

TOWN OF NEWLAND
01/02/2024
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING



ATTENDING:

MAYOR: Derek Roberts

ALDERMAN: James Johnson, Christie Hughes, Gail Haller, Kenan Foxx

GUEST: Teresa Foxx, Christy Ray, Burt Valarie, Nancy Davis, James Clark, John Jones, Michaela Sutherland, James Clark, Kaye Reinhofer, Robin Montgomery, John Montgomery, Charles Isaacs, Harry Isaacs, Larry Hoyle, Beverly Hoyle, Christian Gardener, The White Rabbit, Mason Hollifield, Maria Roberts, Faith Lacey, Dennis Aldridge, Cindy Aldridge, Donnetta McKinney, Amber Williams, Andrew Williams, Greg Jenkins, Nathan Gittner,

STAFF: Town Administrator Bill Bailey, Town Clerk Mackenzie Tipton, Finance Officer Jessica Buchanan, Police Captain Michael Fields, Public Works Director Gary Lewis, Public Works Rodger Hicks, Town Attorney Gerald McKinney

The mayor called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., reminded everyone of ethics awareness, and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. Alderman Foxx made a motion to approve the December minutes; Alderman Hughes seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

Alderman Johnson made a motion to add James Clark and closed session reference personnel to the agenda. Alderman Johnson made a motion to adopt the agenda. Alderman Hughes seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

AGENDA

MAYOR PRO TEM OATH

James Johnson was officially inducted as Mayor Pro Tem for the Town of Newland after taking his oath.

SWEETWATER RANCH ANNEXATION

Bill stated the necessity of establishing a specific date for a public hearing. The decision was made to have the public hearing on February 6th at 5:30 p.m.

PERSONNEL – STAFFING LEVELS OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

It was resolved to transfer the subject to the February agenda.

VACANT POSITION – TOWN COUNCIL

It was resolved to transfer the subject to the February agenda.

JAMES CLARK

James Clark attended to speak before the board on the emails circulating about him, which falsely claimed the existence of a wet-water spring and mentioned the misplacement of keys. Mayor Roberts instructed Bill and Gary to exclude James from the emails.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Larry Hoyle asked about the possibility of conducting another election. Alderman Hughes stated that after speaking with the board of elections, the cost would be excessive.

Greg Jenkins spoke about the attendance of all individuals to the county commissioners meeting to act as representatives for the Town of Newland. He elaborated on the modifications that the county had put into effect in its policy. Greg also highlighted his facility built to accommodate homeless veterans.

Dennis Aldridge described the modifications made to the county policies.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Gary explained that the rainfall on December 17th overwhelmed the treatment facility, requiring its drainage. This occurrence recurred on the 26th. The water leak that occurred on the 28th was fixed, and while attending to that issue, another line near Mountain Jewelers experienced a break. The repair for this second leak is scheduled for January 4th. Alderman Johnson asked Gary about the events that occurred at the doctor's office. Gary reported the presence of a worn collar lacking a rubber component and identified a bent section of the line where another resident had made a connection, resulting in a leak. Alderman Haller asked about the accessibility of the water testing report to the public. Gary indicated that tank one was emptied, causing the circulation of air through household lines, resulting in the noticed sediment experienced by several households.

Kaye Reinhofer emphasized the need for improved communication between the town and its residents in the event of water-related issues.

FINANCE REPORT

Jessica provided an in-depth description of the breakdown of the Southern Software agreement. Alderman Johnson asked what Jessica suggested the town add to the contract. Jessica expressed her belief that tax conversion was the sole requirement.

POLICE REPORT

Captain Michael Fields provided the police report. Capitan Fields stated that Police Officer Stockton will be doing radar in town now. Police Officer Ruppard has sent his radar paperwork

to the state and is waiting to hear back. Officer Issacs completed his lidar training and is currently awaiting a response from the state.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Bill expressed that he is nearing completion of the AIA grant requirements. He stated that a payment has been received and a bank account will need to be established for it. Bill referred to the ongoing leaks in the city's infrastructure resulting from inadequate maintenance. Bill indicated that he had a conversation with the engineers over the 3.2-million-dollar grant, and they are currently in contact with the state officials, suggesting that progress should be made quickly. Bill indicated that he would provide a preliminary version of the budget in February.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Alderman Hughes asked about receiving further information regarding Greg Jenkin's establishment dedicated to veterans.

Alderman Foxx asked about the feasibility of installing a collection box at the town hall to gather miscellaneous items for individuals in need. Additionally, he expressed interest in establishing a welcoming space to accommodate visitors upon their arrival at the town hall.

CLOSED SESSION

There was no action taken in the closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Johnson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alderman Foxx seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm

Town Clerk, Mackenzie Tipton

Mayor, Derek Roberts