoman Adrian Thompson

Others Present:

Carly Autry, Town Clerk
Lieutenant Justin Bonsignore, Spring Lake Fire Department
Tim Garner, Director of Water Treatment Plant
Banard Lemon, Audio Visual Coordinator
Michael Porter, Town Attorney
Dysoaneik Spellman, Chief of Spring Lake Police
Lieutenant Danny Sutton, Spring Lake Police Department
Jason Williams, Spring Lake Fire Chief/Interim Town Manager

1. Call to Order

Mayor Anthony declared a quorum and called the meeting to order.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Juanita Bonds gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Additions or Deletions

Alderman Palacios requested all Consent Items to be Tabled until after Closed Session. Alderwoman Cooper requested to add Kelby Wortham vs. Town of Spring Lake to N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(3) – Attorney-Client Privilege and N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(6) – Personnel under Closed Session.

4. Approval of Agenda

Action: Approval of September 11, 2023 Board of Aldermen Regular Meeting agenda with Consent Items Tabled until after Closed Session.

Motion by: Alderwoman Cooper
Second by: Alderwoman Thompson
Vote: Unanimous

5. Approval of Consent Items

Action: Approval of Draft Minutes of August 28, 2023, Work Session Meeting and Table March 25, 2019, Closed Session Minutes, February 24, 2020, Closed Session Minutes, July 12, 2020, Closed Session Minutes, August 10, 2020, Closed Session Minutes, January 25, 2021, Closed Session Minutes, February 22, 2021, Closed Session Minutes, March 8, 2021, Closed Session Minutes, March 22, 2021, Closed Session Minutes, April 12, 2021, Closed Session Minutes.

Motion by: Alderman Palacios
Second by: Alderwoman Cooper
Vote: Unanimous

6. Public Comment

None

7. Presentations

- a. Community Appearance and Sustainability Committee “Yard of the Month” September 2023 – Alderman Raul Palacios – Alderman Palacios stated Yard of the Month is the opportunity to recognize neighbors for maintaining and upkeeping their property that makes Spring Lake a more attractive place. The five (5) winners were Maggie Davis, Byron Ferrell, Janet and John Layman, Bennie and Annie Pierce, and Richard and Arnetta Weaver. Alderman Palacios presented a PowerPoint announcing four (4) residents who were chosen as Yard of the Month for their neighborhood and one (1) resident did not want a picture of her home taken.
- b. Sista Soul Fest – Ayreka Plowden, Owner – Ms. Plowden presented a presentation to Mayor Anthony and the Board about Sista Soul Fest, Sista Soul Fest in NC, Sista Soul Fest NC Logistics, How the Town of Spring Lake Can Help and ended with Questions and Answers.
- c. National Preparedness Month 2023 Proclamation – Alderwoman Soña Cooper – Alderwoman Cooper stated the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners also did a Proclamation; however, this was originally passed by President Joseph Biden. Alderwoman Cooper stated due to hurricane season, the Board wanted to honor this month and make sure the Town is prepared for any natural disasters. Mayor Anthony stated the Fire and Police Chiefs and other departments are already working together to make sure the Town is staying ahead of natural disasters as well as internally.
- d. 9/11 Proclamation 2023 – Mayor Kia Anthony – Mayor Anthony read the Proclamation in honor of the remembrance of the 22nd anniversary of 9/11.
- e. Dunkin’ Donuts – Dunkin’ Donuts Manager – There was no representation from Dunkin’ Donuts.

8. New Business

- a. Adopt Town of Spring Lake's Mission and Vision Statement – Mayor Kia Anthony – Mayor Anthony stated the Mission and Vision statement was set in the strategic planning session and she read it to reaffirm the Pledge, Vision, and Mission for the Town of Spring Lake. Mayor Anthony stated this is the Board's promise, not only for ourselves, but for the citizens, and wants citizens to hold them to a standard and wants to provide vision and foresight for growth in the community, not just economic development, but for a connection within the community. Mayor Anthony stated that is why this was created, to show commitment to this community and something to continuously build on forever. Alderman Palacios asked Mayor Anthony where this be posted and shared with the Town and Mayor Anthony stated in a place where the community is constantly reminded of the Town's vision, possibly in the foyer of Town Hall possibly on a plaque.

