

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

November 27, 2023

MINUTES

6:00 pm

The Spring Lake Board of Aldermen held a work session 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 Soña L. Cooper
Alderman Marvin Lackman
Alderman Raul Palacios
Alderwoman Adrian Thompson

Others Present:

Carly Autry, Town Clerk
Banard Lemon, Audio Visual Coordinator
Michael Porter, Town Attorney
Dysoaneik Spellman, Spring Lake Police Chief
Lieutenant Danny Sutton, 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

Pastor Vernon Marsh gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Additions or Deletions

Alderman Palacios requested to add New Business, item 8h. discussion of the style of the Governing Body regarding Naming.

4. Approval of Agenda

Action: Approval of the Agenda with no additions or deletions.

Motion by: Alderwoman Cooper

Second by: Alderman Lackman

Vote: Unanimous

5. Approval of Consent Items

Action: Approval of Draft Minutes of November 13, 2023, Regular Meeting. Alderman Lackman stated the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance was led by Janet Perry, not Rita Perry. Town Clerk Carly Autry was instructed to make the necessary change before signing and posting the approved minutes.

Motion by: Alderwoman Cooper

Second by: Alderwoman Thompson

Vote: Unanimous

6. Public Comment

None.

7. Presentations

None.

8. New Business

Mayor Anthony took a Point of Privilege and started with agenda item g.

g. Board Discussion Regarding Work Session Agenda – Mayor Kia Anthony - Mayor Anthony proposed eliminating Public Comments because the Board is only required by statute to have Public Comments during one of the regularly scheduled meetings. Mayor Anthony also proposed removing the individual updates during the work sessions unless there is something pertinent that is happening and needs to be updated, therefore, a Point of Privilege can be taken at that time. Ms. Autry asked Mayor Anthony if she wanted to take out presentations as well and Mayor Anthony stated yes so it gives the Board time to openly discuss the presentations they heard in the regular meeting. Mayor Anthony also stated no voting during work sessions. Mayor Anthony stated to add these proposals to the agenda for the regular meeting in January to approve these changes and asked Attorney Porter if this was legal. Attorney Porter stated yes, it is legal. Alderman Palacios stated he agrees with everything, except the Public Comment section. Alderwoman Cooper and Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick both stated they agreed with Alderman Palacios. Mayor Anthony agreed to leave Public Comments. Alderwoman Cooper stated she is in favor of removing presentations and the Board updates during work sessions. Mayor Anthony stated the Board can take a General Consensus to add this to the next regular meeting in January.

a. Discussion of Monthly Financial Update – Mayor Kia Anthony – Mayor Anthony stated the monthly financial updates were a requirement set by the State Auditor when they came and did the State audit and one of the major recommendations was to make sure the Board received monthly financial updates. Mayor Anthony stated since Mr. Erwin left, Ms. Boyle has been stagnant in getting these reports on time, so she told Ms. Boyle she would discuss this with the Board. Mayor Anthony stated Debra Mack would provide a summary report the Board could discuss and hopefully someone from the Finance Department could give the Board monthly updates. Alderwoman Cooper stated whether someone comes or not, she would love to have the report emailed monthly and on time. Mayor Anthony stated she addressed Ms. Boyle about getting the reports on time and Ms. Boyle agreed. Alderman Lackman stated he would like to see a report on where the Town was 12 months ago versus today. Mayor Anthony stated in January that the Board should see a comprehensive update and the LGC is also working on the new Fiscal Accountability Agreement. Alderwoman Cooper asked about the audit and has it started. Mr. Williams stated no, it was

supposed to start this month but the contract is not in place yet. Mayor Anthony requested for the audit to be put on the list of LGC questions so they could give the Board a more precise timeline for the audit.

