

Town of Mineral Springs
Town Hall
3506 S. Potter Road
Town Council
Special Meeting
April 14, 2016 ~ 6:30 PM

Minutes Draft

The Town Council of the Town of Mineral Springs, North Carolina, met in Special Session at the Mineral Springs Town Hall, Mineral Springs, North Carolina, at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 14, 2016.

Present: Mayor Frederick Becker III, Mayor Pro Tem Peggy Neill, Councilwoman Valerie Coffey, Councilman Jerry Countryman, Councilwoman Janet Critz Councilwoman Lundeen Cureton, Councilwoman Bettylyn Krafft, Town Clerk/Zoning Administrator Vicky Brooks and Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector Janet Ridings.

Absent: Attorney Bobby Griffin.

Visitors: John Ganus, N•Focus Planning and Design, Inc.

With a quorum present Mayor Frederick Becker called the Special Town Council Meeting of April 14, 2016 to order at 6:31 p.m.

1. Opening

- Mayor Becker welcomed everyone to the special meeting of the Mineral Springs Town Council.

2. Discussion of a Nuisance Ordinance

- Mayor Becker gave a brief overview of the meeting by explaining that it was called as a work session where Mr. John Ganus of N•Focus Planning and Design would present the council with some of the “nuts and bolts” of what would go into a Nuisance Ordinance if the town were interested in adopting one. Mayor Becker pointed out that Planning Director Vicky Brooks had just placed a document in front of the council and put copies on the back table for any visitors; the document explains what a zoning ordinance is and what general police power is. Mayor Becker gave a brief overview of what the planning director put together. A zoning ordinance is what we have in Mineral Springs (many have had to get a zoning permit from Ms. Brooks to do an addition or to build a new house) and what a zoning ordinance does under General Statutes is for the purpose of promoting health, safety, morals, or the general welfare of the community. A zoning ordinance may regulate and restrict the height, number of stories and size of buildings and other structures, the percentage of lots that may be occupied, the size of yards, courts and other open spaces, the density of population, the location and use of building, structures and land. That is directly quoted from the North Carolina General Statutes. A zoning ordinance is very limited; it really does

address the placement of building and that is why you deal with setbacks and zoning permits. It doesn't govern uses or individual conduct. But a city may by ordinance define, prohibit, regulate, or abate acts, omissions, or conditions detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of its citizen and the peace and dignity of the city, and may define and abate nuisances by using a General Police Power. Mayor Becker noted that those are two very different types of regulatory structures. Mineral Springs has zoning and subdivision ordinances that the zoning administrator administers, but the town does not have any police power ordinance in place whatsoever right now. If somebody was doing something which were to be a nuisance there is nothing that Ms. Brooks could do; there is no authority, she can't even contact that person, because there is not authority in any ordinance in the Town of Mineral Springs to address that.

- What is the difference between a zoning ordinance and a police power ordinance? Enforcement of zoning ordinances is limited to civil penalties for noncompliance; town staff does not have the authority to hire a contractor to take the necessary actions to obtain compliance. Enforcement of a police power ordinance allows for the town to take steps to abate or actually correct a violation and they can authorize a contractor to do so. The zoning ordinance regulates the uses of land and a police power ordinance regulates specific conduct by individuals. Why would a police power ordinance be needed? A zoning ordinance would not prohibit an individual (for example) from storing and accumulating household trash that might constitute a nuisance, but a nuisance ordinance could prohibit such conduct. Mayor Becker reiterated that there is nothing in the Mineral Springs Zoning Ordinance allowing the town to regulate or prohibit nuisances.
- Mayor Becker explained that several months ago the zoning administrator's office received many phone calls and letters saying "we have a few situations in our town and some really unsanitary conditions, there is trash piling up, it seems to be a health hazard" and Ms. Brooks said "I can't do anything about that, we have nothing that allows us to address trash or health hazards". The county used to handle some of those complaints, but Ms. Brooks' contact with the County Health Department confirmed that they are not interested in doing that anymore; therefore, the only way to address that would be to consider coming up with a nuisance ordinance that might give the town and give an enforcement agency or the staff the ability to regulate and correct those problems.
- Last month, Mr. Ganus submitted a list of the type of things that some towns/jurisdictions were putting into nuisance ordinances; it was a very long list of 21 items that you might want to consider a nuisance in your town. Mr. Ganus will talk about that and the overall way a nuisance ordinance might be adopted/enforced/administered. Mayor Becker explained that before the town adopted anything like that it would be a much longer process – our attorney would be involved, as well as public hearings and public input. Mayor Becker explained that one apparent nuisance that was located in the Shannon Road area has been a situation where there was an elderly couple unable to get trash removed and there may be some community assistance in helping that family get that trash hauled away; "that's a great thing if it works out that way". It takes the burden off anybody in the town and it's good for a community to come together and do that.
- Councilwoman Critz added that this is not a "knee jerk" decision based on requests that have just come in the last few months. Councilwoman Critz explained that in

