

TOWN OF COATS
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, June 8, 2023
Official Minutes

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, June 8, 2023 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 Marc Powell
Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
Commissioner Shirley Allen
Commissioner Allen Mosby

Others Present:

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

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.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Allen Mosby, SECOND BY: Commissioner Marc Powell

APPROVED: 5-0, unanimously approved

II. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes – May 11, 2023 Regular Meeting & May 18, 2023 Work Session
- B. Approval of Attorney Bill – Services Rendered May 1-31, 2023
- C. Approval of Transfer for remainder of Odum Family Cemetery Plots

RESOLVED, to approve Consent Agenda.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: 5-0, unanimously approved

III. PUBLIC FORUM

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, summarized the following regarding the Proposed FY 2023-2024 budget:

- No increase on ad valorem tax (remains at \$0.49)
- No increase in water rate
- No increase in solid waste rate
- 5% COLA for full-time employees and increased police department salaries predicated on getting the starting salary to \$40,000

- Three capital projects separate from the operating budget (water lines, water meters, park project)
- Increase in Water Tap fee from \$1,800 to \$2,000
- Increase on preliminary plat subdivision review from \$10 to \$20

Mayor Chris Coats opened the Public Forum; and after hearing no one, Mayor Coats closed the Public Forum.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Chris Coats opened the Public Hearing for the Proposed Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget; and after hearing no one, Mayor Coats called for a motion to close the Public Hearing.

RESOLVED, to close Public Hearing.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Allen Mosby, SECOND BY: Commissioner Marc Powell

APPROVED: 5-0, unanimously approved

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Cloudwyze Easement Contract

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, recapitulated the April meeting when CloudWyze presented plans to extend fiber internet to Coats and requested an easement for a location to store and maintain their cabinet with their preferred site being at 128 W Lemon St which was near the cell tower. However, SBA Towers who holds a 50 year lease for the cell tower could not be contacted, so a new location for the cabinet installation at 50 N Isabella St in the southwest corner of the lot at the Public Works Building was requested.

Town Manager Holcomb reported that the Town Attorney had reviewed the easement contract and that corrections had been made. He noted one important change being that if it ceases to be operational then the easement would be vacated back to the Town.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley asked about the size of the easement. Town Attorney Al Bain responded that the easement would not be specifically assigned because they just needed access to and from the cabinet. The map would show the location of the cabinet and there was no concern with meets and bounds.

Mayor Chris Coats expressed concern over waterlines and other ground obstructions. Town Manager Holcomb responded that they would need to inform us where they would be working each day so that we could go before them to locate any water lines with the Ground Penetrating Radar; and Cloudwyze would be responsible for any damages.

Commissioner Marc Powell inquired if the work would have to be inspected by the FCC and was curious if it would interfere with signals around town. Town Manager Holcomb replied that he could direct those questions to Cloudwyze representatives.

RESOLVED, to approve easement.

**MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley, SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
APPROVED: 5-0, unanimously approved**

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Adoption of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget

Town Manager Nick Holcomb noted that based on board discussion at the May 18th workshop the janitorial services line had been reduced and the savings went to demolition of structures for potential condemnation and demolition and to parks improvement to help cover potential overages with the next potential vote on the project.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley expressed an amendment was needed because he thought it was agreed to lower the amounts given to the three non-profits to \$800 each. Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert stated that he remembered discussing it but didn't recall agreeing to it and others echoed the same. Discussion ensued regarding the history of increase in previous years to the various non-profits for specific needs and the amount was never reduced back.

Town Attorney Al Bain stated that a motion would be needed to amend the proposed budget.

RESOLVED, to reduce the Senior Citizens Center and the Chamber of Commerce to \$800 each and that the total savings of \$2,400 be moved to Demolition in the Planning/Zoning Department.

**MOTION BY: Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley, SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: Ayes (3) Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley, Commissioner Shirley Allen and
Commissioner Marc Powell; Noes (2) Commissioner Allen Mosby and Commissioner Kelvin
Gilbert**

Commissioner Marc Powell inquired about possibility of running over budget. Town Manager Nick Holcomb explained that the budget was balanced without the use of unappropriated surplus, but the Board would need to approve to pull money from surplus in the case of a specific emergency. He also noted that in the case of having the surplus in the budget in the beginning and an emergency didn't happen then that would be an area where the board wouldn't necessarily have as much control when not responding to a specific crisis.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley communicated that he didn't like the budget because so much of the budget was going to salaries and benefits; and he noted that there was no wiggle room in the budget. He conveyed the need to meet in January to assess situation.