Action: Motion to approve the adoption of the Town of Spring Lake's Mission and Vision Statement.

Motion by: Alderwoman Cooper

Second by: Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick

Vote: Unanimous

- b. Mayor's Report – Mayor Kia Anthony – First, Mayor Anthony stated the next Lunch with the Mayor is Thursday, September 28, 2023, at K-Food Seoul at 12 noon. Second, Mayor Anthony stated First Friday on Main was successful and was hosted by the Chamber, however, Alderwoman Cooper will talk more about that in her Report. Last, Mayor Anthony stated she had a chance to do some training this past week in St. Louis, MO, for which she was offered a full scholarship to include travel, hotel, and food, by Local Progress. Mayor Anthony stated they taught about governance, how to be an elected official, stress levels, and how to maintain a positive work-life balance. Mayor Anthony stated she brought back a lot of information for the Board and will provide it to them soon. At the end of the Board of Aldermen Report, Mayor Anthony commended the Board and staff for their involvement in the local schools.
- c. Board of Aldermen Report – Spring Lake Board of Aldermen – Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick stated less than two (2) weeks away is the 7th Annual Pink D.Y.M.O.N.S. 5K Cancer Walk and Community Festival, which is Saturday, September 30, 2023, and there will be a mammogram van, free cancer screenings, food, giveaways, and vendor opportunities still available. Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick stated Spring Lake Middle School Marching Band will be doing a melodic band march and they will also be raising money for uniforms. First, Alderman Palacios stated the Fall Town Community cleanup is Saturday, September 16, 2023, from 9:00 am until 12 noon, at the Spring Lake Recreation Center, and there will also be e-waste opportunities to get rid of electronic waste, tires, and bulk items. Second, Alderman Palacios stated Wednesday, September 13, 2023, is the Appearance Committee meeting, and all are welcome. Last, Alderman Palacios stated the Appearance Committee is coordinating with the Military and Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee for the Veterans Day Ceremony, along with the Mural Dedication Ceremony on Thursday, November 10, 2023. Alderman Palacios stated the mural will start on September 30th, which should take possibly about a week to do, and will be asking for volunteers from the community to help paint. First, Alderwoman Thompson stated Friday, September 15, 2023, from

10:00 am to 2:00 pm, at Spring Lake Walmart located at 670 Lillington HWY is Cops on Top. Alderwoman Thompson stated this event is to reach a goal of \$1,000 to donate to support Special Olympics. Mayor Anthony stated Chief Spellman will be on top of Walmart until the \$1,000 goal is met. Last, Alderwoman Thompson stated there will be no Cops and Conversations this month, so the next Cops and Conversations will be Thursday, October 26, 2026. First, Alderman Lackman stated this past Saturday, September 9, 2023, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, there was a Hiring Event at the Spring Lake Recreation Center, which the Police Department also had a station set up. Second, Alderman Lackman stated the Veterans event would be on Saturday, November 4, 2023, at the Spring Lake Recreation Center. Third, Alderman Lackman presented a PowerPoint regarding the Town cleanup that took place on Saturday, September 9, 2023, totaling approximately 400 pounds of trash. Alderman Lackman stated last year's total has been surpassed and as of right now, over 3,400 pounds of trash has been collected this year from the streets of Spring Lake and the next Town Cleanup is Saturday, October 7, 2023, from 8:00 am to 11:00 am, and will meet at Southwinds Plaza. Last, Alderman Lackman stated the Military and Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee meeting is Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at 6:30 pm and the general public is invited. Alderman Lackman stated there are three (3) applications submitted to join the two (2) open positions on the Committee and those will be reviewed at the next meeting. First, Alderwoman Cooper stated the First Friday on Main event was very successful and the next First Friday on Main is Friday, October 6, 2023, from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm, and please wear pink as October is Breast Cancer Awareness month. Second, Alderwoman Cooper stated Saturday, October 28, 2023, is the 3rd Annual Haunted Lakes event from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Third, Alderwoman Cooper stated she, Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick, and Alderwoman Thompson were at Spring Lake Middle discussing the Booster Club to raise funds for band uniforms, sports teams, items for Teachers and Staff, etc. Fourth, Alderwoman Cooper stated on Thursday, September 14, 2023, she will be in Raleigh, NC at the NCLM Board of Directors meeting. Last, Alderwoman Cooper stated she and two (2) others were going to the Military Summit on Tuesday, September 26, 2023, and Wednesday, September 27, 2023.

