

TOWN OF COATS
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, March 13, 2025

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, March 13, 2025 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
Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg
Commissioner Jerry Beasley

Staff Present:

Elizabeth Krige, Interim Town Manager
Connie Lassiter, Finance Director/Town Clerk
Ken Storicks, Police Chief
Wesley Blount, Public Works Director

Others Present:

Alton Bain, Town Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Mayor Chris Coats called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to add "Consideration of Quotes and Request for Approval to Replace Sprinkler Heads on Ballfield at Park" under New Business as Item 5.

RESOLVED, to approve the agenda as amended.

MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes – February 13, 2025
2. Approval of Attorney Bill – Services Rendered February 1-28, 2025
3. Approval of Celebrating Spiritual Unity Event on May 3, 2025 with Street Closures on E. Dooley St and E Lemon St
4. Approval of Payment to Highland Paving Co for the amount of \$80,300
 - Powell Bill Paving – S Isabella & E Washington \$75,300
 - Utility Cut Patches \$5,000

5. Approval of FY2025 Audit Engagement and Contract for \$18,250
 - Audit Fee \$14,500
 - Single Audit Fee for Grant Funding \$3,750

Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to approve consent agenda.

RESOLVED, to approve Consent Agenda.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

SECOND BY: Commissioner Monique Clegg-Warren

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Chris Coats opened the Public Forum.

Vicki Ingersoll, Coats Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, 30 N Railroad, Coats NC, mentioned the upcoming deadline for Chamber Award Banquet nominations and the status of the Easter in the Park event.

Pam Burgett, 1139 Live Oak Rd, Coats NC, stated her children played soccer at the Coats Park when they were growing up. She referenced houses being built in the area would mean those kids would need something to do. She added that sports were good for children not only for physical activity but also to teach teamwork and camaraderie.

Leigh Byrd, 3411 NC 27 E, Coats NC, expressed her belief that although the demise of the Coats Park and Rec program had been disappointing, she hadn't felt the need to speak out against it until now. She mentioned her understanding of an agreement between the coach and the Interim Town Manager that allowed the team to use the facilities at the park this season, but the Board made the decision to stop it during the team's third practice due to staffing issues. She expressed sadness that her children wouldn't have the same experience of fond memories being made at the park as she did growing up. She implored the Board to reconsider how much they valued the Parks and Rec Department as it was the best vessel for promoting health with citizens.

Turner Matthews, 1120 Carson Gregory Rd, Coats NC, echoed the comments that his sister made before him of fond memories at the park, but noted that for somewhere around a decade the park had been run into the ground as surrounding area parks and recreation thrived. He mentioned that there were three teams practicing at park until it was called to a stop. He commented that this was after the acting town manager, Kenny Cole, assured them that they would have a place to play regardless of staffing issues and noted that Mayor Chris Coats confirmed that whatever Kenny told him would be done.

Adam Byrd, 3411 NC 27 E, Coats, NC, suggested forming a committee of people who care about the town and athletics and contracting maintenance out to a third party or hiring a seasonal employee. He recommended finding someone that was good at recruiting and marketing who loved children and athletics. He stated his belief that the board had lost a lot of confidence from people in the community.

Reginald Walden, 138 Gail Spears Dr., Coats, NC, asked if he could get the Town to put in a pipe so he could get a driveway to access his property.

Randy Yost, 3605 Old Stage Rd, Coats, NC, expressed discouragement with Coats in general. He referred to a parks and rec Facebook post about sign ups and that he brought forms for kids to sign up. He relayed

that Kenny Cole guaranteed that they could play and added that he had volunteered to run the program since there was no park staff.

Carol Yost, 286 Bill Avery Rd, Coats, NC, also spoke in regards to the park situation commenting that the teams not playing would mean that those families would not be coming into town to shop. She told the board that she knew someone that would take the position if staffing was the issue. She stated her concern was that kids had no starting point here for sports.

Jason Savage, 1978 Cane Mill Rd, conveyed disappointment in the Town for not supporting kids and noted that the last time he knew of Parks and Rec being mentioned at a board meeting was back in September of 2024. He told the board that the odds of parents coming back to Coats were pretty low.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Appointments to Mid-Carolina Regional Council (MCRC) Board of Delegates (This item was tabled at the February 13, 2025 meeting):

Finance Director Connie Lassiter reminded the Board of the request made at the meeting last month by MCRC Executive Director, Justin Hembree, for one volunteer and one alternate from the elected officials in Coats to serve on the MCRC Board of Delegates.

Commissioner Shirley Allen asked when the board would meet, and Ms. Lassiter responded that the first meeting would be a dinner on March 27th with other quarterly meetings likely being at night.

RESOLVED, that Commissioner Allen would serve on the Board of Delegates with Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell as the alternate.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Jerry Beasley

SECOND BY: Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

2. Consideration and request for approval of purchase to replace two damaged Basketball Goal Backboards at Park

Finance Director Connie Lassiter mentioned that Public Works staff had been working to clean up the park since there was currently no staff in the Parks and Recreation Department. Public Works Director Wes Blount had obtained a quote for replacing the shattered backboards that several Commissioners had previously asked about replacing. The cost for two 72-inch aluminum backboards would be \$700 each plus shipping of \$200, totaling \$1600. Ms. Lassiter stated that no capital improvement items had been planned for the park as of now so replacing the backboards was an option.

