

**Minutes of the  
Mineral Springs Town Council  
Regular Meeting  
August 11, 2022 – 7:30 p.m.**

The Town Council of the Town of Mineral Springs, North Carolina, met in Regular Session at the Mineral Springs Town Hall located at 3506 Potter Road S, Mineral Springs, North Carolina, at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 11, 2022.

**Present:** Mayor Frederick Becker III, Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Countryman, Councilwoman Valerie Coffey, Councilwoman Janet Critz, Councilwoman Lundeen Cureton, and Councilman Jim Muller.

**Absent:** Councilwoman Bettylyn Krafft.

**Staff Present:** Town Clerk/Zoning Administrator Vicky Brooks, Attorney Bobby Griffin, Administrative Assistant/Deputy Town Clerk Maurice Norman, and Deputy Town Clerk Janet Ridings.

**Visitors:** None.

**1. Opening**

With a quorum present at 7:31 p.m. on August 11, 2022, Mayor Becker called the Regular Town Council Meeting to order.

Councilwoman Critz delivered the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Becker introduced the new Administrative Assistant/Deputy Town Clerk Maurice Norman who started on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

**2. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**3. Consent Agenda – Action Item**

Councilwoman Coffey motioned to approve the consent agenda containing the July 14, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes, the June 2022 Union County Tax Report, and the June 2022 Finance Report and Councilman Countryman seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, and Muller. Nays: None.

**4. Consideration of a Planning Board Applicant – Action Item**

Mayor Becker asked Mr. Johnny Evans to step up to the microphone for a quick introduction.

Mr. Evans explained he grew up in a small town in the mountains of North Carolina and he went to Appalachian State where he met his wife. Mr. Evans moved to the Charlotte region and started his career there. Mr. Evans noted his majors were in Environmental Science with a minor in Geology. Mr. Evans started with South Carolina DHEC [Department of Health and Environmental Control] for a year and then with stormwater regulatory and agriculture facility inspections. Mr. Evans moved to Mecklenburg County and their water quality department and from there went to the City of Charlotte Land Development/Erosion Control. Mr. Evans spent about five years in local government and then went to the private sector where he has spent about three years working for a developer. Mr. Evans stated he had a blend of municipality experience and work in the private sector with developers and engineers in land development.

Mayor Becker commented Mr. Evans may have to go above and beyond the call of duty, because the town is always looking for a little bit of expertise in stormwater and erosion control issues.

Councilwoman Coffey stated with all the experience and attributes Mr. Evans has to bring with him, she believed he would be a great asset to the planning board, as well as the town.

Councilwoman Critz asked Mr. Evans how long he had been in Mineral Springs.

Mr. Evans responded they bought their house in October of last year. Mr. Evans shared that they have a little two-year old son who is a ball full of energy and they are expecting a little girl in November.

Mayor Becker mentioned that it sounded like even if Mr. Evans was in the development industry, not everybody who was building houses or developing projects is necessarily looking to maximize density at the expense of quality and Mr. Evans seems to understand that.

Mr. Evans responded that he sees both sides of it, the good and the bad, the responsibility, stewardship versus just blaze everything down and make a quick profit, which was what compelled him to step into this role to be responsible for what is being done. It is just a matter of time, the growth will sprawl from Charlotte, it is working its way out. Mr. Evans stated he enjoyed driving by cow pastures and cornfields on his way from work to home; "that's one of the appealing things about living out here."

Councilman Countryman commented that the interesting thing was that several years ago you could drive [highway] 16 where it meets [highway] 84 and go either direction and it was all wheat fields and bean fields 15 years ago. The erosion has continued into this county, and it is important that it does not come any further. The town motto is "Conservation by Design," and the expertise Mr. Evans has will be of great value to ensure that continues.

Councilwoman Critz applauded Mr. Evans for getting involved and wanting to be involved right out of the starting gates. It says a lot about Mr. Evans' investment in the community. Councilwoman Critz thought Mr. Evans should be pleased with what he sees in the town's zoning and how the town developed conservation zoning.

Councilman Muller motioned to appoint Johnny Evans to the planning board and Councilman Countryman seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, and Muller. Nays: None.

#### **5. Consideration of the Audit Contract – Action Item**

Mayor Becker explained that the audit contract was exactly the same price (\$4,730); nothing has changed. The audit contract is pre-printed from the State Treasurer's Local Government Commission's language. There is no room for discretion; the auditors have to follow that contract template.

Councilwoman Critz motioned to approve the audit contract with Kendra Gangal CPA for \$4,730 and Councilwoman Cureton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, and Muller. Nays: None.

#### **6. Consideration of a Dead Wildlife Policy on Greenway Property – Action Item**

Mayor Becker referred to his memo and stated he thought it was a non-issue about dead wildlife on town property. This case turned out to be on HOA property and it was not the town's problem in the long run. Eventually the dead animals go away, because the vultures and other predators will make quick work of them. Mayor Becker did not know what to do if the dead animal had been on town property, because the town does not have a policy enforced. Mayor Becker pointed out there had been a dead animal on town hall property once and it had to be removed, which cost \$415. It would be expensive to bring somebody into the woods. Mayor Becker stated he was uncomfortable, and he was glad the dead animal was not on town property, because he did not want to authorize the

expenditure of having someone get the deer and then the council question why he would do that with the dead animal being in the woods. Mayor Becker explained he just wanted to know if the council wanted to establish a policy on what happens if this does come up on town property.

