

**TOWN OF GRIFTON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORKSHOP MEETING**

August 5, 2014

Present: Mayor B.R. Jackson; Commissioners E.F. Albritton, Mary Grace Bright, Will Barnes, Mike Coles, Sammy Whitehurst; Manger Joe Albright

Absent: None

Mayor Jackson called the meeting to order.

Mayor Jackson led the Board of Commissioners in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Recognition of Persons to be Heard:

*Annie Harrison of 6739 Church Street came before the Board as a representative of the Shad Festival Board. She is speaking in response to a motion brought to the Board of Commissioners by Commissioner Coles to have the Shad Festival put in abeyance.

Ms. Harrison explained all the processes of requests for volunteers that were done last year and this year. She also stated that there were unforeseen circumstances that came up at the last minute which was no fault of the Shad Board. She stated the Board done the best they could with what they had. She also went through the trials and tribulations they were faced with and what they are planning for the future. However, they are hesitant to make definite plans because of the motion that Commissioner Coles made. She also stated that the Shad Board would like to continue with the festival. She stated that the Shad Board would like for the Town Board to take the time to look at all sides of everybody involved and they are willing to accept any volunteers. She informed the Board that the by-laws have been amended and she feels all parties should work together and make a great festival.

*Jewel Grimes of 613 Casey Drive stated that she has been in Grifton since the first Shad Festival in 1969 and she thought this past festival would be the last. She would like to do whatever she can to help the festival progress. She also talked about the resistance for information and response from Cyndy Graham. She feels there is a lack of communication. She would like to do what is best for Grifton and make people proud.

*Casey Tripp of 120 Pinnon Dr Ayden, NC, stated that she has been helping with the festival since 2008 and she is also a Board member. She feels everyone should work together and help each other to make a great festival.

*Wayland Summerlin of 6526 Church Street stated that he is not sure what is going on but feels there is a power play going on. He feels this past year was not the greatest but all parties involved should work together.

*Mayor Jackson stated that what needs to happen is all should work together in harmony to get the problem resolved and to keep any negativity off the streets.

*Lisa Cauley of 6227 Brassie Drive stated that she had experience with the group from last year. She also feels the groups should merge and there should be some openness about who is on the Board including the new group. She feels direction needs to be given and the new group should be added to the current Shad Festival Board.

Commissioner Bright made a motion to enter into a public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Albritton. The motion was carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

The purpose of the public hearing is to hear public comment and answer questions on a rezoning request from Highland Solar Center.

Manager Albright stated that a request has been received from Highland Solar Center, LLC to rezone Lenoir County parcel #456903100884 located at 3717 S. Highland Blvd from R-4 Residential to I-Industrial. The applicants intended use will be a solar farm.

Manager Albright stated that the Planning Board has recommended approval. However, the vote was not a unanimous vote. Some of the Board members had concerns with the location and visibility of the entrance into Town. Manager Albright did inform the Board that the applicants have offered steps to address the concerns.

Manager Albright also stated that all legal requirements have been met.

Mr. Kyle West from Highland Solar Center came before the Board to give a brief presentation. He talked about the benefits and steps taken for the project to be approved because of the concerns of the Planning Board members.

He asked the Board for approval.

Commissioner Bright asked if there is any intent to put anything on the unused property.

Mr. West responded no.

Commissioner Bright asked if there would be any wind projects done.

Mr. West responded no.

Commissioner Bright clarified that all tax benefits would go to Lenoir County and not the Town of Grifton.

Mr. West confirmed her statement.

Commissioner Coles asked what the minimum plot size is for the project.

Mr. West responded by saying about 30 acres.

Commissioner Barnes asked how much would be fenced in.

Mr. West responded by saying most all of the project would have fencing.

*Don Johnson of 3605 S Highland Blvd asked if there were going to be buffers on the residential side.

Mr. West stated that his company would be willing to extend the vegetative screen.

Mr. Johnson asked about the humming noise that was mentioned.

Mr. West stated that it could not be heard by property owners.

Mr. Johnson stated that there is already a problem with drainage on the property.

Mr. West responded that there will be no erosion with the project.

Mr. Johnson asked about the Town of Grifton annexing the property.

Manager Albright stated that there are no plans to annex any areas in that vicinity.

*Sam Edwards of 3556 S. Highland Blvd. asked how it will adjust the real estate value.

Mr. West stated that there will be no change in property values.

Mr. Edwards where they are planning to enter the property when construction begins.

Mr. West stated that would be up to the residents and the property owner.

Mr. Edwards asked if it would restrict hunting.

Mr. West answered no.

Commissioner Whitehurst made a motion to exit the Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barnes. The motion was carried unanimously.

Discussion/Action Items

1. Shad Festival

Manger Albright stated that this item was tabled at the last meeting and in order for it to be put back on the agenda to be discussed there needs to be a motion and a positive vote made.

Commissioner Barnes made a motion to put the Shad Festival back on the agenda for discussion. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bright. The motion was carried unanimously.

Commissioner Whitehurst stated that the three biggest issues are organization, communication and differences. He stated that there seems to be willingness on both sides for discussion. He feels this issue needs to be done in harmony instead of each trying to work against one another.

Commissioner Bright stated that one of the speakers stated that we are a family town. All families have disagreements and we need to figure out how to resolve the disagreement. She stated that she would like for the Shad Board to come to the Town Board with an idea of how they will continue and sustain. In addition, she would like to see how many current Board members there are. She also stated that she would also like to see whatever number of current Board members there are that that number of people from the other group also be appointed and to have co-chairs. She feels there are different skills that can be used from both groups to make a great Shad Festival and all should work in harmony with one another. She would like to have this information at the next regular Board meeting.

Commissioner Whitehurst asked that the Board give them 30 days.

Commissioner Coles disagreed because of timing and feels it should be done at the next meeting.

Commissioner Bright agreed with Commissioner Coles but stated that the decision was ultimately up to the Shad Board.

The Shad Board agreed to have all information requested and issues resolved by the next regular meeting.

Annie Harrison asked for clarification on exactly what information was being asked to be provided.

Commissioner Bright stated that she would like to see concrete doable ideas for sustainability and then for there to be the same number of Board members from both groups along with co-chairs.

Commissioner Bright also commented that she appreciates the time spent by all on the Shad Festival.

2. *Non-Contiguous Annexation Request – Resolution 2014-07*

Manager Albright recommended this item be put on next week's agenda. The Board agreed.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Bright commented that she hopes all will work together and move forward and respect one another.

Commissioner Barnes stated that he was glad to see everyone working together. He also stated that someone had asked about sending a thank you letter to Chief Cauley about the 18 wheeler parking issue. He also stated that people are complaining about the overgrowth at the old golf course in county club.

Commissioner Whitehurst asked Chief Cauley to keep an eye on the pond by his house and if his officers see any children playing in it to please inquire.

Commissioner Albritton stated that there are 2 pot holes on Niblick Road that need immediate attention. He also stated that people are commenting on the tennis courts at the St. David Street park. He would like to see them fixed and used.

Manager Albright stated that there will be a bid opening for the Streets Project next Thursday.

Commissioner Bright made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Coles. The motion was carried unanimously.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted
Angel Hudson
Town of Grifton