

February 14,2000

The Middlesex Governing Body met in regular session on February 14, 2000 at 7:30p.m. in the Conference Room of the Town Hall. Members present were Mayor Bobby R. Bissette, Commissioners Harold Meacombs, Fred Hough, Luke Robinson, Isaac Lewis and Bascoe Lewis. Mayor Bissette called the meeting to order and the invocation was given by Commissioner Isaac Lewis.

There were approximately 50 people present. Mayor Bissette stated that he would give each guest present an opportunity to speak but would limit the time per person to two minutes. The first person requesting to speak was Vincent Brock. Brock stated that he wanted to know if the board was concerned enough about his character to fire him, why weren't they concerned about the clerk and the mayor's character, further stating that the clerk assaulted a bank teller years ago while on duty and the mayor had been arrested and found guilty of assault on a minor and Brock held up a sheet of paper stating that he had the Mayor's criminal history and would give anyone a copy that desired it. Brock stated that he wanted the copy of a letter written to the board by Sgt. Ridgway about the incident at Brock's residence removed from his personnel file.

Clerk Bissette corrected Brock's remarks, stating that she was not working the day of the incident at the bank.

James and Beth Cardona were present and Beth Cardona stated that the water bills were mailed this past month without the meters being read and that it was illegal to estimate bills and to send them out without proper notification to the user. Mayor Bissette stated that due to the ground being covered in snow, the estimates had to be made. James Cardona was worried that the next bill would be higher and create a problem with his household budget.

Brenda Taborn was present and stated that she had gotten a water bill for over \$1300.00 and had several leaks fixed under the house and wanted the board to reduce the bill. Mayor Bissette told her that it would be handled in the same manner that all adjustments were made that she needed a letter to the board in order for an adjustment to be made.

Charles Wood addressed the board and wanted to know why he had not had a meter set at his residence, stating that he had requested twice to have one set. The clerk informed him that the cost for the taps being put there had not been paid. Wood stated that he had not received any notice of the cost but would make sure they were paid if he owed them.

Richard Price asked the board to take a look around at the people here in support of Vennie Brock and to put the right man back into the office of Chief of Police for everyone's sake.

Mayor Bissette asked if anyone else wanted to speak at this time and none else spoke.

Commissioner Bascoe Lewis moved to accept the Minutes of the previous meeting as being recorded correctly, his motion was seconded by Commissioner Fred Hough and carried unanimously,

The clerk presented the Financial Statements for the previous month and they were accepted as correct in a motion by Commissioner Robinson, seconded by Commissioner Meacombs and carried unanimously.

Utility Director, Richard Bucklin was present and gave his report to the board, stating that the new pump is being wired this week, and that several driveways in need of repair would be taken care of when the dry weather permits.

Acting Chief Ridgway gave a report on the activities of the Police Department for the previous month, asking that the board give some recognition to the ALEO for the help they provided to the town during the snow, providing a four-wheel vehicle and an officer to drive it during the time the town cars could not be used.

Commissioner Isaac Lewis stated that the corner of South Walnut, just off Pamlico Street had a water run off problem and that water was running across the road and onto the property of John Brantley, further stating that a ditch needed to be dug there but people cut the grass right to the edge of the street and he asked if anyone had any suggestions to help solve the problem.

Mayor Bissette stated that the issue of painting the water tower had been tabled and a decision need to be made on it.

Commissioner Meacombs moved to contract to Utility Service to paint the exterior of the tower this fiscal year for \$19,735.00 and to paint the interior of the tower in the year 2001 for a cost of \$23,395.00, his motion was seconded by Commissioner Isaac Lewis and carried unanimously.

After reviewing the proposed quotes from the League for insurance on the town's real estate, Commissioner Hough moved to accept the increased values from A1 Insurance Company, his motion was seconded by Commissioner Robinson and carried unanimously.

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Commissioner Isaac Lewis moved to hire Wanda Peele on a permanent basis, and to increase

the salary of Joshua Biggs and Wanda Peele by fifty cents per hour, and to make the increase retroactive to the date that ends their six months probationary period, his motion was seconded by Commissioner Meacombs and carried unanimously.

After receiving a request from Derek Bissette to officially close the portion of West Exum Street from West Finch Avenue to North Nash Street, Mayor Bissette excused himself from chairing the issue due to his being the father of the petitioner, and asked Mayor Pro-Tem Meacombs to chair this issue.