- d. Manager's Report – Interim Town Manager Jason Williams – Mr. Williams stated no report at this time.
- e. Town Attorney Report – Town Attorney Michael Porter – Attorney Porter stated no report at this time.

9. Closed Session

Action: The Board approved a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(3) – Attorney-Client Privilege regarding Kelby Wortham vs. Town of Spring Lake and Pursuant to N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(6) – Personnel.

Motion: Alderwoman Thompson

Second by: Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick

Vote: Unanimous

Action: The Board approved a motion to reconvene in open session. No action was taken.

Motion: Alderman Palacios

Second by: Alderwoman Cooper

Vote: Unanimous

Alderman Palacios read a statement regarding the release of the Closed Session minutes under Consent Items (**Attachment #1**).

10. Adjournment

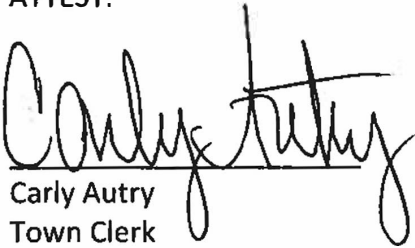
Action: There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:16 pm.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick


Second by: Alderwoman Cooper

Vote: Unanimous

ATTEST:


Carly Autry
Town Clerk




Kia Anthony
Mayor

Because of ongoing conversations with the public over the last 3 years, and in an effort to mitigate misinformation being spread in our community, I'm asking for the immediate release of all Closed Session minutes regarding Economic Development over the last 5 years, to give the opportunity for public inspection.

I'm sure this will raise questions among our citizens, but I want to reassure the public that when the purpose of the town board going into closed session is no longer relevant, and when the release of the information would no longer frustrate the purpose of that closed session, the minutes should be released.

I'll be asking the board to develop a policy to release closed session minutes appropriately so that our citizens continue to see transparency. Certain information must remain redacted and certain matters will remain confidential. But given the rise of questions I've received about our town's past, I find no fault in allowing the public access to this information.

One of the largest dollar amounts this town had wasted came through a public scheme called Economic Development in which a certain individual the town had deemed its Economic Development Director had access to unlimited funds in hopes of enticing businesses to come to Spring Lake. All of the money was spent, but none of the promises came through. I keep a personal note in my wallet of all the "Projects" the town was supposed to receive with this money.

9 Projects:

Project Candyland - Gourmet Popcorn Company

Project Pinky Promise

Project Ironman - Movie Theatre

Project Hot Sugar Pops

Project Pancake - Caelin Farms (no incentives due to this being a residential development/Stopped By S Wullenwaber)

Project Wishbone

Project Wildcat - Ft Bragg LandSwap

Project Lemonade

Project Big Cheese

These names may be humorous, but I don't mean to be flippant about this endeavor. Because of poor record-keeping, our citizens will never know how much we actually lost on these endeavors over the last 5 years.

The intent of requesting the release of these closed session items is not to drudge up the past, but to put certain rumors and speculation to rest.

Respectfully,

Alderman Raul Palacios
Town of Spring Lake, NC