

Meeting Minutes
June 10, 2013

Mayor Lewis opened the floor at 7:30 pm for the public hearing to discuss the proposed 2013-2014 budget. Robert Johnson suggested the budget to be rejected. He was opposed to the \$3.00 per month recycle fee. He also asked what contracted services represented in several departments, and asked why funds were budgeted in the tax collections when Nash County bills and collects taxes for the town. He also added that Sonoco Recycling was making a sizeable profit and should be paying the town for the recycle tons.

Commissioner Bachmann explained contracted services in the sanitation department represents Waste Industries charges for landfill tipping fees and fuel surcharges for the town's garbage. Mayor Lewis explained contract service amounts represents computer software and hardware maintenance in the Police Department, Administration, and Water and Sewer Department and services performed in these departments, as well as the Parks Department. In Powell Bill, contracted services represents street paving and ditch cleaning. He further explained the street paving schedule is every three years in order to get a better price for a larger job. He also reported the town did approach Sonoco about revenue for recycling about two years ago, and we were told the town did not have enough volume. Clerk Lambert responded to the tax collection budget question, stating she was still responsible for the collection of all prior year taxes.

Brandie Holt also spoke against the new recycle fee, stating the residents should not have to pay for trash and recycle carts. She also asked what the Police Drug Fund was for, and added that library salaries should be trimmed due to the lack of summer programs.

Mayor Lewis advised that Police Drug Funds were used for undercover drug work and investigations. Commissioner Davis explained the library had summer programs in previous years, but they were discontinued due very little participation. She added that if enough interest is shown, the summer programs could be added again.

Cash Cameron expressed he would like to see East Hanes Avenue paved and the ditches need cleaning. Mayor Lewis assured him that East Hanes Avenue would be reviewed before obtaining paving quotes next year.

Mayor Lewis pointed out \$13,750 in swimming pool revenues was omitted from the proposed budget, reducing the General Fund Balance Appropriation from \$184,560 to \$170, 810. He explained the figures in the swimming pool budget are based on sixteen (16) weeks of operation, which spans over two fiscal year budgets.

With no further public comment or questions on the proposed budget, Mayor Lewis closed the hearing at 8:00pm, called the regular meeting to order, and gave the invocation. Commissioners Harold Meacombs, Danny Alford, Cherrye Davis, Dale Bachmann, and J.W. McClenny were all present. Approximately fifteen guests attended.

Mayor Lewis opened the floor for the Pubic Comment Session. Brandie Holt and Edna Mount addressed the Board about various concerns.

Stacey Meek addressed the Board requesting to change the Town Code of Ordinances to allow chickens. First, she apologized for not checking with the town regarding regulations for chickens, adding that she had seen chickens behind her house. She presented several suggestions and a wide array of options from other local governments, adding that responsible chicken coop owners gave less problems than dogs in most situations. She recommended the following: limit the number of hens to eight (8) per acre, reducing the number of hens allowed proportional to lot size; specify that hens be confined to the owners lot; require a three (3) square foot coop size per bird and birds must be fifty (50) feet from any property line; present signed authorizations from all adjoining property owners; and require a permit with a fee between \$25-\$50. She added that a responsible coop owner would have no problem paying the permit fee. She indicated that towns who allow coops, but have none or only a few, is most likely due to the fact that coops are a passing fad and people loose interest when they find out the responsibility involved. Finally, Ms. Meek explained that she was not trying to turn the town into a barnyard, but progressive neighborhoods are now allowing coops.

Mayor Lewis added that the majority of lots in towns were no more than fifty (50) feet wide and would not qualify for coops by Ms. Meek's recommendation. He also added that if the Board wishes to pursue the matter, it should go to the Planning Board for a recommendation and there would be advertising expense to hold a public hearing and legal expense for establishing guidelines/ordinance changes. Commissioner Bachmann stated he would like more time to review and talk to other citizens and moved to table the matter until the July 8, 2013 meeting. His motion was seconded by Commissioner McClenny and passed unanimously. Mayor Lewis will extend the deadline for Ms. Meeks' civil citation for the ordinance violation issued for the chicken coop.

Commissioner Bachmann requested the June 4, 2013 budget workshop minutes be changed to reflect the amount of money added to the Police Department salaries for the extra officer he requested for Friday and Saturday night coverage. Mayor Lewis advised there was no money amount agreed upon. After a brief discussion, the minutes were changed to read "Everyone agreed there is enough money in the 2013-2014 police salary budget for the extra coverage requested". Commissioner Bachmann moved to approve the May 7, May 13, and May 24 minutes, and June 4, 2013 minutes with the requested change. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Meacombs and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Bachmann requested to add a Closed Session under G.S.143-318.11(a)(6) to discuss a personnel matter to the agenda, and Finance Officer Jennifer Lambert requested to add a 2012-2013 budget amendment for bad debts to be written off to be approved. The amended agenda was unanimously approved in a motion by Commissioner Meacombs, which was seconded by Commissioner McClenny.

The May financial statements were approved as correct in a motion by Commissioner Meacombs and seconded by Commissioner Davis. The vote was four to one, with Commissioner Bachmann being the dissenting vote. He did not elaborate.

Public Works Supervisor Dale Bachmann reported the state's annual inspection of the town's well sites yielded no problems.

Mayor Lewis reported Duke Energy Progress has chosen a 320-acre section of the Middlesex Corporate Center to participate in the 2013 Site Readiness Program to prepare the location for potential industrial development. The Middlesex Corporate Center was one of ten sites in thirty five counties chosen by Duke Energy Progress for an economic development/marketability study. A report should be available near the end of July.

