

TOWN OF GRIFTON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORKSHOP MEETING
September 4, 2012

Present: Mayor B.R. Jackson; Commissioners William Barnes, Jr., Mary Grace Bright, Richard Hill, Sammy Whitehurst, E.F. Albritton; Manager 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:

*Mary Newton Moore of 6931 Pitt Street came before the Board to express her concern of the nuisance properties in her neighborhood. She asked the Board what their plans are to take care of this problem. Manager Albright stated that he is working on a list of properties that will be possible condemnation properties. Ms. Moore stated that she is mainly speaking of the grass being out of control. Manager Albright stated that those issues are being addressed. He explained that when grass becomes a nuisance the Town sends a letter to the property owner and that person has 10 days to cut the grass or either the Town has it done and the property owner is billed. He told Ms. Moore that if she had a specific area of concern to let him know and he would take a look at the property.

*Barbara Garrett of 475 Main Street stated that there is a drainage problem on the corner of Main Street and Church Street. Manager Albright responded by saying that problem has been looked at and we possibly have a resolution.

Public Hearing

Mayor Jackson called the public hearing to order.

The Purpose of the public hearing was to hear public input concerning Mrs. Tonnia Pollard's request to change the property located at 459 Main Street (Parcel #'s 19556 and 16352) from R-6 Residential to CBD Central Business District. Mrs. Pollard would like to put a fish and chips restaurant on the property.

Manager Albright stated that public notices and legal requirements have been met for this permit.

Manager Albright also stated that the Planning Board has recommended approval.

Mayor Jackson asked for comments.

- *Tonnia Pollard, owner of the property, who lives at 302 E Hanrahan Road came before the Board to ask the Board to give her a chance to make the business work.
- *Alonza Wallace, owner of the property, who lives at 302 E Hanrahan Road came before the Board to state that he felt this would bring more business to Grifton.
- *Lorraine Washington, Snow Hill Commissioner, came before the Board in favor of the keeping the business in the community.
- *Cassandra Watson of 6569 Dogwood Lane would like for the business to be in Grifton to keep from having to go out of town and she feels it will help the community.
- *Montashia Wallace of 302 E Hanrahan Road stated that she supports Friday Night Fish and thinks it will help the community.
- *Gloria Kent of 923 Chebistal Drive supports keeping the business in Grifton.
- *Lorenzo Mewborn of 635 E Hanrahan Road stated that it would be nice to have somewhere else to eat.
- *Deloris Wallace of 588 Cannon Blvd supports keeping the business in Grifton.
- *Andre Kent of 923 Chebistal Drive supports the idea and feels we should keep the money in Grifton.
- *Keith Browne of 5961 Berkley Court supports the new business in Grifton.
- *Felicia Carmon of 940 Allen Rd. Greenville, NC stated that she felt this new business would help other businesses in Grifton.
- *Gordon Carmon of 6284 Gum Swamp Rd feels a new business would help the community as a whole.
- *Shante Hardy of 3009 Kinston Circle, Greenville, NC feels the restaurant is a nice idea for Grifton and will bring more revenue to the community along with jobs.
- *Frederick Parker of 504 Bayle Dr. Greenville NC, owner of the Daycare and Church near property, is concerned about alcohol being served and crime.
- *Manager Albright addressed the issue at hand stating that this public hearing has nothing to do with whether or not the Town wants a Fish and Chips Restaurant. It is about whether or not the Board feels it would be beneficial to change the zoning from R-6 to CBD. If the property is changed to CBD the property can be used for anything allowed under the CBD allowable uses.
- *Mary Newton Moore of 6931 Pitt Street is not in favor of the rezoning because she is concerned about what may be put there in the future. She also does not want to smell fish all the time. She feels a residential neighborhood should remain residential. She stated that there are already plenty of spaces uptown that could be used for their purpose. She is also concerned with the traffic issue.
- *Mayor Jackson stated that the Board is on neither side and are simply listening to public comment.
- *Barbara Garrett of 475 Main Street stated her concern of what might be put on the property if the Fish and Chips does not work. She feels residential should remain residential.
- *Abigail Johnson of 302 Creekshore Drive feels the restaurant should be taken uptown instead of in a residential neighborhood. She is also concerned with traffic issues.
- *Adrian Larry of 6812 Church Street stated she was in favor of the restaurant.
- *Tonnia Pollard commented that there should be no concerns with the traffic because her parents run illegal numbers for 20 years with no revenue to the Town and there was no problem with traffic then. She stated that kids need somewhere to go. She also stated that

there would be no alcohol. She wants the Board to give her a chance and instead of running a illegal operation she would be legal and the Town would be making revenue.

*Karen Watson of 6569 Dogwood Lane came before the Board in favor or the Restaurant, keeping the revenue in Grifton and bringing business to Grifton.

