

MINUTE BOOK XXVI, PAGES 116-119
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE TROUTMAN TOWN COUNCIL
December 05, 2017

A Special Meeting of the Troutman Town Council was held in the Troutman Town Hall, 400 North Eastway Drive, North Carolina on Tuesday, December 05, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. with the Mayor Teross W. Young, Jr. presiding.

Council Members Present: Sally Williams, Judy Jablonski, James Troutman, Paul Bryant

Council Members Absent: Paul Henkel

Staff Present: Justin E. Longino, Town Manager; Kimberly H. Davis, Town Clerk; Erika G. Martin, Planning Director; Adam K. Lippard, Public Works Manager; Emily M. Watson, Parks and Rec. Coordinator

Press Present: Debbie Page, SVL Free News

(Sign in Sheet is filed with these minutes)

ITEM 1. MAYOR YOUNG CALLED THE SPECIAL MEETING TO ORDER

ITEM 2. OVERVIEW OF PROJECTS, (Justin Longino, Town Manager)

Town Manager Justin Longino presented to Council with a power point presentation, for overview of town projects currently approved by Council; the project status, and cost estimates along with six projected future projects to examine and prioritize future projects and determine availability of funding.

- Approved projects include:
 - Mill Village sewer system project/upgrades - loan application was submitted to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in September of 2017 for \$1.5 million, funds to be awarded in late January 2018. Staff recommends borrowing \$1.16 for the project which consist of sewer line rehab, addition/upgrade of generators, eliminating Mill Village pump station and extending 3800 linear ft. of gravity sewer, rehab of other existing pump station facilities and pumps. Town Engineer, Benjie Thomas of West Consultants explained the loan approval process stating that if the two loans applied for are approved by DEQ, Council will have to consider approval of a resolution accepting the loan offer. Bids will then go out for construction of the project that will also have to be approved by Council, and another resolution will have to be approved to officially accept the loan. He also explained that following the Town's acceptance of the loan, an engineering and environmental report will have to be submitted along with plans to be reviewed, etc. (Timeline of construction to be discussed at Council's Annual Planning Retreat)
 - Talley Street Sidewalk - Town committed \$491,430, a 38% match of grant funds awarded through Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO). CRTPO will not release the funds until FY 2018/2019. The grant constitutes that construction must start within 5 years and the project complete within 10 years.
 - Richardson Greenway Extension South - (also through a CRTPO grant) Town committed to match 20% totaling \$197,997. Grant funds approved-\$989,985.
- Projected future projects include:
 - Project Fitness - opportunity for possible acquisition for expansion of the Town's recreational facilities or partnership with a lessee. Benefits: provide additional storage space for the Town; could be a revenue generator for the Town; and possibly bring new businesses. Cost of the property for "Project Fitness" ranges from \$400,000 to \$1 million. Town Manager Longino stated that the property owners have acquired an appraisal of the 10 acre property that resulted in a little over \$1 million, but they have not shared the full appraisal with Town staff. He advised Council that staff will be meeting with the property owner next week to discuss the proposed project.

- Town Hall Expansion - Two (2) design options were presented that would benefit the growing need for staff space and storage: 1) Small addition that would include a new and larger Council Chambers, new offices for the Police Department, and renovation of current Council Chambers into offices. Estimated cost: \$1.7 million, adding 6,800 sq. ft.; 2) Full buildout to include a new Council Chambers, new building structure behind the existing Town Hall for new offices, storage space, leaving room to grow into that could temporarily be utilized as lease space for partner agencies until needed for growth purposes. Estimated cost \$4.1 million, adding 24,000 sq. ft.
- Street Improvements - Study performed by West Consultants in December 2016 ranked town streets from worst to best in need of maintenance or re-surfacing. Estimated cost to repair the top ten worst streets range from \$29,250 to \$1.5 million.
- Troutman ESC Park, Phase 2 - The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) Grant applied for this year was not awarded to the Town bringing Phase 2 of the park to a momentary halt. PARTF's feedback in not awarding the grant was that the park's master plan is out of date. The plan is slated to be reviewed and updated in 2018 with the Town to hold public input sessions for feedback. Phase 2 proposed amenities include an amphitheater (estimated cost \$154,000), a walking trail around the multi-purpose field and additional parking lot (estimated cost \$167,000 for gravel/\$424,000 for pavement), and splash pad (estimated cost \$125,000).
- Gateway Signage Property - A gateway sign would serve as a welcome sign to Troutman presenting visitors with a clean and positive first impression of the town. Installation of a sign would require purchase of .34 acres located on the southern end of town (Hwy 21 and Eastway Drive intersect). Property was appraised a little over \$28,000 in August of 2017. (Note: estimated cost for Gateway signage \$5,000). Purchase cost of the property is included in the Richardson Greenway South Grant, but the funds will not be available until October 2018. The Town could purchase the property sooner, but if Council waits until October, the Town's cost will be reduced to 20%. Council member Bryant asked if the logo that is to be painted on the water tank at Exit 42 is part of the Wayfinding program. Town Manager Longino responded no, it is separate and is budgeted under economic development. Council member Bryant asked if the logo is proposed on two sides and the cost per side. Town Manager Longino responded that the cost depends on the design and advised he would email the cost projections to Council.
- Lytton Street Connector – The recently completed US 21/115 Study revealed a community preference to extend Lytton Street from Mills Avenue to a new intersection and realignment of Wagner Street. Church Street would tie into the new Lytton Street and the intersection at Wagner will become a right in and right out intersection. The project calls for the acquisition of four to five properties with an additional three to four that would be significantly impacted. The combined tax value of the five properties needed to be acquired is \$532,360, but a single and uncooperative property owner could inflate cost and average sale of an older home in Troutman is usually 20% higher than the tax value.

