

**MINUTES FOR BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING**  
**February 21, 2012**  
**6:00 PM**

The following elected officials were present: Mayor Coleman, Alderman Martin, Alderman Beaty, Alderman Withers, Alderwoman Morrow, and Alderman Huggins.

The following staff were present: Jim Palenick, Interim Town Manager; Gary Buckner, Police Chief; Doug Huffman, Electric Director; David Kahler, Community Development Administrator; Anne Martin, Recreation Director; Bill Trudnak, Public Works Director; Pennie Thrower, Town Attorney and Steve Lambert, Fire Chief. Maria Stroupe, Administrative Services Director was absent.

The mayor called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Mayor Coleman opened the meeting with the Invocation and Pledge of allegiance to the Flag. The mayor asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda. There were none. Mr. Withers made a motion to set the agenda, seconded by Mr. Martin and carried unanimously.

**Recognition of Citizens:**

Mr. Stephen Bradley, 2362 Puetts Chapel Rd. Bessemer City, NC addressed the Board concerning his ban from the gymnasium. Mr. Bradley spoke of the incident which led to his being banned, and how he was notified about the banning. Mr. Bradley stated that while he does not live within the Town limits, he pays extra so that his child can play in Dallas because of the talent level, competition and the coaches. He stated that he just wants to be treated fairly, and to be able to watch his son play. He missed all of the tournament games due to the banning, and wants to be able to watch his son practice for the all-star games. Mr. Bradley advised that the Board should investigate why families are leaving to go play elsewhere, and why the program won't grow.

Mayor Coleman advised that the Recreation Committee had met, and gave them an opportunity to speak. Alderman Beaty made a motion to table the discussion until the next Board meeting in March, seconded by Alderwoman Morrow, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Bradley re-approached, and asked if he was going to have to wait until next month for a decision. When answered affirmatively, Mr. Bradley asked if he would be allowed to attend his son's all-star practices at the gym. He was told no that a decision would be made on March 13.

Mr. Lindsay Masters approached the podium and spoke in support of Mr. Bradley. He advised that he is a children's minister, and was in the middle of the fiasco. He advised that there were children watching 2 adults "go at it". He advised that he likes Anne, and he likes Steve and that he was not taking sides but what had happened was avoidable; all that had been required was for 1 adult to step up and apologize to the children and the adults. He advised that when 2 adults have a beef, they should get away from kids.

Mr. Craig Primm spoke next, in support of Steve Bradley. He advised that he was a friend of Steve's, and that he had been punished enough and that the Board needed to help him out.

Mr. Joe Finger spoke on behalf of Steve Bradley; he advised that he had met Steve 5 or 6 years ago, that he coached his child and was very patient.

**Awards and Recognition of Employees**

Chief Buckner introduced Dallas' newest police officer Matthew Scott, no relation to Captain Scott.

## **Public Hearing**

None

## **Old Business**

Item 9A was the discussion of employment of relatives. The matter had been referred to the Personnel Committee at the last meeting, but Mayor Coleman advised that despite several discussions, the committee was at a stalemate. Alderman Martin advised that there was no consensus regarding the definition of a close relative. He stated that communication was lacking regarding the hiring of part time employees and that there could be some improvement in that, but that there was no consensus on changing the policy. Alderman Beaty made a motion to continue the hiring policy as outlined in the personnel policy handbook, with clarification that part time positions should be advertised. This motion was seconded by Alderman Withers. Alderman Huggins stated that he could see both sides of the issue, and that proper procedure should be used to hire part time employees to be fair to everyone. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 9B was a report on the plan for repairing the damaged wall of the water treatment plant, present by Johnny Denton. Mr. Denton talked about the deterioration of the wall being caused by a busted caustic chemical pipe in the wall. The walls are unreinforced hollow concrete. The caustic chemical has dosed the blocks, causing damage. The structural wall is degrading, and the blocks must be removed and replaced with filled reinforced blocks. Mr. Denton presented the plans to the Board with quotes. The first quote was from and was for \$40,000. The second quote was from Custom Construction for \$43,000. He passed out pictures of the damage. Alderman Huggins asked Mr. Denton what the "gunky" stuff around the blocks was; Mr. Denton replied that it was a residue of the caustic eating the blocks. The total cost for repairing the building would be between 50,000 and 60,000 dollars. The percentage of the caustic in the pipe had been 50%. The pipes were galvanized, and they broke. The caustic is eating the wall from the inside out. The cost would be covered fully by the Town's insurance, less a \$2500 deductible. The pipe has been replaced with PVC piping, and a more diluted (25%) caustic purchased.