Commissioner Allen Mosby remarked that there was no money wasted and salary maintenance was something that we couldn't get behind on because keeping good employees was important.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley stated he would like work sessions every 90 days to look at each department to know what was going on.

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert commented that Coats is growing and it's going to cost more money to continue to grow; and we could not stay stuck in the old ways. He agreed that work

sessions would be good if working towards growth, but work sessions on the premise of us staying the same would not be good.

Commissioner Shirley Allen suggested that quarterly meetings to review state of expenses at certain times of the year would be helpful.

RESOLVED, to approve budget as amended.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, SECOND BY: Commissioner Marc Powell
APPROVED: 5-0, unanimously approved

B. Hardcourt Resurfacing Bids

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, reported that bids had come in over the \$50,000 budget with two companies refusing to give bids for resurfacing only instead of removing the existing asphalt and paving a brand new surface. North State Resurfacing was the only company that agreed to essentially do a patch job with two-inch overlay and chip seal for \$60,000. Mr. Holcomb turned it over to the board for discussion on whether to proceed with bid or select a new project and added that the grant money had to be spent by June 2024.

Commissioner Marc Powell indicated that he would like the money directed to the new property after seeing the grounds tore up from the past weekend from vehicles parked there and mentioned fencing was needed.

Commissioner Shirley Allen asked if the board would be comfortable doing the resurfacing instead of a brand new surface at the park. Town Manager Holcomb asked Parks and Recreation Director, Mike Collins, for his opinion based on what he had been told by contractors. Mr. Collins summarized the resurfacing as a glorified band aid adding that two of the three contractors said it needed to be ripped up to find what was underneath as far as drainage and see if the subsoil was the problem for the cracks. Mr. Collins emphasized that there would not be a ten year guarantee and problems could arise that would cause the need to spend more money in a few years.

Board discussion included:

- Disposal cost of asphalt removal
- No guarantee of resurfacing
- Alternate location for basketball
- Pouring a concrete slab instead of asphalt

RESOLVED, to table until June 29, 2023 recessed meeting.

MOTION BY: Commissioner Allen Mosby, SECOND BY: Commissioner Marc Powell
APPROVED: 5-0, unanimously approved

C. Vehicle Policy

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, remarked that commissioners had questioned why police vehicles for officers living beyond 15 miles were parking at Boone Trail Emergency Services Station. This is in breach of the vehicle policy due to the commute distance being 15.8 miles and the location is not the officers' primary residence. A staff recommended amendment increases the miles from 15 to 20 and it would also allow those that lived beyond the miles to park in an approved government facility within mile range and give priority to those that were staffed 24 hours per day.

Commissioner Marc Powell inquired about the purpose of driving the vehicle home. Police Chief Ken Storicks replied that if there was a major incident in town that he needed everyone here as quick as possible and noted that mutual aid was sometimes delayed due to staffing shortages everywhere. Chief Storicks acknowledged that we could not compete with the salaries of other towns, so we have to find ways to be competitive. He noted that all agencies in the county and surrounding area have take-home car policies with some being less restrictive than ours.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley asked if Boone Trail was manned 24 hours a day and if weapons were left in vehicles. Chief Storicks responded that Boone Trail had confirmed that they were manned 24 hours a day and that weapons were not left in vehicles.

Town Manager Holcomb announced that the policy amendment also included language to make it clear that vehicles were not to be used for secondary employment. He informed the board that all employees would be given a copy of the amended policy and would sign an acknowledgement of receipt of policy.

RESOLVED, to approve amendment to police vehicle policy.

**MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: 5-0, unanimously approved**

VII. MANAGER & DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, communicated that there were no expected year end budget amendments unless an emergency happened. He urged the board to come prepared to make a decision in regards to McKinley Point and the Parks project. He informed the board that they would be given year end financials statements to date also showing capital projects.

VIII. RECESS

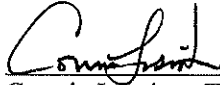
Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to recess meeting.

RESOLVED, to recess the meeting to continue on Thursday, June 29 at 6:00 p.m.

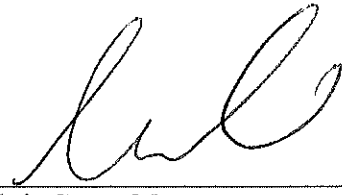
**MOTION BY: Commissioner Allen Mosby, SECOND BY: Commissioner Marc Powell
APPROVED: 5-0, unanimously approved**

Meeting recessed at 8:26 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

TOWN OF COATS
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, June 29, 2023
Official Minutes

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners reconvened the recessed Thursday, June 8, 2023 regular session on Thursday, June 29, 2023 at 6:00 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
Commissioner Allen Mosby

Staff Present:

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager
Connie Lassiter, Finance Director/Town Clerk
Mike Collins, Parks & Recreation Director

A quorum being present, Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and acknowledged that the Mayor would be late to the meeting.