ITEM 3. RANKING OF PROJECTS

Using “Turning Point” polling system, Council participated in an exercise ranking the proposed future projects in order of priority. The purpose of the exercise is to select several top ranked and fundable projects to work toward in 2018. The exercise resulted in Street Improvements being Council's top priority followed by Gateway Signage, Lytton Street Connector as third, Town Hall expansion and the Park Phase 2 tied for fourth/fifth, and lastly Project Fitness.

ITEM 4. DISCUSSION

Following the ranking exercise of future projects, Council discussed and weighed the options of each project to better determine the future direction for the Town both logically and financially. Discussions included community needs, timing and cost.

In regards to the Gateway Signage property, Council took into consideration the cost of the property and the amount the Town could save by waiting on the Richardson Greenway South Grant Funds that will become available in October of 2018. Several Council members suggested that an alternate location for the gateway signage be closer to Exit 42. Mayor Young commented that it is definitely a conversation for the future as Exit 42 becomes more developed, but expressed that the gateway sign should anchor the “core” of the Town.

Council members expressed concerns of land acquisition cost and the availability of acquiring the property's needed to accomplish the Lytton Street Connector project. Concerns were also expressed of property values increasing over time and the increase in traffic and congestion. Viewpoints were expressed of how the project would help the Town with current traffic flow. Planning Director Martin commented that Council may want to wait on NCDOT's Highway 21 Corridor Plan which may include part, if not all of this proposed project. A brief discussion was held regarding the town requesting first right of refusal from the property owners.

Town Manager Longino asked for Councils direction in regards to the Town's Street Improvement Plan in preparation of budgeting suggesting repairing several roads per year. Council reviewed the street summary repair estimates as prepared by West Consultants last December for all town roads along with the Town's revenues and expenses over the last 5 years. From last fiscal year, the Town's tax revenue has increased 19% due to last years \$.05 tax increase. Council discussed options of how to grow the town's tax base in terms of residential verses industry. Council member Bryant questioned the 18% increase in expenses last year. Finance Director Steve Shealy responded that the increase was mainly from purchase of the property for the ABC Store land, and acquisition of property on Old Mountain Road for the SIHS Greenway project; both being one-time expenditures. A brief discussion was held regarding economic development and how to attract businesses and industry to Troutman and position the Town for that type of future growth. Mayor Young commented that the Town is on the right track to attract business and industry with the all future projects that are proposed.

In serving in the capacity of an advisor/mentor for the Town Manager, Mr. Layton Getsinger addressed Council concerning the need to plan for forth coming growth in a way that would avoid the need to raise taxes or pull away from pre-existing commitments. He suggested that Council may want to look into the option of bond referendums for funding projects when possible and advised that Council look at the aggregate of the cost of things that are necessary verses the things that are nice to have. Mr. Getsinger commented that "Project Fitness" is one of the things that industry/businesses look for in a community is places to go and activities for children to do, along with looking for good schools. There is a large demand for preschool and after school programs, and adult and senior fitness programs. He continued by commenting that a fitness center could maximize the Town's potential for additional revenue, one of which is revenue from the use of recreational facilities by non-town residents. Mr. Getsinger stated that based on Councils preferences, he will continue to work with Town Manager Longino on how to come up with programs/mechanisms to achieve such projects.

