Minutes of the Mineral Springs Town Council Regular Meeting via ZOOM July 9, 2020 – 7:30 p.m.

The Town Council of the Town of Mineral Springs, North Carolina, met in Regular Session in a virtual meeting via ZOOM, Mineral Springs, North Carolina, at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 9, 2020.

Present: Mayor Frederick Becker III, Mayor Pro Tem Valerie Coffey, Councilman Jerry

Countryman, Councilwoman Janet Critz, Councilwoman Lundeen Cureton,

Councilwoman Bettylyn Krafft, and Councilwoman Peggy Neill.

Absent: None.

Staff Present: Town Clerk/Zoning Administrator Vicky Brooks, Attorney Bobby Griffin, and Deputy

Town Clerk Janet Ridings.

Visitors: David L. Cook, Artists Music Guild and Lee Jenson, Union County Planning Director.

1. Opening

With a quorum present at 7:37 p.m. on July 9, 2020, Mayor Frederick Becker called the Regular Town Council Meeting to order.

Town Clerk Vicky Brooks did the roll call of those present [as shown above].

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments; no requests for public comments were received via text or email.

3. Consent Agenda

Councilwoman Krafft motioned to approve the consent agenda containing the June 12, 2020 regular meeting minutes, the June 18, 2020 special meeting minutes, the May 2020 tax collectors report, and the May 2020 finance report and Councilwoman Cureton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Union County 2050 Comprehensive Plan Presentation

Union County Planning Director Lee Jenson presented the Union County 2050 Comprehensive Plan to the council.

Mr. Jenson thanked the council for allowing the county to share the presentation with them and explained it was an important process the county was going through right now. The process is an update to the county's comprehensive plan; it is almost an entirely new comprehensive plan. The process was started in earnest around January and many will remember back around Labor Day of last year they had the comprehensive plan kick-off meeting where a lot of the towns came and presented their visions for their towns to the Board of County Commissioners at the Ag Center. It was a two-day workshop and they got a lot of great feedback. It took the county a little while to get the committees appointed by the board. Since January, they have worked through the COVID issues and made good use of technology to still be able to meet with the sub-committees and the coordinating committee. Right now, they are at the scenario input phase with three different scenarios, which Mr. Jenson will share with the council tonight. There are information sessions and public input sessions that are currently in process.

The PowerPoint presentation by Mr. Jenson is shown below and on the following pages.



WHAT DO I DO?

- 1. Make sure you have a feedback form on a clip board
- 2. Review the information on the boards
- Talk to Union County representatives and ask questions
- Provide feedback on the three scenarios by using the feedback form
- 5. Ask your friends to participate now through July 24



→ WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

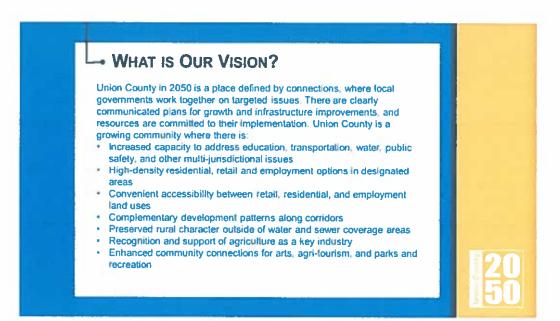
A Comprehensive Plan is a guide to the County's future.

The Comprehensive Plan will inform current and future decision makers where we are now, where we want to go, how we intend to get there, and who will help us along the way.

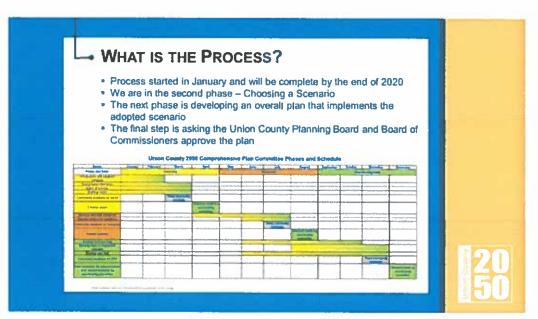
More specifically, it will:

- · define the County's biggest assets and challenges
- · focus on strengthening the County's economic development efforts
- recommend the type and character of development appropriate in different parts of the County
- recommend and prioritize policies, key projects, and resources and determines implementation partners, including municipalities
- provide guidance to the County in developing and directing future capital budgets



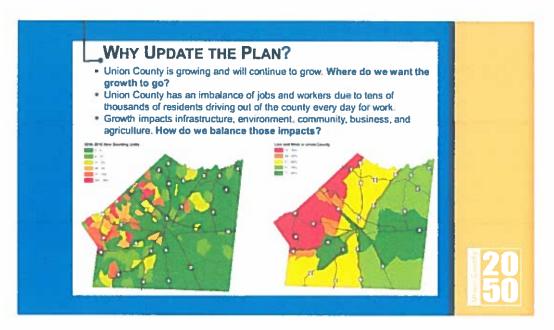


Mr. Jenson explained one of the first things the committees wanted to do was to come up with an overall vision for what they say Union County is. While it may sound relatively simple, the vision statement really helps develop the entire plan. The entire plan is based on this vision, which went out earlier in the spring when they had a series of feedback on the vision. Ultimately that was what was adopted, and the coordinating committee members and the public were very involved in this process.



The county is still working on the land use map and developing tools to implement the scenarios. They are constantly collecting community feedback on the plan. Mr. Jenson asked the council to let them know what they thought by emailing them. At the end of the slide show, Mr. Jenson will show the council the website for the comprehensive plan and tell them how they can get in touch and give them feedback.

Comments from the subcommittees and the recommendation by the coordinating committee will be some time in December and the comprehensive plan will hopefully be adopted in early 2021.



The red and yellow areas on the map above shows that a high percentage of the people are driving out of the county each day; they are coming here to sleep, but they are probably driving to Ballantyne, South Park and uptown Charlotte for work.

The map on the left shows where the growth is. The western side of Union County continues to have a lot of growth and growth impacts a lot of different things, such as infrastructure, which includes water, sewer, schools, fire, etc. that both the county and towns help fund. Growth impacts the environment, because a lot of times with development you have increased flooding and increased stormwater runoff. There is a loss of important agricultural land from growth. Growth also affects the community and businesses. The county needs to try and figure out how they can address a lot of those impacts.