our previous surveys and in the town meetings that were done with UNC Charlotte in 2005-2006 they were approached by many people in the community that either had actual situations that were in this category or perceived situations that were in this category and wondered what the town might be able to do; “we sort of just skirted around the issue, because we had no way to implement whatever we might come up with”. The town could come up with all kinds of ordinances, but they are only going to be effective if this town has a very legitimate way to implement them. Since these other things have taken place we have been spurred on to research a little farther and get advice and in doing so Ms. Brooks found N•Focus and our attorney suggested that we pursue communications with them; this is something that has really been ongoing since 2001 to Councilwoman Critz’s knowledge. Councilwoman Neill agreed. Mayor Becker commented that what Councilwoman Critz brought to mind one more thing for those that may not be familiar with everything that’s been going on in the town, there is another type of regulation that people in the town have complained about, which is buildings that should be condemned. Neither a zoning ordinance nor a nuisance ordinance can address that; it is addressed by building inspections, which the town does not have and that is not under consideration in any of these discussions. It is a much more complicated situation that is completely out of our hands.

- Mayor Becker noted that there seem to be some misunderstandings that we were hiring the Waxhaw Police to go around our town and go on people’s property and that is not in a plan that Mayor Becker is aware of. The way we enforce ordinances in Mineral Springs, whether it is zoning or nuisance (if adopted) is based on complaints only. The town is not sending Mr. Ganus or Ms. Brooks out into the community everyday sniffing around for problems; it needs to be a violation that is in writing to Ms. Brooks, which has been our policy.
- Mayor Becker explained that N•Focus has done a little bit of work on the planning aspect of things for the town in the past. Mr. Duston from N•Focus has helped the town with drafting and adopting our Conditional District language in our zoning ordinance. Ms. Bennett from N•Focus has conducted training for our planning board; this is the type of work that N•Focus does. Mr. Ganus is an expert on these sorts of ordinances.
- Mr. Ganus stated that he appreciated the opportunity to come here and talk to everyone and to answer whatever questions they may have. Mr. Ganus explained that the information that he provided to the town was simply a listing of the types of things that can be considered a nuisance that has been developed over the past 20 years or more in dealing with multiple jurisdictions throughout the state. Some of them came about simply by citizen complaints to an individual town that they were working with. The complaints were reviewed, they talked to attorneys and others and they have drafted the line items seen in the listing. There are quite a few, because over the years it has developed. Not every town uses every one of these items and some of the items are modified. For example, one talks about any weeds or vegetation having an overall height of more than 18” above the surrounding ground, some towns think that is pretty high, some of them don’t think that is high enough, so they have towns that range from 12” to 15” to 18”, a couple of them are 24”. Mr. Ganus reiterated what Mayor Becker stated earlier, N•Focus is not hired by any town to come in and do a sweep of the town and continue to send out notices; they work on the basis of complaints that come into the town, the

town then turns it over to N•Focus and they go out and review the conditions on that property based on the adopted ordinance. Whether it is this group of standards or a modification of this group of standards that is what they would investigate. If they go out to a property based on a complaint (for example) for tall grass and the grass is not 18" then it is not in violation, because the standard set by the council and adopted in the ordinance would be 18" or 15" or 24" or whatever the adopted height is. When they get into things like accumulation of trash, garbage, food waste or other trash, which is the result of the absence or overflowing of improperly closed trash cans, garbage containers that are likely to attract mice, rats, flies, mosquitoes or other pests, some of the complaints they have seen are where people just start piling stuff up and they end up with a huge pile of garbage in their back yard, which becomes a feast for the rats and snakes that come next door after a while. People don't want that in their neighborhood. So these are options for the town to decide; some towns want it and some don't. Some towns don't care if you have a stuffed sofa out on their front porch, so if that is not an issue to the town they don't need to put that in the ordinance.

