

Town of Mount Olive
July 12, 2022
Regular Board Meeting
Minutes

Mayor Kenneth Talton called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Those in attendance per roll call of Mayor Kenneth Talton were Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins, Commissioner Vicky Darden, Commissioner Delreese Simmons, Commissioner Barbara Kornegay, Commissioner Tommy Brown, Town Manager Jammie Royall, Town Clerk/Administrative Assistant Sherry Davis and Town Attorney Carroll Turner.

Mayor Kenneth Talton welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked Chandler Johnson with the Goldsboro News Argus and Rebecca Whitman with the Duplin Times for attending. He is saddened that the Mount Olive Tribune has closed.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins delivered our invocation and Commissioner Tommy Brown led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Kenneth Talton conducted a roll call and all were present.

Mayor Kenneth Talton read the Conflict of Interest Statement; there were no conflicts.

Mayor Kenneth Talton requested a motion to approve the published agenda. Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins made the motion. Commissioner Barbara Kornegay seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Kenneth Talton requested a motion to approve the June 14, 2022 regular and the June 29, 2022 special meeting minutes. Commissioner Vicky Darden advised the minutes were missing the election of the Mayor Pro-Tempore. Town Clerk Sherry Davis apologized, she accidentally deleted it when reducing the number of pages. Mayor Kenneth Talton requested a motion to table the June 14, 2022 meeting minutes until the August 9, 2022 meeting. Commissioner Barbara Kornegay made the motion and Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Kenneth Talton requested a motion to approve the June 29, 2022 special meeting minutes. Commissioner Barbara Kornegay made the motion. Commissioner Tommy Brown seconded the motion and it passed 5-0.

Mayor Kenneth Talton then moved to the Public Forum. Mr. Sammie Faison of 106 East Maple Street, Mount Olive, NC 28365, 919-344-7034 wanted to comment on past issues that have been going on for forty plus years now. He stated there is never any action and he is always told, I will get back to you. He purchased property at 104 East Maple Street because it adjoined his property. There was a ditch located at 304 South Church Street located behind his property. He asked the late Lloyd Warren and the late D.F. Odom to clean the ditch but they filled it in instead. He stated there are side ditches on both sides that have catch basins. This helps with some drainage but now the water is eroding over the pipes.

Mr. Sammie Faison then discussed a rotten tree located on Church Street heading toward Maple. The roots are growing into the sidewalk and people have to walk in the street. Town Manager Jammie Royall said the North Carolina Department of Transportation would not allow them to pave or widen the street. Mr. Sammie Faison informed the audience there are handicap buses that make three trips a day for two students. It is difficult for the buses to get through there and the street needs to be widened. Mayor Kenneth Talton encouraged Mr. Sammie Faison to meet with his commissioner and the Town Manager. Mr. Sammie Faison's three minutes were up so his neighbor Ms. Marge Swinson allowed him to have her three minutes.

Mr. Sammie Faison stated the funeral home down the street floods and causes mold to run down in nearby houses causing health issues for the residents. He wanted to know what happened to the five million dollar grant that ADLA, Inc. received and grant for the storm shelter. He commented God is looking and so is he and other people.

Mrs. Doris Yates of 1202 South Church Street, Mount Olive, NC 28365, 919-299-4000 was next to speak. She asked what happened to the five percent across the board raises. The new employees received a five percent but some of the more experienced employees did not. Mayor Kenneth Talton advised that Town Manager Jammie Royall can answer this during his report at the end of the meeting.

Mrs. Linda Boykin of 600 East Main Street, Mount Olive, NC 28365, 919-922-9364 stated the specified five percent across the board raises did not take place. She thought that was the reason for the property tax increase. She said, it looks like the board is being deceitful to the citizens and the employees. She also wanted to discuss the proposed mobile home ordinance on the agenda tonight. She is on the planning board and is opposed to this even if it is for Mobile Home Parks only. She said, the mobile home parks are terrible and decreases the property values for surrounded homes. The landlords need to be held accountable in the ordinance. Amendments need to be made.

Ms. Mary Joyce Southerland of 911 South Church Street, Mount Olive, NC 28365, 919-658-2204. She is concerned about the proposed side walk for the nine hundred block of South Church Street. She has spoken to Town Manager Jammie Royall, Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins and former Commissioner Harlie Carmichael. Her house is only a few feet from the road, if this sidewalk is installed it would only be two feet from her front door. The situation is the same for her neighbor. She is asking that the sidewalk not be installed for the sake of saving her and her neighbors homes.

Dr. J. Jerome Newton of 605 Connor Street, Mount Olive, NC 28365, 919-658-9769 stated three minutes is a short period of time to speak but he will do his best to speak within it. He introduced himself as the National President for the Carver High School Alumni and Friends Association. He is concerned about the people of Mount Olive. He would like a status update regarding the deeds of the Carver Cultural Center properties. He wanted to know why the yard waste/debris truck is still broke down after two months. Why has it not been repaired and why is yard waste/debris being collected with a backhoe. He stated he watched the Water/Sewer Department clean out pipes that had not been cleaned in years. They were full or dirt and the drain is lower than the pipe. Two drains were identified yesterday that have not been for years. One of them was a dummy drain. He advised the same crew is picking up debris, is it the Water/Sewer Department's job to collect yard waste/debris or Public Works. If Public Works is responsible then why are they not collecting it, is there not enough personnel? How often are ditches cleaned and is a log kept? Can't this be done with a backhoe that has an extension that is long enough to reach? He wanted to know why the new employees are getting a five percent raise and the experienced employees are not. He commented the trash truck is too small and the old police cars at Gordon Street need to be removed. He mentioned all the new vehicles. He talked about the town recently be awarded two new grants. One for one point nine million dollars and the other for one hundred and seventy five thousand dollars for Downtown Revitalization. He wanted to know if that grant was earmarked specifically for downtown and if not can some of the funding be applied to the south side of town. He said, shouldn't grants be applied for on the south end of town. He asked who do the advisory committees report to. He stated he is not a member of the Concerned Citizens.