Councilwoman Critz referred to the agenda packet that contained the presentation Mr. Jenson was showing and noted the first bullet point was increased capacity to address education or infrastructure in general, which unfortunately, what has been seen was that the first bullet point and the second bullet point usually happen in the opposite. In other words, we are usually impacted and then the infrastructure is constantly playing catch up.

Mr. Jenson answered, "correct,"

Councilwoman Critz stated that was what they have had to cope with for as long as she has been an elected official (since 2001) and she was sure it was happening before her. Councilwoman Critz explained she really did not see anything looking through the presentation that they are recognizing that issue. Councilwoman Critz then asked if the county was actually going to put the improved infrastructure ahead of the development and if Mr. Jenson could explain that to her.

Mr. Jenson responded that he thought he would get to that later on in the presentation but noted Councilwoman Critz was exactly right. What the vision is saying is that they want to try to address some of these issues. Some of the scenarios and some of the issues that came up and the way that some of these issues are addressed and some of these scenarios are ways that we can help increase our capacity and that may mean money to address some of those issues, especially education and transportation.

Mr. Jenson explained what the second bullet point is talking about is really getting in and defining where some of the high density residential should go and not just spreading it out everywhere. There are places in Union County that are appropriate for high density, but not all over the whole county and that is what that bullet point is really getting at, to plan where those areas are and to do

a better job of planning where those areas should be and then tailoring transportation networks and to help build those areas that we want to build and then a lot of these places would be left rural.

Councilwoman Critz agreed and explained that has been a battle here in Mineral Springs, because as the map is showing the high density has been the same for at least 50 years and longer, it's just that the numbers have gone up, but the development area continues to be on the west side, which is what you would expect.

Mr. Jenson answered, "right."

Councilwoman Critz explained she thought that even though she agreed with Mr. Jenson, it was a more appropriate area for that type of growth, she still believed we need to be careful that we don't, even though it is a more appropriate place for this high density development, we still need to be careful, because it can be overdone and poorly done.

Mr. Jenson stated he agreed 100% and thought when they get into looking at some of the land use components in just a second, he thought Councilwoman Critz would see what he meant by tailoring where some of those areas should be.



Mr. Jenson mentioned that staff does not have a seat at the coordination committee table, because they do not feel like it is appropriate, but they do work with these plans every day. Staff also works with a lot of the elected officials every day, so they have a unique insight into some of these things and then all meetings are monthly and open to the public. Meetings are being held in person now, so people can come to them, or they have an option to call in.

COMPARE THE SCENARIOS

The three scenarios have different combinations of regulations, land use patterns, and new programs. Please think about the following issues when reviewing the scenarios:

- · More flexibility versus concentrated areas for allowing high-density development
- Allowing commercial development in specific areas versus maintaining a quiet, residential atmosphere
- Allowing schools to locate anywhere in unincorporated Union County versus establishing siting requirements
- Additional regulations and requirements for new developments to mitigate for impacts versus limited regulatory burden
- Lower county taxes versus increased taxes to pay for transportation, recreation, environmental health, and downtown development
- Required well testing and subsidizing well remediation versus treating unsafe wells as a property owner concern
- Supporting municipal land use planning on their periphery versus maintaining county land use planning authority in unincorporated areas

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Councilwoman Critz asked if Mr. Jenson could go back to number one and explain the benefit of allowing schools to establish sitings.

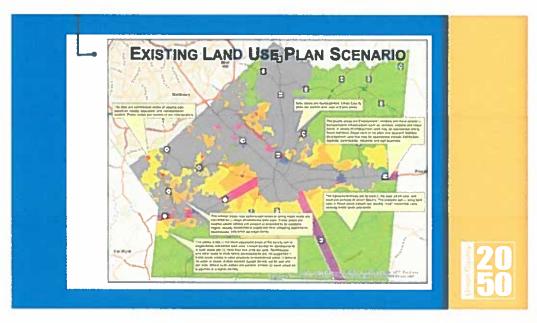
Mr. Jenson explained Union County Public Schools does a great job when they want to build a school. They have set criteria for how large the piece of property is that they need and how big of a building they want to use. The county ran across some issues in the recent past with some private schools where they did not seem to use any criteria. There have been a few schools that were built on pieces of property that were unsafe with the current regulations; schools are allowed anywhere. It is the idea that there should be some mechanism in the ordinance that would put some minimum standards on where a high school should be or minimum standards on where elementary or middle schools should be as opposed to just wherever you can buy a piece of property that works for you and you can just put a school there.

Councilwoman Critz stated she still saw some possible problems, but she was not going to belabor that one. What really concerns her from living in a more rural area and having a well that she maintains herself, is that she does not want subsidizing for well remediation, and she thought it was a bad idea in general. Councilwoman Critz asked Mr. Jenson why he thought it was a good idea.

Mr. Jenson explained these are trade-offs, these are not standard, these are not necessarily good or bad ideas, that is not the intent of this slide. The intent of the slide is when you are going through the scenarios, there are many issues that were identified by the subcommittees. One of the big issues that came up in the county was contaminated wells, so the citizen environmental subcommittee had at least one or two members that identified contaminated wells and unsafe drinking water as a huge priority in the county. That is what that bullet point gets at and it is thinking about the idea of either increased regulation on new house building: when a home builder or an individual builds a house, should they know if the well is contaminated. This is the idea that either you do not and it is just "buyer beware" and you do it on your own or should there be regulations in place to require those things. The slide is not saying one is better than the other, it is just saying think about these things as you go through the scenarios, because that is what some of these scenarios do. Some of them are less regulatory and some are more regulatory. The third scenario has regulations and some new programs that could help with a lot of these issues.

Councilwoman Critz stated there were already state requirements; they have been in their home for 21 years and they were required to prove they had safe water before the bank would consider their loan. Councilwoman Critz did not see where the trade-off was happening or why we need to supersede what is already in place. Either it is not working or the cases that have been experienced in Union County are those people that are not abiding by the law that is currently in place. How can we be more effective with the laws that are already in place without creating new ones?