- The good thing about a nuisance ordinance is that the State of North Carolina issued a law several years ago that said the towns and counties have the right to adopt an ordinance dealing with nuisances and the reason is because the legislature didn't sit down and create this list and say that you have to do that. In other laws, they have said these are the standards and you must meet these; if you are going to have this ordinance you have to adopt these rules specifically the way we have written them. Here, they simply say the town has the authority to adopt an ordinance and define what a nuisance is in their community.
- Mr. Ganus explained that the way the process works is that the ordinance is adopted and then takes effect; this is available to any citizen that wants to know what the rules are. If your neighbor is creating a mess and you don't want to live next to it (for example, appliances piled up in the front yard, trash and debris piled up, an old building is torn down and they pile up the trash in the yard) you can file a complaint, but if you don't mind living next to it then that's fine, it's not a problem, you don't call in and complain. Another example was of a heating and air conditioning contractor that had a tendency to end up with a lot of old duct work and equipment from houses where they changed the AC out and they haul the stuff to their house and put it in the back yard, when they get a large enough supply they can take it to the scrap yard, but in the meanwhile if you are next door to that you get to live next to it if there is not an ordinance in place. A lot of times these kinds of things don't rise to the point of a complaint until something occurs in your life that you decide "I need to sell my house", but you have the mess next door and nobody is going to buy your house if you have that mess next door and the first thing the realtor tells you is the she/he is not going to be able to get top dollar for your house. Property value is an issue, mice, snakes, health and safety issues are an issue; those are some of the reasons why it's good to have a nuisance ordinance.
- Mr. Ganus explained (as Mayor Becker had previously) that it's not something where once the ordinance is adopted that they would come in 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and start scouring the town and looking for something; there is no need for that. Once the ordinance is adopted and once a complaint comes in they would go out to the property and look at it and see if the conditions were there and if they were in violation. If they were and the property owner was

home they could contact them and talk to them; if they were not home or if it's decided it's a good idea to follow-up with a written notice anyway then a written notice is issued to the property owner and they are given a reasonable amount of time in which to get it cleaned up. What's a reasonable amount of time? It depends on what's there and how much is there. If it's a small amount or if it's a simple thing like mowing their yard the law allows you to give them a notice of 10 days to do the work (that doesn't include mail time); it may take 30 days or 45 days. There is also a situation where the person there can't take care of it, because of physical issues, so there may be a way that we can get in touch with some folks that could help them. Ultimately, if there is no other avenue then the town has the authority (after the deadline and after every opportunity has been given to the owner) under the ordinance to go to the property with a contractor and clean up or mow the yard; whatever is necessary. If the property owner doesn't pay that bill for the clean-up then a lien can be placed on their property, which is the way the town will be enabled by statute to recover any cost related to the abatement process.

- Mayor Becker noted that there was not a whole lot of will in the Town of Mineral Springs to regulate grass height or upholstered furniture on the porch; it's probably something that wouldn't be included in a nuisance ordinance in Mineral Springs, although Mayor Becker couldn't speak for the board. Mr. Ganus addressed that by explaining that one of the reasons the town may want to consider it is that a lot of times they run into a lot of foreclosures; it doesn't matter what kind of neighborhood you are in. Mr. Ganus has had to go into neighborhood with half a million dollar homes, because the property owner abandoned the property or it was in foreclosure and in that period of time between when they pack up their stuff and leave and the time that the bank takes some sort of action you are dealing with trash and debris and tall grass and weeds. It may be something the town would want to have in their ordinance, but it may not be something that comes into play very often; if you have that foreclosure situation and you don't have that line item in there, there is nothing you can do about it. If you have abandoned property then it may be an issue to deal with, because it can happen in any neighborhood whether it's a half of a million dollar home or a 30 year old home; it's an issue that can arise. Mr. Ganus explained that they have had landlords/property owners have a tenant move out or a home is abandoned that leaves all their stuff in the house or it gets piled out in the front yard. Sometimes a landlord will hire a contractor to go in and clean the house, but they don't tell them to haul it away, so they pile it out in the front yard and the town trash will pick it up. Whatever contract you have with a garbage company may not deal with that stuff. Councilwoman Critz commented that the town doesn't have a contract, that's a service that we don't provide as a rural community and we have not pursued it because in all of our surveys the response is overwhelming that people don't want it. Mr. Ganus responded so then if this situation arose, it would be there and the people living next door or across the street would not be able to complain, because it would not be an issue.
- Councilwoman Critz referred to grass height and commented that we don't want the kind of situation where someone would abuse it to monitor or strong arm their neighbors unnecessarily, because we are very conscientious out here of living without big brother and we don't want to empower someone to sort of police their neighbors with a ruler, so if we did go with a situation like Mr. Ganus mentioned,

