



Holly Springs Town Council
7:00 PM **Tuesday, January 5, 2021**

Regular Meeting
Holly Springs Town Hall Council Chambers
128 S. Main Street, 2nd Floor

MINUTES

The Holly Springs Town Council met in regular session on Tuesday, January 5, 2021 in person and via video conferencing. Mayor Sears presided, calling the meeting to order at 7 p.m. A quorum was established as the Mayor and four Council members were present in the Chamber and one was present via video conferencing as the meeting opened.

Council Members Present in Chambers: Mayor Sears, Mayor Pro Tem Dan Berry, Councilmen Peter Villadsen, and Aaron Wolff, and Councilwoman Christine Kelly.

Council Members Present via Video Conferencing: Councilman Shaun McGrath
The audio connection with Councilman McGrath was established and verified prior to commencement of the meeting.

Council Members Absent: none.

Staff Members Present in Chambers: Randy Harrington, *Town Manager*; John Schifano, *Town Attorney*; Linda McKinney, *Town Clerk* (recording the minutes); Mark Andrews, *Communication and Marketing*; Jeff Wilson, *Director, IT*; Mathew Mutter, *IT*.

2. and 3. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited followed by an invocation by Pastor Jim Littleton of Holly Springs United Methodist Church.

4. Agenda Adjustment: The January 5, 2021 meeting agenda was adopted with changes, if any, as listed: none.

Motion: Berry
Second: Kelly
Vote: Unanimous

Public Comment: Public Comment was requested in writing prior to the meeting. The following number of comments was received and provided to the Council prior to the meeting: one comment in favor of the connection between Promenade and Wildwood Farm Way, and two comments against that connection.

Recognitions

5. Census 2020

Gina Clapp, Development Services, outlined the importance of the decennial Census for state and local government. She said that Holly Springs had the highest self-response rate in Wake County at 85.1%, the 4th highest in the state, and tied for the 390th highest in the nation. She thanked staff members Beth Trautz, Cassie Hack, Tamara Ward, Mark Andrews, Officer Arthur "Jamie" Clark, Officer Joe Harasti, Sonia Delgado, Angela Parsons, Rachel Downey, and Mayor Sears for their work on the Complete Count Committee and other 2020 Census outreach activities. She talked about how the committee had to pivot when COVID struck, and how other municipalities in Wake County called them asking for advice on how to reach their residents.

Council expressed their gratitude and appreciation to Ms. Clapp and the staff that enabled Holly Springs to achieve such a complete count.

6. Retirement Recognition of Gina Clapp

Randy Harrington, Town Manager, said that after more than 20 years with the Town and nearly 28 years in public service, Gina Clapp is retiring on January 8th. She began her career in 1993 as a Planner for the Village of Orland Park, IL. In 1998 she served as a Senior Planner for the Town of Cary, NC. She became Director of Planning and Zoning for Holly Springs in 2000. She is an American Institute of Certified Planners Certified Planner which is a very high standing in the Planning Field. He said that she has been instrumental in growing Holly Springs, and giving it the look and feel it has today. She has been here through three Census Counts. Through the years she has been instrumental in the Town's overall development and such initiatives as the Holly Springs Farmers Market, and awards such as the 2018 Great Main Street-in-the-Making from APA-NC. He thanked her for bringing her passion and her love of the community to the Town. He recognized her husband Gene for supporting her through this journey.

Assistant Town Manager Scott Chase presented her with a plaque of appreciation.

Mayor Sears thanked her for all her work for the Town. Ms. Clapp said a few words about how she became interested in the Town of Holly Springs, and decided to join the team. When she started here there were about 9,000 residents, there was one stop light, and the police all drove 4-wheel drive vehicles because there were so many dirt roads. Now there are restaurants, shops, and a vibrant downtown. She thanked all the managers, Councils and Planning Boards she has worked with. She thanked her staff. She thanked her husband for his support, and said that she looks forward to participating in Town activities in another capacity and from another angle.