b. Appropriate Grant Funds for Capital Project Veterans Park – Interim Town Manager Jason Williams – Mr. Williams stated this is one of the appropriated grants from the North Carolina Budget of \$110,000 for Veterans Park to be corrected and fixed and the LGC is voting on it, but wants the Board to vote on it as well. Mayor Anthony stated this is taking the initiative to have the LGC start treating the Board as if they have been released but have zero say on what is going to happen with this. Alderman Lackman acknowledged Representative Lucas for allocating these funds and will discuss more options regarding the park with the Military and Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee. Alderman Lackman also acknowledged Mr. Williams, Steve Wing, and the City of Fayetteville for the coordination of this project. Mayor Anthony stated this money was allocated to the Town in the 2021 budget, the year the Board came into office, however, the financial situation was a bit chaotic, and were not authorized to spend this money. Mayor Anthony stated until the finances are straight, the LGC is authorized to spend this money. Alderwoman Cooper asked when is the public forum going to be held for this. Mayor Anthony asked Alderman Lackman if it was December 14th. Alderman Lackman stated options are being discussed with the Military and Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee, but looking around the December 20th timeframe. Alderwoman Cooper asked if this was not going to be at a Board meeting. Alderman Lackman stated it would not be at a Board meeting, but would be here in this room, which votes would be done with a marble. Mayor Anthony stated kind of like the Board did with the Land Use Plan. Alderwoman Cooper stated there have been past issues with committees having forums or taking in a vote outside a Board meeting and wants to make sure the Board is well within the rules. Attorney Porter stated if it is just an informal information-gathering and not a final vote, it should be fine. Alderwoman Cooper expressed her concerns about putting the public forum in the paper and stated it is almost like it is the Board of Aldermen holding the forum. Alderwoman Thompson stated she thinks it is just for the people involved and to get the community to come out, and not so much as an official meeting or a forum. Alderwoman Cooper expressed her concerns again about putting the forum in the newspaper and thinks people would get confused with it being a Town-sponsored forum. Mayor Anthony stated it is Town-sponsored. Alderwoman Cooper stated the Board and their forums are one thing but a committee forum advertised in the paper is going to be confusing for people. Mayor Anthony stated it is more of a community stakeholders' event and it is a Town function. Mayor Anthony stated the Town is hosting the event and wants to solicit public input. Mayor Anthony asked how should the Board how do they propose to mitigate this. Alderman Palacios stated he does not think people are going to read the newspaper and the Board diverting this approval. Mayor Anthony stated whatever the community says, that is what is to be seen at Veterans Park. Alderwoman Thompson stated for this to be explained on social media, the website, and the newspaper that it is not a Board forum. Mayor Anthony suggested a public stakeholder meeting or public input. Mayor Anthony requested the Clerk to research how to word that this is not a formal vote, just public input.

c. Appropriate Grant Funds for Capital Project Cumberland County Recreation Service District – Interim Town Manager Jason Williams – Mr. Williams stated the Town has had this money, which is \$200,000, for two (2) years but this was a great merger with the County. Alderman Palacios stated this merger has helped the Town save money, especially with all the repairs that had to be done. Alderman Lackman explained some of the funds which are \$90,000 are for equipment, \$30,000 for the installation of the new equipment for the parks, and \$50,000 for rubberized surfaces at the parks and stated this should be completed by June

7, 2024, depending on the weather. Alderwoman Cooper stated the Board decided this merger was a great decision but the LGC made the final decision to move forward with this. Mayor Anthony gave a cost comprehension for the playground equipment and why this was a good move for the Town. Alderman Lackman asked Mr. Williams if the rubberized surfaces included all parks or just Mendoza Park. Mr. Williams stated it covers all parks. Mr. Williams stated the Rex Perry sign has not been forgotten about and it is in the process of being worked out and the Police Chief is working on the sign for the Police Annex. Mayor Anthony reiterated that if any of the park equipment is unsafe, it will be removed and destroyed, and not moved from one park to another. Mayor Anthony stated there were repairs done at the Recreation Center as well.

