

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

September 27, 2010

**MINUTES**

5:30 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 James Christian  
Alderman Richard Higgins  
Alderwoman Debora Hudson  
Alderwoman Fredricka Sutherland

**Others Present:**

Michael Uskiewicz, Town Manager	John Jackson, Town Attorney
Allen Coats, Finance Director	Robert Doberstein, Fire Chief
Paul Hoover, Director of Inspections	Ken Metcalf, Recreation Director
Rhonda Webb, Town Clerk	

The purpose for this workshop was to discuss Nixle Community Information Service, Mutzberg Property Update, Freedom Center Update and Land Sales and Purchases.

Mayor Clark gave an invocation.

Nixle

Mr. Uskiewicz explained what Nixle is and how it can help us get information out to the citizens. He advised that it costs the Town nothing. It is a voluntary service that allows the Town to text and/or email information to people who have signed up. Information will be in the next water bill.

Mutzberg Property

Mr. Metcalf gave an update on where we are with the Mutzberg property. He advised that the Sandhills Area Land Trust has closed on the property and are now the owners. Eventually the Town will own approximately 55 of the 90 acres, the rest will be split between the Nature Conservancy and SALT. They have requested that the Town help them clean up the property. We are hoping to have a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in early November. He stated that he is requesting permission from the Board to assist SALT in the clean up. Clean up is a requirement from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund grant. Access is still a problem. The Board and Attorney discussed possible access points.

Mayor Clark asked if they had petitioned to annex and it was stated that they have not as of yet.

Mr. Jackson advised that normally they will buy the property, then impose a conservation easement on it and then approach the Town for the possibility of a conveyance from them to us with a conservation easement imposed.

Mr. Jackson requested to see all documents regarding this initiative.

The Board's consensus was to move forward with getting the MOU prior to going on their property to clean up.

#### Freedom Center Update

Mr. Bob Stafford and Ms. Brenda Compton give the Board an overview of what has been done to date and then move forward with a revised contract.

Mr. Bob Stafford and Ms. Brenda Compton from the Gentry Group gave the Board an overview of what has been done to date on the Freedom Center. Mr. Stafford stated that due to Spring Lake receiving so much negative press (he read from an article dated September 19, 2010 from the Fayetteville Observer) and due to the timing of everything moving to this area, the Freedom Center progress has not proceeded as quickly as anticipated. They have spent more than \$200,000 on this project thus far. They over estimated the time frame that defense contractors would move to this area. The problem is that the contractors do not know what type of facility they need until they are awarded a contract.

Ms. Compton stated that the economy plays a big role in what they and the defense contractors are able to do. She has tried to educate people on where Spring Lake is located. This seems to be a problem with recruiting developers/contractors. They are familiar with Fayetteville but not so much with Spring Lake. She has contacted over 60 military contractors and in speaking with them, the questions were: where is Spring Lake, how far it is from Fayetteville, is Spring Lake where they are having problems with the Police Department. Most companies see desire to look at Fayetteville. Class A office space in general is more than 17% vacant in our area and that is high. Most people need a flex space. Service oriented support companies are what is needed. The companies that are interested are not ready to move and timing is the key. The Freedom Center is moving slower than they would like but the economy and timing is not ideal at this time. She believes that it will pick up within 4-6 months. They really want to engage a high quality defense contractor into the area that will stay in the Town for a long time and not those types of businesses that stay for a while and then move out.

Mr. Jackson clarified that Mr. Stafford and Ms. Compton is speaking on behalf of the Gentry Group. He stated that he is concerned from a legal standpoint with the way things have gone. He has requested several times to obtain information and contract updates from the Gentry Group. He wants Gentry Group's stand in writing. Ms. Stafford advised that this meeting was meant to preface what Mr. Jackson stated we need and to give the Board an update on what has been done to date.

The Board's consensus is to work with Gentry Group but we need to sit down and work out the

details in a contract.

Due to time constraints, the final workshop item will be moved to the regular meeting agenda.

The meeting ended at 6:48 p.m.



*Rhonda D. Webb*  
Rhonda D. Webb, MMC  
Town Clerk

ATTEST:

*Ethel T. Clark*

Ethel T. Clark  
Mayor