

**TOWN OF COATS**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**Thursday, August 10, 2023**  
**Official Minutes**

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, August 10, 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

**Members Absent:**

Commissioner Allen Mosby

**Others Present:**

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager  
Connie Lassiter, Finance Director/Town Clerk  
Ken Storicks, Chief of Police  
Rodney Pleasant, Public Works 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 Marc Powell, SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen**

**APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved**

**II. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of Minutes – July 13, 2023 Regular Meeting
- B. Approval of Attorney Bill – Services Rendered July 31, 2023

**RESOLVED**, to approve Consent Agenda.

**MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley**

**APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved**

**III. PUBLIC HEARING**

- A. Update to Future Land Use Plan Map

Town Manager Nick Holcomb explained that the update to the Future Land Use Plan Map was needed so that the zoning districts would match the UDO update that was completed last year.

Hazel Stephenson, Planning Board Chairperson, emphasized that the proposed updates were for the Future Land Use Plan Map and not the Zoning Map. Ms. Stephenson highlighted the following updates:

- 300' MU-2 buffering along Hwy 55 & Hwy 27 to allow for commercial and higher density residential; with General Commercial steered to the core
- Expanding MU-1 on the west side of town which would allow for multi-family housing and expanding RMST on the east side which would allow for a variety of higher density residential options
- SFR-1 low density 1 acre lots around Fleming Rd and Brick Mill Rd due to limitations to higher densities such as lack of through transportation and watershed limitations
- Agricultural/Open Space preservation along Delma Grimes Rd and Ebenezer Church Rd in proximity to industrial farms and Black River watershed and wetlands.
- Optional future Industrial site around existing solar farm on Hwy 27

Chairperson Stephenson pointed out that the Planning Board tried to cover everything and do what would be best to plan for future land use in the updates. She also noted that the approval of the Future Land Use Plan Map updates would help the Planning Board to make better decisions in zoning.

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

#### IV. OLD BUSINESS

##### A. Street Resurfacing Projects

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, informed the Board that he had refined the list of streets discussed at the last meeting in the most need of repair as follows:

Resurfacing: N Ida St from Hwy 27 to E. Park St  
 Winchester Ave (including Remington Dr intersection)  
 N Poole St & Odum St (full loop)

Patching: Park Ln (remove hump and repair broken areas)  
 Park Ln Extension (repairs from entryway to first parking space)  
 46 Marlin Ln (large patch at driveway)

Town Manager Holcomb asked for a consensus from the Board on any of the aforementioned streets or any street they deemed a higher priority to be quoted.

Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley inquired whether or not the dip in Park Lane was the result of a sewer pipe issue; and if so, the County should be contacted to make the repair. Town Manager Holcomb replied that he would address the issue and update the Board with the response from the County.

**RESOLVED**, to allow Town Manager to proceed with gathering quotes for the road project for all six of the roads.

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

**APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved**

## V. NEW BUSINESS

### A. Update to Future Land Use Plan Map

Town Manager Nick Holcomb stressed that the Future Land Use Plan Map is one aspect of the plan used when someone requests a rezoning decision to determine if the rezoning request is consistent with the land use plan. He emphasized that it was not the zoning map.

**RESOLVED**, to approve amendments to the map.

**MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley, SECOND BY: Commissioner Marc Powell**

**APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved**

### B. Set Public Hearing – Open Burning Ordinance

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, requested the Board to set a Public Hearing on the update to the Open Burning Ordinance. The current ordinance is outdated and the updated ordinance would give the Fire Department and Law Enforcement clearer rules for use in enforcement. The ordinance would legalize smaller recreational fires, prevent opening vegetation burning and allow for land clearing only in special circumstances given the proper permits were received and authorized. Mr. Holcomb asked if the Board desired any edits to the proposed ordinance.

Commissioner Marc Powell expressed the need to define what recreational fires could be burned in such as a bona fide burn pit and to put a top over it to prevent ashes from escaping. Town Manager Holcomb stated that he would put the cover in the ordinance language and discuss with the Fire Chief.

**RESOLVED**, to set Public Hearing for Open Burning Ordinance on September 14.

**MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley, SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert**

**APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved**

### C. Set Public Hearing – Noise Ordinance

Nick Holcomb, Town Manager, requested the Board to set a Public Hearing on the update to the Noise Ordinance. The updated ordinance would establish the start and end time for live music and entertainment. Some businesses are expanding into live music and entertainment in outdoor areas which has caused friction between business zones and residential zones. The ordinance update would enable the police to intervene in cases of noncompliance.