d. 2023-2025 Budget Appropriations – Interim Town Manager Jason Williams – Mr. Williams stated one of these appropriations is for the 2023-2025 Budget for the natural gas lines to be extended throughout the Town, computer systems, and the parks. Mayor Anthony stated the funds were just awarded to the Town and acknowledged Senator McInnis and Representative Lucas for working hard for these appropriations. Mayor Anthony stated another one of the appropriations is going towards Mutzberg Park, which is 39 acres. Mayor Anthony stated the last appropriation is for Town software upgrades, and hopefully for an app for Town residents. Mayor Anthony stated the appropriations would have to be adopted via Resolution and then appropriate the funds into the Budget. Alderman Lackman expressed his excitement for these appropriations.

e. Board Discussion Regarding When People Work – Mayor Kia Anthony – Mayor Anthony stated this program is for funding for Veterans. When People Work provided an example contract with another municipality. Mayor Anthony stated she has been trying to formalize opportunities to use this funding. Mayor Anthony asked Mr. Sherrod Knox how much funding was available and Mr. Knox stated it was based on their financial bankers. Mayor Anthony read a snippet from the VetBridge program, which helps with mental health for Veterans and justice-impacted citizens to lower recidivism to provide opportunities. Mayor Anthony stated she would like for When People Work and Habitat for Humanity to partner together. Mayor Anthony stated Spring Lake has minimal resources to help with homelessness and possibly come up with a transportation service to help transport the homeless to facilities until there is one here in Spring Lake. Alderwoman Cooper stated the homeless have become more visible in Spring Lake within the last six (6) months. Attorney Porter asked Mr. Knox to explain more regarding the payment structure as he knows his company would provide the initial investment. Mr. Knox stated it is based on the savings after each of the successes of the programs of how much the Town would have to pay back. Attorney Porter asked Mr. Knox how the metric determined the savings as the Town does not provide all services for Veterans and the homeless. Mr. Knox stated that would be determined during the contract and determines what programs the Town wants to be active in. Mr. Knox explained how his company became interested in Spring Lake and he is also familiar with the area. Alderman Lackman stated he would like to see where the priorities of the Board lay whether it is housing, medical, or job preparedness. Mayor Anthony would like to survey Veterans regarding these programs to see which areas they would like the Town to focus on. Alderwoman Cooper stated she would like to have discussions with the Board regarding what areas to focus on such as justice-impacted citizens and transportation. Attorney Porter stated to the Board that they should get something more concrete before presenting it to the LGC. Mayor Anthony asked Mr. Knox how could the Board start getting this more concrete and Mr. Knox stated to have another meeting to lay these items out, including finances. Attorney Porter asked Mr. Knox did his company had any ideas for Spring Lake and he

stated yes, but would go with what the Town sees fit. Mr. Knox listed the areas of North Carolina where he has done these projects and what projects they were. Mr. Knox also explained how his organization was started. Mayor Anthony stated she challenges the Board to come up with some creative projects. Mayor Anthony stated the next conversation would be bringing in the LGC to keep this on the forefront.

f. Board Discussion Regarding Habitat for Humanity – Mayor Kia Anthony – Mayor Anthony stated Habitat Humanity presented at the last meeting and would like to bring Tiny Home and duplex projects to the Town. Mayor Anthony stated conversations were discussed regarding the initial location, which was right behind Town Hall, however, there were discussions to move the location and would discuss that in Closed Session. Mayor Anthony stated they were going to do a mock-up for the Board to see what the project would look like. Mayor Anthony stated there were two (2) options for the land, either the Town buys the land and sells it to Habitat for Humanity at a low price or grants them the land. Mr. Williams stated this still needs to be looked at and see which way to go, but is something that the Town should work for. Mayor Anthony stated Habitat for Humanity to ready to move if the Town can secure the land or parcel, even if that means bringing in stakeholders. Alderwoman Cooper asked Attorney Porter if the Board is within the rights to sell land as this has happened in the past. Attorney Porter stated something like Habitat of Humanity, yes because it is for the public welfare. Mayor Anthony stated the Town's buy-in is for them to come and build the houses for the Town. Attorney Porter fully answered Alderwoman Cooper's question by stating the Town can sell land without going through the bidding process if it is for the public welfare. Mayor Anthony stated hopefully a stakeholder will sell the land to Habitat for Humanity, which would also provide the stakeholder with an incentive. Alderman Lackman stated these projects would bring in extra funding to Town finances. Mayor Anthony stated the lifespan of a Tiny Home is 25-30 years, which adds stability and longevity. Mr. Williams stated that Habitat for Humanity works with people who want to buy the homes budget and tries to get them in those homes. Alderman Palacios stated he was glad that the initial location of the Tiny Home projects was changed as it raised concerns for him and Alderman Lackman. Mayor Anthony stated the next interaction with Habitat of Humanity is them bringing the Board a mock layout of what the project would look like and housing designs.

