

**TOWN OF COATS
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, May 9, 2024
Official Minutes**

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, April 11, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room at Coats Town Hall.

Members Present:

Mayor Chris Coats
Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell
Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
Commissioner Shirley Allen

Others Present:

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager
Connie Lassiter, Finance Director/Town Clerk
Ken Storicks, Police Chief
Mike Collins, Parks & Recreation Director
Al Bain, Town Attorney

Members Absent:

Commissioner Jerry Beasley

I. CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Mayor Chris Coats called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

A. Invocation & Pledge

Mayor Coats delivered the invocation and led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Approval of Agenda

RESOLVED, to approve the agenda.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

II. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Attorney Bill – Services Rendered April 1-30, 2024
- B. Request for Court Resurfacing Payment
- C. CAMPO MOU
- D. Audit Contract

RESOLVED, to approve Consent Agenda.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

III. PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Chris Coats opened the public hearing.

Walter Weeks, 12 Eagle Rd, Coats NC, asked on behalf of the Coats Museum that the board considered allowing a display case to be placed on the back wall of the board room that would contain items to commemorate the history of the community. Mr. Weeks noted that the display would not interfere with expanding seating when needed or obstruct views.

Mayor Coats closed the Public Forum after hearing no one else.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Scope of Work for Pass-Through Grant

Town Manager Nick Holcomb conveyed that the scope of work had to be defined for the \$50,000 Harnett County Pass-Through Grant and asked the board how they would like to proceed.

The consensus of the board was using the grant to clear out the old Public Works building and move everything to the new shop would be a good use of the grant since it had been a topic of discussion for a long time; and it would free up the old building for another use.

Town Manager Holcomb mentioned that Public Works employee, Wes Blount, had put together a good budget that allowed for fencing, 24'x40' metal building on concrete pad with shelving and bins, and left about \$8,000 as a contingency; and he noted that if everything went perfect there would possibly be room for consideration of moving fuel tank.

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert asked for confirmation that everything that was at the old shop would be removed including the outside of shop. Wes Blount confirmed.

RESOLVED, to approve exterior upgrades for the Public Works facility.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. ARPA – Grant Project Amendment & Interfund Budget Transfer

Town Manager Nick Holcomb explained that all ARPA funds had been expensed and reported and now three motions were needed for the following:

1. Motion to amend original grant project ordinance to amend budget for which a portion was going to the general fund but later decided it would be needed for the water fund due to the unexpected overages in the waterline project
2. Motion for Interfund budget transfer to move the remaining balance from the ARPA fund to the Water Fund
3. Motion to close ARPA Fund

RESOLVED, to approve the amended grant project ordinance.

MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell
SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

RESOLVED, to approve the interfund transfer.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

RESOLVED, to close the ARPA Project Fund.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

B. Revize Website Contract

Town Manager Nick Holcomb informed the board that Finance Director Connie Lassiter had several meetings with website vendors and that pricing was fairly close. Revize specializes in municipal government website design and offers flexibility in payment options. Option 1 for \$8,500 would be covered under the current budget year for the initial design and the first year of maintenance pending no emergency for HVAC replacement, but it would be possible to reduce that amount with Option 2 and pay \$3,300 per year over the next five years if the council preferred to do so.

RESOLVED, to approve the Revize website contract for Option 1.
MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell
SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

C. SRO Contract & Plan

Town Manager Nick Holcomb reminded the board of the new SRO contract from the County that was discussed and tabled at a previous meeting because there was no pressure to sign the contract at that time due to the vacancy of the SRO position. The contract was based on an eleven-twelfths reimbursement of a \$45,000 salary plus benefits which would mean the Town would be responsible for paying the cost of one month of salary and benefits for the SRO. There would be a 3% escalator cap.

Police Chief Ken Storicks expressed his desire for the contract to be approved as it would allow the SRO officer to work at the Town whenever school is out for the summer. He stated that he was close to filling the position.