Mr. Jenson explained that his understanding from talking to building inspections and environmental health was that the current rules in place is when you build a house, some banks do require well testing before they will allow you to close on a loan, just like some banks require property owners to have a survey done on their property before they will allow you to close, but that is not across the board. There are people they have talked to during these meetings that bought a house, closed on it and then found out that they had a contaminated well, just like there are people that bought a house, closed on it only to find out later that their property lines were not right. Different banks have different rules for closing. Right now, to build a house in Union County, you pull the permit to build the house, start building the house, dig your well and testing is required, but it is almost backwards: you get your CO [Certificate of Occupancy] and then a few weeks later you get your test results and what this is talking about is flip flopping that. Maybe before you get you CO you find out if your water is safe. This is not saying it is a good idea or a bad idea, it is just one of the ideas that the committee came up with and that is what this process is. This process is asking residents to give their feedback on some of the ideas that are contained in the scenarios.



Mr. Jenson explained the grey areas on the map above reflect municipalities, in which the county does not have any control over those land use plans.

The purple areas, under the current land use plan, are defined as employment corridors, because these areas have access to fairly good transportation infrastructure. Some the areas along Highway 75 and Highway 74 have access to rail and access to relatively good roads that connect to places outside of Union County, which also make them more appropriate for certain industrial corridors. The green areas that are shown are agricultural areas, they are predominately low density rural residential, working forest land and farms.

The yellow areas are more populated areas of the county for single family residential with the overall density being no more than two units per acre. Townhomes and other multi-family type developments are not supported in the yellow areas. The density would be lower if there is no water and sewer available.

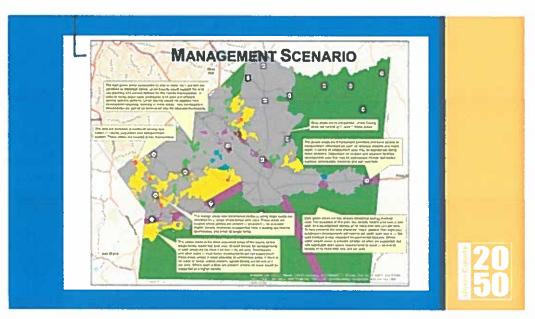
The dots that are shown all over the map are commercial nodes (Rea Road, Tom Short, New Town, Providence, and Chestnut).

The orange areas are mixed residential; Mr. Jenson thought those areas had created a lot of issues under the current plan. The intent was to be near commercial nodes or along major roads, and they are currently identified for a range of different types of residential land use, because generally the utilities are present. This area was intended for higher residential including apartments, townhomes, and small lot single family. That is under the current plan that is in place right now.

Mr. Jenson believed when the plan was adopted in 2014, the idea was the commissioners wanted to promote and have development in some of these areas.



Mr. Jenson mentioned a lot of farms need access to broadband and there are some state programs to do that, but Union County has never done it. This was one of the things staff heard from the agricultural committee.



Mr. Jenson shared that this land use map [above] looks a good bit different than the 2014 one and it is called the "Management Scenario"; the name was chosen by the coordinating committee.

The grey areas are again the towns who have their own land use planning programs.

One of the worthy carry-overs was the employment corridors, which all the subcommittees liked the idea of. Not the idea that they would be "stripped" out, but the idea that along some of the major corridors you could have increased employment opportunities such as distribution, industrial, or agri-business type uses.

The dark green areas are low density residential and agriculture. Under the current plan it is single-family and mixed residential and that comes close to the Mineral Springs border. Those areas could

potentially be higher density development patterns and what the county staff has heard is that nobody wants that out in the county.

The orange areas were really pulled back, which is what Mr. Jenson meant when he talked about concentrating the higher density in a specific location. Around Mineral Springs and to the south of Highway 75 was pulled back to agricultural and rural development.

Then north of town (mainly because of Wesley Chapel and some of those areas around there) you had a single-family residential pattern for single-family homes, which is what the yellow area is. Under the current plan a lot of the now yellow area was orange (higher density). That was pulled back with some lower density, which is what county staff heard from some of the towns during their meeting.

Councilwoman Critz noted she had two maps before her, and she doesn't see any real change. How has it changed?

Mr. Jenson explained that is what they are working on now, which is the whole purpose of this presentation. It is trying to change it, the map is the existing land use plan, so the development that is happening in unincorporated part of the county right now is because of the existing land use plan.

Councilwoman Critz asked if building permits that were already issued could be changed or was that water under the bridge.

Mr. Jenson explained once a building permit is issued it would be water under the bridge. They cannot go back, but they can go forward, which is the whole point of a plan; we are moving forward. A lot of the committee members recognize that the current plan is not what people want to see right now. Mr. Jenson thought the two scenarios (at least the land use patterns), they heard loud and clear from a lot of people that they did not like the current plan, they do not like high density in the unincorporated parts of the county and that's what this plan does, it pulls back a lot of the areas that were slated for high density development. If the Management Plan is adopted, the map that is titled "Management Plan" would be the new land use map that the county would go by when it is looking at rezoning. For example, Orchard Creek is a development close to Mineral Springs that is going through the rezoning process. The property is located on the edge of a mixed residential and singlefamily area. When staff evaluated it, they did not recommend approval, because they thought the density was still too high even for that pattern. The planning board agreed with staff and unanimously recommended to turn it down. Mr. Jenson mentioned since he had the floor, he would share that with the council and went on to say this plan pulls that mixed residential. There is no orange in any of this part of the county, and south of Highway 75 is all green for low density and agriculture. That is what the idea on this land use scenario shows. One of the other important things in the Management Plan (and the next scenario) is you see light green areas scattered throughout the plan (a couple in Mineral Springs and over Waxhaw), which are unincorporated Union County areas that are completely surrounded by one or more municipalities. Those areas have been identified as transition zones and the idea is that Union County would support the land use planning and service delivery for the nearby municipalities and would not support any increase in density as part of a rezoning request in any of those green areas. If a developer wants to develop one of those properties, they should go annex into the town. There are a few areas where there are three municipalities and the county, it is recommended that all four would sit down at the table to come up with a small area plan that works for everyone in that specific area.

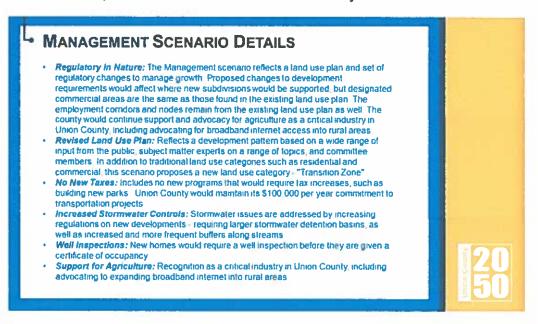
Councilwoman Critz asked if the county was planning on putting wording in that will require that or if it was just a suggestion.