we would want to make it the height greater than we would want to make it to an extreme situation as he described before any kind of intervention took place. Mr. Ganus responded that the statute does not define any of this; it gives you the leeway to do that, so if there is an item that the town doesn't want then they don't have to adopt it. If the council doesn't want it to be 18" (for example), they can make it two feet or three feet; they have that option.

- Councilwoman Critz commented that she thought that #5 & #6 were more applicable to the town than #2; however, she had a question about #3. How do you determine that there are dangerous chemicals, acids, oils, gasoline, combustible material or poisonous materials? Mr. Ganus responded that when they go onto the property they are usually trying to meet with the property owner and when they go onto the property at that point to look at all the individual details and talk to the property owner they are going to be able to see labels on a lot of the stuff, somethings you won't be able to and you won't be able to make the judgement call on what's in there, you have to take the word of the property owner what's in that container, but as a general rule if it's any of these items that usually has some sort of hazardous label on it and that would tell them what it is. Councilwoman Critz asked how they get a complaint like this. Does somebody smell overpowering smells or is there a minor explosion? Mr. Ganus responded that sometimes it is just the visibility of seeing, when you see 55 gallon drums on your neighbor's property by the shed or you see five gallon buckets that have some sort of hazard label on it that would lead you to believe. A lot of times it is just seeing a large collection of things that seem out of place, so when someone calls they would look at that a little closer to see what they were dealing with.
- Mayor Becker explained that in looking over the samples he thought there was a lot of overlap; there are somethings that we might not want. For example, brush and limbs. Does it ever reach a time when you want to tell somebody "you can't leave that pile there"? Mayor Becker commented he didn't know, but these are the things that would be the council's decision, as well as getting input from the public. What do we not like or what do we feel is a nuisance in our neighborhood? The town wants to respond to what our population thinks is a problem for them, not so much what the council necessarily thinks, although "we are citizens", but they certainly would want to get more public input. Do you like upholstered furniture? Mayor Becker commented that he wouldn't mind if his neighbor had a sofa on his porch. So, little things like that probably never have to go in. Mr. Ganus responded that it was up to the board. There are some towns that do not care about couches and stuff; they have some that don't care if there are trash cans overflowing.
- Councilwoman Critz mentioned that she would speak for all, so anyone could pile on, but she didn't think they were interested in approaching this from any other standpoint but for the safety and well-being of our community, so if there is something that is harmful then we should be aware. Councilwoman Critz mentioned that it has been in the news that there is a new virus being carried by mosquitoes. If you look at the map from last year the states that were affected and have reported incidents didn't include North Carolina. If you look at the map now it does include North Carolina, so we do need to be more diligent and being responsive to things that could harbor stagnant water and possibly anything that would be disease carrying. At the same time we want to be sensitive to people's property values, but as far as nitpicking or policing goes – "that is really not us".

