

Town of Spring Lake  
Board of Aldermen Workshop  
Municipal Building  
300 Ruth Street  
Spring Lake, NC 28390

October 27, 2008

MINUTES

4:00

p.m.

The Spring Lake Board of Aldermen held a workshop in the Grady Howard Conference Room of the Municipal Complex with Mayor Ethel T. Clark presiding.

**Board Members Present:** Mayor Pro-Tem James O'Garra  
Alderman Richard Higgins  
Alderman Napoleon Hogans  
Alderwoman Nellie McCoy  
Alderwoman Fredricka Sutherland

**Others Present:** Larry Faison, Town Manager  
Byron Bluemfeld, Storm Water Technician  
Allen Coats, Finance Director  
Daniel Gerald, W&WR Director  
Rhonda Webb, Town Clerk

The purpose for this workshop was to discuss storm water projects and Board of Aldermen travel policy.

**Storm Water Project Funding**

Byron Blumenfeld gave an overview of four storm water projects that are to be considered for completion during the fiscal year. Mr. Blumenfeld stated that the Storm Water Committee helped to determine which projects needed to be addressed. They used a prioritization matrix to determine which projects are the most severe or need immediate attention. The projects are listed in priority order:

Goodyear Drive  
Marvin Drive  
Elizabeth Street (West)  
Elizabeth Street (East)

Mr. Blumenfeld explained how each project will be completed and what will be needed to fix the problems.

(A copy of the supporting documentation is hereby incorporated into these minutes.)

Mr. Faison proposed that the Board think about a policy statement that if a resident wants the Town to fix and improve the storm drain then the resident must donate an

easement.

Mayor Clark inquired about the time frame for completing these projects. Mr. Gerald stated there is a process. We must first go to the LGC. Then the engineer will give us a cost estimate. We will then prepare all of that information to present to the LGC so it will take approximately 6-7 months.

The storm water fees that we collect now is enough to pay the debt service. However, due to the error that we made when transmitting the fee to the County, we are collecting more than what we intended to collect. Staff intends to bring a resolution to the Board in November to request reimbursement to the citizens for the amount that was collected in error. Therefore, we do have as much money to address these issues as it appears. With what should have been the fee increase, we can afford approximately \$300,000 with a loan. We want to be careful dipping into fund balance.

Mr. Coats gave an overview of the LGC process. He stated that at the Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> meeting there will be a reimbursement resolution that will need to be approved. This allows us to begin engineering and preliminary planning. Depending on schedule that engineer puts together, we will submit application to LGC. They meet once per month. Our application must be to them four weeks prior to their meeting. The Board will have to adopt resolutions for submitting applications. This will be done in November. In order to submit application we must have engineering drawings, all permits and bids for construction and financing in hand. Basically, we have to be ready to start construction before we submit the application. Once we start this process we have to be committed to the project. Anticipate construction in early spring. The initial estimate for the entire project is \$500,000.

Concern was expressed about 30-year financing and if it is necessary to finance the projects when we bring in enough money each year. Mr. Coats advised that the budget was designed to take in an additional \$18,000 to pay debt service. The rate increase was designed to pay the debt service over a period of years.

Alderwoman Sutherland expressed concern about the drainage problem at the new Community Center. It was expressed that we need to take care of the new building and that area so that in 30 years the building will still be in good shape.

Alderman Higgins asked, based on the condition of the Town's fund balance now, do we anticipate any problems obtaining the loan from the LGC. Mr. Coats stated that they focus mainly on the storm water fund and we do not anticipate any problems.

Alderman Hogans asked about the percentage that the Town is required to pay and Mr. Coats stated that we will pay 100% of the costs. He recommended that the Board use the priority system that Mr. Blumenfeld used to prioritize the projects and go with that.

Alderman Hogans asked if we could afford to fix all the requested projects. Mayor Clark asked about how much money we will try to borrow. Mr. Faison stated that the Board

will be involved in the amount that we ask for. The Board will be informed as to the upper limit of what we will ask for.

Alderman Hogans asked how we increase the storm water fee. Are there guidelines that we go by? We can only increase this fee annually and it must be a whole dollar amount. There are requirements for how the money can be spent. It must be spent for storm water projects.

The Board's consensus was to proceed with the storm water projects as explained. Mr. Faison stated that there will be multiple opportunities for the Board to stop the process if they should decide not to proceed.

### **Board of Aldermen Travel Policy**

Mr. Faison presented a draft travel policy for the Board's consideration. He explained that during the budget process, each Board member would complete a "dream sheet" of events they wish to attend and the Board would approve travel for the upcoming year during the budget process. Another variation is to have a dollar amount allocated to each Board member and have them determine how they want to spend their allotted money. He reminded the Board that staff does not have the authority to approve their travel requests.

Alderman Hogans asked if Mayor Clark asked for this policy to be put in place. She stated no. He stated that the Board may not always have a "Mayor Clark" and friction between Board members could occur. He doesn't like the part of the policy that gives one elected member the final authority over the other elected members.

Alderman Higgins believes that during the budget process is when the Board should determine how much money they want to spend and what events they will attend. He agrees with Alderman Hogans that one person should not have the final say.

Mayor Clark stated that she prefers each Board member have a travel budget and they determine how they will spend their money.

Alderwoman Sutherland agreed with Mayor Clark and would like to see it done individually.

Alderman Hogans stated that we need to live within our means and budget for what we can do. He stated that if people need to go to training then make that happen. If the Board wants to attend an event and we can afford it then they should be able to go.

Mayor Clark requested that the form be changed and the final authority not be given to one person.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Garra stated that the Mayor's budget should have a little more in it

since she represents the Board at various events.

Alderman Hogans stated that he believes if you attend a function representing the Board you should be reimbursed for it. Alderwoman Sutherland stated that she agrees. He disagrees with Mayor Clark not requesting her mileage reimbursement for attending Mayor's functions.

Mayor Pro Tem stated that the Board should use a car pool system when possible and if it is available and a Board member chooses not to use the car pool they will not be reimbursed.

There was discussion about the money that was budgeted and the money that was frozen to help offset employee furloughs. It is confusing to have the money show up in the financial reports without notation that part of that money is being held for another purpose. Alderman Higgins suggested that money not show in what is reported to the Board as unencumbered money.

It was the Board's consensus that the Board will adopt an annual allotment for each Board member during the budget process. Board member's can share money to allow someone to attend something that another individual does not wish to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Rhonda D. Webb, CMC  
Town Clerk

ATTEST:

Ethel T. Clark  
Mayor