

TOWN OF COATS
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, October 12, 2023
Official Minutes

The Town of Coats Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, October 12, 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
Mike Collins, Parks & Rec Director
Al Bain, Town Attorney

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 Kelvin Gilbert, SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen

APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved

II. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes – September 14, 2023 Regular Meeting
- B. Approval of Attorney Bill – Services Rendered September 1-30, 2023
- C. Budget Amendment – Powell Bill

RESOLVED, to approve Consent Agenda.

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

APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved

III. PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Chris Coats opened the Public Forum.

Lena Grubbs, 76A Scotch Broom Ln, voiced that she was glad the Board was considering the issue of volume instead of just focusing on the timing in the amendment of the noise ordinance.

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

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing – Rezoning 235 E Jackson St

Town Manager Nick Holcomb presented the request for rezoning submitted by Karen Ferguson to change the .69 acre (30,056 sq. ft.) lot at 235 E Jackson St from Single Family Residential 3 (SFR-3) to Residential Main Street Transition (RMST). Mr. Holcomb presented the map showing that the property was literally in between the two districts. The property was assigned SFR-3 zoning during last year’s town-wide rezoning due to the large size of the property.

Hazel Stephenson, Planning Board Chair, commented that the Planning Board recommended the approval of the rezoning request because it is consistent with the future land use map and the property is in the transition area between SFR-3 and RMST.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley informed the Board that the husband of Karen Ferguson (rezoning request applicant) was his cousin and expressed that he would receive no financial gain from the approval of request. He deferred to the Town Attorney on whether or not he should recuse himself from voting.

Town Attorney Al Bain instructed that generally with those types of relationships neither would be considered a disqualifying event as General Statutes describes a close personal relationship tends to be a spouse or child which is more or less a lineal line.

Commissioner Marc Powell disclosed that he was in a similar situation with a spouse being a cousin.

RESOLVED, to approve rezoning of 235 E Jackson St.
MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley, SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved

B. Public Hearing – UDO in Practice

Town Manager Nick Holcomb emphasized that the Public Hearing was fulfilling a promise to allow citizens the opportunity to discuss any concerns the new UDO may have caused when it was passed last year. He commented that three to four minor amendments were being considered by the Planning Board.

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

RESOLVED, to refer back to Planning Board for amendments to be made.
MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley, SECOND BY: Commissioner Marc Powell
APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved

C. Work Session Schedule

Town Manager Nick Holcomb presented prospective dates and times with topics in response to a request to have work sessions for the Council to meet prior to the regular scheduled Board Meeting as follows:

- November 9, 5:00pm-6:30pm – Parks & Rec Department Strategy & Improvements
- December 14, 5:00pm-6:30pm – Water System Grant Projects (Waterline Bid Plan & AMI Meters)
- January 11, 5:00pm-6:30pm – Finance & Budget (Tracking FY24 Budget Expenditures)

After discussion which included scheduling conflicts and a concern that the proposed length of meeting time wasn't enough time, Town Manager Nick Holcomb amended the prospective dates to the following Thursday of regular meetings as follows:

- November 16, 6:00pm – Parks & Rec Department Strategy & Improvements
- December 21, 6:00pm – Water System Grant Projects (Waterline Bid Plan & AMI Meters)
- January 18, 6:00pm – Finance & Budget (Tracking FY24 Budget Expenditures)

RESOLVED, to schedule work sessions at 6:00pm on November 16, December 21 and January 18.
MOTION BY: Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley, SECOND BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert
APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Noise Ordinance

Town Manager Nick Holcomb conveyed that the Board directed that the ordinance amendment should focus more on controlling volume and less on setting times after feedback received at last month's Public Hearing which included complaints about noise levels at restaurants as well as comments about supporting local businesses and the need to create a pro-business environment. The proposed ordinance amendment would add item 19 to the existing 18 items under this section which would focus on unreasonable noise from commercial establishment and any outdoor areas and define plainly audible and disruptive noise during daytime hours at 300 feet from the property line and nighttime hours at 150 feet from the property line. Officers would respond to complaints and use the definition of plainly audible and unreasonable noise to determine a violation.

RESOLVED, to approve amendment to noise ordinance.
MOTION BY: Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert, SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved

VI. MANAGER UPDATES

Autism Walk

Town Manager Nick Holcomb informed the Board of an Autism Walk that would be taking place on the upcoming Sunday which had grown from a small event to a rather large event. He invited the organizer of the event, Casey McFadden, to the podium to give more details.

Casey McFadden provided the Board with the Emergency Action Plan and a copy of the Insurance & Liability Waivers that would be signed by all participants of the event. She explained that she had met with the Police Chief and Fire Chief concerning safety for the event adding that volunteer Firemen and EMTs would be available during the walk which would start at the Kicking Camel along Railroad St down to Stewart's Tire and come back up on the sidewalk of McKinley ending back up at the Kicking Camel. The event would be held from 10:30am through 9:00pm with the walk taking place between 2:00pm and 3:00pm.

Parks & Rec Update

Mike Collins, Parks & Rec Director, updated the Board on the following:

- Currently in the middle of soccer season with 9 teams playing
- Working on creating a new entranceway at park to make it more attractive
- Do North Resurfacing will have basketball goals up and all resurfacing done in about three weeks
- Campaigning to area businesses to get funding for lighting
- Kicking off Basketball registration at the school Fall Festival

Commissioner Kelvin Gilbert questioned the validity of the basketball goals being completed in three weeks since it was already supposed to be completed. Mr. Collins explained that the contractor was in high demand, and he would upgrade from a 50" to a 60" backboard at no additional cost because he was late in completing the project.

Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley inquired if the crack could be fixed when concrete was poured for goals. Mr. Collins replied that he had already spoken to the contractor about it and added that repairs in the concrete at the picnic shelter would be taken care of as well.

Repair or Demolish Orders

Town Manager Holcomb informed the Board that he would have quotes for the November meeting.

Council Comments

Commissioner Shirley Allen asked about status of Dixon house. Town Manager Holcomb responded that they've shown to be serious about getting work done.

Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley expressed concern over being short staffed in the Police Department. Town Manager Holcomb replied that the hiring of one applicant was pending on Training and Standards approval and that there were two candidates interested in the SRO position.

Commissioner Marc Powell inquired about the possibility of a Christmas tree to replace the current holly tree at McKinley Point property.

Commissioner Shirley Allen stated that she had secured a Christmas tree to place between the flag poles at Farmer's Corner.

Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Beasley commented that he agreed with Finance Director Connie Lassiter's handling of the maturing CDs as presented in the financial report.

VIII. ADJOURN


Mayor Chris Coats called for a motion to adjourn.

RESOLVED, to adjourn.

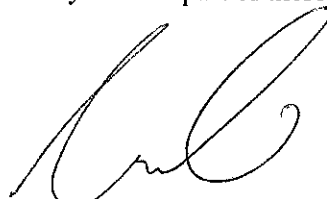
**MOTION BY: Commissioner Marc Powell, SECOND BY: Commissioner Shirley Allen
APPROVED: 4-0, unanimously approved**

Meeting adjourned at 8:06 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