Interim Manager Palenick advised the Town was going to be purchasing water from Gastonia adding additional costs, and that the work must be done quickly and finished quickly to limit the down time and cost. The exterior wall must come down, there is no way to just repair it. There is no way operations can continue while this repair is being done. DENR would not need to be notified about this repair. Staff would like authority to move forward with the repair. Alderman Beaty made the motion to begin the repair, seconded by Alderman Huggins and carried unanimously.

Mr. Denton then began to speak about the plan for the improvements to the water distribution system. The plan is to divide the Town into 4 quadrants, with Quadrant 1 being addressed by the CDBG which the Town has applied for. Phase 2 would be the Southeast quadrant, Phase 3 the Northwest quadrant, and Phase 4 the northwest. All of the projected phases are within the \$750,000 range. There are larger lines (12 inch) on Trade, Gaston and Oakland streets. The project would be centered on Gaston and Oakland streets. The total cost would be about 3 million dollars. Alderman Beaty recommended borrowing the money and buying the supplies needed to complete the project. Mr. Trudnak advised that contractors don't like to do that, and there would be a problem with leftover material that could not be used. Alderman Beaty asked if Mr. Denton thought the estimate was on the high side, and Mr. Denton replied that he hoped so. Mr. Trudnak explained the timeline and procedure of the CDBG. A general discussion about the total replacement of the water lines occurred, with Mr. Palenick advising that doing the project in multiple phases would be very disruptive. If the project was done at one time, it would be disruptive but over more quickly. Interest rates are very low at the present time, and a very favorable rate could

more than likely be found, perhaps under 3%. Contractor costs would be low, and prices are very good right now. There is also a concern about fire flow during a multiple phase project. Fire Chief Lambert advised that he would be concerned about water supply and availability in the event of a fire incident. Alderman Martin enquired as to the length of time it would take, if the whole project was pursued, to prepare it for bidding. Mr. Denton advised that it would take 8-10 months of continuous work to prepare the bid package. The grant (if received) would still take some time, it will probably be the end of the year before anything could be done. Alderman Beaty asked about the payback for a loan to complete the whole project. Mr. Palenick advised that it would be around \$200,000 a year for 20 years. The first step would be to look at financing and see how it would fit the budget. Alderman Martin made the motion for staff to investigate the financing. Alderman Beaty seconded the motion. Alderman Withers asked if that could be done by the next Board meeting. Mr. Palenick advised that that was doable, and that with the Town's outstanding credit rating, we should see some very competitive rates. The motion carried unanimously.

Item 9C was to establish a public hearing on the matter of designating N Davis St a one way street, to include prohibiting trucks on the street. Alderman Huggins made a motion to set the public hearing for March 13, seconded by Alderman Withers and carried unanimously.

### **New Business**

Item 10A concerned the 90 day waiting period for enrollment in the North Carolina Retirement System for new employees. A former police officer with the Town wants to purchase the 90 days from the retirement system. The discussion involved enrolling all new employees into the retirement system immediately upon hiring, and allowing all current employees the option, at their expense, to purchase the 90 days for themselves. Alderman Beaty made a motion to amend the Personnel Policy to eliminate the 90 day wait period for new employees and allow current employees to purchase the 90 days at their own expense, effective January 30. The motion was seconded by Alderman Martin and carried unanimously.

Item 10B was to establish the calendar for the 2012-2013 budget. The initial meeting was scheduled for Monday March 12, 2012 at 5pm in the Board Room.

Alderman Withers was excused from the meeting at 7:15pm.

Item 10C was the first reading of a proposal to change the yield sign at the corner of S Oakland St and W Robinson St to a stop sign. Both Mr. Trudnak and Chief Buckner concur and recommend this change. Alderman Huggins made a motion to set a public hearing for this matter for the next Board meeting Tuesday March 13, 2012, seconded by Alderwoman Morrow and carried 4-0.

Mr. Palenick gave a manager's report highlighting various projects and issues going on within the Town.

Alderman Martin made a motion to adjourn at 7:31pm, second by Alderman Huggins and carried unanimously

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Rick Coleman, Mayor

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Maria Stroupe, Town Clerk