Councilwoman Coffey commented she thought it was something the town needs to research. Councilwoman Coffey did not want to attempt to comment on it tonight, because she needs more information, and she would like to look into what other areas are doing.

Mayor Becker stated he would do some research with some trail managers to see if there were any policies in place.

Councilman Muller commented he was sure there had been squirrels, possums, copperheads out there [on the trail], but he agreed with Councilwoman Coffey, because it was not only unsightly, and it is more than just the smell, but it could be a health or safety concern.

Councilman Countryman commented that you have to look at the reality of how frequently that might occur and the fact that it would be on town property. Councilman Countryman thought it was reasonable to explore the possibility and encouraged Ms. Brooks to contact the Fish and Game Department or an exterminator or somebody that would deal with it like they did with the one [dead deer] in the backyard of town hall to see what the possibilities were, so there might be something in place down the road. The likelihood and frequency with which it might occur is extremely rare; the most likely place might be the parking lot at the greenway with animals crossing the road and being hit by a vehicle. In nature, there are not many of them that are just going to die on their own, something has to happen for them to be injured and then for that to happen on property owned by the town increases the potential rarity. Exploring is a good idea but having something in place right away is probably not a great requirement, because it probably will not happen again for a while.

Mayor Becker commented the Thread Trail people's instinct was to let nature take its course, but they were not out here. Of course, the dead deer was not on town property. The town has a lot of property, which is far from houses and far from the trail. It could die in the woods where the smell would not travel and no one would know it was there, except the turkey vultures and other predators might find it.

Mayor Becker mentioned the conversation he had with Andy Kane from the Catawba Lands Conservancy and if he had found the deer, he might have contacted Fish and Wildlife, because they might have wanted to know if the deer got hit by a car or if it was the Chronic Wasting Disease.

Mayor Becker stated he would put this off and do a little research.

## **7. Recognition of the Deputy Town Clerk's Retirement**

Mayor Becker stated the final thing was recognition of 11 years of service by Janet Ridings.

Ms. Brooks presented Ms. Ridings with an umbrella and a clock [from the Crystal Shop].

Mayor Becker announced the council will take the opportunity after the meeting to have a cupcake/cookie and give Janet a farewell. Mayor Becker noted it would not be an official meeting after the adjournment, so the council would not be discussing town business during the social gathering to honor Janet.

## **8. Staff Updates**

There were no staff updates.

## **9. Other Business**

Ms. Brooks pointed out she had given the council members a flyer about the movie night tomorrow evening at 8:30 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 18 will be here selling popcorn and drinks, Kona Ice will be selling shaved ice, and the Union County Library will arrive at 7:15 p.m. to do crafting with the children.

Councilman Countryman noted he had driven both ways on [highway] 75 and it appeared that somebody had worked over the town sign areas; they look much better.

Mayor Becker explained he had spoken with Mrs. Newell (Ken is not doing the work, because he is feeble), so Jason [their son] has been doing it. Mrs. Newell was receptive and was upset that it was not being done properly. Mayor Becker thought Mrs. Newell would let her son know "you're doing this in your dad's name, let's get it done right." Mayor Becker noted he did not talk about the crape myrtles, because it was not the time of year to prune them. Mayor Becker explained when he paid their bill he enclosed a note, because the sign on the Monroe side had weeds and a tree in there that had been removed but the shrubs needed to be lowered so you can see the sign.

Councilman Countryman asked for an update on the "House of Infamy" [on McNeely Road], because there did not seem to be anything in the yard anymore.

Ms. Brooks responded that apparently the foreclosure went through, and they moved out.

Mayor Becker mentioned the non-conforming, non-permitted building [on McNeely Road].

Ms. Brooks responded that was also gone.

Mayor Becker added it was the Altherrs' building, which had been moved, so they were back in compliance; Ms. Brooks was able to close that.

Councilman Muller asked what the new building on Billy Howie was; someone built a huge three deck garage.

Ms. Brooks responded they had a permit for it.

Councilwoman Cureton commented the house next door to her looks beautiful; they have done a lot of work and it is ready to be torn down.

Councilman Countryman asked if somebody was thinking about mowing the grass at the newly acquired property behind the barbershop.

Mayor Becker responded he thought the owner was going to get a guy.

#### 10. Adjournment – Action Item

At 8:02 p.m. Councilman Countryman motioned to adjourn the meeting and Councilwoman Coffey seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, and Muller. Nays: None.

The next regular meeting will be on Thursday, September 8, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. at the Mineral Springs Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted by:

  
Vicky A. Brooks, CMC, NCCMC, Town Clerk

  
Frederick Becker III, Mayor