Requests and Communications

7. Update on UNC Rex Holly Springs Hospital

Roy Tempke, VP and COO of UNC Rex Holly Springs Hospital said that he has worked for Rex for 28 years, starting as a physical therapist. He spoke of the distribution of hospitals in the UNC system, saying that UNC Rex Holly Springs will be the first hospital in the UNC system to have the new logo. He spoke of the certifications that Rex has, and awards that they have received. He outlined what the new Holly Springs Hospital would offer and showed photos of the progress made and views of what the inside of the hospital will look like. He talked about the community engagement the hospital participates in, and gave an estimated opening time of the end of September, 2021. He said the hospital will bring around 350 new jobs to Holly Springs.

Mayor Sears asked about helicopter access. Mr. Tempke said that there was a helicopter pad, but helicopters will not be stored there.

MPT Berry asked how many of the medical jobs will be filled with Holly Springs residents who work for Rex but are currently driving to other facilities versus how many would be brand new jobs. Mr. Tempke said there is a portal for internal candidates to apply and they will soon be launching a portal for external candidates. There have been about 120 current employees who have expressed an interest in transferring to this facility, many of whom live in Holly Springs. Councilwoman Kelly asked when the non-medical jobs would be advertised. Mr. Tempke said that medical personnel take longer to onboard, so they will be hired first, and housekeeping, etc. will be hired closer to opening, depending on how long it takes to onboard each type of position. He said he would let Mayor Sears know as those jobs become available. Mayor Sears said that this hospital was one of the highest priorities for Holly Springs, and we are very excited to see it open.

8. Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) Update

Emmily Tiampati, Development Services, said that this was to give Council a brief update on the CTP process. She introduced Allison Fluitt from Kimley-Horn who gave a report on the progress of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan update, and a report from the progress of the Steering Committee and stakeholder interviews so far. She discussed the process being followed. She said that Phase 1 of the process continues this month, and the project will move into Phase 2 next month and Phase 2 which will continue into the summer.

She said that the Steering Committee had its first meeting on December 16th and there were 23 attendees. During this meeting they identified today's challenges as growth, funding, and connectivity, and expressed a future vision including cohesive, innovative, safe, and functional transportation systems. They looked at goals from the last CTP from 2011, and ranked the goals identified in that plan. She thanked Council for participating in Stakeholder Interviews and said that some of the things she heard were concerns about connectivity; pedestrian safety, particularly at Avent Ferry Road and Main Street at Hwy 55; space for expanded roads, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure; and improving and widening the bridge near the Carolina Springs development.

Ms. Fluitt outlined upcoming outreach including more stakeholder interviews, public workshops, and an online survey. The workshops are on January 20th at noon and January 21st at 6:00 pm. Zoom links for these workshops are already on the Town website. They have already received 328 responses to the online survey. She said other "next steps" would include completing Stakeholder Outreach, completing the State of the Town Report, and conducting further Steering Committee meetings.

9. Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

Antwan Morrison, Finance Director, introduced LeAnn Bagasala Senior Audit Manager of Elliott Davis to give the annual financial report for Fiscal Year 2019-20.

Ms. Bagasala said she was going to speak about auditor communications, the audit process, the Town's financial performance, and then would take questions from Council. She said that there had been no changes in accounting processes, and one restatement of them in order to open a Trust account. She said that depreciation was misstated on 6 vehicles and one other account needed adjustment because it was stated twice, and management made those changes.

Financial highlights include, assessed value for property tax purposes has increased from \$4.38 billion in June of 2019 to \$5.04 billion in June of 2020. Current year *ad valorem* tax collections totaled \$24.24 million, which is an increase of \$3.39 million over the prior year. She said that 99.69% of the levy was collected. The statewide average for municipalities our size is 99.16%. The General Fund Balance is at 29.77% of actual operating expenditures, which is above the 25% required by Town policy. She outlined how much the General Fund Balance and Proprietary Funds have increased over the last five fiscal years.

