

May 9, 2023

#### CALL TO ORDER

Mayor LaWanda Tatum called the regular meeting of the Lawrenceville Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. on May 9, 2023.

#### ROLL CALL

Roll was called. Present: Mayor LaWanda Tatum; Council Members H. B. Brockwell, Jr., Robert F. Pecht, III, Nakai Peterson, Alice Talbert and Anne Williams.

Absent: Council Members, Dora Hardy and Teya Whitehead.

Also present: Town Attorney, W. C. Outten, Jr., Town Manager, Everette Gibson, Town Clerk, Wanda Johnson, Special Projects Coordinator, Kimberly Martin, Police Chief, John Stith, Police Officer, Martisa Stith, Justin Thomas, Dr. Barbara J. Harris, Bernard Jones, Alfreda Reynolds, Lezlie Weddington, Public Works Director, Randy Lynch, Dr. Kristy Somerville-Midgette, Dr. Darnell Carter, Leonard Rose, citizens and the press.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Tatum led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### PUBLIC HEARING – PROPOSED FY 2023-2024 BUDGET

As this time had been advertised for a public hearing on the proposed FY 2023-2024 Budget, Mayor Tatum opened the public hearing. There was no public comment. Mr. Pecht asked Mr. Gibson to review the assumptions and the proposed budget. Revenue: 20% water and sewer rate increase, no garbage rate increase, no tax rate increase. Expense: three percent raise for employees, Town continues to pay 100% of the eligible employee's health insurance premium, Town will pay 20% of the additional premium for dual or family, if selected, outsource the mowing for water and wastewater plants, include \$20,000 estimated cost for redistricting, continue building code enforcement position, on an as needed basis. Items can be discussed and amended between now and the final adoption in June. Mr. Pecht reported that following a meeting with fire department representatives, \$4,500 will be added to the line for repairs to the firehouse/generator. Ms. Williams asked if the firehouse is Town property. It is Town property. Mayor Tatum declared the public hearing closed.

#### CONVEY PROPERTY TO BRUNSWICK COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

As this time had been advertised for a public hearing on the proposed conveyance of property to the Brunswick County School Board, Mayor Tatum opened the public hearing. The parcel is 65 ft. by 65 ft. and has a water tower that is no longer in use. It is adjacent to the Bus Garage and Tech Center. The property would become part of the site where the School Board plans to build the athletic complex. Dr. Kristy Somerville Midgette, Superintendent of Brunswick County Public Schools, respectfully requested that the Town convey the water tank and surrounding property from the Town to the School Board. She introduced Josh Bower, Architect with Crabtree Rohrbaugh & Associates, as architect for the project. Mr. Bower presented a map and information on the plans to build a new sports complex on the property. There was no public comment. Mr. Pecht commented that this has been advertised. He thinks this would be a great asset for the school board project. Ms. Williams asked if the removal of the water tank would create a negative impact on water usage for the new school that is planned in the area. Mr. Gibson responded there would not be a negative impact.

On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to convey the water tank and the 65 ft. by 65 ft. parcel of land adjacent to the Bus Garage and Tech Center to the Brunswick County School Board.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Mr. Brockwell, seconded by Mrs. Talbert and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on April 11, 2023, as received, suspend the reading and file.

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion by Mr. Brockwell, seconded by Mr. Pecht and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to approve the agenda as presented.

## RECOGNITION OF CITIZENS

### LEONARD ROSE

Leonard Rose talked about business licenses and various businesses in Town. He talked about safety for the fire and rescue. He said his birthday is May 17.

### ALEX TWUM, MURAL

Mr. Gibson introduced Alex Twum, artist and art teacher at Russell Middle School and Brunswick High School. Mr. Twum presented a painting of a sample mural proposed to be painted on the side of the E. E. Vaughan & Son building. The mural would be approximately 64 feet long. Mr. Vaughan has agreed for the mural to be painted on the building. Some of the items represented are bridges, a racehorse, stew pot, St. Paul's College and a church. Ms. Williams commented there was no stagecoach. She said the evolution of stage coach to railroads to cars is part of the history of Lawrenceville. Mr. Twum was not aware of that. Mr. Pecht asked about the budget for the project. Mr. Gibson said a budget will be created as part of the grant application for Main Street Project funds for the project. On motion by Mr. Brockwell, seconded by Mr. Pecht and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to proceed with the mural project pending funding and budget approvals.