- Mayor Becker commented that most of us here have large properties that are wooded. We have livestock, chickens, horses, goats and we have home businesses; we may not be a nuisance, but we are a little more lenient, we are not operating like a big city or an HOA. Of course neighborhoods that have HOA's can govern themselves and we don't ever have to worry about them, because the HOA is going to be on their case before it ever gets to us; those kind are self-limiting, even those foreclosure situations, because the HOA will often take action in those types of neighborhoods. Mr. Ganus responded that he has seen some HOA's that won't, but he guessed that was the easiest way to look at this. It is like going to a buffet, the owner of the restaurant is going to lay out all kinds of different foods and when the customer goes in they are going to pick and choose what they want. In this particular case, the town and the citizens are the customer and the ordinance becomes that choice of going across the buffet; we don't want this, we want this one, we don't want this one, we want this one, but we want to modify it a little bit. It is totally up to the customer (town/citizens).
- Mr. Ganus explained that the notice has to have certain legal requirements in it and that notice is pretty cut and dried as to how it needs to be, because if you are going to take action, whether it be civil penalties or going to the property and cleaning it up, then that notice has to have the appropriate information in there. The notice tells the property owner what the violation is, when it was noticed, how long they have to clean it up and it allows for them to appeal the decision that they are in violation. It is not just a matter of the government coming in and saying you're in violation and we are going to hurt you. A notice goes out to them, it spells out what their options are, what the town can do legally and their way of appealing it if they disagree. What is usually done as well is that they add in another paragraph that says "if you disagree with this or if you have any questions, you can call me and I'll explain everything to you as to what's what, I will be happy to meet you on the property and talk to you about any questions you have and point out what we're talking about versus what we are not". Sometimes there are issues that are borderline and there is a way of dealing with it to where it is no longer a violation. An example of that is that you have got buckets out in the yard and they are collecting water where it becomes a mosquito haven, well those buckets can be turned over and they don't collect water anymore or they can be put under a carport or a lean-to or something to where they are not open to the water and it is no longer a violation. If there is an overflowing trash can, because there is not lid on it, they clean it up and put a lid on it and they are in compliance; sometimes that's a matter of meeting with the property owner when they do their initial investigation and they say "here's what the issues are and if you do this, this and this, then you are no longer in violation". Mr. Ganus has had some do it in 15 to 20 minutes and then they are done. Others may say they need the weekend and maybe the next weekend and he says "okay, that's fine". Councilwoman Critz commented that was really helpful information, because that shows a willingness of the ordinance itself and Mr. Ganus partnering with the town to enforce it to not strong arm individuals, but to work with them. Mr. Ganus responded that we have to give them a reasonable amount of time in which to take care of the violation and if there is an issue (for example) that a yard hasn't been mowed, because the lawn mower is broken, but they are getting it out of the shop on Tuesday and have a day

off the next weekend and will get it mowed; Mr. Ganus goes back to check after that time and it is mowed then they are done.

- Councilman Countryman commented that he thought there were several issues here that really need to be explored with the community and for people to have a better understanding of what this whole process is about. There is a strong misconception out there that the town is going to enact a bunch of ordinances and then have the Gestapo run around. A single person in this audience that wouldn't and couldn't appreciate some type of nuisance ordinance particularly if it affected you and common sense says that there are things that occur in a community that probably do need to be dealt with and that the community, us, currently in Mineral Springs having virtually no authority to do that probably needs to take a look at creating some type of authority, but Councilman Countryman thinks it is really critical to have the community involved rather than have the council pick the ordinances. This is not something that is going to happen tonight, it is not something that is going to happen next month. Councilman Countryman thanked people for being here and he suggested that they as individual citizens need to go tell their friends and neighbors, because they need to be involved too; it's a community project since it affects the whole community. Councilman Countryman explained that he felt that before any of these ordinances are adopted, just like in the past when surveys were done to develop our zoning ordinances, it is critical that the council get input from the community that says what kind of ordinance they think we need. What kind of issues have we faced before we begin any kind of ordinance creation? Councilman Countryman stated that he was looking at some things that had him really distressed, because he didn't know where these ideas came from, but there is a lot of commentary out there, that in his opinion is way off base. "Get other people involved", Councilman Countryman stated. Councilwoman Neill added please do not be so quick to believe everything you see or read on social media, because misinformation can spread like wild fire and it can create problems that don't exist, so be very careful about what you listen to, what you read or what you hear. Councilwoman Critz pointed out that there are examples on our website and people can go there and have their neighbors go there and look over it and if something stands out to them and says "such and such has really been a problem for me". For example, you have a neighbor that is in construction and there is just a tremendous amount of construction material collected on this property and it's on the side of this property that everyone can see from the road and it's on the side where your house is and you are thinking about putting your house on the market and this is a real concern to you and you have seen it happen before.....that's the kind of thing the council needs to hear; this is actually happening. The council can perceive all day long the situations that might occur, but all of us know situations that have occurred and are occurring that would be benefitted by some attention.
- There was discussion among the council on how to seek input from the community and there seemed to be a consensus that the council will come up with a survey after condensing the list of options. This survey could be sent out with a newsletter or mailed to all recipients of the newsletter as an individual mailing.
- Councilman Countryman suggested that the council open the floor for questions while Mr. Ganus is here. There was a consensus of the council to allow the remaining 10 minutes of the meeting to be used for questions from the public.

