

Mayor
Jack Edwards

Mayor Pro Tem
Ed Samaha

Town Manager
Ryan Spitzer



Town Council
Les Gladden
Amelia Stinson-Wesley
Chris McDonough

Town Clerk
Lisa Snyder

**WORK SESSION MINUTES
MONDAY, MAY 22, 2023, AT 6:00 PM
TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The Town Council of the Town of Pineville, NC, met in a Work Session on Monday, May 22, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Mayor: Jack Edwards
Mayor Pro Tem: Ed Samaha
Council Members: Chris McDonough, Amelia Stinson-Wesley, Les Gladden
Town Manager: Ryan Spitzer
Planning & Zoning Director: Travis Morgan
Town Clerk: Lisa Snyder

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Gladden moved to approve the agenda items with a second made by Council Member McDonough. All ayes. Mayor Jack Edwards called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Main Street Gross Project. Planning & Zoning Director Travis Morgan stated that Blue Heron is seeking consideration of a conditional zoning proposal at 404 Main Street, to allow for 294 apartments and 8,500 sq ft of commercial space within a 5-story structure on the northeast corner of Cranford Drive and Main Street. There will be a parking deck. The commercial component will be on the ground floor. He added that left-hand turns could be problematic since there is no traffic light at this corner. Mr. Morgan further reviewed the parking count with council and advised that the count is short. This is a first read.

Sean Paolini, with Bolton & Menk, Inc., which is also known as Blue Heron, Inc., presented a power point presentation to council breaking down the plan. He eliminated entrances on Main Street.

Council Member Amelia Stinson-Wesley stated that she is not interested in more apartments and is more interested in owner-occupied units, and she has concerns about height. She would prefer to have a building across from Town Hall not exceed the height of these buildings. She asked if they're keeping any trees along Cranford. He replied if they can, they will absolutely try to do that.

Council Member Chris McDonough asked if there would be a marginal effect on the number of cars going in and out. He wondered how accurate their assessment is. Mr. Paolini replied that their traffic engineer said there was no

recommendation. Mr. Morgan added that he would like to see NCDOT's recommendation. Traffic is a popular subject and there will continue to be workshop meetings to discuss this further if council approves the idea. Mayor Edwards compared the applicant's parking count ratio with Mr. Morgan's parking count ratio. There's almost a 400-car difference between the two.

Council Member Les Gladden concurred that the applicant's parking count is not acceptable. Mr. Gladden further added that this is excessive for Pineville, and he is having real heartache over this. Mayor Pro Tem Ed Samaha agreed that parking is an issue.

Mayor Edwards recommended that the applicant continue to work with Mr. Morgan on what is acceptable and come up with something and come back to a meeting.

Lowry Street Project Approval. Town Manager Ryan Spitzer received three bids for this project, with United of Carolinas coming in as the lowest bidder at \$541,653.82. The purpose of this project is to widen the road from S. Polk Street to Marine Drive. The project will improve traffic flow in both the mornings and afternoons by dedicating a right turn lane on S. Polk, as well as a dedicated through lane on Lowry at the intersection of Marine Drive. They will begin work on June 15th and complete the work by school openings in August. He believes that this time frame is realistic. The Town has already appropriated \$600,000 for this project in the previous budget. We have already expended \$88,000 for engineering and consultation services. The reason for approving the contract at this Work Session is due to the timeline.

Mr. Spitzer said that we will have to do a little bit of stormwater piping on the edge of the road, and we'll have to move the fire hydrant and some other utilities. He continued he'd like to have a vote at this meeting, however, if they aren't comfortable with this, he can push it to June. The attorney would still have to approve the contract, we'd have to sign it and they'd have to sign before work begins.

Council Member Gladden moved to approve the low bid with United Carolinas to go ahead and get this project started, with Council Member Stinson-Wesley providing a second. All ayes. **(Approved 4-0)**

Budget Discussion. HR Director Linda Gaddy began the budget presentation with a proposed pay plan for the employees for FY24 to accomplish the goals we previously discussed. She did work with some consultants on this project. The cost-of-living increases in the country have been pretty steep in the last two years. The two-year average for all CPI index was 14%, this is why we're moving in this direction. The plans have been updated to reflect a proposed 8% COLA across the board, and are planned to be implemented effective July 2023, if approved. She has also realigned the grades on the Police Sworn Officer's Step Pay Plan to assure even spreads and appropriate promotional increases. It has been difficult to hire and retain quality staff given the competitive labor market. She noted that the spreads between some grades in the Police Step Pay Plan were not evenly distributed. Mayor Pro Tem Ed Samaha added that it's the right thing to do.

Town Manager Spitzer said that this will be presented at the public hearing at the June 13th council meeting, in which council can vote that evening. Statutorily the budget has to be adopted by June 30th. Council Member McDonough asked if he has heard anything further from Charlotte or Mecklenburg County in terms of what they might be doing. Mr. Spitzer replied that they are planning on a revenue-neutral rate and the County is looking to go up 1.6 cents.

We thought we were going to have an increase in health care, but we went out for bid on health care this year and we're going to go with Cigna and staying at the same rates we currently have. We are looking to get back some money from Cigna to do some wellness stuff. They have offered to give us \$24,000 this year and another \$5,000 next year for wellness.

Council Member Gladden explained to those in attendance that our radio system with the police department is going to have to be changed from Harris to Motorola, and with that, goes a lot of change in the dispatch center and the tower. We have to be able to communicate with the other police departments and the state patrol system. It's going to cost \$5 million dollars. We don't have a choice in the matter. So, when you hear people talk about a tax increase here and there, this is to make you aware that this is not a choice item, it's for public safety. We have to do that. Town Manager Spitzer added that at our current assessed value, each penny that we assess in tax value is about \$365,000.

Council Member Stinson-Wesley added that at our public hearing on June 13th anybody can sign up to speak and share their thoughts. Mr. Spitzer reiterated that anyone can speak during public comment and public hearing comment so people can speak on that.

Mayor Edwards added that adjustments will have to be made in two years or we won't have the funds to do the projects. Right now, we have a balanced budget, but in two years that will change.

Mayor Edwards called for a five-minute break before entering closed session pursuant to NCGS 143.318.1 (4) for economic development.

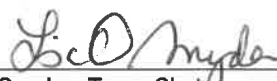
A motion was made to close the Work Session by Council Member Stinson-Wesley and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Samaha. All eyes.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 8:30 pm.



Jack Edwards, Mayor

ATTEST:



Lisa Snyder, Town Clerk