### LAWRENCEVILLE EDA

Mr. Brockwell reported that he met with the chair of the LEDA. The LEDA is considering having a business after hours. There are about 175 business licenses in Lawrenceville. This could also be a part of the Main Street Project program. No action is needed at this time. Mayor Tatum would like to be advised of the next meeting date so she can attend the meeting.

## MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Tatum reported she has been really busy. She attended the BDX ribbon cutting, the groundbreaking for Hotel Elle and the Main Street meeting. She is very excited about the upcoming Virginia State University Small Farm Outreach Program community give away scheduled for May 21, 2023. There will be clothing, lawn and garden, electronics and dry goods. Lunenburg County is also a partner in that project. Mayor Tatum invited everyone to attend the Mayor's first Chat and Chew to be held on May 31, 2023, at the Lawrenceville Brunswick County Library, third floor, at 6:00 p.m. The topic will be mental health and wellness. May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Topics are wellness in the workplace, adult mental health and children's mental health. She is a mental health professional, this is important and near and dear to her heart.

## REPORT OF TOWN ATTORNEY

Mr. Outten commented that the appointment of a Town Manager that was made at the meeting last month was premature. He advised upon examination of the Town Handbook for Employees, the position should be advertised. Present town employees will be given preference provided they possess necessary qualifications. He recommended making Randy Lynch Interim Town Manager and proceed with advertisement of the position and plan for a regular appointment to be made at the July meeting. On motion by Ms. Williams, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to follow the recommendation of the Town Attorney to advertise the Town Manager position. On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to appoint Randy Lynch as Interim Town Manager pending the proper advertisement and regular appointment to be made at the July meeting.

**REPORT OF THE TREASURER**  
**CONSIDERATION OF ACCOUNTS**

Mrs. Johnson reported the bills total \$86,698.88. On a motion by Mrs. Talbert, seconded by Ms. Peterson and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to pay the bills in the amount of \$86,698.88 and post to the proper accounts.

**REPORT OF TOWN MANAGER**  
**JAH SPEAK ARTS GALLERY RIBBON CUTTING & GRAN OPENING**

Mr. Gibson attended the JAH Speak Art Gallery ribbon cutting on April 1, 2023. The gallery is open on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Mrs. Martin shared pictures of the various events.

**HOMETOWN HUSTLE PREMIERE**

Mr. Gibson and Mrs. Martin attended the premiere of Hometown Hustle, Season 2: Episode 8, "Brunswick" on April 27, 2023. The featured businesses were Browntown Farms, Shady Shack Bar and Grill, Poplar Pointe Marina and The Butterfly Rose Flowers and Gifts.

**BDX PERFORMANCE LLC RIBBON CUTTING & GRAND OPENING**

The BDX ribbon cutting was held on April 28, 2023. There was a tour of the operation. They have nine employees and would like to hire four more employees. BDX is the only business of its kind in the United States.

**HOTEL ELLE GROUND BREAKING**

They attended the Hotel Elle ground breaking on May 5, 2023. It was a very nice event. Liz Povar was in attendance. She has done work for the town in the past.

**MAIN STREET TRAINING SESSION**

Zachary Whitlow, Virginia Main Street Program Administrator, presented a Main Street program to Town Council members on April 26, 2023. We look forward to strengthening the Main Street approach to improve our historic downtown.

**FINANCIAL & CONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (FCAP) VDH GRANT FOR ALBERTA WATER LINES**

The FCAP VDH Grant for the Alberta waterlines was submitted on May 4, 2023. Mr. Lynch gathered the information for the application. VDH will begin reviewing applications the week of May 15, 2023. It is a \$4.9 million project.

**EASEMENT AT BRUNSWICK SQUARE PUBLIC HEARING**

The Brunswick County Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing for the easement to run underground electricity to the water tank for the mixer project at Brunswick Square on Wednesday, May 17, 2023, at 7:30 p.m.