h. Board Discussion Regarding Election Cycle, Term Limits and Naming – Alderman Raul Palacios – First, Alderman Palacios stated he would like to discuss moving the election cycle from odd-numbered years to even-numbered years and this change could help the voter turnout for Spring Lake. Alderman Palacios stated he is not proposing to do this but is biased about it and mentioned the pros and cons of this change. Alderwoman Cooper stated she does not think the Town citizens would be happy about that being changed. Mayor Anthony stated instead of switching the years, try more voter engagement and find a way to increase voter turnout, and is in favor of the term limit change. Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick stated she agrees with Alderwoman Cooper that change would not be great and is not in agreeance, but thinks the Board needs to get involved with more community engagement. Alderman Lackman stated it starts with the people. Mayor Anthony suggested reaching out to some organizations that help with community and voter engagement. Alderwoman Thompson stated she is always putting forth effort for transportation because a lot of Town residents do not have transportation, which could also have something to do with voter turnout. Alderman Palacios stated this can be tabled to an undisclosed date to see if there is any type of community engagement regarding it. Second, Alderman Palacios stated the second discussion is changing terms of office from 2-year terms to 4-year terms for future elections. Alderman Palacios stated he is not in favor of staggered terms due to institutional knowledge. Mayor Anthony stated she is in favor of changing this as

two (2) is not long enough and there needs to be some stability in the Town's government. Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick stated she is not in favor because it does not allow fresh ideas for changes. Alderwoman Thompson stated she was in favor of this change. Alderwoman Cooper stated she was in favor of this change but did not want staggered terms. Alderman Lackman stated he is in favor of this change, but not staggered terms. Alderwoman Cooper stated to Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick a way to keep ideas fresh is by training and attending webinars. Mr. Williams stated he agrees with the Board about going from 2-year terms to 4-year terms. Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick stated for now she stands at staying at 2-year terms but will let the Board know if she changes her mind. Mayor Anthony stated this change would be cost-saving. Last, Alderman Palacios stated he wanted to discuss the style of the Governing Body from Aldermen to Commissioners, a gender-neutral term. Mayor Anthony and the whole Board stated they are in favor of this change. Attorney Porter stated there is a process and he can work with Ms. Autry on it and has spoken to Alderman Palacios about this, but the Board would have to modify or amend the Town Charter. Attorney Porter stated he does not think there is enough time to get it on the next regular session, but it can be done, or in the alternative, which would take two (2) years, it could be brought before the voters of the Town and let them decide, and a Public Hearing must take place. Mayor Anthony stated to try to get working on this so it can be taken to the Legislature for the short session for approval, and the local representatives have already been contacted regarding this and they are in favor of these changes. Mayor Anthony stated to do a consensus at the next meeting to give the Clerk authorization to start working on this and bring it back at the work session. Attorney Porter stated the Board does not have to wait to do a consensus, as they can do it now to give the Clerk authorization to start working on these changes.

