

Regular Meeting
Town of Cooleemee
November 18, 2024

Absent: Comm Almond (work)
Comm Reavis (work)
Att. Terry (contract)

Minutes

(open session)

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

Mayor Smith gave the Invocation.

Mayor Smith led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Smith welcomed a room full of attendees.

With Two members out the Town Clerk recognized a quorum was set requesting the Mayor still refrain from motions but please vote on items to have 3 counts on record.

Motion made by Commissioner Tippett to add discussions on the Community Center to Line C of Old Business.

Seconded by Commissioner Ferrell; motion carried (3-0)

Statement of conflict read by Mayor Smith, seeing no one with a conflict of interest,

Motion made by Commissioner Tippett to adopt tonight's amended agenda along with the consent agenda that includes a financial report and minutes from the October 21 meeting.

Seconded by Commissioner Ferrell; motion carried (3-0)

Public Comment saw one speaker, Linda Bourne of Watt St. asking that a property on Watt St. be added to an agenda soon, also spoke on River Park in hoping soon there would be residential pass for citizens of Cooleemee.

Ron Bivins gave an update to the River Park that it is now in Winter hours which is Friday, Saturday, and Sunday 10AM-4PM with no charge until April. The Board is set to discuss a Citizen Day or Pass at their next meeting which will take place tomorrow, they will also be discussing the storage building being relocated to the Park to make more room at the grounds where the Potential site for the Community Center will be.

Sgt. Crotts gave an update on Law Enforcement and a few safety issues around Town, 454 hours logged in October, 75 total calls, 17 traffic attempting to catch speeders, 11 school checks, 6 suspicious persons mainly at the Park. Suggested looking into the auto locking system for the Park, he and the Clerk have spoken, and someone is coming out to quote, in the meantime locks have been placed on gates it just takes someone to lock and unlock each night, the Clerk and Mayor have been doing this. The bushes at Junction Rd. and at the Shopping Center have become an issue for traffic it is recommended to remove or cut back to enhance vision. The clerk mentioned John Chandler just this afternoon had cut back the ones at the Shopping Center so it may be better now, some folks did agree it had made a difference.

Motion made by Commissioner Tippett to have the Oneal's remove the bushes in the islands of Junction Rd.

Seconded by Commissioner Ferrell; motion carried (3-0)

Sgt. Crotts also mentioned placing a fence up around the wall at the Old Police Dept Building, and removing the steps on the wall, in trying to keep the wall in place still need to make as safe as possible removing the steps that are busted up anyway could keep kids and folks off the wall and a fence would keep anyone from falling off the wall.

Clerks update, Auditor had a timing conflict will be here in Dec, Family Promise as well had a timing conflict will as well be here in Dec. Powell Bill Reporting is Complete, this is a 3-step process that runs from July to at least October we are thankful that is complete.

Reminded the board and public Town Hall would be closed next Wed, Thur, and Friday for Thanksgiving and hopefully he would sneak away for a small vacation but would return in time for the Parade on Saturday at 4PM.

Mayor Report, a visit to the Sheriff Dept along with a tour was very pleasing and successful they learned a great deal and have a much better understanding and appreciation for what County Law Enforcement go through and how they train to handle certain situations, Commissioners Tippett and Ferrell attended as well and agrees the training is top notch they feel even safer now with knowing the training that goes into the County Deputies.

Code update to date 3 months in 75 cases have been open 46 of those have been abated, 29 still open 11 of those are newer and in the early stages with time still to abate, 18 others are in some type of penalty phase some with hearing already attached some with daily penalties being assessed. He understands some feel this is a slower process than hoped but steps in the right direction are being taken for the outcome to have corrected. Spoke about the boards year 1 accomplishments there are several from Code Enforcement Book Updates to getting Code Enforcement back up and running, Zoning Book Updates, Planning Board back in place, steps toward the Community Center, and although bittersweet proper steps at removing the old pool.

Last month it was determined to hold a closed bid auction to remove the car sheds used by the Police Dept. Bids were to start at \$500 per shed. Six (6) bids were received, Tommy Hampton was awarded the sheds placing a bid on each at \$650 per shed. The Clerk would make contact this week with Mr. Hampton.

Motion made by Commissioner Ferrell to nominate Jamie Lawhon of Junction Rd. to the Planning Board, giving the Town a full 5-member Board.

Seconded by Commissioner Tippett; motion carried (3-0)

Commissioner Tippett spoke on wanting to see perhaps more meetings scheduled and using the Planning Board as they are meant to be used even adjusting the budget to fit this need for the Town.

Discussions on the Community Center the idea of placing Town Hall in the old Police building is liked to allow for more uses of the Community Center for the Community.

Motion made by Commissioner Tippett to move forward with quotes from Hanes Paving to pave Ruffin St. \$36,960 and Erwin St. \$28,875 which will include raising needed manholes and water/gas valves that may be in the road.

Seconded by Commissioner Ferrell; motion carried (3-0)

Discussions on how to proceed with the Attorney Contract as it expired Oct. 31, 2024. The Clerk had mentioned it would be easier to have a contract that ended in June like most of all other contracts so that our contracts and fiscal year end together and we are then discussing all these matters during budget time and it is not sneaking up on us. Mayor had talked with the Attorney she offered two (2) contracts to assist the Town one was a full year at \$9,000, was a month to month for \$750/ month until the Town posted and decided, the Mayor and Attorney also discussed extending the current until June 30, 2025, to match the fiscal year.

Motion made by Commissioner Tippet to accept the \$750/month contract contingent on Ms. Terry agreeing to extend until June 30, 2025, at which that contract could be signed for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Seconded by Commissioner Ferrell; motion carried (3-0)

Commissioner Tippet thanked once again Sheriff Hartman for their services and for the tour, thank the Public for their involvement on matters at hand the Town deals with like input and would like further community sessions as things continue to grow.

Commissioner Ferrell reminded everyone of the parade, and CHA festivities to follow, including the Fudge Contest making its return. And too thanked the Sheriff and Public for all their assistance and involvement.

Motion by Commissioner Ferrell to adjourn the meeting

Seconded by Commissioner Tippet; motion carried (3-0)

Mayor, Jeff Smith

Clerk, Steven Corriher