



CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

City Council Chambers

Monday, April 08, 2024 at 7:00 PM

MINUTES

Members Present

Mayor, Becky S. Smith, Council Members: Brenda Boyd, Donnie Griffin, Nellie Floyd, Michael Brooks and Allen Hook were all present. City Manager, Josh Ross and Attorney, Marshall Walker were present filling in for City Attorney, David Smith. Council member, Brent Guffey was absent.

Call to Order, Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order. Council member, Brenda Boyd led the audience in prayer. Mayor Smith led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adjustment and Approval of the Agenda

By motion of Allen Hook and unanimous vote, the April agenda was approved with no revisions.

Special Presentations

Student Appreciation- Students from Bessemer City High School, Bessemer City Central Elementary School, Tryon Elementary and Bessemer City Primary School were recognized by their principals and City Council as part of the Student Appreciation Program. Bessemer City Middle School was unable to attend:

Mrs. Doneen Johnson, Principal of Bessemer City High School, and Mayor Smith, recognized the following students of the month: Tessa Holcombe, 9th grade representative; Daiana Salinas Laguna, 10th grade representative; Mason Maag, 11th grade representative and Jason Morris, 12th grade representative.

Dr. April Conley, Principal of Bessemer City Central School, and Mayor Smith, recognized the following students of the month: Maddox Burgess; 3rd grade representative; 4th grade representative, Kensleigh Anderson; and 5th grade representative, Margarita Alcudia Lopez.

Dr. Bill Kessler, Principal of Bessemer City Primary and Mayor Smith, recognized the following students of the month: Kenzley Brooks & Gabriela Romero Vasquez, Kindergarten representative; Alexandra Quezada-Garcia, 1st grade representative, and Alexander Ruiz, 2nd grade representative.

Mrs. Kelsey Nixon, Kindergarten Administrator of Tryon Elementary and Mayor Smith, recognized the following students of the month: Rayce Hampton, Kindergarten representative; Mason Moore, 1st grade, Noah Kish, 2nd grade representative, Alexa Galo Reyes, 3rd grade representative; Alex Hardy, 4th grade representative; and Micah Davidson, 5th grade representative.

Request to Speak/Opportunity for Public Comment

Mayor Smith opened the floor for public comment. The following individuals came forth:

- Pamela Gladney of 502 E. Ohio Avenue: Mrs. Gladney addressed Council regarding the Planning & Zoning Board of Adjustments. Mrs. Gladney stated that the Planning & Zoning Board April meeting was cancelled as one guest couldn't attend. Gladney stated that although the developers could not attend, other housekeeping matters could've been discussed. Gladney further stated that the minutes should be available for public inspection. The minutes should not be left unadopted for months on end. Additionally, Gladney had a question about why 5 members of the planning & zoning board could serve on the board of adjustments. Additionally, Gladney would like for the agenda packets to be released to the public.

-Aaron Grosdider of 517 Costner School Road: Mr. Grosdider thanked City Council for not moving forward with the close and vacate order on property at 112 West Georgia Avenue. Council chose to give the property owner a 30-day extension. Mr. Grosdider also provided words recognizing late Council member, Dan Boling. Mr. Grosdider stated that that he believed the City spent \$1,500 to \$2,000 to pay a 3rd party to remove the fall banners around town. Item 11 on the agenda (Storm Water Implementation), is an unnecessary increase. Grosdider made claims that his City water remains to have a foul odor and color. Grosdider thanked City staff for answering his FOIA request in a timely manner. Lastly, Mr. Grosdider would like to see the City meetings streamed online for citizens who cannot attend the City Council meetings.

Public Comment Acknowledgment

Mayor Smith recognized City Manager, Josh Ross to provide clarification on some items discussed during public comment.

- The Planning Board has seven board members, and the Zoning Board of Adjustments has five board members as this board makes quasi-judicial decisions. In an effort to maintain the quasi-judicial function, the board has two members that serve as alternates.

Consent Agenda

The following items on the Consent Agenda were unanimously approved by motion of Brenda Boyd:

1. **Approval of Minutes:** City Council will consider adopting Regular Meeting minutes of the March 11, 2024 meeting.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** City Council will consider adopting Work Session Meeting minutes of the April 2, 2024 meeting.

Proclamation honoring Council Member, Dan Boling

Mayor, Becky S. Smith read the proclamation recognizing Dan Boling for his 18 years of service.

By motion of Donnie Griffin and unanimous vote, the Proclamation was adopted.

Resolution Directing the Clerk to Investigate a Petition Received for Voluntary Annexation N.C.G.S. §160A-31 (Meritage Homes)

By motion of Donnie Griffin and unanimous vote, a resolution directing the City Clerk to investigate the petition for voluntary annexation from Meritage Homes Inc. for the Stewart Crossing homes project per NCGS 160A – 31 was adopted.