Consensus for the Town Clerk to start working on the process for the Charter change to change from 2-year terms to 4-year terms and the name change from Aldermen to Commissioners.

i. Discussion Regarding Draft Rules of Procedure – Town Clerk Carly Autry – Mayor Anthony stated the first correction regarding the Rules of Procedure if the Board changes terms, is the 2 to 4-year term lengths, on Page 1 under Introductions. Ms. Autry stated she did some research and on 6/22/20, the Board gave consensus for the Board to start drafting Rules of Procedure and apparently, it was never done. Ms. Autry stated she drafted the Rules of Procedure with the help of Alderman Palacios and will discuss what changes will be made as Alderman Palacios also provided a draft. Ms. Autry stated she made a few minor grammatical error changes but there were two (2) major changes she made if that is okay with the Board, which the first was on under **Rule 4. Agenda. Proposed Agenda.**, item f., she deleted 5:00 pm when the agenda packets must be out. Ms. Autry stated the other major change was in **Rule 25. Closed Sessions.**, item a. **Motion to Enter Closed Session**, she changed the examples of the two (2) Closed Session reasons to all reasons allowed to enter Closed Session. Ms. Autry stated she will make all necessary changes if the Board changes term lengths and title. Mayor Anthony stated she wanted to add remote participation in Board meetings and read from Alderman Palacios' drafted Rules of Procedure and wanted to add a section to the sealing of Closed Session minutes regarding Closed Session minutes being active to only active Board members. Ms. Autry stated she would make the suggested corrections and will have it on the January 8, 2024, agenda for voting. Alderman Palacios thanked Ms. Autry for doing these Rules and feels it is important to have these in place, as well as policies. Ms. Autry stated these Rules of Procedure eliminate extra work for policies that may fall under the Rules such as a Closed Session policy or a Public Comment policy. First, Alderman Lackman stated he wanted to add under **Rule 4. Agenda. Proposed Agenda.**, item a. The Mayor and the Board of Aldermen may meet or discuss the Proposed Agenda. Mayor Anthony stated she thinks

this refers more to an agenda-setting meeting and should include a Board member. Ms. Autry asked if she should change it. Alderwoman Thompson stated whoever the Board member is, just make sure you make yourself available. Mayor Anthony stated yes because this would take place during work hours. Alderwoman Cooper stated she feels like the invite should be open to all Board members but make sure it does not create a quorum. Mr. Williams stated he thinks when it states at his or her discretion, it means other Board members could be present if needed. Alderwoman Cooper stated she feels like it should be open to any Board member. Mayor Anthony reiterated this Rule is pertaining to staff and gives her the authority to talk to the staff. Alderwoman Cooper stated this Rule may need some clarification. Second, Alderman Lackman stated he thinks **Rule 14. Voting by Written Ballot.** should be removed because he does not think the Board ever votes by written ballot, as well as under **Rule 30. Appointments.**, item f. **Vote by Written Ballot.** to be removed. The Board agreed to remove **Rule 14.** and item f. under **Rule 30.** Mayor Anthony asked Ms. Autry why she added it to these Rules of Procedure. Ms. Autry stated she researched and saw it on a lot of other municipalities' Rules of Procedure. Alderman Palacios stated he also saw the same thing and did not think it was necessary. Mayor Anthony stated to strike out all items under **Rule 14.** and state No Voting by Written Ballot. Mr. Williams reminded the Board that they are planning this for the next 20+ years. Alderman Palacios stated he thinks it is up to the Governing Body to adopt their own set of Rules of Procedures and thinks it is important to adopt these to set ethical standards. Ms. Autry stated a cover sheet stating the adoption date and note any amendments that could be made. Last, Alderman Lackman wanted clarity on **Rule 31. Committees and Boards.**, item **e. Application.** if it was dealing with the Mayor appointing a Board member onto a committee or dealing with the committee and the members that are on the committee. Mayor Anthony stated item a. under **Rule 31.** answers that question. Attorney Porter stated he understands what Alderman Lackman is saying and feels that the committees would be safe because they are covered under or otherwise provided by the Board. Alderman Lackman stated on item f. **Terms.** under **Rule 31.** regarding the term limits of the committees needs clarity as the Military and Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee was three (3) years but recently changed to two (2). Mayor Anthony stated the Rule states unless otherwise provided by statute or Town Ordinances, which is the Board making that call. Alderwoman Cooper stated she does not think applications for vacancies that come open and are maintained and considered for one (1) year are always followed. Ms. Autry stated she keeps all applications received, files them in the committee folder, and emails them to the Board ex-officio of the committee. Alderwoman Cooper stated she wants to make sure all committees are in line with the two (2) year terms. Attorney Porter stated they do not have to be because it states unless otherwise provided by statute or Town Ordinance. Ms. Autry stated she could add verbiage that states depending on the individual committee Bylaws regarding term limits and will correct it on the Rules of Procedure. Attorney Porter requested to have an agenda for Closed Session. Mayor Anthony stated this has been brought up before regarding an agenda being made available to help stay in line regarding topics of discussion during Closed Session. Attorney Porter proposed to have the Closed Session agenda emailed the day of the meeting to help better prepare himself. Mayor Anthony stated the whole Board has agreed about having some type of guidelines or prenotifications before going into Closed Session. Ms. Autry stated she would add an item under **Rule 5.** and **Rule 25.** about a Closed Session agenda. The Board advised Ms. Autry to add a Rule regarding Adjournment stating the Mayor can adjourn the meeting, as a motion is not needed.