Mr. Jenson explained a comprehensive plan is a policy guide. They would hope if a rezoning was submitted on a property that was completely surrounded by Mineral Springs, that would guide staff in their analysis of that rezoning to say, "we don't, if it was an increase in density, we would say, we are not increasing the density, we will defer to the town and this developer should go work with the town." It should then guide the elected officials to say the same thing and to turn the rezoning down.

Staff would tell the developers when they come in to meet with them that they need to go talk to these towns they are impacting, because the county plan/policies do not support whatever they want to do.

Mayor Becker asked what the turquoise areas were because there is no legend for that area.

Mr. Jenson explained the areas were industrial, which really goes along with the commercial nodes. Mr. Jenson explained he had two [map] layers sitting on top of each other and he had to display one and not the other one, but it is an industrial area that the City of Monroe was interested in doing.



Mr. Jenson explained the Management Scenario would not be implemented through increased regulation, but with changes in county zoning and stormwater controls.

Most towns in the county have stricter stormwater rules than the unincorporated part of the county does, and the county recognizes that as an issue. Stormwater does not stop at a municipality boundary or a state boundary. Stormwater keeps going wherever the creek is, or the down-hill movement of water is, stormwater goes that way. The county could rewrite some of their stormwater rules to increase those standards to better match what some of the different towns have. The idea is that you can create rules that govern what can happen with subdivision in some of those agricultural areas. Based on these RA40 areas (one unit per acre), which is a lot of the development that happened in the Marvin and Weddington areas over the years, a lot of people would not consider that to be rural; it is suburban. There are things that can be done to help maintain the rural identity.

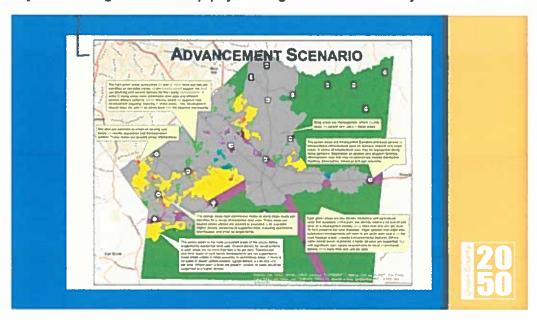
This plan is not recommending new programs that require any tax increases (i.e. new parks).

The plan would require well inspection before they are given a CO for a new home; this would flipflop the way the building code and environmental health work now, putting the well inspection before the CO. This allows the person purchasing the house to know, before the CO is issued, their water is safe.

Mayor Becker mentioned this parallels waste treatment protocols.

Mr. Jenson responded, "exactly." That was the parallel they drew from, to have to know the septic system works before you get a CO, so why wouldn't you want to know if your water was safe before the CO.

Mr. Jenson noted support for agriculture was more of an advocacy role of support; they are reaching out to people and saying, "we need this broadband internet into these rural areas". In this scenario, the county would not go out and help pay to bring broadband into any rural area.



The Advancement Scenario has a land use pattern identical to the Management Scenario. The difference is in how some of the ideas that came out of the committees are implemented. Management is more in-house without any new programs and Advancement will have programs, which is talking about doing things differently than in the past and creating some programs. It includes revised regulations, as well as initiatives to help implement that plan.



Mr. Jenson explained when he was finished with the PowerPoint, he would show the council the county's website and how you get to the online survey that shows every single initiative that the committees have identified. Mr. Jenson noted Ms. Brooks also put the link on the town's website. It reflects input that was received from the community and the committee members for responses on issues. A lot of the issues they heard throughout this process have been safe drinking water, recreation, and transportation. The Advancement Scenario would include some initiatives to help implement that vision of helping to respond to those concerns.

Mr. Jenson pointed out the scenarios were where the county wants your comments, it is not saying these things are going to happen. The county wants community feedback to tell them if these are good ideas or bad ideas.

Increasing the transportation investment from \$100,000 up to \$5,000,000 would be done through a quarter cent local option sales tax and that money could be used for lots of different things. The idea is to help guide and move some transportation projects along faster, because we know the DOT is broke, they are behind, and roads are not functioning the way they should. A lot of that is based on development, but there are roads, based on a lot of old decisions, that need to be upgraded. This is the idea of the county and some municipal partners going together to help fix those.

Mayor Becker asked if the county has legislative statutory authority to do transportation spending or if it would require special legislation.

Mr. Jenson explained the county can implement a quarter cent sales tax now. It is a referendum and it would have to go to the voters, but yes, the county can. With the critical intersection analysis that was done, the county got \$100,000 a year to help move some projects along a little bit faster. The county is authorized and are currently throwing dollars right at that project. Another idea is to build partnerships with municipalities to help build parks, trails, and greenways.

Councilwoman Critz asked why DOT was broke.

Mr. Jenson explained the first hit DOT took was based on a big lawsuit, which was really a statewide lawsuit, that was based on the map act. What a map act does is, you have the comprehensive transportation plan, which looks out 30 years into the future for transportation needs, a lot of communities use that map to preserve corridors. When you think about planning, it is a great idea. Unfortunately, there were a series of lawsuits in North Carolina and the judges ruled the other way (against DOT) and it was a billion-dollar lawsuit. When DOT lost that, it took a lot of their funding. The other monetary hit DOT took was that a vast majority of their funds come from gas taxes and during COVID people quit driving and that has impacted DOT's final line.

With partnerships with municipalities to build new parks, trails, and greenways, Mr. Jenson explained they heard through their visioning session, from the community and the committees that some of the feedback was, "if I live close to Target maybe I don't want to get in the car and drive, are there other ways to link things." Mineral Springs has done a great job with their greenway helping to link people together and that is the idea; to link people to things, to places of business, to restaurants, and to each other.

Councilwoman Critz noted Mineral Springs did not have to raises taxes to do any of the things they have done, and they are the greatest supporters of green space of any community that she is aware of. The town did go to developers and just say "we would like to have this, would you like to be a part of our vision" and remarkably the developers did, so there was a lot of land donation from developers. The town also received money through grants, which took a lot of time and energy on the part of the council, mayor, staff, and planning board, but is can be done, but is has to be a priority.