Ms. Bagasala spoke of the Town's debt position, which is in compliance. The percentage of debt to valuation is at 1.89% with a debt service ratio of 10.3%, both of which are better than Town Policy.

Mr. Morrison said that the key takeaways from this audit are that our property tax collection rates and sales tax revenue were not hurt as badly by COVID-19 as was predicted, the Town has strong financial reserves and solid cash balances, even enough to last through a pandemic. He said this is important because it helps us prepare for the future as a strong municipality.

He said that the Town was awarded the Certificate for Achievement of Excellence in Financial Reporting from the GFOA for 2019, and will be applying for the 2020 GFOA shortly. He offered special thanks to Finance Department staff members, specifically Patty Dressen and Doreen Muentener and the finance staff who carried things through during the interim period.

10. PLANWake: Wake County Comprehensive Plan Update

Sean Ryan, Development Services, introduced Terry Nolan, Wake County Planner, who would present for public review a draft of PLANWake, Wake County's Comprehensive Plan update. Tim Maloney with Wake County (appearing remotely) said that this was an 18-month effort. The current land use plan dates back to the mid-90s and this is a comprehensive update to that plan. It was presented to the Wake County Board of Commissioners in November. Public Feedback is being gathered now, and it will go back before the Board of Commissioners in February.

Ms. Nolan said the Comprehensive Plan would address what policies Wake County wants to have in place over the next 10-15 years to address considerations of rapid growth in population and residential units, increased traffic, and increased poverty. She outlined the process Wake County used to answer these questions and create a draft Comprehensive Plan. Preserving open space

was an important request. Key components include Vision Outcomes that Wake County will be Inclusive and Equitable; Healthy and Active; and Sustainable and Vibrant; a Development Framework that focuses on maintaining rural areas, focusing on transit and walkable centers in urban areas; and performance metrics reported annually - Countywide metrics, Development targets, and Targeted Populations measures.

Ms. Nolan said that high level policies would focus on Urban Service Area Agreements, Extraterritorial Jurisdictions, Water Supply Watersheds, Facilitating Municipal Development, Area Land Use Plans, and Activity Centers.

She discussed the state statutes that govern ETJs and what the Wake County ETJ criteria are, then outlined the changes to those criteria in the draft plan. These changes include encouraging small, more focused requests, requests must align with the Development Framework Map, the criteria no longer measure how much of the existing ETJ has been annexed, and municipalities must demonstrate the ability to extend services, document community engagement, and demonstrate how they are working with the county to achieve comprehensive goals. Municipal Transition Standards is a formalized process to encourage community and Walkable Center areas, to develop under municipal jurisdiction, so that if development requests come in to the County that a municipality could better serve, they will work together with the municipality.

Ms. Nolan then outlined the project schedule for public comment before the County considers approval of the plan in February of 2021.

Council questioned Ms. Nolan on the County's plans to consider the landfill problem in conjunction with planning for growth, as more residents mean more solid waste going to the landfill which is already a problem. There was also discussion surrounding areas where the County's draft map does not correspond to the Town's, how certain areas, such as along Highway 55 could be considered "walkable" and how the County would objectively judge the criteria of a municipality cooperating with the County on their priorities, as municipalities may have other priorities and funding needs. Ms. Nolan said that this was all high level and the details would need to be worked out, but that the County is working with municipalities, they meet quarterly with the planning staff of the municipalities, and if municipalities were facing development pressure, the County would work with them.

