

TOWN OF COATS
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, June 13, 2024
Official Minutes

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, June 13, 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 Jerry Beasley
Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
Commissioner Shirley Allen

Others Present:

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager
Connie Lassiter, Finance Director/Town Clerk
Rodney Pleasant, Public Works Director
Ken Storicks, Police Chief
Mike Collins, Parks and Recreation Director
Al Bain, Town Attorney

I. CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Mayor Chris Coats called the meeting to order at 7:00 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: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

II. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes – April 11, 2024 & May 9, 2024

B. Approval of Attorney Bill – Services Rendered May 1-31, 2024

C. Lease of Viper Radios

RESOLVED, to approve Consent Agenda.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

III. PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Chris Coats opened the Public Forum.

Vikki Ingersoll, 30 N Railroad St, Coats NC, spoke on behalf of the Coats Chamber of Commerce as the Chamber President to clarify the action of the Chamber Board regarding the recent lay-off of Chamber Executive Director Tricia Bristow. Ms. Ingersoll explained that the Chamber could not afford an employee due to their financial reality; and the decision was made after options were discussed between the Director and Board in an effort to keep the Chamber open and operational. Going forward, the Chamber will be a volunteer organization until the financial situation changes. Ms. Ingersoll expressed appreciation to the Town Board for use of property, road closures and providing town staff for their events. She mentioned that the Chamber had not received a response for their request for financial assistance and would like to meet to discuss further.

Joan Harmon, 1390 Abattior Rd, Coats NC, requested that the Public Forum be moved to the end of the meetings to make relevant comments of concerns about topics discussed during the meeting. She questioned the town procedures for handling grants and commented that she felt it to be stagnant. She suggested that a committee could be formed to come up with ideas if guidelines were given.

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

IV. PUBLIC HEARING for FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 BUDGET

A. Introduction of Proposed Budget

Town Manager Nick Holcomb highlighted the following summary from the budget presentation at the May 9th meeting:

- No increase on ad valorem tax; remains at \$0.49
- No increase to water rate
- \$1/month increase to solid waste rate
- 5% COLA for all full-time employees
- No new capital requests

Mr. Holcomb noted the changes made to the previously proposed budget as follows:

- Meters & Supplies line item decreased \$10,000 and Water Purchase line item increased \$10,000 in the Water Department (Fund 60)
- Unappropriated Surplus line item in the General Fund was used to balance the \$40,000 budget increase due to the Boards' vote to budget and hire a full-time Parks and Recreation Director

Mr. Holcomb reminded the board of previous discussions regarding the timing of purchasing a police vehicle later in the year when the need could be reassessed based off the department being fully staffed or having a need based off any other major mechanical problem with existing fleet. He suggested that the board may want to hold a separate vote on revisiting the police vehicle purchase at later month in the year.

B. Public Hearing

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to open the Public Hearing on the FY2024-2025 Budget.

RESOLVED, to open Public Hearing.
MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell
SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to close the Public Hearing after hearing no one.

RESOLVED, to close Public Hearing.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Adoption of FY2024-2025 Budget Ordinance

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert questioned the need for a separate vote regarding the purchase of a police vehicle being held off until later in the year.

Town Manager Nick Holcomb explained that the budget was balanced based off of keeping the police vehicle in there, but the board could vote to set a specific time to revisit the need to purchase if the majority of the board thought it prudent to do so.

Commissioner Shirley Allen asked whether there were enough cars if a new policeman was hired. Police Chief Ken Storicks responded that there were enough cars with the inclusion of the older Chargers. He explained that he did not feel a separate vote regarding the vehicle purchase was needed since a vehicle purchase was a capital expense with an amount that would require approval from the board in order to purchase.

The consensus of the board was to leave the police vehicle in the budget.

RESOLVED, to approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget ordinance.
MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell
SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

B. Open Capital Project – Public Works Improvements \$50K

Town Manager Nick Holcomb reminded the board of approval last month on the scope of work for grant funds that included exterior upgrades at the Public Works facility located at 50 N Isabella St. The \$50,000 has been received from the County. A grant project ordinance is necessary because the project will span multiple years. Town Manager Holcomb asked for authority to be given to the public works department to move forward on scheduling the work and pointed out that the project cost breakdown included in their packet.