Development Services Director, Nathan Hester addressed City Council regarding the Meritage Homes Inc. project. This project was previously approved under a different developer, Eastwood Homes. Thus, the project must be resubmitted by the new development team. The team has met with City Staff and shared construction drawings of the 6 different parcels.

Establish a Public Hearing - Petition for Voluntary Annexation (Meritage Homes):

By motion of Allen Hook and unanimous vote, City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, May 13th, 2024 at 7:00 PM to hear public comment regarding a voluntary annexation petition from Meritage Homes (Stewart Crossing) for property located at tax parcel #304904 (23.688 acres). City Council Member, Michael Brooks ask that new Council Members be sent the details of what was previously approved under the Eastwood Homes project for reference.

Establish a Public Hearing - 2024-2025 Proposed Budget:

By motion of Michael Brooks and unanimous vote, City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, May 13th, 2024 at 7:00 PM to hear public comment regarding the proposed 2024-2025 City budget.

Resolution- Application for NC DEQ Water Infrastructure Funding (Lead & Copper Study)

City Manager, Joshua Ross informed Council that City Staff would like to apply for funding to assist with the completion of the mandated Lead & Copper Study. In order to comply with this mandated Lead & Copper study, City Staff will need assistance from a third party to complete this extensive scope of work.

By motion of Donnie Griffin and unanimous vote, the resolution regarding the application of NC DEQ water funds for a lead and copper study was approved.

Capital Project Ordinance- RC2 Grant Project

City Manager, Joshua Ross Development Services Director, Nathan Hester informed Council that the City has received a grant from NC Department of Commerce through the RC2 project. Thus, a capital project ordinance detailing how the funds will be spent is needed. The grant was \$49, 999 and City Staff would like to use the funds primarily for City branding and an economic development study. The City would like to do a corridor study and downtown master plan.

By motion of Nellie Floyd and unanimous vote, the capital project ordinance regarding RC2 grant funds was approved.

Bessemer City Storm Water Fee Implementation Plan

City Manager, Joshua Ross addressed Council regarding the Stormwater Fee Implementation plan. In 2021 the City had an impervious study done to determine the ERU stormwater rate for non-residential surfaces. Previously, City Council voted to implement a new rate structure for Stormwater Fees based on this study on July 1, 2024. However, upon further review Staff would like to recommend a three-phase process:

- Phase 1: 2024-2025 Budget (July 1, 2024) Residential- Stormwater Fee of \$3.07/month goes to \$6.00/month Non-Residential- 50% of proposed fee implemented (based on impervious surface; multiplier \$3.00)
- Phase 2: 2025-2026 Budget (July 1, 2025) Residential- Stormwater Fee remains at \$6.00/month Non-Residential- 75% of proposed fee implemented (based on impervious surface; multiplier is \$4.50)
- Phase 3: 2026-2027 Budget (July 1, 2026) Residential- Stormwater Fee remains \$6.00/month Non-Residential- 100% of proposed fee implemented (based on impervious surface; multiplier is \$6.00)

By motion of Allen Hook and unanimous vote, the three phases implementation option was adopted.

City Manager's Report

City Manager, Josh Ross, addressed Council regarding the following:

- General: The budget process is underway, and all available information for the public has been placed on the website. Parks & Recreation will have their first Concert & Cruise-In on Saturday, April 27th. Down Home Festival is coming up as well. Downtown Development has moved the Farmer's Market to Sundays to increase artisan participation. Mr. Ross made a few remarks to remember former Council Member, Dan Boling as his funeral services were earlier today.

Council General Discussion

Mayor Smith opened the floor for Council general discussion. Mayor Smith opened the discussion with informing everyone that the Work Session this month would begin at 2 PM. Council Member, Michael Brooks inquired about how to stream meetings and his condolences about the late Dan Boling. Per general consensus, the streaming of meetings will be discussed at the next Work Session. Council Member, Allen Hook inquired about the shoulder on Edgewood Road near the new stoplight. City Staff has reached out to NCDOT about improving this area. Additionally, Mr. Hook inquired about the cost associated with streaming the meetings. Mr. Hook made a few remarks regarding the late Dan Boling. Council Member, Brenda Boyd spoke about recently attending a seminar on behalf of the City, and how blessed she is to serve the citizens of Bessemer City. Additionally, Dan Boling was a great man and will be missed dearly. Council Member, Nellie Floyd thanked City Staff for addressing citizen complaints about Rice Street. Mr. Boling was a man of integrity and he welcomed me on to the board. He will be missed. Council member, Donnie Griffin inquired about streaming meetings and the passing of Dan Boling.

Adjournment

Being no further business to come before the board, by motion of Brenda Boyd and unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 8:01 PM.

Becky S. Smith, Mayor

Hydeia Y. Hayes, City Clerk