j. Mayor's Report – Mayor Kia Anthony – First, Mayor Anthony wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. Second, Mayor Anthony stated the Mayor's Coalition updates were a discussion regarding Gen X and Fort Liberty regarding Manchester Road. Third, Mayor Anthony stated she attended the RLUAC meeting on

Thursday, November 16, 2023, which also discussed Manchester Road updates, the barracks on Fort Liberty, tree clean up on Pope, and infrastructure at the end of Odell Road. Fourth, Mayor Anthony stated she attended the Pine Cone Turkey Contest at W.T. Brown. Fifth, Mayor Anthony stated the Christmas Lighting is on Friday, December 1, 2023. Sixth, Mayor Anthony stated Lunch with the Mayor is Wednesday, November 29, 2023, at noon at LaVista. Last, Mayor Anthony stated she and Alderwoman Cooper had the Thanksgiving feeding and acknowledged Carl Pringle and We Are One Big Family for helping serve almost 300 meals.

k. Board of Aldermen Report – Spring Lake Board of Aldermen – First, Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick stated Mr. Fitch is holding a raffle for a 2013 F-150 Ford Truck to take the youth to Busch Gardens. Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick stated the tickets are \$20.00 each and donations are up to April 15, 2024. Last, Mayor Pro Tem Chadwick acknowledged the Kinsey House by Ms. Debora Hudson and gave her contact information. First, Alderwoman Cooper stated she attended the NLC City Summit in Atlanta, GA from November 15-19, 2023, and she was re-elected to serve on the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (NBC-LEO) and was nominated for an award with Women in Municipal Government (WIMG). Second, Alderwoman Cooper stated she is bringing three (3) Resolutions to the Board on behalf of NCBEMO and asked the Board to adopt Town Resolutions of these. Last, Alderwoman Cooper acknowledged the Thanksgiving feeding and those who participated. First, Alderman Palacios stated December is Yard of the Month Holiday Edition, which would be done on Friday, December 15, 2024, and those citizens will be recognized at the meeting in January. Last, Alderman Palacios stated the Appearance Committee is on Wednesday, January 10, 2024, at 4:00 pm at the Recreation Center. First, Alderwoman Thompson stated at 6:00 pm on December 8, 2023, Cornerstone located at 111 N. Bragg Blvd. is having a movie night. Second, Alderwoman Thompson stated Monday, December 11, 2023, is the Board's swearing-in ceremony. Third, Alderwoman Thompson asks to include those who do not have families during the holidays, even if it is a phone call. Last, Alderwoman Thompson stated Breakfast with Santa is on Saturday, December 16, 2023, at the Spring Lake Recreation Center. Alderman Lackman's announcements are attached (**Attachment A**) and some pictures were broadcast on the big screens regarding his announcements.

l. Manager's Report – Interim Town Manager Jason Williams – First, Mr. Williams stated the light on 210 is now working. Second, McCormick Bridge Road has been paved and is smooth. Last, Mr., Williams acknowledged the Board for caring for the citizens.

