

**TOWN OF COATS**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**Thursday, June 9, 2022**  
**Official Minutes**

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, June 9, 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 Kelvin Gilbert  
Commissioner Shirley Allen  
Commissioner Marc Powell  
Commissioner Allen Mosby

**Staff Present:**

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager  
Alton Bain, Town Attorney  
Connie Lassiter, Finance Director/Town Clerk  
Ken Storicks, Chief of Police

**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.

Mayor Coats requested to amend the agenda by moving Section II Item C "Recognition of Book Box" to Section V Item A.

**RESOLVED**, to approve Agenda as amended.

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

**II. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of Minutes – May 12, 2022
- B. Approval of Attorney Bill – Services Rendered May 1-31, 2022

**RESOLVED**, to approve Consent Agenda.

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

**III. PUBLIC FORUM**

Mayor Chris Coats opened the Public Forum.

Hope Turlington, 327 S Railroad St, gave an update regarding the property owned by her sister, Connie. Ms. Turlington informed the Board that a rental storage unit had been obtained and that they were

working hard to get the house livable. She read a letter from Jonathan Cook of Beacon Rescue Mission who works alongside Habitat expressing efforts to raise money to assist in getting the house up to code.

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

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

##### **A. Proposed FY 22-23 Budget**

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, highlighted the following items:

- Ad valorem tax decreased from \$0.59 to \$0.49 as a result of the county tax reevaluation
- No increase to water rate
- In-town solid waste increase from \$19.73 to \$21.00 per month
- 5% COLA for employees
- Additional Police Officer position
- Full-time Parks and Recreation position
- Vehicle for Police Department
- Vehicle for Street Department
- \$100,000 for condemnation and demolition of hazardous structures

Town Manager Holcomb noted that he had not heard any comments from the Board or the public regarding the proposed budget during the past month; and if there are no comments during the public hearing, he thinks the budget is in a place that it could be approved tonight.

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

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

##### **A. Recognition of Book Box**

Madison and Reagan Fuller presented the Town with two Little Library boxes that they decorated after being constructed and provided by local ladies. Madison Fuller asked that the Town accept these on behalf of all the children that would never be able to read books again due to recent events. Reagan Fuller said that they included some of their favorite books to share with the children of the Town.

##### **B. Adoption of FY 22-23 Budget Ordinance**

Mayor Chris Coats asked the Commissioners for comments or questions regarding the budget.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley stated that he believed this was one of the best budgets in a long time and fulfills needs of departments that have been needed for a while.

Town Manager Nick Holcomb noted changes were made to the fee schedules as follows:

- Parks and Recreation Youth Participation Fees would be no cost for in-town residents and \$40 for youth residing out-of-town

- Water taps increased to \$200
- Adjustments to planning fees due to engineered required inspections of stormwater ponds and that type of construction

Commissioner Allen Mosby pointed out date on page 4, Section IX Rate and Fee Schedule, of the Budget Ordinance was listed as July 1, 2021. Town Manager Holcomb noted that it should be the July 1, 2022 and would be corrected.

(Reference 1)

**RESOLVED**, to approve budget.

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

C. Capital Project Ordinance – Old Public Works Building Renovation

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, notified the Board that a capital project ordinance was needed because the renovation expense wasn't budgeted in fiscal year 2023; although it wasn't a major project, the work could not be completed in the current year since the funding was received so late in the year.

Commissioner Shirley Allen asked if a contractor had been hired to do work. Town Manager Holcomb replied that he had received two bids and waiting on two others.

(Reference 2)

**RESOLVED**, to create a Capital Project Ordinance for old Public Works Building renovations.

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

D. ARP Policy Updates

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, reminded the Board that these were the policies he mentioned would be forthcoming when the Grant Project Ordinance to use ARP funds for payment of law enforcement salaries and benefits was approved last meeting.

Town Manager Holcomb stated that he utilized the templates provided by the School of Government and made specific to the Town of Coats without conflicting with existing Town policies to create the necessary policies for ARP funds as follows:

- Eligible Use Policy & Implementation Tools
- Allowable Costs & Cost Principles Policy
- Non Discrimination Policy
- Records Retention Policy

(Reference 3)

Town Manager Holcomb noted that there would be a lot more record keeping with paying law enforcement salaries and benefits over the next two years but looking at the degree of the policies you can see why the School of Government recommended to go this route; although we could have used for water line improvements or meter project, there would be so much documentation and requirements.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley asked if the ARP approval for the meters had to be done away. Town Manager Holcomb stated that the ARP amendment for revenue replacement and paying law enforcement salaries and benefits that was approved at the last meeting essentially did away with previous approval to use ARP funding for meters and water line replacement.