Commissioner Marc Powell stated that he lived close by and couldn't hear his stereo or television when the band starts up outside. He also expressed concern with a church trying to hold services on Sunday during the time of an outdoor events at business and communicated that he preferred the events to be moved inside or taken out of town.

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert mentioned that this issue was a part of growing pains for the Town, but acknowledged and sympathized with nearby residents' concerns. He also inquired about any issues the church might have on Wednesday night services.

**RESOLVED**, to set Public Hearing for Noise Ordinance for September 14.

**MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley, SECOND BY: Commissioner Marc Powell**

**APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved**

D. School Resource Officer – MOU Renewal

Town Manager Nick Holcomb reminded the Board that this item was removed from the consent agenda last month due to some of the police chiefs petitioning the contract. There has been no action taken to amend the original agreement made in 2018 that has been renewed each year.

Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley asked if payment had been received since the contract ran out. Town Manager Holcomb replied that it was the School Board that was requesting the contract signature, but the payment actually came from the County. He added that the July payment hadn't been received yet but that was a normal delay in the new fiscal year. Finance Director Connie Lassiter commented that last year's July payment was received in September.

Mayor Pro Tem Beasley inquired if we had benefited from having the School Resource Officer and asked if it would be a good time to get out of it. Police Chief Ken Storicks recommended staying with the program as it allowed for the SRO to cover time off for other officers when school was out as well as the benefit of enabling interactions between the kids and officers.

**RESOLVED**, to renew the contract.

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

**APPROVED: 3-1**

**Ayes (3) Commissioners Shirley Allen, Kelvin Gilbert and Marc Powell**

**Noes (1) Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley**

E. Helping Hands Neighborhood Garden Request

Adam and Alexa Peterson requested use of a space for a community garden for their non-profit, Helping Hands Neighborhood Garden, at the Town-owned lot of the old theater at 131 E Main St. They explained their plan was to build 8-12 raised garden beds and plant fruits and vegetables for people take what they need.

Discussion by the Board included concern with the length of time of the project and the desired location that had previously been used as the Public Works lot where trucks were washed out as well as years past gas tanks were located on the site.

Mr. Peterson explained that ideally they would have it last for years, but right now they were looking at it as a startup of a year to five years. He commented that the garden boxes could be moved if the Town needed the land for something else at any time. He stated that they were open to alternate locations in town.

Commissioner Marc Powell recommended an area by the Gift Primitive Baptist Church. Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley suggested the lot at the new Public Works building where a water tap would be available.

No action was taken.

## VI. PUBLIC FORUM

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

## VII. MANAGER & DEPARTMENT UPDATES

### A. Review of Financial Statement

There were no questions or comments.

### B. Library Consolidation Update

Teresa Brown, Coats Library Director, reported that the library had extended hours of operation, hired two additional employees and increased programs since the library consolidation took place one year ago.

### C. NC League Services

Town Manager Nick Holcomb updated the Board on services that the NCLM was offering as a result of APR funds they had received. Services include engineering, planning and grant services, legal services in regards to ARP spending and software services.

### D. Community Signage Program

Town Manager Nick Holcomb informed the Board that the representative from the Coats Museum had gotten a quote of approximately \$1100 for the signs but the rendering would not be available until a commitment to the pricing was made. Mr. Holcomb relayed that we did not specifically budget for the signs, but the appearance line item could be used for this purpose. The museum is ready to pay their fair share and move forward with the purchase. Mr. Holcomb asked what the Board felt would be a reasonable amount to commit or if they preferred a formal proposal next month.

**RESOLVED**, to proceed with signage project not to exceed \$1500.

**MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, SECOND BY: Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley**

**APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved**

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert asked for update on the Park Project. Town Manager Holcomb responded that the basketball goals would be put up within a week but the painting would not be done until December. Town Manager Holcomb informed the Board that 8 loads of soil were needed now and an additional 6 loads of soil would be needed at a cost of \$375 per load to complete the project which would put the Multipurpose Hardcourt project over budget. He mentioned that the Parks Improvement line item could be used to cover the overage. The general consensus of the Board was to complete the project with the acknowledgement of the additional cost.

## VIII. ADJOURN

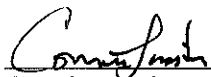
Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to adjourn.

**RESOLVED**, to adjourn.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 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