m. Town Attorney Report – Town Attorney Michael Porter – Attorney Porter stated that it is Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Action: There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Motion: Alderman Lackman

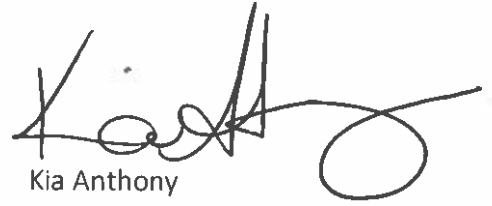
Second by: Alderwoman Thompson

Vote: Unanimous

ATTEST:



Carly Autry
Town Clerk



Kia Anthony
Mayor

On November 4th, 2023 Spring Lake Hosted a Veteran Service Officer Event at the Spring Lake Recreation Center. Ideas + Action = Results

The **idea** began with an event to help Veterans with their VA claims. The **action** came from the Military and Veterans Affairs Committee putting this event together. The **result** was Veterans (young and old) getting the information and help they needed.

Tonight, I want to recognize the organizations and Veteran Service Officers who participated in this event -

Mr. Robert Johnson, NC DMVA Regional III Manager, Fayetteville

Mr. Tab Brown, Department Service Officer, out of Kinston

Mr. Christopher Smith, American Legion Post 32 out of Hope Mills

Mr. Tony Forte, Chapter 46 DAV, Fayetteville

Ms. Karmisha G Hernandez Luciano, Interim Assistant Director- TRiO Veterans Upward Bound Program
Central Carolina Community College

Mr. Christopher "Ranger" Mitchell, Cumberland County Veterans Treatment Court, Fayetteville

VFW Post 4542 / 9103 / American Legion coming out and educating Veterans on what the VFW and the Legion do in and for the community, Linda Richardson, George Reed, and David Dunlap

Mayor, you talk about **YOUR** team, I have a wonderful team myself in **The Spring Lake Military and Veterans Affairs Committee**, with all the behind-the-scenes work and Armand Caron, Tim Baker, Kathie Turner, Irene Rosa, Robert Kennedy. Interim Town Manager, Jason William, Town Clerk Carly Autry, and Banard Lemon for developing the flyer and pushing the information out to the public. I must give a special thanks to the Mayor and BOA for the unanimous support to approve and host this event for ALL Veterans. This is the first time we have done this type of event in Spring Lake since 2018.

Veterans Day Ceremony, November 10, 2023

What needs to be said other than "Thank You" to all those that put it on! Thanks to ALL who showed up and "Thank You" to our Veterans and their families! By now, most of you have seen the pictures on social media! I want to give a "Special Thank You" to the Appearance and Sustainability Committee for reaching out to the Military and Veterans Affairs Committee to do a Joint Ceremony of the mural unveiling and combining it with the Veterans Day Ceremony! This was the key (and Dr. David Dickerhoff dreaming big) to make this happen. Mayor, you talk about Dreaming Big... This was HUGE!!!

Thank You Ronald Lee Wolfe for capturing such wonderful pictures and sharing them with us!

I was going to talk about the election, but the citizens said it all. Thank You!

Upcoming Events

Military and Veterans Affairs Committee meeting – Tuesday, November 28th, we will be discussing Veterans Park, holding elections, and planning for 2024. We will not be meeting in December. I think this awesome group has earned a little time off... 2024 we will be planning Memorial Day, A Suicide Awareness Event, Veterans Day, and maybe a few other events, you will have to come out and see what is going on in our MVAC. Again, the public is invited and welcome to attend. We meet on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 630 PM here at Town Hall, Grady Howard Conference Room.

Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony – December 1st, right here at Town Hall. Still looking for a group of carolers to back up Alderman Palacios

Wreaths Across America will have their annual laying of the Wreaths at Sandhills Veterans Cemetery on Saturday, December 16, 2023. The Wreaths will be stored behind Town Hall and will be transported from Town Hall to the cemetery. Anyone with a truck and trailer who would like to participate in transporting the wreaths or the laying of the wreaths is welcome! More information to follow, but the date is Saturday, December 16th.