RESOLVED, to approve the purchase of backboards.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

3. Consideration of Budget Amendment or Intrafund Transfer for Planning Department Contracted Services Line Item and request for approval of payment to KCI Associates for Land Use Plan Update Installment #1 for the amount of \$29,165.02

Finance Director Connie Lassiter requested approval of an invoice from KCI Associates for the first installment of the update to the land use plan in the amount of \$29,165.02. Ms. Lassiter informed the Commissioners that approval of the invoice would cause the Planning Department Contracted Services line item to be over budget by \$6,176.02 and acknowledged that more invoices requiring payment from the same line item were expected from Meyers Engineering for various on call engineering services through the end of the year.

Ms. Lassiter explained that the unexpected demand for plan reviews and construction oversight required a budget amendment from unappropriated surplus sufficient enough to cover the remaining balance of the KCI invoice and estimated amount for future Meyers invoices. An alternate solution would be an intrafund transfer from the surplus in other General Fund departments.

RESOLVED, to approve the budget amendment using unappropriated surplus.

MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

RESOLVED, to pay the invoice to KCI in the amount of \$29,165.02.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

4. Approval of Budget Calendar

Finance Director Connie Lassiter proposed the following Budget Calendar dates:

- Thursday, March 20, 2025, 7:00 p.m.
Budget Workshop – Departmental Requests
- Thursday, March 27, 2025, 7:00 p.m.
Budget Workshop – Non-Departmental, Capital Projects & Grant Funding
- Thursday, April 17, 2025, 7:00 p.m.
Budget Workshop if needed for any items requiring additional discussion or follow-up
- Thursday, May 8, 2025, 7:00 p.m.
Regular Scheduled Meeting – Proposed Budget
- Thursday, June 12, 2025, 7:00 p.m.
Regular Scheduled Meeting - Public Hearing on FY 2025-2026 Budget
Adopt budget ordinance if there is support or recess meeting if major changes are needed

RESOLVED, to approve proposed budget calendar.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

SECOND BY: Commissioner Monique Warren-Clegg

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

5. Consideration of Quotes and Request for Approval to Replace Sprinkler Heads on Ballfield at Park

Finance Director Connie Lassiter notified the Commissioners of the following two quotes for replacement of sprinkler heads that were received after the agenda packets had gone out:

Quote #1 – No Drought Irrigation \$2,923.53

Quote #2 – Systemize \$4,023.20 with option to install 1-inch swing joint for additional \$1,536.43

Ms. Lassiter offered that this would be another Park Capital Improvement project that would be within the budgeted line item amount and commented that getting the sprinkler system operating again had been previously mentioned to the Board at prior meetings.

Commissioner Shirley Allen asked the difference between the two quotes, and Public Works Director Wesley Blount responded that Systemize gave the extra option because of not knowing what would be found in ground and that was a buffer for extra replacement. No Drought believed that it was on a swing joint which allowed the sprinkler to have some give to prevent breaking if stepped on or mowed over.

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert and Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell inquired about start and completion time. Mr. Blount replied that the project could be started and completed within a month.

RESOLVED, to move forward with No Drought in the amount of \$2,923.53.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert

SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

MANAGER UPDATE

Interim Town Manager Elizabeth Krige informed the board that all submitted permits had been reviewed and approved; all voicemails and emails had been returned; and she had started working along with Finance Director Connie Lassiter on revenue projections for the upcoming budget year.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Mayor Chris Coats observed that Mr. Byrd made a good point during the Public Forum about forming a committee, and he had already prepared to seek applicants starting tonight since there had been no applications received this past November. Mayor Coats explained that the Parks and Recreation Committee is one of three committees appointed by the Board in December from submitted applications given out in November.

Commissioner Shirley Allen expressed that her heart had always been with recreation and that her kids grew up at the park and her husband had volunteered for the park. She hoped that things would be different in the future with the help of the public.

Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell thanked those that took the time to come to the meeting to address concerns about the park during the Public Forum. He conveyed disappointment over negative Facebook posts that seemed to fuel the fire regarding the park and staffing issues.

CLOSED SESSION

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

RESOLVED, to go into closed session.

MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Marc Powell

SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Board of Commissioners entered closed session at 7:50 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 8:24.

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 Shirley Allen

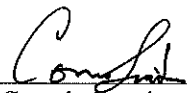
APPROVED: Unanimously Approved

Meeting adjourned at 8:24.

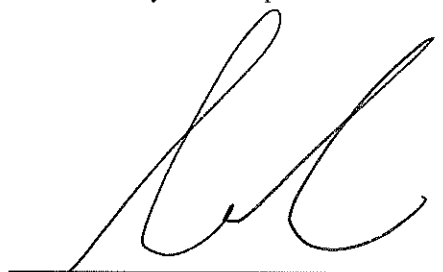
The attached documents of reference are incorporated herewith and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

Minutes prepared by Deputy Clerk Mikayla Johnson.

ATTEST:



Connie Lassiter
Finance Director/Town Clerk



Chris Coats
Mayor