- A member of the audience posed an inaudible question that Councilman Countryman answered with “there isn’t going to be any policing, policing is done by the guy who lives next door to you”. Again there was an inaudible comment from the audience and Councilman Countryman responded “then you don’t have a problem”. Mr. Ganus commented if you are on a five-acre tract and there is a property next to you then there is nobody living around you and you’ve got huge piles in your back yard, which is not visible to an adjoining property owner, it is not visible from the road, it is not an issue; there is nobody to complain. If somebody moves into that adjoining property they may have a complaint on it, then it would become an issue. Mayor Becker commented that was a fair question and that just goes to not looking for problems, only if a problem is brought out.
- Councilwoman Coffey commented that the only reason she was thinking it would be a good reason to field questions through him this evening is because our constituents definitely go back to the website and look over this and any questions that they have are probably going to be answered and become clear: that there is no policing taking place and there is no action being taken at this time. This should alleviate a lot of the concern and once people read all of this and understand that we are not necessarily addressing this, it is what was handed to us to review as a potential and nothing is put in stone. Nothing would happen with an ordinance in place unless somebody made a complaint. The council wants to do what is best for the constituents along the guidelines they decide should be implemented. Councilwoman Neill added that “it’s our community too, we live here too, we have neighbors, so it affects all of us”.
- A member of the audience asked Mr. Ganus if he was paid by contract or per complaint [in general as the citizen was not audible on the recording]. Mr. Ganus explained that they do a couple of different things. It is all contracted by town contracts through the company that he works for. There are actually two other code officers in the state and they do this for jurisdictions all over the state. The contract is with the company, not with Mr. Ganus. Mr. Ganus does not get paid by the fine, he gets paid to do the job that the company has hired him to do and the towns hire the company to do; there is no special little interest in it for Mr. Ganus to go out and hammer somebody.
- A member of the audience gave an example of having a boat in his front yard that is about 99 years old and he can have it in his front now, because there is no ordinance saying that he can’t. Right? What you all are trying to do is have an ordinance that will control that – right? Councilman Countryman responded not necessarily, no. Member of the audience says “if you don’t have a complaint”? Councilman Countryman responded that first of all they maybe wouldn’t want that in any ordinance that dealt with boats in your front yard. Mayor Becker commented that it wouldn’t be included, we wouldn’t talk about boats. Audience member stated that he was just exaggerating. Councilman Countryman responded that if a hundred people in this community thought that was really important and we needed an ordinance to deal with boats in your front yard, then we might put it in the ordinance. Mayor Becker added that there is nothing at all right now. Councilwoman Critz commented “we are exploring”. Councilwoman Neill commented “this is information tonight”.
- Ms. Brooks explained that there was a concern about N•Focus today and she asked Mr. Ganus if he wanted to address it. The concern was about annual filings.

Mr. Ganus responded that there was one citizen that did a little investigation into our company and one of the questions was about several years ago we had what was called an affiliate program where we had other companies that would go into partnership with us as an affiliate just like other companies do. That company closed up so that affiliation between them and N•Focus ended, but evidently there was some relation to that (Mr. Ganus did not know exactly what the citizen found); he had questions to whether that was a legitimate company or something along that line. It was a legitimate company that signed an affiliation contract with N•Focus and then they decided to quit with them; they actually went out of business and don't do any kind of business in that state anymore. There was another that said N•Focus had neglected to reset our annual reports to the State of North Carolina, Secretary of State which was inaccurate. N•Focus had changed the format of our company and in doing so they notified the State and they were misfiling our annual reports and that has now been corrected. "We are a company in good standing and have been in good standing for many years", Mr. Ganus said. N•Focus is a collection of different professionals that have been in local government services; some of them for 30 years or more. Mr. Ganus has been doing it for 20 years. Some of the professionals have backgrounds as police officers (one guy was a police officer for 30 years and was a magistrate for five years). Mr. Ganus stated that they are very experienced and there is a lot of stuff out on the internet that is not accurate, so social media and the internet are not going to be your truth that you are looking to find. N•Focus is above board and they are going to be honest with you. Mr. Ganus commented that they were not here to "hoodoo" anybody; sometimes when you go on the internet you don't necessarily find the truth. The things that the citizen questioned in reference to the Secretary of the State have all been cleared up; the reports were filed with the state as required by law, they [state] just did not file it correctly.

3. Adjournment

- **Councilman Countryman** made a motion to adjourn the meeting and **Councilwoman Critz** seconded. The motion passed unanimously as follows:

Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft and Neill
Nays: None

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Vicky A. Brooks, CMC, NCCMC, Town Clerk

Frederick Becker III, Mayor