

**TOWN OF COATS**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**Thursday, November 14, 2024**  
**Official Minutes**

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, November 14, 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  
Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg

**Others Present:**

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager  
Connie Lassiter, Finance Director/Town Clerk  
Ken Storicks, Police Chief  
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 – October 10, 2024
- B. Approval of Attorney Bill – Services Rendered October 1-31, 2024
- C. Budget Amendment & Request for Payment of Invoices for Drainage Work on Gale Spears Dr
- D. Request for Payment – FY2024 Audit Invoice
- E. Ordinance to Close Grant Project Ordinance for Public Works Facility Upgrades

**RESOLVED**, to approve Consent Agenda.

**MOTION BY:** Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Jerry Beasley

**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

**III. PRESENTATION**

Lee Grissom, SP Douglas & Associates, presented the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Annual Audit Report remotely. Mr. Grissom informed the Board that their firm had issued an unmodified audit

opinion which is the highest level of assurance that financial statements are free from material misstatement in accordance with the applicable standards. He stated that there were no difficulties or disagreements encountered while conducting the audit, the audit was submitted timely and that Finance Director Connie Lassiter had the books in excellent shape. The only finding was the recurring issue of segregation of duties due to the limited number of finance staff which would require approximately two more employees to resolve.

The following financial information was highlighted:

- ARPA Funds were still on balance sheet which was a positive boost to the Water Fund
- Financials have been trending positively over the last eight years
- Water Fund net position increased by \$160,000 largely due to the transfer in of \$131,000 ARPA funds
- General Fund added \$330,000 this fiscal year
- General Fund Balance was at 136%; LGC calculated a 34% minimum as a recommended requirement for the Town of Coats
- Tax collection rate remained on par with previous years at 99.9%

Mr. Grissom noted that a response to the LGC was needed regarding the water fund fixed asset ratio again this year as the fifty percent level of depreciable assets was not quite reached with the projects completed this year which brought the town to approximately forty-five percent.

#### **IV. PUBLIC HEARING**

Mayor Chris Coats opened the Public Hearing for a rezoning request for properties located at 546, 552 and 568 N Orange Street from SFR-1 to SFR-3.

Phillip Poole spoke on behalf of his mother who lives at 545 N Orange St and stated that traffic was already horrible which made it difficult to back out of her driveway and there seemed to be no traffic enforcement.

Ronnie Poole, 195 Hardwood Ln, Coats NC, echoed the concerns of his brother regarding the heavy traffic and speeders.

Rick Ploughe spoke on behalf of the property owner at 568 N Orange St and acknowledged that he was a financier to the owner's project. He commented that they wanted to create three lots with a private street to serve the three lots and noted that backing out to the street would not be an issue. He explained that the rezoning would just fill in the hole of the other nearby properties that are zoned SFR-3.

Janice Medders, 842 Abattoir Rd, Coats NC, agreed with other speakers that the traffic was bad.

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

#### **V. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Rezoning Request - 546, 552, and 568 N. Orange St

Town Manager Nick Holcomb introduced the request to rezone 546 N Orange St (.68 acre lot), 552 N Orange St (.60 acre lot) and 568 N Orange St (1.4 acre lot) from SFR-1 to SFR-3. The Planning Board recommended approval of the rezoning request as it was consistent with the updated future land use map and would support Objective 2.7 to support and promote infill development that will optimize the use of existing infrastructure.

Commissioner Jerry Beasley inquired about compliance with an ordinance for driveway width and expressed concern about fire truck accessibility to get to the last house. Mr. Rick Ploughe responded that they would meet the private road maintenance agreement and the driveway would be 20 feet wide. Commissioner Beasley asked Town Manager Holcomb if there were any specifications for driveways to which he responded it should have a width of 20 feet for driveway with 10 feet for utility easement.

Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell noted that since it was only one driveway only one car could get out at one time, so there shouldn't be a major increase in traffic on the road.

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert added that the rezoning would make the section uniform and was in keeping with the future land use plan.

**RESOLVED**, to approve the rezoning request.  
**MOTION BY:** Commissioner Shirley Allen  
**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg  
**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

Town Manager Nick Holcomb read the following consistency statement from the Planning Board as follows:

Rezoning is consistent with updated future land use map. Property is in a transition zone between SFR-3 and SFR-1. This would support Objective 2.7 to support and promote infill development that will optimize the use of existing infrastructure.