*Regina Daniels of 6553 Dogwood Lane is in favor of the Restaurant.

*Barbara Garrett stated that she is concerned about the type of business that may be there in the future.

*Carl Ebron of 320 Olive Branch Blvd stated that he felt there should be a happy medium between the two.

Commissioner Bright made a motion to close the public hearing. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Whitehurst. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Jackson closed the Public Hearing

Manager Albright introduced Jay Farin of the Pitt County Boys and Girls Club.

Mr. Farin came before the Board to ask for consideration of financial support from the Town of Grifton. Mr. Farin stated that they have about 35 members from the Grifton Community and with the price of gas it is extremely expensive to pick these members up and carry them home. The Boys and Girls Club also helps these members strive in school by helping with homework and education.

Manager Albright told the Board that in previous years funds have been budgeted for the Boys and Girls Club. However, for whatever reason, the funds were not being requested by the Boys and Girls Club during the past several years so the line item has been eliminated.

Discussion Items

1. *Board of Elections Agreement Addendum*

Manager Albright stated that in 2009 the Town of Grifton and Pitt County Board of Elections signed an agreement to have the Town's municipal elections. Manager Albright stated that at that time Lenoir County was not included in the agreement but needs to be included. This Addendum adds Lenoir County as a party to the agreement. Manager Albright recommended this item be put on the consent agenda at the next regular Board meeting. The Board agreed.

2. *Street Improvements Project-Next Workshop Meeting Date*

Manager Albright stated that he felt another Special Workshop is needed to review and approve the citizen survey for distribution. Manger Albright also stated that from this meeting he would like to talk about scheduling public input sessions and ways to get the information to the citizens. He suggested the date of September 18, 2012 at 7:00pm. Manger Albright recommended this item be put on the consent agenda at the next regular Board meeting. The Board agreed.

3. *Golf Cart Operation on Town Streets- Ordinance No.2012-02*

Manager Albright stated that he and Chief Cauley have come up with an ordinance they feel would suit the needs of Grifton. Manager Albright asked the Board for feedback on the proposed ordinance.

Commissioner Hill asked how this ordinance would deal with people from out of Town. Manager Albright responded by saying that all golf carts have to be registered with the Police Department whether they are in town or out of town.

Manager Albright recommended this item be put on the consent agenda at the next regular Board meeting. The Board agreed.

4. *Façade Grant Application-613 Queen Street*

Manager Albright informed the Board that a Façade Grant Application has been received from Mr. David Jones. Mr. Jones has recently purchased the property at 613 Queen Street and is refurbishing the building. The Community Development Committee has approved the application. However, they approved it with the understanding that all NCSTEP funds are depleted. He also stated the CDC approved it because it was an eligible project. Manager Albright recommended that we table the application until such funds become available. He also stated that he would like to budget for Façade grants in future budgets. Manager Albright recommended this item be put on the consent agenda as a tabled item at the next regular Board meeting. The Board agreed.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Bright stated that she realizes that we are only 2 months into the budget but she would like for Manager Albright to make a budget amendment in order to help the Boys and Girls club.

Commissioner Bright stated that she feels that the whole Board needs to think very carefully about changing a residential area to a commercial area. She agrees that we need new places to eat but is not sure if putting it in a residential area would be the correct choice. She stated that we need to put ourselves in the shoes of the residents that already live there.

Manager Albright stated that past committees have envisioned businesses growing in that direction. (Towards Main Street)

Mayor Jackson is concerned with the narrowness of the street and the ability for the street to handle the traffic.

Manager Albright stated that the zoning request would not be on the consent agenda and would be under action items on the agenda at the next regular Board meeting.

Commissioner Hill complimented the edging of the streets that has been done.

Commissioner Whitehurst asked Manager Albright about the house on Queen Street that burned down months ago.

Manager Albright responded by saying the house was on the condemnation list.

Commissioner Hill stated that on Tucker Street there is a pink house and a white house right across the street from the pink house that needs to be added to the condemnation list.

Commissioner Barnes complimented Manager Albright for being proactive and being able to give answers when the questions were asked.

Commissioner Albritton mentioned the drainage issue in the ditch just beyond Main Street beside the RailRoad track.

Commissioner Bright made a motion to enter into Closed Session concerning a Personnel Matter as authorized by N.C.G.S.143-318.11(a)(6). Motion was seconded by Commissioner Albritton. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Whitehurst made a motion to exit the Closed Session. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Barnes. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Whitehurst made a motion to give Manager Albright a \$1200.00 bonus and a 3% raise. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Albritton. Motion carried with Commissioner Hill voting against the motion.

Commissioner Bright made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Barnes. Motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted
Angel Hudson
Town of Grifton