Mayor Pro-Tem Meacombs stated that the town had received the request and that it was thought to have been done by a prior board but that it was never done legally and that the proper steps needed to be carried out, first a resolution of intent had to be adopted and then a public hearing would have to be held on the matter.

Resolution of Intent

A Resolution Declaring the Intention of the Middlesex Board of Commissioners to consider the closing of West Exum Street from a point off West Finch Avenue through Block 28 to North Nash Street.

WHEREAS, G.S. 160A-299 authorizes the Middlesex Board of Commissioners to close public streets and alleys; and

WHEREAS, the Middlesex Board of Commissioners considers it advisable to conduct a public hearing for the purpose of giving consideration to the closing of West Exum Street between West Finch Avenue and North Nash Street;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Middlesex Board of Commissioners that:

- (1) A meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on the 10th day of April 2000, in the Conference Room of the Town Hall to consider a resolution closing that portion of West Exum Street between West Finch Avenue and North Nash Street.
- (2) The Town Clerk is hereby directed to publish this Resolution of Intent once a week for four successive weeks in the Wilson Daily Times newspaper of general circulation in the area.

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- (3) The Town Clerk is further directed to transmit by registered or certified mail to each

owner of property abutting upon that portion of said street a copy of this Resolution of Intent.

- (4) The Town Clerk is further directed to cause adequate notices of this Resolution of Intent and the scheduled public hearing to be posted as required by G.S. 160A-299.

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Isaac Lewis and duly seconded by Commissioner Robinson the above resolution was duly adopted by the Middlesex Board of Commissioners at the meeting held on the 14th day of February 2000, in the Town Hall.

Upon call for a vote the following Commissioners voted in the affirmative:

Fred Hough
Isaac Lewis
Bascoe Lewis
Luke Robinson

There were no negative votes.

This the 14th day of February, 2000

Mayor

ATTEST:

Town Clerk

After the resolution had been voted on, Mayor Pro-tem Meacombs then removed himself from chairing the meeting and Mayor Bissette returned to his seat.

Commissioner Isaac Lewis moved to hold a public hearing on the issue on April 10, 2000 at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Town Hall, his motion was seconded by Commissioner Robinson and carried unanimously.

The board reviewed a request from the Fire Department requesting that the town institute a fire tax district, the request was tabled until further investigation into the matter can be obtained.

Commissioner Bascoe Lewis moved to advertise for the position of Chief of Police, his motion was seconded by Commissioner Isaac Lewis and carried unanimously, the clerk was then instructed to advertise in the local papers and to include the following requirements:

- a) certified by NC Criminal Justice
- b) willing to locate to Middlesex area
- c) Minimum of five years in law enforcement

Officer Richard Price asked the mayor who would be doing the background investigations on the applicants for the chief position, stating that he felt it would be a conflict of interest for Ridgway to investigate the applicants when he would be one of them.

Mayor Bisette stated that it could be done by an agency outside the town.

Edna Mount stated that the town needed more officers with CPR, Character, Principle and Respect, and suggested that Internal Affairs be allowed to handle the investigations.

Alvin Brantley addressed the board and stated that the citizens of Middlesex had a right to know why Vennie Brock was fired from the position as chief. Mayor Bisette stated that he had told the reason at least fifty times, that he was fired due to conduct unbecoming to a police officer according to what the town wanted in a officer and that was all the statement that would be made at this time.

Barbara Bunn came into the meeting from within the hallway and stated that if the town wanted to judge a man about his character, then they should look at the character of the man replacing Brock who is sleeping with his best friends wife. The Mayor stated that she was out of order. Ms. Bunn left the room.

Larry Daniel was present and stated that the park needed to be kept in better condition and to keep it so that citizens could use it. Commissioner Hough stated that he had bids out now to repair the shelters.

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Commissioner Isaac Lewis moved to enter into closed session to review the Minutes of the Closed Session held on January 10, 2000, his motion was seconded by Commissioner Robinson and carried unanimously.

The Clerk passed out the Minutes of the closed session and read them aloud to the board members and after hearing them, Commissioner Isaac Lewis moved to enter back into open session, his motion was seconded by Commissioner Robinson and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Isaac Lewis moved to accept the Minutes of the Closed Session, held on January 10, 2000 as correctly recorded, his motion was seconded by Commissioner Bascoe Lewis and carried unanimously.

Peggy Bissette
Town Clerk

Mayor Bobby R. Bissette
Commissioners
Harold Meacombs
Fred Hough
Luke Robinson
Isaac Lewis
Bascoe Lewis