**RESOLVED**, to adopt the consistency statement as stated.  
**MOTION BY:** Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell  
**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Jerry Beasley  
**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

**B. Budget Amendment & Request for Payment – Large Water Meters**

Town Manager Nick Holcomb announced that there was an additional amount of \$4,773 needed to pay for the remaining large meter installs at 169 S. McKinley (laundromat) and 236 N Orange from the AMI project. He noted that this was the final count and work would be completed.

**RESOLVED**, to authorize expense and budget amendment and pay invoice for \$4,773.  
**MOTION BY:** Commissioner Jerry Beasley  
**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert  
**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

**C. Fuel Tracking System**

Finance Director Connie Lassiter informed the Board that the provider of the town's fuel management system had gone out of business and the hardware and software was no longer

supported. Data would have to be manually tracked until a new system was put in place due to the software failure which also caused the incapability to update user information.

QAT quoted \$11,722 for equipment and installation but required purchase of a monthly cellular data plan. Link2pump quoted \$5,450 for initial one-time setup fees and \$1,600/year for software license plan including updates, portal access and controllers life-time warranty. The Town averaged \$700 in yearly expenses for repair fees for previous system and no current cost for a data plan which would be an estimated annual cost of \$600.

Ms. Lassiter explained that the Fire Department was no longer using town fuel tanks due to the current inability to accurately bill usage, but there was still a need to monitor fuel used by town employees. Either of the quoted systems would provide much better analytics to track fuel and discover outliers in usage than the previous company as well as assist in budgeting. She offered the alternative of obtaining fuel cards but added that the savings in purchasing and storing bulk fuel would be lost.

Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell relayed the need to have a system in place for accountability. Commissioner Jerry Beasley expressed concern with problems that could arise with using cards. Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert inquired about fuel delivery fee to which Ms. Lassiter responded the current fuel provider did not charge a delivery fee.

**RESOLVED**, to go with Link2Pump quote.  
**MOTION BY:** Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell  
**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Shirley Allen  
**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

#### **D. Downtown Schematic Design Drawings**

Town Manager Nick Holcomb presented the downtown schematic design drawings which included aesthetic improvements to the streetscape, schematic design drawings of Public Square and architectural facades. Parking was a topic of discussion at the stakeholder meeting. The plan would take the current fifty parking spaces down to forty-six spaces. The Dixon family would allow temporary public parking on their corner lot at Railroad and Main. There could be more parallel parking spaces made once waterline project is completed.

He asked that the Board instruct staff on how to proceed. If they find the current plan acceptable, he would need directive to get RFPs out and see what kind of general contractors have an interest.

Commissioner Jerry Beasley commented that he liked the concept but that the animated drawing didn't accurately portray the scale. He noted the Public Square area in particular as appearing like a larger space than it would be in reality.

**RESOLVED**, to approve the schematic design and direct Nick Holcomb to proceed with getting RFPs.

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

**VI. PUBLIC FORUM**

Mayor Chris Coats opened the Public Forum.

Sue Burkhart, 2128 Rauls Church Rd, Angier NC, spoke on opioid awareness and expressed desire to partner with the town to give out Narcan kits.

Joan Harmon, 1390 Abattoir Rd, Coats NC, requested that the town purchase an electronic sign to display information on town events, meetings and information.

Coats Chamber of Commerce President Vicki Ingersoll, 30 N Railroad St, Coats NC, announced the upcoming Christmas events.

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

**VII. MANAGER & DEPARTMENT UPDATES**

Town Manager Nick Holcomb updated the Board on the following:

- Current status of waterline project
- Upcoming appointments of Boards & Committees
- Land Use Plan Open House December 5<sup>th</sup>, 6pm-7pm
- AV upgrades in board room awaiting equipment delivery

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to adjourn.

**RESOLVED**, to adjourn the meeting.

**MOTION BY:** Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

**SECOND BY:** Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg

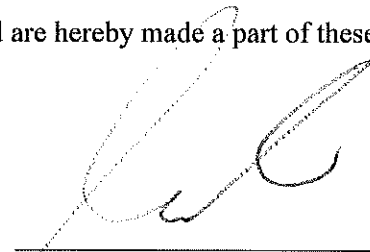
**APPROVED:** Unanimously Approved

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

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



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Connie Lassiter, Town Clerk



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Chris Coats, Mayor