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert asked if this would slow up water project. Town Manager Holcomb replied that it wouldn't necessarily slow up water project, but it would complicate how the Town handled funds as we would need to ask approval from LGC to transfer funds from General Fund to Water Fund.

**RESOLVED**, to approve policies as presented.

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

#### E. HVAC Replacement

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, informed the Board that the seventeen-year-old HVAC unit for the Town Hall upstairs space had started freezing up and estimate received for cost to replace coil was \$4,500 but was not recommended for a unit of that age. Town Manager Holcomb received a bid of \$7,827 from J & M Heating and AC to replace the unit; two other vendors contacted said they were too busy.

**RESOLVED**, to approve HVAC replacement.

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

## VI. MANAGER & DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, notified the Board that he had been working along with Recreation Director, Mike Collins, on a job description for the full-time recreation position in anticipation of budget approval to include the focus on youth programs, marketing, and social media; responsibility for purchasing and checking in at Town Hall. Mr. Holcomb encouraged Board to state any specifics they wanted included in description. The following was mentioned:

- Primary office with computer at Park; hotspot needed
- Recruiting and outreach for programs as part of marketing
- Report to Town Manager at Town Hall daily
- Consult/update Recreation Director daily
- Hourly employee; schedule with flexibility on game days; overtime concerns; if becomes issue, exempt status could be considered
- Be at Park during busy times

Town Manager Holcomb informed the Board of the following items:

1. Public Works lost one employee; would like to freeze position and use savings to give increase to existing employees and could reassess in a year; discussed with Rodney Pleasant, Public Works Director, who agreed was best idea right now
2. Hot topic lately was RV Living which is not allowed in Town; two in-town and two that border town limits have been sent violations
3. North Johnston Street paving has a little left to be done

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, announced that the joint meeting with the Planning Board resulted in good ideas and compromises which were relayed to the consultant to work out changes. Mr. Holcomb stated a major point to consider, if we want to do some things to reduce the minimum lot size of the ag district and to allow for six lots on a gravel street just like the County does, we have to ask what are we really getting out of the ETJ if we were making it like the County; consider throwing back large portions of our ETJ.

Alton Bain, Town Attorney, addressed the Board and stated that he served at their pleasure and had only increased rates one time and never charged for travel. Attorney Bain mentioned that due to increase cost of staff and gas that he proposed to charge a monthly retainer of \$400 to cover the one monthly meeting and conversation with Town Manager to cover any legal issues in agenda that he needs to prepare. Attorney Bain informed the Board that his \$150 per hour rate for any work outside the monthly meeting would remain the same which is \$125 less than his normal hourly rate as he sees serving as Town Attorney a public service. Attorney Bain mentioned that it should not affect what the Town budgeted for his services.

Teresa Brown, Library Director, presented Library statistics for the month of May. Ms. Brown noted that there were no new updates on the library consolidation. (Reference 4)

Chief of Police Ken Storicks presented Police Department statistics for the month of May. Chief Storicks mentioned there was an overdose victim in the Town Hall parking lot yesterday who overdosed outside of town and after administered Narcan was driven to Police Department seeking help; vitals checked out okay by EMS. (Reference 5)

## **VII. CLOSED SESSION**

Mayor Chris Coats called for motion to enter closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.1(a)(6) "To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee;"

**RESOLVED**, to go into closed session pursuant to the aforementioned statute.

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

Board of Commissioners entered closed session at 7:49 p.m.

**RESOLVED**, to reconvene in open session.

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

Board of Commissioners reconvened in open session at 8:05 p.m.

**RESOLVED**, to fulfill contract with Town Clerk effective July 1, 2022 for the full amount.

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

**VII. RECESS**

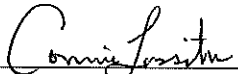
Nick Holcomb, Town Manager expressed the need to recess meeting due to the following:

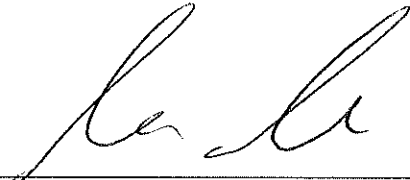
1. County Library Consolidation – still awaiting final draft
2. Downtown Streetscape Master Plan – just received final draft today and presented copy to Commissioners to review
3. FY 21-22 Year End Budget Amendments – allows time for receipt of outstanding items to reflect more accurate balances

**RESOLVED**, to recess the meeting to continue Thursday, June 16 at 5:00 p.m.

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

Meeting recessed at 8:10 p.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Connie Lassiter, Town Clerk

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chris Coats, Mayor

**TOWN OF COATS  
Board of Commissioners  
Thursday, June 16, 2022  
Official Minutes**

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners reconvened the recessed Thursday, June 9, 2022 regular session on Thursday, June 16, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room at Coats Town Hall.

