

TOWN OF COATS
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, July 14, 2022
Official Minutes

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, July 14, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room at Coats Town Hall.

Members Present:

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

Staff Present:

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager
Alton Bain, Town Attorney
Connie Lassiter, Finance Director/Town Clerk
Ken Storicks, Chief of Police
Rodney Pleasant, Public Works Director
Teresa Brown, Library Director

Members Absent:

Commissioner Allen Mosby

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

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

RESOLVED, to approve Agenda as amended.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Marc Powell, SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved

II. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes – June 9, 2022, Regular Meeting; June 16, 2022, Recessed Meeting
- B. Approval of Attorney Bill – Services Rendered June 1-30, 2022

RESOLVED, to approve Consent Agenda.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, SECOND BY: Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley
APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved

III. PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Chris Coats opened the Public Forum.

Jennifer Mariner, 1161 Live Oak Rd, expressed to the Board that she hoped they would vote yes to the library consolidation which would mean a bigger budget, more employees and benefits for the library which needs more things.

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

IV. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING - Coats Unified Development Ordinance Draft

Mayor Chris Coats re-opened the Public Hearing.

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, communicated that due to the many comments received at the May 12th meeting the Board of Commissioners voted to continue the public hearing; and since that time, the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners held a joint meeting in which they were able to review the comments along with written comments that had been provided. Town Manager Holcomb summarized that the consensus of that meeting was that there were some things we should be doing and with help of the consultant we need to improve and do things like have the official zoning map posted. Town Manager Holcomb relayed that many of the comments related to the Agricultural District which was where the Planning Board was able to dive into it and compare Coats in regards to other towns in the County while still looking at the purpose and intent of the ordinance with the consultant's guidance and feedback.

Walter Weeks, Planning Board Chairman, explained one of the discoveries made in reviewing the zoning map were that a lot of the ETJ lines do not follow natural boundaries and property lines and property was cut up so that a landowner in the ETJ might have to follow County rules for some of their property and the Town ETJ rules for the rest of it. Chairman Weeks informed the Board that Town Manager Nick Holcomb met with the County about redrawing the map to give up part of the ETJ to allow for cutting back to go along property lines where possible. Chairman Weeks stated there may need to be a change or two on the revised map; one of which may simply be an error in the drawing near the intersection of Erwin Chapel Road and Hwy 55 drawn along the watershed line that should have been drawn along the property line. Chairman Weeks recommended to follow the property line at that particular point rather than the watershed line. Chairman Weeks pointed out that there was an existing nonconforming mobile home park off of Clayhole Road that the County questioned the Town about giving up. Chairman Weeks stated that when you follow the natural boundaries and look at where the Town has services there is no reason for it to be in the ETJ.

Planning Board Chairman Walter Weeks noted that the Planning Board agreed that there should be a little more leeway after hearing comments regarding the minor subdivisions particularly in the areas where the Town doesn't have services available. Chairman Weeks reported that the Planning Board recommends changing it to the entire area of the tract be divided is greater than 3 acres instead of 5 acres and after division no more than 6 lots result from the division mentioning that this allows areas in the ETJ where minor subdivisions can still be developed and allows for up to 6 homes off a private drive.

Chairman Weeks relayed that the Planning Board recommended changing the minimum lot size from 2.5 acres to 1.5 acres after hearing Public comments and reviewing what is currently being done with lot sizes in Harnett County as well as neighboring towns of Dunn, Erwin, Angier and Lillington.

Chairman Weeks mentioned that under the CDO no new billboards will be allowed in the ETJ or in Town and the Planning Board recommends that billboards be allowed in the ETJ. Chairman Weeks asked Town Manager Nick Holcomb for the other rules regarding billboards in which Town Manager Holcomb replied that currently billboards must be 100 feet from an existing residence, 800 feet from an existing billboard, 15 feet tall and area of 150 square feet maximum. Chairman Weeks stated that we had not been overwhelmed with billboards with the ordinance as it was and does not think we would be going forward.

Rick Flowe, N-Focus, pointed out that the mini farm overlay was a tool to reduce lot sizes in the agricultural district but preserve areas that were not ideal for development which requires a decision to be made on the development. Mr. Flowe relayed what the change does to the basic agricultural district is minimize the need for the mini farm overlay. Mr. Flowe conveyed that the purpose behind the original

2.5 acres was not to prevent people from doing anything with their property but to make sure they are going through a process where there are some deliberate decisions made. Mr. Flowe noted the problem with small sizes, not the 1.5 necessarily but jurisdictions that allow .5 or smaller, is when you end up with subdivisions built with high septic density the new street system is installed with the lay of the land; retrofitting sewer into areas where there is septic and small lots is extremely expensive. Mr. Flowe emphasized the point in the original recommendation was to distinguish between rural context of septic, low density and what is more town context which is sewer, smaller lots, streets graded for utilities to function and flow properly. Mr. Flowe indicated that he doesn't think 1.5 acres will create a big problem, but he doesn't recommend going lower.

Mr. Flowe stated that he felt some changes needed to be made with the lot width and setback with the reduction in lot width and area even though the Planning Board didn't recommend noting that he proportionately brought those back in to keeping it in check.

Mr. Flowe indicated that he didn't see any normal problems with allowing up to six lots off a private driveway but noted as community grows may need to consider how to handle garbage collection, public safety and emergency situations.

Mr. Flowe informed the Board that the General Assembly had added provisions in the statutes where existing billboards if removed can go anywhere else in the jurisdiction that allows the same uses that the billboard left. Mr. Flowe stated that this was addressed in the ordinance by a requirement to obtain zoning compliance permit and meet certain standards. Mr. Flowe mentioned that the statutes doesn't provide for additional billboards, and he needs to know if the recommendation is to add additional billboards to the jurisdiction because that is not addressed in the ordinance now.