Mr. Jenson mentioned the county and Mineral Springs as well have adopted the Carolina Thread Trail plan. The county has a greenway master plan and they have developers to give them easements through common areas or greenways. The county has not been very successful at getting trails built, but that is not the fault of the developers, they have had developers offer, but that is more of a new way, at least on a county level, to think about greenway building and maintenance and taking on that responsibility. Mr. Jenson mentioned there are all kinds of "free money" out there to help build these things.

Councilwoman Critz asked if Mr. Jenson would be offering the county to participate.

Mr. Jenson responded yes, they want partnerships and they recognize Mineral Springs has a great greenway plan, as does Monroe and Indian Trail; those towns want to build parks. This scenario would allow the county to partner with them to help that happen.

The Advancement Scenario includes increasing stormwater regulations and possibly establishing a stormwater program to help maintain facilities. One of the biggest problems they face is that you can build a neighborhood today and it functions fine, but five years down the road, if it is not maintained, it falls apart and you have stormwater issues. It does not matter how good your stormwater regulations are. This would be a way to create the beginnings of a stormwater program where the county would own and maintain some of those facilities.

Mandatory well inspections for sales of both new and existing homes would be a county requirement, even if the bank does not require it. This is not saying it is a good idea or a bad idea, the county wants people's feedback.

Councilwoman Critz clarified this was not regulatory authority on people's wells other than for buying and selling purposes.

Mr. Jenson responded other than for buying and selling, yes, no other real regulatory authority. Mr. Jenson does know some types of wells require some inspections if you have a certain type of well, much like a septic system.

Councilwoman Critz mentioned a community well.

Mr. Jenson agreed and explained this would just trigger it at the time of a sale of the house or something like that. This will continue county funding initiative to address unsafe wells, including the short line water extension program and the in-house water filtration system. That was something that came out of the environmental committee that other committees caught onto. The idea that some of these water filtration systems, if you have magnesium or arsenic in a well, it can be treated. While the program is not perfectly defined yet, it could possibly be a 50/50 grant program for the short line water extension the county would do if you live way out in the unincorporated areas, but it will be years before some of these short water lines will get to people. In the interim, there is a way the county can help people that have contaminated wells with a 50/50 grant program to purchase a filtration system.

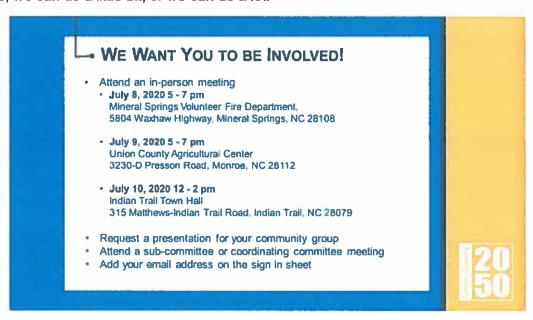
The Advancement Scenario suggests establishing a task force to identify strategies to address litter.

To support and advocate for agriculture as a critical industry, which includes committing county resources to expand broadband internet into rural areas. All these things have big price tags (fixing roads, broadband, short water line extensions) to them and the Advancement Scenario includes a lot of cost. The Management Scenario is a little more pulled back and it does not include so much cost.

Councilwoman Critz asked if they have looked at a way of starting out with the Management Scenario and phasing in the Advancement Scenario as monies or grants are available without raising taxes.

Mr. Jenson noted that staff are not the decision makers, nor are they advocating for any one of these scenarios, it is the community and ultimately the Board of Commissioners that have to make the decisions. Staff believes what will probably happen is it will be some combination of the two scenarios. There will be some programs that sound good, but will be too expensive and fall by the wayside and there will be some that are good ideas they should do and will make it into the final plan. It will not happen overnight. When the plan is adopted, if they want to increase transportation investments with the quarter cent sales tax it would have to be approved by the voters; it is not something the board can just say they want to do. It has to go to the voters, so the earliest would be in November of 2021 and then you have to actually collect the sales tax, so a lot of the programs will be several years in the future, but you have to get started. The idea is "you've got to start

somewhere." You have to think about solutions to the issues and ultimately the community along with the elected officials make decision on how we are going to address these issues. That is what this is all about and this is all about getting feedback from the community on how we address these issues; we can do a little bit, or we can do a lot.



Councilwoman Critz asked how they wanted input from this point forward if people weren't able to attend meetings.

Mr. Jenson explained he would switch over to something else once he finished this last slide. The meeting in Mineral Springs was last night, there is one tonight at the Ag Center, and one tomorrow at the Indian Trail Town Hall. If you were not able to make any of those meetings, staff will present to community groups. Mr. Jenson noted people can also go to the website and sign up to get on a distribution list that will keep you informed.

Mr. Jenson explained they expected the plan to be developed based on the chosen scenario in November; there will be three more community meetings, which will be on the overall plan that the coordinating committee selects.

Councilwoman Critz asked what the turnout for the meetings was.

Mr. Jenson responded the one at the Ag Center was pretty good, but he didn't know the exact number, because he had to leave the meeting to be able to present to this council. The one in Mineral Springs was not well attended, which was disappointing.

Mayor Becker asked if Mr. Jenson thought there had been so much upheaval and confusion with COVID and people not being out as much, and so many meetings not being in person, that the word just did not get out.

Mr. Jenson responded they have reached a good number of people, there was a press release, which was in the Union Weekly and Enquirer-Journal, there was a big online presence, the county did a series of Facebook posts, many of the members of the coordinating committee shared it, Archie Morgan did an interview on WIXE radio, and a lot of people have gone to the website.

The survey takes about 45 minutes to take, because it is in depth. This is a comprehensive plan, which is talking about land use and other big issues that impact the county; people need to think long and hard about how they want to be addressed, if they want it addressed. Mr. Jenson explained the information they have received from the communication team this week showed not that many people took the survey, but the number of people that went to the survey was about 3,000. There is a percentage that clicked on it and said, "I don't want to mess with that." They are hoping that a

good number of those people will go back and take the survey. Mr. Jenson asked if Mineral Springs was on Facebook or Instagram, etc. would they share with their friends, because they want as many people taking the survey as they can get.

Mayor Becker commented that the survey was comprehensive and asked if when the meetings were done was there information on the website that was adequate enough to inform people.