Consent Agenda

The Council passed a motion to approve all items on the Consent Agenda. The motion carried following a motion by MPT Berry, a second by Councilwoman Kelly and a unanimous vote. The following actions were affected:

11. Minutes – The Council approved minutes of the Council business meeting held December 15, 2020.

12. America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) Risk and Resilience Assessment/Emergency Response Plan Contract Approval - The Council awarded a contract to Freese and Nichols in the amount of \$130,390 to complete the Town of Holly Springs AWIA Risk and Resilience Assessment and Emergency Response Plan.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Sears said the current COVID 19 cases in the County are 46,759 with 351 deaths, and 1304 in our zip code, and only three deaths. As of today hospitals are very busy. We need to work very hard on the 3Ws to keep our town as safe as possible.

Councilman Villadsen encouraged everyone who was due or overdue for a colonoscopy to get it done this year.

Councilwoman Kelly said that, related to COVID, she was thrilled to see that some of our essential workers are starting to get the vaccine. She is part of the trial for the Novavax vaccine. She asked what was going on with the vaccine rollout in the town. Randy Harrington, Town

Manager, said that the County is the best source of information. There is a link to the County health department from the Town website. Members of the Holly Springs Fire Department started getting vaccinated last week, and the next phase will probably include the Holly Springs Police Department. We are monitoring the COVID situation with our staff and have been very aggressive as far as daily cleanings, employees wearing masks, etc. He said he wants to be safe with our staff. There is a manager's meeting tomorrow. Hospitals are projected perhaps to peak around January 25th and the managers will discuss any adjustments that might be warranted to keep the members of our organization safe. Mayor Sears asked that more information be given about the phases, and how you make an appointment when it is your turn.

Councilman Villadsen asked if the Town had anything on the website to direct residents to the County level for financial aid or assistance, child care needs, or other needs due to COVID. Mr. Harrington said that this information has been on our website since March or April. Staff will look at it to be sure it is as up to date as can be.

MPT Berry said he wanted to follow up on conversations from last fall, relating to permitted election activities. Was there consensus for staff to draft a policy regarding permitted election activities on Town property? There was consensus from Council that that was a good idea.

Secondly, he said that as the Town is looking at budget priorities we need to look into technology for livestreaming meetings and allowing remote participation. He thinks that post-pandemic the public will continue to want meetings streamed, and he would like to look at whether this is the best platform, and how the Town wants to continue streaming. He has had good feedback from residents who like being able to watch the meetings from home.

Councilwoman Kelly agreed that this is an expectation that people now have. Councilman McGrath said he also agreed, and that easy access to the live stream from the transparency portal would be a good idea.

Mr. Harrington thanked them for raising these comments. He said that prior to the holiday the Senior Leadership Team had a debriefing on what we have learned from COVID, and how we have been able to succeed. And we have succeeded, but it has been hard. He gave thanks to the IT Department, because they have worked so hard and done some things that are "duct tape and band aids" but they have made it work. We are looking at technology to make that easier and smoother.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Randy Harrington, Town Manager, said the county has released the landfill survey, and there is a post on the Town website that links to that survey. Staff will try to support that and encourage everyone to fill out the survey. Councilwoman Kelly said to be sure to go the final pages of the survey, which is where the real meaty questions are.

CLOSED SESSION: The Council entered into closed session, pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss an economic development prospects and incentives and N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) to discuss the Town Clerk's and Town Attorney's Annual Reviews. No grants will be made in this closed session.

Motion by: Berry

Second by: Wolff

Vote: Unanimous

General Account of Closed Session:

Economic Director Irena Krstanovic gave Council an update on the new project that the Town is in competition for, and asked for guidance. Council's consensus was for Ms. Krstanovic to continue in negotiations with the company along the lines presented to them in closed session.

No official vote or action was taken by the Town Council in closed session.

-End of General Account

Motion to return to open session was made by Councilwoman Kelly seconded by Councilman Berry and passed with a unanimous vote.

Adjournment: Councilman Berry made a motion to adjourn at 10:45 pm. It was seconded by Councilman Villadsen and passed with a unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted on Tuesday, January 19, 2021.



Linda C. McKinney, Town Clerk

Addenda pages as referenced in these minutes follow and are a part of the official record.