**MIXERS BID SIGNED CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS**

The mixer paperwork and notice to proceed has been received and is to be signed by the Town of Lawrenceville. The generator project is being reevaluated for cost saving measures.

**THT FUNDING FOR MAINTENANCE GRANT SUPPORT**

A copy of the support letter sent regarding funding for improvements to the Tobacco Heritage Trail is in the packet. They are seeking a grant for maintenance funds.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

### TENTATIVE ADOPTION OF THE FY2023-2024 BUDGET

A public hearing was held on the proposed budget earlier tonight. There were no public comments. The assumptions and the proposed budget were reviewed. Items can be discussed and amended between now and the final adoption in June. On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to tentatively adopt the FY2023-2024 Budget as presented with the addition of \$4,500 added to the line for repairs to the firehouse/generator. It is anticipated that the budget will be formally adopted at the June meeting.

### ADVERTISE PROPOSED WATER/SEWER/GARBAGE RATE ADJUSTMENTS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Pecht reviewed the proposed 20% rate increase as listed in the packet. The proposed minimum rate for in town would be \$14.40 per month for water and \$14.40 per month for sewer. The proposed minimum out of town rates would be \$25.20 per month for water and \$25.20 per month for sewer. If adopted, the increase would be effective on the August 1, 2023 utility bills. On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to advertise a public hearing to be held on June 13, 2023, on the proposed water and sewer rate adjustments.

## FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The fire reports for March and April 2023 are in the packet. The fire department responded to 25 calls in March. Of the 25, 7 were in the town limits and 18 were outside the town limits. Also, 19 were in the LVFD First Due area, with 6 being mutual aid to other agencies. Approximately 152 man hours were expended. The fire department responded to 27 calls in April. Of the 27, 2 were in the town limits and 25 were outside the town limits. Also, 17 were in the LVFD First Due area, with 10 being mutual aid to other agencies. Approximately 163 man hours were expended.

## PERSONNEL

Mr. Brockwell reported there is a report in the packet. We need licensed water and wastewater operators.

## POLICE

Ms. Peterson reported the police report is in the packet.

## PROPERTY & EQUIPMENT

Mr. Brockwell commented that Liz Povar played a big role in the County and Town becoming certified. He thanked Alfreda Reynolds for her work. Things are moving, but moving slow.

## STREETS, LIGHTS & CEMETERY

Mrs. Talbert reported that Mr. Gibson is working with someone to have the red ant problem sprayed on both sides of the cemetery. Mr. Gibson said he was advised this would need to be a spring and fall spraying project.

## TOWN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Brockwell commented that we have already mentioned several activities. The CED project list is in the packet.

## WATER/WASTEWATER

This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

## HOUSING CODE ENFORCEMENT

The carport and part of the porch of the old Barkley house collapsed. Mr. Gibson reported the owner has submitted an insurance claim and is working to address the problem. There is a large dumpster there. Mr. Veliky will come to look at it. Grass notices have not gone out yet.

## PARKS/RECREATION

This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

## WELLNESS

There was no report.

## FARMER'S MARKET

There was no report.

## LAWRENCEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION

There was no report.

## CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Red, White & Blue Parade, Saturday, June 24, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

Sparks in the Ballpark Spectacular, Saturday, June 24, 2023, 7:00 – 10:00 p.m.

Ms. Williams reminded everyone that at the 313 High Street Garden, there is a list posted on the back of the sign for activities and needs.

Mr. Pecht reported that he discovered a big hole in North Main Street one night last week after normal working hours. He called and Mr. Lynch came out and called out the crew. The water leak was found and repairs were made quickly and efficiently. He wanted to thank them publicly for their work. We are fortunate to have such good folks that get these things done.

Mayor Tatum thanked Mrs. Martin for her hard work. Her commitment and dedication is awesome. She is Wonder Woman without a cape. She wants to honor her for all that she does.

Mayor Tatum also thanked Ms. Weddington and Ms. Reynolds for all they do for the Town and the County. We look forward to collaborating and working together to make the Town of Lawrenceville and Brunswick County the place to be.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, Mayor Tatum adjourned the meeting.

LaWanda Tatum, Mayor

Wanda Johnson, Clerk