

Minutes of the Work Session of
The Liberty Town Council
Held on August 16, 2021 5:30PM

Present

Mayor: The Honorable Filmore York

Council: Chris Compton, Larry Coble, Don Herndon, JR Beard and
Tyson Nixon

Town Manager: Scott Kidd

Town Clerk: Jessica Brown

Staff: Fire Chief; Matt Talbott, Safety Director; Bret
Pedigo, Library Director; Brenda Heindl Hornsby,
Public Service Director; Terry Crouse, Finance/HR
Director; Kathy Bond, Library Assistant; Warren Dixon
Police Chief; David Semrad, Parks and Recreation
Director; Logan Maness, Police Sergeant; Andre Murphy,
and Police Officer; David Deshaies

Town Attorney; Bill Flowe

To Order

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm and welcomed everyone.

Adoption of Agenda

Council Member JR Beard made a motion to adopt the agenda. Council Member Chris Compton seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Council Members Larry Coble, Don Herndon, JR Beard, Tyson Nixon and Chris Compton voted yes and adopted the agenda.

Information

Monthly Reports

The Town Manager has included the monthly reports from Department Heads and can discuss any comments or questions.

Police Chief David Semrad said he didn't have any additions to his report. They have had twenty five domestic complaints and it seems they go to the same places over and over. Town Manager Scott Kidd commended him for keeping reserve officers. He introduced our new officer David Dehaies. He has run a successful social media at his previous department and is excited to be here. The PD is now fully staffed.

Safety Director Bret Pedigo had nothing to add to his report. He said the Wifi is better at Freedom Park.

Fire Chief Matt Talbott had nothing to add to his report.

Library Director Brenda Heindl said she has gotten a good response to the Library's new patio area. She is going to lend laptops and tablets inside and outside the library. The grant they are getting will pay for permanent book panels for the book walk at Paul Henry Park. She is looking at the cost for twenty more at Freedom Park. The Library Board has approved using Lowe funds for this. The Barking Dog Company is known for strong walk designs. Pinehurst and Elon have used them as well. She has had a great response to the summer reading program and patrons really appreciated having in person activities.

Parks and Recreation Director Logan Maness said they finished soccer games last week and adult softball sign ups end Friday. They hope to have five or six teams which will play on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Public Services Director Terry Crouse had nothing to add to his report.

Administrative Reports

Manager's Report

Town Manager Scott Kidd gave his report. The CDBG project is finishing up the cure in place process in the next couple of months. He had an ASADRA grant meeting Wednesday. This grant will help update equipment and we will then have other pumps as spares. It is now taking five to six months to get certain parts.

There are a lot of grants still available. We may possibly look at getting a grants manager in the future. The PTRC (Piedmont Triad Regional Council) helps now. Council Member Larry Coble said it would be good to find some grants for homeowners. The Town Manager responded that homeowners can call the PTRC for help. He is working on getting some information out there.

The Removal of the Annexation CAP passed which means Liberty is not restricted by a 10% annexation cap and gives us more potential for growth.

He received a scholarship and his Town Manager class with the School of Government is paid in full.

Warren Dixon with the Patterson Cottage Committee came forward to speak about their ARP funding application and that they want to go to the county to ask for more money for the Downtown museum. They are eligible for a \$99,000.00 grant from ARP based on tourism. The Friends of Patterson Cottage are working on the application which is due Wednesday but they found out the IRS had revoked their non profit status and it will be thirty days before they can get this corrected. A governmental agency can apply on their behalf so the Town could do that for them. Their goals are to improve tourism downtown and offer field trips. The Consensus of the Council is to approve these goals. Mayor York said they will make a presentation to the County Board on August 30th if anyone else would like to go.

Finance Report

Finance Director Kathy Bond came forward to give the report. She said they did over \$139,00000 in payroll in July and \$196,000.00 in Accounts Payables. The Sales and Use tax revenue is up thirty two percent. Property tax is up twenty four percent. Randolph County issued tax bills on July 16, 2021. She is working on getting things together for the audit process. The goal is for the auditor to come in mid October and have completed by the 31st.

Old Business

Liberty Chamber Appropriation Discussion

Mayor York read the breakdown on the cover sheet for the record. Town Manager Scott Kidd said he had gotten a text from Kelly Raymond that she had planned to be here but something came up. Council Member JR Beard asked what type of classes they were planning to have and he thought that \$1500.00 for gravel seems high. He also said they need to look more at the pricing they are getting. Council Member Larry Coble said he thought a \$1,000.00 for mowing the lot seemed high. Council Member JR Beard said he would like to see more details. Council Member Larry Coble said these were details that they would ask of anyone. Council Member Chris Compton asked if the LAC (Liberty Association of Churches) provided these details when the Town granted them money and Town Manager Scott Kidd said he believes they did. Council Member Larry Coble said he thinks we should remove this item from the agenda until we can get more information. Mayor York said we should move to the September meeting. Council Member Larry Coble made a motion that we move Liberty Chamber Appropriation Discussion to the September meeting and get more information. Council Member Chris Compton seconded the motion which passed unanimously with Council Members: Larry Coble, Chris Compton, Don Herndon, JR Beard, and Tyson Nixon voting yes. The Liberty Chamber Appropriation Discussion will be postponed until September or until they can get more information.

