



**ELM CITY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2015  
ELM CITY TOWN HALL  
CONFERENCE ROOM**

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Grady Smith (hereinafter "Mayor Smith") called to order the regular meeting of the Elm City Board of Commissioners (hereinafter "Board") at 7:33 pm, on January 12, 2015.

**2. Roll Call**

Mayor Smith conducted a roll call. The following were present:

Commissioner, Dale Childress (hereinafter "Comm. Childress")  
Commissioner, Melvin Cooke (hereinafter "Comm. Cooke")  
Commissioner, John Edwards (hereinafter "Comm. Edwards")  
Commissioner, Marsha Wells (hereinafter "Comm. Wells")  
Commissioner, Gil Wheeler (hereinafter "Comm. Wheeler")  
Town Administrator, Jonathan Russell (hereinafter "Admin. Russell")

**3. Swearing in of Mayor and Commissioners**

The Honorable William Farris was in attendance for swearing in of the Mayor and Commissioners for the two-year term.

**Mayor:** Grady Smith

**Commissioners:** Dale Childress, Melvin Cooke, John Edwards, Marsha Wells, Gil Wheeler

**4. Mayor Pro tem Appointment and Commissioner Assignments**

Mayor Smith gave the Board opportunity to decide how to appoint the Mayor Pro tem for the upcoming term. He mentioned that the previous appointment was given to the commissioner receiving the highest number of votes at the last election.

*MOTION: Comm. Childress made motion that the Mayor Pro tem appointment be given to the commissioner with the highest number of votes, seconded by Comm. Wheeler. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Comm. Cooke was appointed Mayor pro tem for the upcoming term.

Mayor Smith gave Commissioner Assignments as follows:

Comm. Childress: Zoning and Inspection, Annexation, Overgrown Lots, and Recreation  
Comm. Cooke: Electrical Service, Water and Sewer Service  
Comm. Edwards: Police, EMS, Fire, Library, and CDBG  
Comm. Wells: Cemetery, Storm Drainage, Town Ditches, Trash / Leaves and Limbs  
Comm. Wheeler: Sanitation / Recycling, Tree Service, Streets, Sidewalks / Curbing and Gutter

**5. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting**

Mayor Smith gave the Board opportunity to review the proposed minutes from the December 15, 2015, meeting.

*MOTION: Comm. Cooke made motion to approve the December 15, 2015, meeting minutes; seconded by Comm. Wheeler. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

**6. Admin. Russell's Report**

A. State Water Infrastructure Authority Grant Notice: SWIA will announce the winners of the October grant application at the January 21, 2016 meeting. This will determine if the Town receives funding for waterline replacement in the Gray Street neighborhood. Guidelines for the March grant cycle will be presented, and the meeting will establish the scoring methods for the March application, where the Town will seek funding for wastewater improvements to the newly purchased land.

Admin. Russell met with CDBG and Division of State Grants and Loan representatives regarding the upcoming application cycle. There will be 12.4 million set aside for wastewater / water / planning purposes. They are producing guidelines of criteria for evaluation, which will push the application deadline to April 29, 2016. The Town will place two applications, one for an asset management project study and for wastewater purposes.

B. Temporary Spray Application: Representatives from Envirolink surveyed the newly purchased property in an effort to provide cost estimates for equipment rental and operations. The current estimate is \$12,000 per month, for 100,000 gallons of wastewater distribution per day. NCDENR representatives will be on site on Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup> to further evaluate the field conditions and to discuss specifics for temporary approval to spray irrigate.

The Town does not have the cost for temporary spray currently in the budget. It may be necessary to scale the amount of spray back in an effort to save funds.

Permits will have to be applied for, and DENR may require that soil studies be done. Crops will also need to be sown.

- C. Increased Ordinance Violation Notices: Town employees have increased the ordinance violation notices in an effort to continue improving the aesthetics throughout Town. There has been some success, however; work will continue, to aggressively pursue the violations in an effort to encourage property owners to comply.

Much discussion was rendered regarding vacant properties, minimum housing standards, adding additional wording to the current ordinances, prioritizing the houses needing to be torn down, seeking funds from owners to work with the Town in tearing down the dilapidated properties, etc. Commissioners were to review the dilapidated properties in Town and give a list to Admin. Russell of those they believe to be the five worst.

