

Town of Webster
Minutes
July 5, 2011

The Board Commissioners for the Town of Webster met for its regularly scheduled meeting at 1411 Webster Road.

Members Present: Mayor Larry Phillips, Commissioners Billie Bryson, Jean Davenport, Rick Fulton, Allan Grant and Tracy Rodes who was confirmed to take the seat of Mark Jamison who resigned June 9, 2011.

Others Present: Attorney Kim Lay; Susan Leveille, Chair of Planning Board; Nick Breedlove with The Sylva Herald; and Ann Melton, Jackson County Clerk of Court.

Agenda: Mayor Phillips called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm with a call for additional Agenda items. Commissioner Davenport noted a correction of date on the agenda from 2012 to 2011.

Oath of Office: Tracy Rodes and Gwen Nicholson were sworn in by Jackson County Clerk of Court, Ann Melton, with the Boards' approval. Tracy Rodes was asked to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Mark Jamison. Ms. Rodes agreed to serve the remainder of Mr. Jamison's unexpired term. . The Board approved the agenda with the appropriate correction.

Approval of Minutes: Mayor Phillips called for a review and approval of the June minutes. There were no comments or deletions. A motion was made by Commissioner Bryson and seconded by Commissioner Fulton to approve the minutes.

Other: Public hearing (self explanatory) for the 2011-2012 budget was posted outside the Town Hall per Commissioner Grant.

Approval of Financial Report: Commissioner Bryson reported that the Town received \$9,199.05 and spent \$5,141.40 in the month of June. Commissioner Bryson stated that the cost to paint the outside of the Town Hall was \$2,516.00. There were two minus expenses on the budget report; (1) for gas and (2) extra for the June power bill that was paid in June.

Guest Speaker: Jack Debnam, Chair of the Jackson County Board of Commissioners, reviewed the R5000 planned connector road that would link the Southwestern Community College campus with NC 107. He reviewed the Tip Program which would take 7 years from the time discussed to get road built. R5000 came about at the April 8, 2008 public hearing at a cost of \$6,600,000 for a two lane road. This past year it has increased to \$12, 350,000 which includes a bridge over NC 107 with a calming circle. This will not alleviate traffic through Webster.

Mr. Debnam distributed a handout that listed residents who will be greatly affected by the road. These residents are property owners in the 100 year flood plain, which is downstream from SCC and the R5000 project. This list included the name, physical address, and PIN#'s of the residents. On April 1, 2009, Debnam stated there were thirty nine projects delayed. On April 3, 2009, there were two programs declined. He discussed Division 14 and gave Mayor Phillips a map showing the 100 year flood plain. The project would cause an increase in velocity but no increase in water. Mr. Debnam stated that a private engineer had been hired, and no one requested a FEMA study, which would lump the projects all together.

SCC stated there will be a safety issue if the road is not built. Mr. Debnam says the Town of Webster needs to ask what this project will do to the Town of Webster and how did it happen so fast. Mr. Debnam stated that the project cannot be built for seven more years. He also stated that July 25, 2006 was the first time documentation could be found about this project, and the next times mentioned were July 24, 2007 October 23, 2007 and April 22, 2008. In 2008, there was discussion about hiring an engineering firm with construction to begin in 2010. In 2010, an engineer was hired. How did this happen so fast? There was no mention of a traffic light and there is not a lot of traffic. There is 800,000 yards of dirt that does not need to be moved. This would stop traffic on NC 107 for a year. We need to ask DOT questions NOW. There has been no right-of-way purchased but should start in October 2011. This will take future expansion from SCC. Mr. Debnam stated that he has not received any answers what so ever.

Mayor Phillips stated that he received a letter from DOT asking Webster to approve the project. DOT wants Webster to respond by December 2012 as they want to begin construction. Mayor Phillips questioned why do this when the economy is the way it is? Mr. Debnam contacted everyone involved in the project on December 14, 2010 and asked why we needed to spend this money. He stated we cannot sit here and let this happen as this will not take traffic out of Webster. Mayor Phillips stated that more discussion is needed on these issues at the next meeting in August 2011.

Old Business: Sidewalk Maintenance

The Board reviewed Blair Spangler's contract with the Town for sidewalk maintenance that included edging, leaf blowing, trash pick-up weekly (or as needed) from April through December; and monthly (or as needed) from January through March, at a cost of \$325.00 per month. A motion was made by Commissioner Fulton to approve as presented.

The area covered by Mr. Spangler is from the SCC campus to South River Road. There was a discussion regarding gravel wash out on the road caused by deterioration of the sidewalk along with gravel mixed with salt from the winter de-icing. This gravel collects in the drain boxes when it rains and washes back to the road. As vehicles drive through town, the gravel ends up on the sidewalks. Commissioners concurred that weekly maintenance was needed on the sidewalks. Mr. Spangler said the cost would be \$100.00 per service. Mayor Phillips will contact Mr. Setzer of the DOT to see if there is money available for sidewalk repair from Buchanan Loop up to the church.

Town of Webster Historical Sign: Commissioner Davenport received a quote from Profinish Design to replace the historical sign that was destroyed by a tree during a recent storm. The price for a 2 x 3 metal sign would be \$230.00, and a 3 x 5 metal sign would be \$310.00. A sand cast 2 x 3 sign would cost \$432.00 and a 3 x 5 sign would cost \$1080.00. The Board asked Mr. Spangler if he could remove the damaged posts, and Mr. Spangler responded that he could

The Board concurred that a 2 x 3 sand cast high density urethane board sign would be the best choice for \$432.00. Commissioner Rodes wants Commissioner Davenport to get a quote on a 3 x 4 sign.

Other: Mayor Phillips stated that the Town of Webster will lose its Powell Bill funding which helps North Carolina municipalities maintain streets and sidewalks. State lawmakers changed the formula, and towns that don't maintain roads within their city limits are no longer eligible for these funds. The financial report ending in June showed a balance of \$63,195.08 in accrued Powell Bill Funds. There has been no direction on how we are to spend the remaining funds left in that account.

- **Committee Reports: the Greenway Committee** was unable to meet last month due to a power outage stated Commissioner Grant. The N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund has been reduced by a third. Judaculla Rock should open soon and would have been open if not for the storm on June 15, 2011.
- **The Planning Board** will meet at 6:00 pm on July 12, 2011, and a joint meeting of the Town Council and Planning Board is scheduled on July 26, 2011. Susan Leveille stated that the Planning Board is completing final changes to the new town ordinances, which will be presented to the Town Board members at the join meeting on Tuesday, July 26, 2011.
- **Traffic and Safety:** Mayor Phillips reinstated the contracted service with the Jackson County Sheriff's office for town patrol and they have already resumed duty. Services were curtailed after last year's budgeted amount was spent.
- **TWSA:** Commissioner Davenport updated the board on a number of Tuckasee Water and Sewer Authority related projects. Commissioner Davenport stated that the new waste treatment plant will be completed in 2012.

New Business: Mayor Phillips received a letter from the Jackson County Commissioners stating that the Mayor and Council Members were invited to meet the new Chancellor, David Belcher, of Western Carolina University on Friday July 22, 2011. This will be a breakfast meeting at 8:00 am in the Heritage Room of the Jackson County Senior Center. Gwen will email or call Pat Parris to RSVP. Attending will be Mayor Phillips, Commissioners Bryson, Davenport, Rodes, Fulton, Grant and Clerk Nicholson.

The next meeting will be held on August 2, 2011 at 7:00 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm with a motion from Commissioner Grant and a second from Commissioner Fulton. The motion carried.

Larry Phillips, Mayor

Gwen Nicholson, Clerk