**Members Present:**

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

**Staff Present:**

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager  
Connie Lassiter, Finance Director/Town Clerk

**Members Absent:**

Commissioner Shirley Allen

A quorum being present, Mayor Chris Coats called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**VIII. RECESS**

**A. FY21-22 Year End Budget Amendments**

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, informed the Board that after line-item adjustments were made within each department there were items under General Management that required borrowing from the Police, Planning and Recreation departments as indicated on the budget adjustment notification presented to them. Town Manager Holcomb reminded the Board of expecting the overlapping salaries of retiree and new hire in General Management to cause the increased expense; and he mentioned that the unforeseen rising fuel prices and need to fill tank one more time before end of this fiscal year caused additional expense.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley questioned the layout of the budget amendment because it looked different than what had previously been done and didn't show which individual line item from the other departments was offsetting the individual line items in General Management. Mayor Pro-Tem Beasley stated that he believed it would need Board approval.

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, explained that the total of the General Management line items was offset by the total of the line items from the Police, Planning and Recreation departments.

Town Manager Nick Holcomb handed a copy of the Budget Ordinance to Mayor Chris Coats for clarification and read the Budget Ordinance aloud as follows:

“The Budget Officer shall be authorized to execute interdepartmental transfers, within the same fund, not to exceed thirty percent (30%) of the appropriated moneys for the department whose allocation is reduced. Notification of all such transfers shall be made to the Town Board of Commissioners at its next meeting following the date of transfer.”

Town Manager Nick Holcomb stated that according to the Budget Ordinance this type of budget amendment only required Board notification, but the Board could vote on it if they desired.

**RESOLVED**, to accept notification of adjustment as presented.

**MOTION BY: Commissioner Allen Mosby, SECOND BY: Commissioner Marc Powell**  
**APPROVED: Ayes (3) Commissioner Allen Mosby, Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert and Commissioner Marc Powell; Noes (1) Commissioner Jerry Beasley**

B. Downtown Streetscape Master Plan Final

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, informed the Board that all expenses for developing plan had been paid, and he had applied for final reimbursement with expectation of receiving monies prior to June 30.

Town Manager Holcomb noted that the Board could vote on approval tonight or wait until the July meeting to allow Commissioner Shirley Allen the opportunity to discuss, and he communicated that approving the plan would allow to start shopping this to state and federal legislators for project funding.

Commissioner Marc Powell inquired as to why Option 2 was still showing in the pictures if we wanted Option 1. Town Manager Nick Holcomb responded that ultimately what was on page 44 is the final plan recommendation and the pictures were only showing what had been offered as design alternatives.

Commissioner Allen Mosby expressed that Commissioner Shirley Allen had been very involved in the plan and would have good input, and he would be fine with waiting until July.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Beasley stated coming up with \$2 million in the next 10 years would be hard and by that time cost could be \$10 million as he sees it and approving now allows us to start working on it.

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert acknowledged that he was fine with proceeding on approval, but he asked if it would be a problem to make tweaks to the final master plan if approved. Town Manager Nick Holcomb responded no.

**RESOLVED**, to approve Downtown Streetscape Master Plan.

**MOTION BY: Commissioner Allen Mosby, SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert**  
**APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved**

C. County Library Consolidation Contract

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, stated that the County was still working with other towns to finalize the contract and that Coats was the only town with the green light and ready to go. Town Manager Holcomb mentioned that the item was on the June 28<sup>th</sup> County Officials work session with expectations of getting final contract ready for approval at their July 5<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Town Manager Nick Holcomb expressed that it would make things confusing about how we get reimbursed for what we spend since the contract was not completed as expected for a July 1<sup>st</sup> start



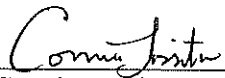
date. Manager Holcomb informed the Board that he had suggested deducting library expenses incurred from the payment to the County with the County Library Director and believed that should work.


**IX. ADJOURN**

**RESOLVED**, to adjourn the meeting.

**MOTION BY: Commissioner Marc Powell, SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert**  
**APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved**

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Connie Lassiter, Town Clerk

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chris Coats, Mayor