Mr. Jenson believed it was very in depth. There is an excel spread sheet that compares the different plans, the land use scenarios, the different issues, and it compares the ways that each one of the scenarios addresses those issues. Mr. Jenson shared the Union County 2050 Comprehensive Plan, which has a dedicated page on the website and described how to maneuver around the site.

Councilwoman Critz referred back to the Management Scenario and the Advancement Scenario and noted they only addressed the increase of funds for transportation, while the other things will require some funding as well, how is the county going to get the money for the other things.

Mr. Jenson responded the strategy that the committee came up with was to address a specific item of increasing county funding for transportation projects and not relying on DOT to get all the transportation improvement done. This was a quarter cent sales tax under the Advancement Scenario, but it is not addressed in the Management Scenario. This is where the county wants to get feedback from the people.

Councilwoman Critz commented in addition to the sales tax increase for transportation, the other things were going to need funding, will the county raise taxes for those.

Mr. Jenson referred to unsafe well water (as an example), which would require a certificate of potability for new and existing homes and that fee would be a user fee, not something that every single taxpayer would pay.

Councilwoman Critz asked how the county was going to help with broadband in the Ag business area under the Advancement Scenario.

Mr. Jenson explained that a lot of the money for broadband and internet in rural areas can come through grant programs. During one of the agricultural subcommittee meetings, a person from North Carolina Department of Information Technology spoke about the multitude of state and federal grant programs that are available to help extend broadband in the rural areas.

Mr. Jenson mentioned the final information on the feedback page was to obtain people's zip code, so they will know the balance of who was taking the survey versus who didn't. Right now, Monroe is winning the race! The county wants to know who is responding to the survey; are there more people in the 60 and older bracket, millennials, baby boomers, or generation X. Right now, the older generation Xers and the younger boomers are winning.

Mr. Jenson informed the council of the August 6th mid-plan update that will be given to the Board of County Commissioners. Town representatives will be invited and will probably have a five-minute slot to provide feedback specifically related to issues and strategies listed in the plan. This is an all-day event; the morning will be the plan and the afternoon will be public works presenting information. Mr. Jenson believed the event would begin around 9:00 a.m. with a light breakfast being offered. Lunch will also be provided. The event will be located at the Ag Center, because they have a big enough facility to handle it where they can also practice social distancing.



5. Artists Music Guild Presentation by David L. Cook

Mayor Becker introduced Mr. David L. Cook from the Artists Music Guild who joined the meeting to talk about the town's partnership with Artists Music Guild, which is budgeted for this year.

Mr. Cook explained he was told the council had some questions about what the Artists Music Guild planned to do this year for Union County. Mr. Cook noted the "show" was still going on, but it has been scaled back and will take place in the new theatre in downtown Monroe.

Mr. Cook explained the Artists Music Guild's whole basis was about the kids and what they do with the kids and how they interact with all of the legends and things like that, which is not being abandoned this year. They have been working with the resource officers and the school board and they have a list of names and things like that from families that have filed for help. Teachers have requested help with instruments, etc. The Artists Music Guild is still involved with that and are going forward. They have ordered book bags and will meet with the principals; one of the schools they are helping is right in the neighborhood, so they are still involved in the Mineral Springs area.

Mr. Cook explained their relationship with Mineral Springs is not so much based on the issues that they do with the Heritage Awards kids, but also with their licensing with the town. The music licenses for 2020 have gone up; they are charging more for licensing from ASCAP, SESAC, Harry Fox, and BMI, but the Artists Music Guild is not asking for that. Even though Mineral Springs has cancelled the festival for this year, they are still going to require the town to have licenses in place whether they are used or not. A continued partnership with the Artists Music Guild keeps the town from having to write checks to those licensing organizations, because the Artists Music Guild would still be representing Mineral Springs.

The Artists Music Guild has a brand-new website and Mineral Springs is listed on it as a continued supporter; if someone clicks on the Mineral Springs logo it will take them to the Mineral Springs website.

The City of Monroe is not giving the Artists Music Guild the theatre, so they are still having to pay, and they still need financial backing to be able to bring the show forward. This year, the Artists Music Guild has confirmed Don McLean, Tommy Tutone, Kool and the Gang, DeeDee Sharp, and T. Graham Brown. They are waiting for confirmation on Aaron Tippin and Frankie Valli. Kathy Garver (Sissy from Family Affair) will be the co-host and John Snyder (Dukes of Hazard) will be the host.

Mr. Cook explained he did need to know if he will get the support from the town, because they have to let Monroe know and they can move forward with their contract with them. If they don't get

support, they will have to find other sources, which has been hard, because some of the sponsors they had are using their sponsorship money to pay their employees, so they didn't have to lay them off.

Councilwoman Critz noted it would be a mistake to not continue the funding, even though the town doesn't have the specific need (festival), because it isn't the kind of thing that the town wants to jump in and out of supporting.

Councilwoman Krafft, Councilwoman Neill, and Councilman Countryman all agreed with Councilwoman Critz.

Mayor Becker stated the town does have the money in the budget if the council wanted to continue to fund at the same level.

Councilman Countryman motioned to support their fund, the Artists Music Guild, the \$4,000 that is in the budget and Councilwoman Krafft seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

6. 2020 Meeting Schedule Discussion

Mayor Becker asked the council if they had any ideas on what to do with future meetings and if they wanted to continue zooming.

Councilwoman Krafft suggested the council continue the Zoom meetings until we are into the next phase and she did not see that next phase coming real soon with the numbers going up and the amount of COVID around the community. Councilwoman Krafft thought everybody needs to stay safe.

Mayor Becker and Councilwoman Cureton stated they were in favor of that.

Councilwoman Critz suggested if the town had something beneficial to the council to meet that they could probably schedule, but since they are dealing with smaller issues right now, except for the county plan, she thought zooming was prudent for at least August.

Councilwoman Neill motioned to continue to Zoom for August and Councilwoman Krafft seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Becker asked if the council had any insight on whether or not to open town hall to the public, because it is still not officially open to the public, even though Ms. Brooks and Ms. Ridings were there a lot. Mayor Becker explained that Ms. Brooks has continued to do most of her service to the public by phone and email; people are not coming into her office.

Mayor Becker asked Ms. Brooks if she had any specific requests or comments to the board.

Ms. Brooks responded she was seeking council guidance.

Councilwoman Krafft explained one of the things she has seen recently with this is if somebody needed to come in, they can always schedule an appointment, which seems like the safest thing to do right now.

