

**TOWN OF GRIFTON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
February 18, 2014**

Present: Mayor B.R. Jackson; Commissioners E.F. Albritton, William Barnes, Jr., Mary Grace Bright, Mike Coles; Manager Joe Albright, Clerk Angel Hudson

Absent: Commissioner Sammy Whitehurst

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.

Commissioner Albritton made a motion to accept the January minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Coles. The motion was carried unanimously.

Recognition of Persons to be Heard: None

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Barnes made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Albritton. The motion was carried unanimously for the following items:

1. 2004 Doubtful Utility Account Write-Offs
2. Depot & St. David Street Park Building Renovation-Architect Services

Action Items

1. Auditing Firm Selection

Commissioner Barnes stated that he has looked through all the proposals and it seems to him that price has a lot to do with years of experience.

Manager Albright stated that he and Angel Hudson had scored them together and we both felt that Carr, Riggs, and Ingram were the most qualified firm. Manager Albright reminded the Board that when bidding a service contract you do not have to choose the lowest price. He also informed the Board that 5 bids were received and 3 were chosen for your review by qualifications recommended by the Local Government Commission. Manager Albright and Angel Hudson recommended that we remain with Carr, Riggs, and Ingram.

Commissioner Barnes made a comment that they are also very close to the Town of Grifton.

Manager Albright gave descriptions of the levels of service Carr, Riggs, and Ingram have given us and not charged.

Commissioner Barnes feels customer service is very important.

Commissioner Coles asked if there was a huge increase in the current auditor's price. Manager Albright stated that they have been consistent in the last several years in price. Commissioner Coles stated that he feels sometimes the price offset makes up in other ways.

Manager Albright stated that one of the firms wanted to use electronic methods of auditing. He stated that although he is a big fan of electronics there would be some disconnect somehow.

Commissioner Coles stated that he is not a big fan of being geographically separated from the entity. He feels you lose closeness and having a personal relationship is better for the Town.

Commissioner Bright apologized for being late due to an emergency.

Commissioner Bright stated that working with the State she is familiar with the electronic version of auditing. Although it is aggravating she feels it is the wave of the future. She also feels customer service is important but is it worth the money. She does not feel it is unusual for auditors to travel. She also stated that she does not have strong feelings one way or another.

Manager Albright stated that he felt at the end of the day it all comes down to customer service and the relationship that has been formed. He also stated the Local Government Commission is not going to let anyone give us a slack audit.

Manager Albright commented that from a management standpoint and knowing what he and Angel Hudson know as it relates to the Town that it is well worth the money to stay with Carr, Riggs, and Ingram.

Manager Albright asked Clerk Angel Hudson how she felt and she replied that with the streets bond coming up she feels more comfortable dealing with the firm we already have a relationship with.

Manager Albright and Angel Hudson stated that they would obviously work with whomever the Board selects.

Commissioner Barnes reiterated that he feels customer service is worth the money and relationships are very important.

Commissioner Bright asked how long the auditor has been doing the audit.

Manager Albright replied that he thought it was 20 plus years.

Commissioner Bright feels a fresh set of eyes need to be used.

Manager Albright clarified that the same people have not done the audit each year only the same auditing firm.

Commissioner Bright asked if it would be worth questioning Carr, Riggs, and Ingram about the price.

Manager Albright stated that was his intention but he could not proceed without the Board's approval.

Commissioner Coles moved to accept Carr, Riggs, and Ingram and to give Manager Albright the authority to negotiate the price. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barnes. The motion was carried unanimously.

Manager Albright informed the Board that there is a vacancy on the Fire Department Advisory Board and recommends that Commissioner Barnes be appointed to this seat.

Commissioner Bright moved to appoint Commissioner Barnes to the Fire Department Advisory Board. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Albritton. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Albritton stated that the letter from the State about the 2013 audit has the wrong Mayor's name on it.

Manager Albright stated that this has been corrected.

Commissioner Barnes asked if any other problems have come up with the Sewer Rehab Project. Manager Albright stated that no other problems have arisen so far and they are about 80% complete with the punch list items.

Commissioner Barnes reiterated that the pot holes are terrible.

Manager Albright stated that utilities has been reading meters this week but has been informed to take care of the pot holes once the meters have been read.

Mayor Jackson asked if Mr. English at Carolina Vinyl Products is pleased with the work on the sewer line.

Manager Albright stated that he hasn't heard anything different.

Commissioner Coles asked if the Town of Grifton was endorsing a tree cutting company out of Greenville.

Manager Albright replied by saying no.

Commissioner Coles stated that people have been approached by this company stating that the Town of Grifton has recommended them. He also stated that he asked the people to try and retain the card so we would know who these people are.

Commissioner Bright reiterated that she feels business owners should be aware of their responsibility concerning the sidewalks in the event of an ice event.

Commissioner Bright stated that Shad Festival is coming up and she would like for the Town to put forth the effort to make it look its very best. She commented that the Library needs to be power washed. She also commented that she would like for someone to ride around the Town and assess the things that need to be done before Shad Festival such as; street signs need to be cleaned, letters need to be sent to business owners and ask them to take the Christmas wreaths out of the window, etc.

Commissioner Barnes moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Albritton. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted

Angel Hudson

Town of Grifton