- D. Train Depot Bid Opening: The bid phase for the train depot project has started with an opening date set for February 4, 2016 at 3 pm. Bids are anticipated from four pre-qualified contractors, along with several additional qualified companies that have expressed interest. Initial cost estimates have exceeded the initial funding offer from USDA. Depending on bid amounts, additional funding may be necessary along with LGC review.
- E. LGC Audit Acceptance: The Town has received notification that the audit was received and approved by the LGC for the past fiscal year. Greg Redman will be at the February meeting to present his report. There were no major findings. The large capital outlay, land purchase was noted in the audit.
- F. Local Water Supply Plan: The Town will be submitting the annual water use and system conditions report by the April 1, 2016 deadline. This is a statutory requirement for the Town's water system permit.
- G. Sidewalk Installation: Anderson and Company continues to struggle with completing current projects due to weather. They hope to begin the sidewalk project in the upcoming weeks.
- H. Additions:
  - 1. Update of stormwater drainage for Staton Lane: Admin. Russell has met with representatives for landowners of the farm land, where work is needed to prevent flooding. Cost to repair the storm drain at the property will be \$2,500. Admin. Russell would like permission to negotiate and move forward once the weather settles.

*MOTION: Comm. Cooke made a motion that the Town pay up to \$2,500 for the drain line repair at the Nash St. / Staton Lane farm property, giving Admin. Russell the ability to negotiate with the owner; seconded by Comm. Childress. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

2. Open Cut Ditches / Storm Drainage Concerns: Admin. Russell presented a map showing the worst areas in Town for drainage. Open cut ditches seem to be the problem. The Town has been waiting for bids from Ralph Hodge Construction, as well as Owens Construction. These contractors are behind due to the weather. The ditches have full grown trees in them, and costs will be high to correct the issues. The sections located on Barnes, Land St., and American Legion Lane will be covered by Envirolink. Admin. Russell mentioned that Powell Bill Funding could be used in certain areas. It is also possible that the Town apply for a grant for storm water issues, which could include repaving the streets with a porous pavement where water will seep through the pavement.

## 7. **Invoices**

Admin. Russell presented the Board with the monthly Town invoices in the agenda packet.

Additions:	BB&T (Safe Deposit Box)	\$ 45.00
	Adv. Portable Toilets (Park)	\$ 69.39
	Greater Diversity (Depot Adv.)	\$127.92
	Ashley Bass (Ordinance Mileage)	\$ 31.32

*MOTION: Comm. Cooke made motion to pay bills; seconded by Comm. Wheeler. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

## 6. **Comments from Public Floor**

Cornell Mercer, of South Branch Street, questioned the Board regarding the cost of tearing down the dilapidated houses. Admin. Russell mentioned that the cost varied. Mr. Mercer suggested that the Town seek help from the fire department, using controlled burn, which in turn will give the department experience. It was mentioned that such had been a concern in the past, and the fire department would not burn in the Town limits. Admin. Russell mentioned that it is possible that the department may allow such to be studied on a case by case event.

Mr. Mercer also asked regarding whether or not the Board has sought guidance as to what needed to be accomplished to be off of the moratorium. The Board and Admin.

Russell mentioned that studies had been completed, suggesting that more land be purchased for spraying, that meetings had been planned as to how to make the land usable, representatives had been contacted, and much work had been done to work toward getting the Town off of the sewer moratorium.

## **7. Commissioner Concerns**

Comm. Wells voiced concerns about the cars speeding on West Wilson Street near the Elm City Missionary Baptist Church. Corporal Ruffin reported that 60 citations had been written recently from Parker and Main Streets.

Comm. Wells mentioned the use of a four-wheeler at the most recent Fall Festival and voiced concerns regarding the safety of others.

There are dirt bikes and four wheelers that are being used on the streets in Town. Corporal Ruffin mentioned that the vehicles are confiscated if found running on the streets.

Comm. Wells would like to see solar lighting at the new park. Admin. Russell will work to get a quote on cost.

Comm. Cooke questioned regarding the new restrooms at Spivey Park, and where construction has gotten. Admin. Russell mentioned that both water and sewer had been run to the property. He mentioned that he had attempted to contact Donnie Price, but has been unable to get a returned call. It was his suggestion that another contractor possibly be contacted to finish the work.

Comm. Cooke mentioned the moving of the public works dumpsters at the Town shop. He suggested that the Town consider attempting to purchase the final building located at the property, giving the Town the full triangle of property, making moving the dumpsters easier. The owner is currently asking \$20,000 for the building. It is possible that he may take less.

Comm. Cooke thanked the Board for the flowers he received in remembrance of his sister.

Comm. Wheeler questioned whether the wreck on West Main Street, taking out the fire hydrant would be filed on the driver's insurance. Admin. Russell said that it would be filed on the driver's insurance. Admin. Russell mentioned that the fire department gave lighting for Envirolink workers to repair the leak from the wreck.

8. **Adjournment**

Mayor Smith adjourned the meeting at approximately 9 pm, January 12, 2016, upon motion of Board.

*MOTION: Motion was made to adjourn by Comm. Wells; seconded by Comm. Edwards. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Minutes submitted by Dena H. Owens, Town Clerk