Kirk Edgerton, Interstate Outdoor Selma NC, stated that he has been in the billboard business for 30 years primarily in Harnett, Johnston and Lee counties and always looking at opportunities to build new ones if possible. Mr. Edgerton mentioned that normally he asks for ordinances to be less stringent but that Coats already has a tough ordinance with only a couple of spots possible to build one. Mr. Edgerton noted that the 800 feet distance applied to both sides of the road and that it is a radius spacing. Mr. Edgerton stated that what was proposed in the UDO refers to just one remedy which is 48 feet tall which is three times the height of current ordinance of 15 feet and there is no standard for square footage and type structure.

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

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Coats Development Ordinance: Articles, Zoning Map & Technical Standards and Specifications

Town Manager Nick Holcomb explained that motions would be needed if the Board wished to proceed for Articles 1-23, the Zoning Map with the one technical correction to follow the parcel instead of the watershed and then the technical standards and specifications. Town Manager Holcomb mentioned Article 3, Article 8 and Article 16 which were all the changes that the Planning Board Chairman spoke about the minor subdivisions and the minimum lot sizes. Town Manager Holcomb also mentioned Article 12.11-13 that eliminated the plug-in electric vehicle charging stations at new restaurants. Town Manager Holcomb stated if the Board want to move forward on the Planning Board recommendation for billboards it would need to be made clear because that was the one place where the changes had not been incorporated from the existing UDO into the new UDO.

Mayor Chris Coats asked Mr. Rick Flowe for guidance on motions. Mr. Flowe responded that there should be two motions; Item A under New Business, with the only edit of stating Articles 1-23 so it would be Coats Development Ordinance: Articles 1-23, Zoning Map and Technical Standards and Specifications; and second motion would be Item B the Statement of Consistency and Reasonableness which was approved by the Planning Board in the initial recommendation which has not changed.

Commissioner Marc Powell asked for clarification on whether the old ordinance or the new ordinance would be used for billboards. Town Manager Nick Holcomb stated the Planning Board has recommended to continue with the existing ordinance on billboards and that is the one article that had not been updated right now. Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley questioned if Article 17.5 allowed the existing ordinance that we have right now. Town Manager Holcomb stated that the Planning Board recommended that off-premise billboard signs will continue as allowed under existing ordinance. Town Manager Nick Holcomb added that if the Board wishes to follow the Planning Board recommendation the existing ordinance would need to be added somewhere in Article 17 and essentially delete Article 17.5(K) which allows the 48 foot height limit.

RESOLVED, to adopt the Coats Development Ordinance Articles 1-23 with changes to Articles 3, 8, 16, 12.11-13 as recommended by the Planning Board and deleting Article 17.5(K) and insert the existing billboard ordinance; Zoning Map with technical amendment to follow property line instead of watershed line and Technical Standards and Specifications.

**MOTION BY: Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley, SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: Ayes (3) Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley, Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert and
Commissioner Shirley Allen; Noes (1) Commissioner Marc Powell**

B. Statement of Consistency and Reasonableness

RESOLVED, to approve the Statement of Consistency and Reasonableness.

**MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, SECOND BY: Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley
APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved**

Mr. Rick Flowe presented the Town with a certificate of administrative support for the next two years.

C. 131 E Main Renovation Bids

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, informed the Board that three bids were received for the renovation of the old Public Workshop, and he recommended going with the lowest bid; and also, he urged the Board to think about additional items or upgrades for the building to utilize the remainder of SCIF grant funds.

RESOLVED, to accept the bid from Larry Barefoot of \$34,870.

**MOTION BY: Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley, SECOND BY: Commissioner Marc Powell
APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved**

D. County Library Consolidation Contract

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, noted the following updates to the County approved contract:

- Amount paid to County in Year One will be prorated due to the contract not taking effect on July 1st
- Town Attorney Al Bain had discussed and corrected uncertain language in regards to insurance coverage and indemnification with the County attorney
- Notice of termination requirement will be six months before the start of the next fiscal year by either party
- Separate rental contracts for each Town because each building is different in space and function

Teresa Brown, Library Director, stated that she and her staff were on board with the changes and looking forward to possibly adding more employees, more resources and increased hours. Ms. Brown added that she believed it would have a positive impact on the community.

RESOLVED, to approve the County Library Consolidation Contract.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Marc Powell, SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved

VI. MANAGER AND COMMITTEE REPORT

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, updated the Board on the AMI Water Meter Project noting that the meters were delayed by supply chain issues. Town Manager Holcomb stated that we were to be the last stop after Harnett County which will not be completed until December or January at the earliest, but Ferguson is still willing to honor the same price offered a year ago.


Mayor Chris Coats announced that the Town had been award One Million Dollars by the State Legislature for water infrastructure projects. Town Manager Nick Holcomb stated that this was perfect timing in regards to decisions made in the budget and recommended proceeding with the Capital Improvement Plan as it would be important over the next ten to fifteen years to ensure what is done with the grant would be the best decision for water system needs.

VI. ADJOURN

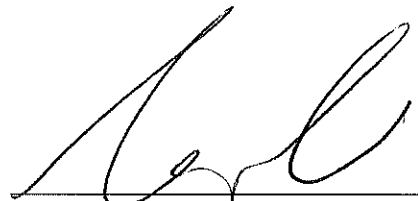
RESOLVED, to adjourn.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Marc Powell, SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.



 Connie Lassiter, Town Clerk



 Chris Coats, Mayor