Updated Animal Ordinance

Police Chief David Semrad came to the front to discuss the updated animal ordinances. They added definitions of feral cats and a responsible person. They removed the thirty day waiting period. Section 96.07 now includes cat or dog owners who are responsible for their animal defecating on another person's property whether loose or on a leash. It is requested for animals to wear collars and identification tags. Section M clarifies enclosure. They will keep an animal for two hours instead of forty eight hours. Section H1 further discusses enclosure areas. Section F says if your animal is contained by underground or invisible fences and it doesn't work or malfunctions the owner is still responsible. Section B clarified that when animals are in parked cars they place the animal's safety ahead of the owner's property. On the last page Section F says that fines are cumulative.

Council Member Tyson Nixon asked at what point can an animal be taken for good? Chief Semrad said the conditions that allow an animal to be taken must be in place for twenty four to seventy two hours. Council Member JR Beard said he thinks this is a very good start and way overdue.

ARP (American Rescue Plan) Discussion and Resolution

This is to discuss the ARP (American Rescue Plan) funds and approve Resolution to accept them. Mayor York read the resolution. Town Manager Scott Kidd said we would have until December 2024 to appropriate where to spend the money and until December 2026 to actually spend funds. He is waiting on the League to get their guidance on how we can spend one hundred percent finalized. Ninety to ninety five percent of the first half will go towards the new water meters.

New Business

Fire Department requests use of CIP funds for rescue tools

Fire Chief Matt Talbott will request the use of CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) funds for new rescue tools. Chief Talbott said he had put a total number of three rescue tools on his CIP. He has come across a deal where he can get the three tools at one time. They do cost a little more than his CIP. They are demo tools so they are being sold for less. It would be \$45,000.00 over three years or just \$25,000.00 now. Town Manager Scott Kidd said there is \$58,000.0 in fire reserve and he appreciates the cost saving. Chief Talbott said their current tools are twenty one years old.

Budget Amendment #2 (leaf vac lease purchase)

This amendment is to move funds from Capital Reserve General (71 fund) to Street Department Capital Outlay Equipment (10 Fund) to lease purchase a new leaf vac. Town Manager Scott Kidd said we are still using the demo truck since they know we are interested in it. \$38,000 covers the lease. It will be ours in seven years so we are not pulling from the budget this year.

NC Water Rate Study Discussion

Town Manager Scott Kidd will give a presentation on water rate cost comparison done by UNC School of Government. This is an overall view of how our system compares to others on the low side for charges. We should see increases once we install new water meters.

Social Media Policy

This is to discuss a Social Media Policy for Town employees. Safety Director Bret Pedigo pulled this together with help from the League of Municipalities. It is something we need to be concerned about. Individual employees should be careful what they post on their social media. It is freedom of speech and not freedom from consequences. It is pretty much verbatim what is recommended by the League.

Mayor Comments

Mayor York thanked everyone for good information.

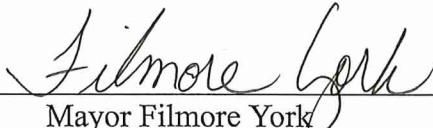
Closed Session - GS 143.318.11 (5)

Council Member JR Beard made a motion to go into Closed Session per NCGS 143.318.11 (5). Council Member Tyson Nixon seconded the motion which passed unanimously with Council Members Larry Coble, Chris Compton, Don Herndon, JR Beard, and Tyson Nixon voting yes. The Liberty Town Council went into Closed Session at 7:10 pm following a five minute break.

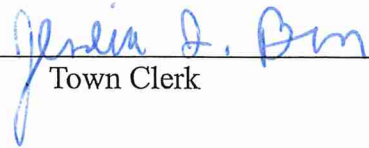
Council Member JR Beard made a motion to come out of Closed Session. Council Member Tyson Nixon seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Council Members Larry Coble, Chris Compton, Don Herndon, JR Beard, and Tyson Nixon voted yes. The Liberty Town Council came out of Closed Session at 7:20 pm.

Motion to Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss, Council Member Tyson Nixon motioned to adjourn the meeting and Council Member Chris Compton seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Council Member Larry Coble voted yes, Council Member Don Herndon voted yes, Council Member JR Beard, Council Member Tyson Nixon and Council Member Chris Compton voted yes. The meeting was adjourned.



Mayor Filmore York

ATTEST: 

Town Clerk