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert inquired if any coverage was being provided at the school now; and whether or not the County would be forced to provide an SRO if the Town did not approve the contract. Chief Storicks replied that a police car was currently parked at the school and an officer stopped by the school periodically throughout the day; also, the school Principal and Secretary had his direct number. Chief Storicks stated that the Sheriff Department wouldn't be forced to put an officer at the school and noted that they do not provide an SRO for any middle school or elementary school within the city limits at this time.

RESOLVED, to approve the SRO contract.
MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell
SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

VI. PROPOSED FY2024-2025 BUDGET

A. Presentation of Proposed Budget

Town Manager Nick Holcomb presented the following budget highlights:

- No increase in property tax or water fees
- \$1 per month increase on Solid Waste to cover 3.5% increase from Carolina Trash in the past two years
- No unappropriated surplus was used to balance budget
- Cautiously budgeted \$50,000 for interest revenue so as not to become dependent on it due to the principal being spent down on grants as they are expended; decline in interest rates next year were possible and likely
- 5% COLA for full-time employees
- \$10,000 AV system upgrade in Council Chambers
- Future Land Use Plan Update ideally would need \$50,000, but budgeted a little over \$30,000 with hopes of working out some deals as the budget didn't allow for more
- Library consolidation allotment is no longer an expense
- Animal Control contract increased from \$12,000 to \$25,000
- Cemetery Fund has been moved to the General Fund-Appearance/General Services; no more plots are available to sell thus no revenue to balance the expenditures; auditor and LGC were consulted and recommended change

Town Manager Holcomb noted that \$53,000 had been budgeted for a police vehicle and suggested that if the board had an opinion on the purchase of the vehicle, the actual purchase could hold off for six months in order to see if we were fully staffed and what state the 2013 Chargers were at that point and access needs at that time. The consensus of the board was to leave the police vehicle in the budget and discuss further if needed.

B. Budget Calendar & Set Public Hearing

Town Manager Nick Holcomb pointed out that the Budget Calendar had a Budget Work Session scheduled for May 16 at 6:00 p.m. if necessary. He asked the board if there was further budget discussion needed and whether or not they wished to proceed with the optional meeting.

The Public Hearing for the Proposed Budget would be June 13 at 7:00 p.m. during the regular monthly meeting.

RESOLVED, to cancel the Budget Work Session for May 16.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

VII. MANAGER & COMMITTEE REPORT

Town Manager Nick Holcomb updated the Board on the following:

- Construction documents have been signed on the Lauder property subdivision; final approval had been received and property was annexed today
- Kick-off meeting for water project had been held; some preliminary work had been done; ordering and staging had started; anticipated beginning construction on July 8 and should wrap up in early to mid-September, but must be done by October 10 for Farmers Day
- AMI meter project is underway; should be done in more two weeks

VIII. CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Chris Coats called for motion to enter closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6)

RESOLVED, to go into closed session pursuant to the aforementioned statute.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Board of Commissioners entered closed session at 7:46 p.m.

RESOLVED, to reconvene in open session.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Board of Commissioners reconvened in open session at 8:30 p.m.

RESOLVED, to put line item for Full Time Parks and Recreation Director and task Town Manager Holcomb to begin search for the director.

MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to adjourn.

RESOLVED, to adjourn the meeting.

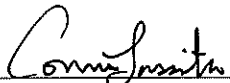
MOTION BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

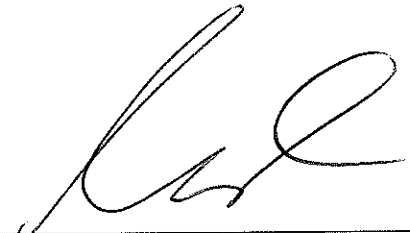
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

The attached documents of reference are incorporated herewith and are hereby made a part of these minutes.



Connie Lassiter, Town Clerk



Chris Coats, Mayor