Councilwoman Critz agreed with Councilwoman Krafft.

Councilwoman Coffey suggested appointment only and the town might want to consider the touchless thermometer, because people really need to be checked when coming in. People also need to fill out a form, because that is going to be vitally important for contact tracing. Councilwoman Coffey stated they were doing that with everybody that walks in her building; they take their temperature and it goes on their form and it is filed along with the questionnaire that they have to fill out. It is important, because people are traveling, and people are hanging out doing everything they want to do.

Councilwoman Krafft agreed with Councilwoman Coffey and stated the other thing was the mandate for this tracing is going to be even more intense as we go forward.

Mayor Becker mentioned Attorney Griffin sent a text reminding the council they have the authority to have staff and visitors wear masks. Mayor Becker explained the town did acquire some disposable masks to give to people if they do not have their own. Mayor Becker asked Ms. Brooks if there were enough.

Ms. Brooks responded yes and mentioned she has seen other towns that are doing appointment only, allowing only one person at a time, and they must wear masks.

Mayor Becker stated that was where this discussion was leading; if we are going to do appointment only and it is only one person at a time. Mayor Becker mentioned (for the benefit of the council) that he was not usually at the office when Ms. Brooks and Ms. Ridings were, so we do not have three people there at once, only two or one. Mayor Becker added staff was still trying to keep their distance, because they have different duties, so it works out fine. Mayor Becker noted he would locate a non-contact thermometer.

Councilwoman Critz asked Ms. Brooks if she was comfortable with continuing the way she has been and then appointment only.

Ms. Brooks responded yes and that she was doing most of her things electronically or over the phone and she has not had anybody who has really wanted to come in to talk.

Councilwoman Critz commented if Ms. Brooks was able to do that without any glitches then by all mean she should keep herself safe.

Mayor Becker requested a motion to continue to have town hall not officially open, but to allow appointments with one person only and to require visitors to wear a mask. Mayor Becker asked if anything else should go in the motion.

Ms. Brooks responded to direct staff to get a thermometer for visitors.

Councilwoman Krafft asked if there was a sign that says people can contact Ms. Brooks by phone or email on the door.

Ms. Brooks responded yes. Ms. Brooks asked Councilwoman Coffey if she had access to a form they could use.

Councilwoman Coffey responded sure.

Councilwoman Coffey motioned to continue with town hall not officially open, that we allow appointments only, one person only, require visitors to wear masks, and get a thermometer for visitors and Councilwoman Critz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Community Crime Report by Councilwoman Critz

Councilwoman Critz explained she was contacted about a week and a half ago by Leigh Smith (formerly Leigh Sossamon), who used to live in our community in Brantley Oaks, she still owns her property there and has a rental property off of Shannon Road. Ms. Smith's tenant (off of Autumn Blaze in Brantley Oaks) had food stolen out of a refrigerator and freezer in his garage, but he did not immediately call the police and they also found out that several other residents in the Brantley Oaks area had similar burglaries. An ATV was stolen out of the yard of Ms. Smith's tenant on Shannon Road. Councilwoman Critz told Ms. Smith she would contact the police department, but there was nothing she could do if they did not file a report. A report was filed and Councilwoman Critz spoke with Captain Greg Thomas, who said he was going to up his patrols in the Mineral Springs area, especially for Shannon Road and Brantley Oaks. In the meantime, they have discovered who the young man was that had been picking garages for food; he is an 18 year old Hispanic man who lives with his mother; he was arrested on a different issue and was out.

Councilwoman Critz stated she did not know if he was going to continue thieving or not, but it appears they need food. Councilwoman Critz stated she told Ms. Smith to contact her HOA and she asked the Sheriff's Department if there was any way to get information to that family about local food banks. Councilwoman Critz thought they were probably here illegally and did not want to access these programs, but she was hoping that he did not continue to steal. Councilwoman Critz stated they did not think or know if he was connected to the theft of the ATV or not, because that has not been resolved, but an official report was made.

Councilwoman Critz added there are some issues in our community she thought were directly related to people who aren't able to earn money, not working, or they lost their job or something. It appears to be a minor situation at this point, but the biggest concern for the people in Brantley Oaks is that they feel frightened having had someone in their home/garage; it is frightening to think that someone was in part of your home and took something.

Councilwoman Critz noted Captain Thomas explained if you go on the Sheriff's website (Ms. Brooks may want to put it on our website), they have an icon on their website that deals with community crime, you can go on that icon and put in your community to see what is going on.

Mayor Becker thanked Councilwoman Critz for her report and reminded the council this came up in 2009 when the town had Sheriff Cathey and Captain Easley come and they said not to be afraid to call 911 and make a report, not just an incident, but a suspicious vehicle. Keep the Sheriff in the loop, that is what they are there for and they want to hear that information and make sure our citizens know that.

Councilwoman Cureton explained there was a place on [Highway] 200 that gives away food and someone gave her five gallons of milk and she went through the neighborhood giving it out. Councilwoman Cureton did not know the name of the place on 200, but it is not far from Parkwood School.

Councilwoman Critz suggested if the council could find out that organization's name it might be good to put it on the website.

Councilwoman Cureton will let Ms. Brooks know the name later.

Councilwoman Krafft mentioned that she had noticed more patrol in her area and in the morning hours, she is seeing more of them on Nablus Road. Councilwoman Krafft also mentioned there is an individual that has been walking into a couple neighborhoods that typically is not a walker in those neighborhoods and she has seen him six times in the last two weeks.

Councilwoman Critz suggested Councilwoman Krafft call the police department.

Councilwoman Krafft stated she walked to a police officer this morning, because she was nervous about it, because it wasn't right, he was looking at houses, looking to see if the garages were open, and it was not a Hispanic person, but it was a younger person.

Councilwoman Critz responded she was glad to hear the police have a larger presence in the community and she will call him back and thank him and see if they can keep up the good work.

Councilwoman Krafft stated she thought the longer this COVID goes on the more people were going to get a little more desperate.

Mayor Becker thanked Councilwomen Critz and Cureton for the information and suggested Councilwoman Cureton communicate the organization to Ms. Brooks and we will try to take it from there. Mayor Becker asked that everyone stay safe and help keep their neighbors be safe by looking out for each other and keeping in touch with the Sheriff's Office.