Commissioner McClenny requested that the bathroom in the Community Building be remodeled and commented that the entrance doors need to be changed to open to the outside. Mayor Lewis will obtain quotes, noting \$3,000 remains in the 2012-2013 budget and \$3,000 is included in the 2013-2014 budget for capital outlay.

The 2012-2013 budget amendment approved at the June 4, 2013 budget workshop did not include \$200 for training for the swimming pool certified operator. Commissioner Alford moved to add \$200 in training to the swimming pool budget, increasing that department budget from \$7,785 to \$7,985. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Meacombs and carried unanimously.

Mayor Lewis and Mike Meyers with Envirolink met with City of Raleigh officials and Public Works staff to negotiate the fourteen percent (14%) sewer treatment increase effective July 1, 2013. Kenny Waldroup, a Public Works staff, came to Middlesex and met with Mayor Lewis and Dale Bachmann and gave the impression that the rate could be negotiated, along with other questionable charges on the town's City of Raleigh sewer treatment bill. Mr. Waldroup indicated the City of Raleigh has a new approach of fairness, and suggested that Middlesex meet with Raleigh officials to negotiate the rate. According to the City of Raleigh, they needed 7% increase in water and 7% in sewer, but they decided to place the entire increase on sewer rates. Therefore, the 14% proposed increase for 2013-2014 to be implemented July 1, 2013, Middlesex is a sewer only customer, so therefore we will bear the brunt of the entire 15% increase for the current 2012-2013 year and the 14% increase for next fiscal year (a 29% increase in two years). Also, Middlesex is the only Raleigh contract customer who owns all of it's lines to the Raleigh's pump station at the Mudcat Stadium, and therefore, seems unfair the town is billed a monthly transportation charge. Mayor Lewis pleaded the town's case, but City of Raleigh officials would not budge and referred to the contract between Middlesex and the City of Raleigh.

Commissioner Bachmann pointed out he was not in favor of increasing sewer rates, but at this point, the town has no choice. He confirmed that the Local Government Commission would come and set your rates if the Water and Sewer Fund did not remain financially solvent, which happened to the Town of Bailey. Bailey had

had no choice but to implement a substantial rate increase during the current fiscal year. Commissioner Bachmann moved to increase the sewer rate \$.75 per 1,000 gallons, from \$13.00 to \$13.75 per 1,000 gallons effective July 1, 2013. Commissioner Meacombs seconded the motion, stating that every year the town's auditor cautions the Board about not increasing the water and sewer rates to ensure the fund remains solvent. The motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Alford emphasized that if the Board did not take action, the Local Government Commission would take action against the town.

Mayor Lewis advised that he, Commissioner Bachmann, and Mike Myers are investigating several other options regarding wastewater treatment for Middlesex and are not giving up on the matter.

Commissioner Bachmann moved to schedule a special meeting on Thursday, June 27, 2013 at 8:30 a.m. to finalize and adopt the 2013-2014 Budget and to approve any necessary 2012-2013 budget amendments. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Alford and it passed unanimously.

Finance Officer Lambert presented a list of utility debts totaling \$1,054.86 to be written off as bad debts. The town's auditor recommends that debts over one year old, or debts deemed uncollectible, be removed from the town's accounts receivable in June of each year. Lambert advised that all debts over \$50 on the list have been submitted to the NC Debt Setoff Program and may possibly be collected through the program. Commissioner Alford moved to write off the debts as presented and approve the following budget amendment:

<u>General Fund Non-departmental:</u>		<u>INCREASE</u>
10-660-5801	Bad Debt Expense-San.	215.00
10-359-0000	Refuse Collection	215.00
<u>Water & Sewer Fund Non-Departmental:</u>		
30-660-5801	Bad Debt Expense-Water	310.00
30-370-0000	Water Collections	310.00
30-660-5802	Bad Debt Expense-Sewer	540.00
30-375-0000	Sewer Collections	540.00

Alford's motion was seconded by Commissioner Meacombs and carried unanimously.

Commissioner McClenny moved to accept the oral resignation of Utility Worker Ben Wilson effective Wednesday, June 5, 2013. Commissioner Davis seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Alford moved to go into Closed Session under G.S.143-318.11(a)(6) to discuss a personnel issue.

Back in Open Session, Mayor Lewis advised there was an omission during earlier budget discussions regarding the water tower contract. Jim, with Southern Corrosion, advised that any increase in the quoted \$7,500 contract price, if the town chooses to go a year without a contract, will only increase by the CPI. For a flat \$500 fee, Southern Corrosion will come for emergency repairs for \$1,200-\$1,250 per service call and repair existing rusty spots. After some questions, Mayor Lewis informed the Board he would clarify this quote with Southern Corrosion. Commissioner Bachmann reiterated to cancel the Utility Service water tower contract in writing.

Commissioner Meacombs moved to authorize Mayor Lewis and Commissioner Davis to interview and make the hiring decision for the swimming pool attendants. Commissioner Alford seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner McClenny moved to post the part time Utility Worker position for three days per week at \$10 per hour on the town's bulletin board and website and advertise in the next edition of the Wilson Times. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Davis and carried unanimously.

With no further business, Commissioner Bachmann moved to adjourn.

Jennifer Lambert, Clerk

Mayor Luther H. Lewis, Jr.
Commissioners
Harold Meacombs
Danny Alford
Dale Bachmann
Cherrye Davis
J.W. McClenny