VIII. RECESSED

A. Year End Budget Amendments

Town Manager Nick Holcomb reported that there were no year-end budget amendments needed, but the board would need to approve a transfer of \$200,000 from the Water Fund Balance to the Capital Project Water Fund for the waterline replacement project. This would allow for payment to WithersRavenel for the upfront costs of survey, design and engineering. The \$200,000 would be transferred back to the Water Fund when the \$1,000,000 grant monies are received.

Mr. Holcomb directed the boards' attention to the year-end financials to date which included a Revenue Statement, Expenditure Statement and Balance Sheet that had been given to them upon their arrival to the meeting and noted that this was not the final statement as more revenue was to be collected and a few more expenditures to be paid before closing the year. He also mentioned that the Park Project was setup under Fund 45 Capital Projects-General and the Waterline Replacement Project was setup under Fund 46 Capital Projects-Water.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley asked where the interfund transfer was being pulled from. Mr. Holcomb replied that it was coming from the water fund balance to the Fund 46 Capital Project for Water. Mayor Pro-Tem Beasley interjected that it should show as an expense. Finance Director Connie Lassiter explained that it would show on the balance sheet because it was a liability account and went on to further explain the accounting entries for "due to" liabilities and "due from" assets.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley stated that the \$50,000 grant should be showing up on the revenue statement. Finance Director Connie Lassiter expounded the principles of grant accounting in respect to the case of unearned grant revenue not being recognized until spent which made it a liability recorded on the balance sheet.

RESOLVED, to transfer \$200,000 from the Water Fund to the Capital Project-Water Fund.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Allen Mosby, SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
APPROVED: 5-0, unanimously approved

Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley asked for confirmation that the line item overages were able to be adjusted within the departments. Finance Director Connie Lassiter confirmed. Mayor Pro-Tem Beasley suggested that it might be better to do them each month instead of waiting to the end of the year. Ms. Lassiter conveyed that there was no right or wrong time to make the adjustments but that it was more common practice to adjust at the end of the year; but, she would do as the board desired if they requested monthly adjustments. No preference was given.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley inquired about moving money from the bank account and the loss of potential interest. Finance Director Connie Lassiter acknowledged that more money could be moved to the Trust for higher interest rates and would move it noting lack of time to accomplish all of her duties because of having to cover two positions since the departure of an employee. Town Manager Holcomb added that the interest would be important in the upcoming year in regards to budget.

B. McKinley Point and Parks

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, commented that during the previous meeting it was agreed that the board didn't like the price and the fact that there was no guarantee on the resurfacing at the park. Since that time, an idea was developed to do a 100' x 60' concrete slab, four inches thick with fiber and add a grass area that could be a permanent soccer setup as well as used for other things on grass. He noted with the concrete, acrylic court painting and basketball goals the project would be very close to \$50,000.

Mike Collins, Parks and Recreation Director, explained that the entire tennis court surface would be removed and because it appears to be sand underneath there should be good drainage. He went on to describe that two basketball courts 60' feet apart could be placed on one side with a pickleball court on the back side. The other side would be a shady, grass area with benches, picnic tables with room for dogs to run or kids to kick a ball around. Four light poles would be installed by Duke Energy for a cost of \$16 per pole per month to light the area. The paint on the concrete would be guaranteed for 10 years.

Mayor Chris Coats entered meeting at 6:50 p.m.

RESOLVED, to approve the two half-court basketball courts and pickleball court quote.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Marc Powell, SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: 5-0, unanimously approved

Town Manager Holcomb commented that the Public Works crew had put up a split rail fence with material leftover from the park as far as they could at McKinley Point. He mentioned that a work session would be needed to get a plan of action for what else is wanted there.

Mr. Holcomb mentioned a letter that he received from the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization that would be in the July agenda packet. A decision on whether to join them or not would be needed before the end of August.

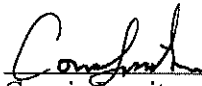
IX. ADJOURN

RESOLVED, to adjourn the meeting.

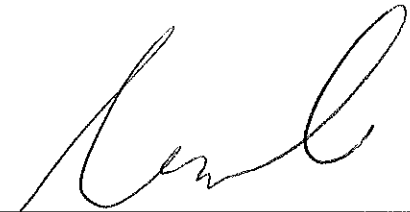
**MOTION BY: Commissioner Allen Mosby, SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
APPROVED: 5-0, unanimously approved**

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 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