8. Staff Updates

Ms. Brooks asked the council to consider bringing the nuisance ordinance back up on a small scale, because the town needs to address a couple issues, such as garbage and pools that are creating a public hazard.

Councilwoman Critz responded we have county environment and asked if they could not do anything.

Ms. Brooks responded the county will not touch those.

Councilwoman Krafft asked if these were the same pools we had last year.

Ms. Brooks responded there was a new one that is a mosquito pit.

Mayor Becker asked the council if they wanted Ms. Brooks to go through the language and see if there were limited items they could look at in the next couple of months to reinstate.

Councilwoman Critz stated the emphasis would be on "limited" and if there is a way that it could be enforced.

Ms. Brooks pointed out that she feels helpless when people say "hey, my neighbor's yard is full of garbage" and she says, "I'm sorry and the health department can't do anything about it." That is not something they do.

Councilwoman Coffey added they will not, she is dealing with them right now and if she does not get any action, her next step will be to hire an attorney, Bobby Griffin, next week maybe.

Councilwoman Cureton mentioned there were people over at the house next door to her (she has called the police several times) and one of the members in the neighborhood said somebody stole his trailer and put it in that house. Councilwoman Cureton wanted to know if there was something could be done about the house next to her.

Ms. Brooks commented that was a police issue.

Councilwoman Cureton explained the house was standing wide open, because the man started tearing it down or something.

Councilwoman Critz asked Ms. Brooks if he needed a permit to tear down a house.

Ms. Brooks explained you would have to get a demolition permit from the county to tear a house down and the county contacts the town for approval before they will issue that permit. The last request Ms. Brooks got from the county was for the house on Highway 75.

Councilwoman Cureton mentioned the junk from one of the houses the man torn down was still sitting there.

Ms. Brooks noted they could not have more than 600 square feet of junk; it could be piled as high as they wanted, but it could not be more than 600 square feet [per the development ordinance].

Councilwoman Critz asked Ms. Brooks if there was any way she could ask the county to come out and assess the house.

Councilwoman Cureton mentioned the police told her he was going to find out who owned it and do something about it, but she did not think he did.

Mayor Becker commented that was one issue Ms. Brooks and Councilwoman Cureton could talk about, but for next month staff might just draft a few things for discussion. Mayor Becker asked the council if that was the plan.

Councilwoman Critz responded "correct."

Ms. Brooks mentioned the town would have to hire someone like they did last time, such as N-Focus to go out and take care of those things.

Mayor Becker agreed, so the town does not put another hat on Ms. Brooks, because her head is crowded with too many hats already. If the town gets something adopted and it is manageable as opposed to the gargantuan thing we tried before it might work. It is up to the council to see if they can come up with something workable.

Councilwoman Critz stated she thought they would have to look at it to know and give some thought to how it could be enforced.

Councilwoman Coffey stated it was desperately needed.

Councilwoman Krafft asked if Ms. Brooks could email the council what they had before, so they could think about it before the next meeting.

Ms. Brooks shared the town had a planning board applicant and explained she does not live in Mineral Springs yet, but they were going to close on a land purchase soon and will build a house here. Ms. Brooks asked the council if they wanted her to present the application to them or should she let the applicant know she has to be a Mineral Springs resident.

Councilman Countryman and Councilwoman Krafft believed she would need to be a resident.

Councilwoman Critz shared that she knew the applicant and explained she grew up here, her parents live in Valley Farm, and she is returning to the area as a millennial thirty-something with family, so she is familiar with Mineral Springs. Councilwoman Critz stated she did not know if that means the council wants to make that kind of exception. Councilwoman Critz asked where the town stood on that legally.

Ms. Brooks commented that they must be a Mineral Springs resident.

Councilwoman Krafft, Councilwoman Coffey, and Councilman Countryman all agreed that needs to remain the policy.

Councilwoman Critz asked that Ms. Brooks let the applicant know that and to let her know the council is interested in her being involved, but she will have to wait until the house is built.

9. Other Business

Councilwoman Neill shared with the council that the State Trooper (Adolfo Lopez-Alcedo) that was critically injured last Saturday morning is part of our community. In fact, he is her next-door neighbor. Trooper Lopez-Alcedo is clinging to life and not only does he need prayers, but his wife and two children need all of our prayers. Councilwoman Neill asked if it was possible to put this on the town website, because he is a State Trooper and he is part of our community.

Councilwoman Critz stated that would be good if we could.

Councilwoman Krafft shared there was a "Go-Fund-Me" account established for him, just so the council knows.

Councilwoman Krafft mentioned that the two families involved in the accident were both home schooled families. The accident that was on Friday night. The second family that was in the accident, where the father died, the son that was driving was a friend of Jordan's.

Councilwoman Critz shared that she and Mr. Critz have been dear friends with Josie and Mark Barland for 32 years; they also go to Christ Covenant. There is a tremendous connection to our community to both accidents, but the State Trooper is the only one who is a resident of Mineral

Springs, although there is a strong connection to both Friday night and Saturday morning, which were all connected. If we could just let the community know, a lot of people may not realize he is a member of our community.

Ms. Brooks stated she would defer to Attorney Griffin on whether the town should put something on the website; "I seek his advice." Ms. Brooks also asked Councilwoman Neill what kind of thing she was thinking of for the website.

Councilwoman Neill stated she did not know, just something about the State Trooper being critically injured and that he is a Mineral Springs resident, but she would get back with Ms. Brooks the next day or sometime.

After a phone conversation with Attorney Griffin, Ms. Brooks explained that Attorney Griffin did not think that was something the town should do, the website is for giving town information. Attorney Griffin also advised the council to establish a policy at some point, so that we know exactly what our future holds on putting things on the website.

Councilwoman Critz asked if the town wanted to look at that as a separate entity as some point they could.

Ms. Brooks responded it was not a town function.

Councilwoman Krafft explained it was not a municipal governmental controlled kind of thing.

Mayor Becker added people should be using their own social media to notify their friends, neighbors, and churches.

Ms. Brooks pointed out that she has seen it on "Put Mineral Springs on the Map" and the fire department Facebook page.

10. Adjournment

At 9:56 p.m. Councilwoman Coffey motioned to adjourn the meeting and Councilwoman Critz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The next regular meeting will be on Thursday, August 13, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted by:

Vicky A. Brooks, CMC, NCCMC, To

rederick Becker III, Mayor