Mayor Young stated that to accomplish all six projects from a cost perspective, the low end is around \$2.7 million, high end is around \$9.6 million. A brief discussion was held concerning the breakdown of yearly expenses if the funds were to be financed including current expenses and debt service. Council member Bryant expressed concerns of the Towns current debt service and additional out of pocket expenses such as staffing and services currently offered by the Town that will be needed as the Town grows. Mayor Young stated the more industry the Town has will help reduce the Towns debt. Mr. Getsinger commented that the problem is the Town is in uncharted waters where there are no assurances of anything other than what can be seen right now; therefore, there has to be some degree of calculated risk but growth will not happen without Council attending to the needs of additional staff/bodies to accommodate those needs. He recommended a data driven matrix with trigger points in hiring additional staff to keep with those needs as the Town's population grows. In regards to street improvements, Mr. Getsinger stated that it is a lot easier to maintain streets once they are at a good level if preventative maintenance is maintained, but once it goes from preventative to routine, then to emergency maintenance; the cost increases tremendously. Town Engineer Thomas agreed with Mr. Getsinger's statement. With West Avenue being in the top 10 worst streets, Planning Director Erika Martin suggested that the Town may want to wait to repair the West Avenue due to construction traffic for a new development that will be taking place in the near future. Town Engineer Thomas commented that Ms. Martin made a good point, but on the flip side, it may benefit to do the improvements to make the street more durable under the construction traffic.

Discussion was held concerning Troutman ESC Park, Phase II. Parks & Rec. Coordinator Emily Watson stated that feedback from the grant application was that the Parks Master Plan needs to be updated which is one of the reasons the 50/50 matching PARTF grant for \$466,000 that was applied for was not awarded. Changes to the master plan are already happening with the addition of two volleyball courts. She commented that staff is planning to hold a community forum for input to see if the

amenities originally proposed in Phase II are the amenities the public still want. Once the plan is updated, staff will reapply for the PARTF grant. Planning Director Martin commented that it would better benefit the Town to wait and see if the grant is approved in August 2018.

The proposed project of Town Hall Expansion was discussed. Cost depending on the design option ranges from \$1.7 to \$4.1 million. Council member Bryant stated that he realizes that Town Hall space is tight, but suggested that the Town have 500 new rooftops (1000 new residents) on the books, and be able to see additional town revenue before considering expansion. Council member Williams asked if Council went with the smaller addition for renovation, could additions be phased in as needed. Town Manager Longino responded that it could. Finance Director Steve Shealy provided information regarding funding from bonds stating that the rates are good, but there is also have higher issuance cost. The Town would have to have a bond rating that involves a significant bond rating package process. Town Manager suggested that the Town could look at USDA loans that also prove low interest rates. Mayor Young requested that staff provide an outline detailing all the services the Town provides with the cost per citizen or household for public information.

(Copied in full, PowerPoint, Projections and Needs Analysis and Appendixes are filed on CD titled: "Town Council Special Meeting Supporting Documents" dated December 5, 2017 in CD Book #1 titled: "Town Council Supporting Documents")

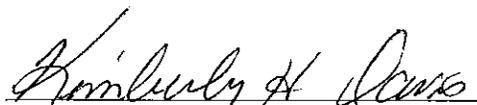
ITEM 5. NEXT STEPS

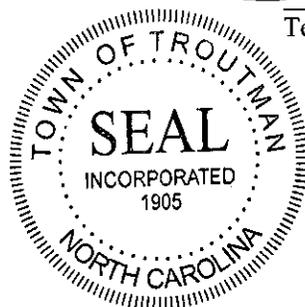
Council agreed upon the following:

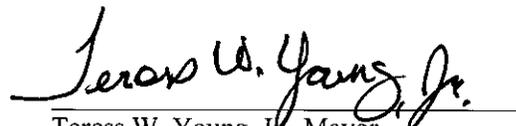
- **Street Improvement Plan:** Repair 5 of the top 10 worse streets, allocating \$850,000 including cost of construction, contingencies and engineering fees. Town Engineers and staff will determine the 5 streets to be repaired, then present those streets to Council.
- **Gateway Signage:** Wait until the CRTPO grant funds become available in October 2018, using the grant funds to purchase the gateway property (saving \$22,400).
- **Lytton Street Connector Project:** Wait, continue discussions with NCDOT and surrounding towns.
- **Park Phase II:** Wait on community input, and to see if PARTF grant is approved in August 2018.
- **Town Hall Expansion:** Wait until there are 500 new roof tops on the books before discussing design options.
- **Project Fitness:** Permission for staff and Mr. Getsinger to continue negotiations for acquisition.

ITEM 6. ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Council member Troutman, and seconded by Council member Jablonski, and unanimously carried, the Special Meeting of December 05, 2017 was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.


Kimberly H. Davis, Town Clerk




Teross W. Young, Jr., Mayor