Wes Blount, Public Works employee overseeing project, gave recommendation on vendor selection and fielded questions raised from the board regarding prices as follows:

Fencing – Carolina Fence \$23,459

Carolina Fence would provide turnkey project that included power and electrical work; other bids did not include power and electrical

24'x40' Storage Building – Boss Buildings \$11,474

Boss Buildings was the lowest bidder

Concrete Pad – NG Gonzalez Masonry \$14,500

Gonzalez Masonry bid included building pad, foundation and concrete with an apron off front for water drainage; other bid was for concrete only

RESOLVED, to approve grant project ordinance.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: Ayes (3) Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell, Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, Commissioner Shirley Allen; Noes (1) Commissioner Jerry Beasley

RESOLVED, to accept Carolina Fence bid for fencing because others do not have ability to do power.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

APPROVED: Ayes (3) Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell, Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, Commissioner Shirley Allen; Noes (1) Commissioner Jerry Beasley

RESOLVED, to accept Boss Building bid for storage building.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

APPROVED: Ayes (3) Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell, Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, Commissioner Shirley Allen; Noes (1) Commissioner Jerry Beasley

RESOLVED, to accept NG Gonzalez Masonry because of the way they build it.

MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

APPROVED: Ayes (3) Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell, Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, Commissioner Shirley Allen; Noes (1) Commissioner Jerry Beasley

C. Open Capital Project – Downtown Revitalization \$500K

Town Manager Nick Holcomb explained that a grant project ordinance was needed to open the capital project that would span over multiple years for the scope of work defined last month for the downtown revitalization. The \$500,000 is frontloaded and should arrive by June 14, 2024. The project must be completed by October 3, 2025.

Commissioner Shirley Allen asked when designs would be available to view. Town Manager Holcomb commented that something may be available by the end of the month, but we would definitely want to have a meeting for citizens, business owners and the planning board to view maybe in the next month.

RESOLVED, to approve grant project ordinance for downtown improvements.

MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: Ayes (3) Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell, Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, Commissioner Shirley Allen; Noes (1) Commissioner Jerry Beasley

VI. MANAGER & COMMITTEE REPORT

A. Financial Reports

No comments were made regarding financial reports.

B. Departmental Updates

There were no updates from departments.

C. Town Manager Updates

Town Manager Nick Holcomb updated the board on the following:

- Planning Board meeting will be on Thursday, July 18 at 6:00 p.m. instead of Thursday, July 4 due to the Independence Day holiday
- Internal Control Policy and Procurement Policy are being worked on with anticipation of presenting for board approval next month
- AMI project is 99% complete

VII. CLOSED SESSION

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

RESOLVED, to go into closed session.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Board of Commissioners entered closed session at 7:42 p.m.

RESOLVED, to reconvene in open session.

MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Board of Commissioners reconvened in open session at 8:45 p.m.

VIII. RECESS

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to recess to a later date for any necessary year end budget amendments and to discuss council vacancy.

RESOLVED, to recess to Thursday, June 27, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Meeting recessed at 8:47 p.m.

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners reconvened the recessed Thursday, June 13, 2024 regular session on Thursday, June 27, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room at Coats Town Hall.

Members Present: Mayor Chris Coats, Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell, Commissioner Shirley Allen, Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert; **Members Absent:** Commissioner Jerry Beasley; **Others Present:** Town Manager Nick Holcomb, Finance Director Connie Lassiter, Town Attorney Al Bain

A quorum being present, Mayor Chris Coats called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Town Manager Nick Holcomb stated that there were no year-end budget amendments that required board approval, but there was a budget adjustment for a transfer between departments within the General Fund that required notification to the board. A transfer from the Planning Department to the Public Works Street Department was made in the amount of \$3,070 due to increased electricity cost for Christmas lights plug-ins.

The board discussed filling the Commissioner seat left vacant after the resignation of Allen Mosby. The following observations were made:

- Appointed member would have one and one-half year to serve for remaining term
- No formal interest had been submitted thus far
- Hazel Stephenson expressed interest, but it would leave the Planning Board without the most tenured member
- Margaret House was willing to serve if needed

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert recommended putting an ad in the newspaper and posting on Facebook for interested persons to submit resume.

The consensus of the board was to advertise as mentioned and review at the August meeting.

Mayor Chris Coats called for motion to enter into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(5)(6).

RESOLVED, to go into closed session.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Board of Commissioners entered closed session at 6:12 p.m.

RESOLVED, to reconvene in open session.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem March Powell
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Board of Commissioners reconvened in open session at 6:49 p.m.

RESOLVED, to adjourn the meeting.


MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

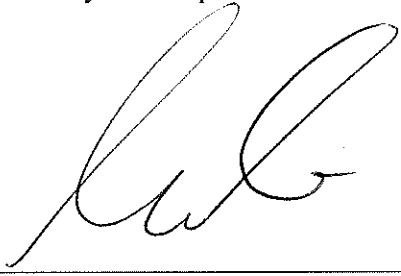
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Meeting adjourned at 6:49 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