Mayor Kenneth Talton advised that we take all comments seriously and we will follow-up on these issues. He thanked everyone for his or her comments and closed the Public Forum.

Mayor Kenneth Talton then discussed the Public Hearing regarding the Mobile Home Ordinance in Mobile Home Parks Only. He asked Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill to explain the purpose of this ordinance. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill stated he has received several phone calls from mobile home park owners. Three of them are on the north side. There are empty lots but they can't replace after six months, which means no tax value. There are several stipulations still in place. The mobile home can be no more than ten years old and must have brick underpinning.

Mayor Kenneth Talton asked if the existing mobile home ordinance requires mobile homes within mobile home parks to be replaced within six months or if they are conforming, can they replace. Code Enforcement Officer said no, the current ordinance applies to all mobile homes. He feels it would increase the value of the mobile home parks because there would be newer mobile homes with brick underpinning. Mayor Kenneth Talton asked if the Planning Board has met. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill answered yes. Mayor Kenneth Talton requested confirmation this was for mobile home parks only and this will allow them to replace mobile homes at any time. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill confirmed.

Mayor Kenneth Talton wanted to know how many mobile home parks there are. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill stated there are three on the north side and two on the south side but only two are classified as mobile home parks. Mayor Kenneth Talton asked if everyone on the board understands. Commissioner Tommy Brown was concerned because he was unable to add an additional bathroom due to the moratorium. So how can a two-bathroom mobile home be added. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill advised there is already a sewer tap at these locations. Town Manager Jammie Royall stated most are already accounted for in the system. Commissioner Tommy Brown said some of them only have one. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill commented that three-inch pipes accommodate three bathrooms.

Commissioner Delreese Simmons asked Utilities Director Jeremy King to speak since he knows more about sewer. Utilities Director Jeremy King stated most sewer lines are four inches. Mayor Kenneth Talton stated for the public but private lines are three inches, so both are correct.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins wanted to clarify that we are discussing the 180- day rule to replace mobile homes once an existing one has been removed. He asked if we are trying to take this rule out of the ordinances. What is a manufactured mobile home and are they up to HUD code? Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill stated it must be approved by the Zoning Officer and it is only to fill a blank space. Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins stated he thought it was the intention was to meet HUD standards. Are we going to allow mobile homes that are not HUD approved? Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill advised no, all mobile homes must have HUD stamp to qualify. Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins wanted to know if they were being asked to strike the 180-Rule and will the mobile homes be required to have underpinning? Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill commented brick underpinning is required.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins is concerned this request will encourage junk mobile homes. Commissioner Delreese Simmons stated all these homes are going in his area. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill advised this request is for mobile home park lots only not residential areas. Commissioner Delreese Simmons said there was mobile home snuck in by Ed Cromartie. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill clarified a permit had been issued. It expired and was re-issued. He asked how long it has been there. Commissioner Delreese Simmons stated since 2016 or 2017. He stated he was not blaming Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill because this was before his time. Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins asked if there are codes for situations like those that Commissioner Delreese Simmons is talking about. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill said residential area require mobile homes to be no older than five years.

Commissioner Barbara Kornegay stated we had so little affordable housing they wanted people to have homes. Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins said so many people live out of town. Mayor Kenneth Talton informed everyone when the tornados ravaged our town in 1984 is when we started seeing a large influx of mobile homes. So many families were displaced. In 1998, the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners voted to place tighter restrictions. As time has passed, we began to see concerns for the neighborhoods and property values. Mobile home parks do address housing but several parks have deteriorated and need to be brought up to code.

Mayor Kenneth Talton requested a motion to go into public hearing. Commissioner Barbara Kornegay made the motion. Commissioner Tommy Brown seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Kenneth Talton asked if anyone from the public wished to speak. Mrs. Linda Boykin advises she is not saying get rid of mobile home parks but to make the landlords accountable. All they do is collect the rent; they don't live here so they don't see it. It is the same thing with the run down houses.

Mrs. Doris Yates agrees with Mrs. Linda Boykin. Landlords should be held accountable. Vista-Verde mobile home park is sad, doors are falling off. It is horrible and no one should have to live in those conditions period.

Mr. Hobart Yates stated at Wil-Mar Estates all the mobile homes are rented and the owners need to be held to a standard.

Fire Chief Greg Wiggins said the fire department goes into these homes quite often. Wil-Mar Estates is not as difficult to get to because the streets are paved. Vista-Verde is paved but it is very hard to maneuver a fire truck. The ones near the gas place have no paved streets and they can't get fire trucks in and out. The same thing on Franklin Street. Subdivisions need to be paved, there must be standards regarding the roads.

Dr. J. Jerome Newton thinks if landlords were held accountable, there probably would not be as many fires because of the way they are maintained. There is cardboard in the windows. If these slumlords are held accountable then people can raise their standard of living.

Mayor Steve Wiggins wanted to clarify that it is not so much the 180-days but no standards for landlords that hold them accountable. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill stated they were working on something one time but it fell through. They wanted to require an inspection before the property could be rented again. Mayor Kenneth Talton advised there should be a minimum housing code. If you see a broken window, you can force the landlord to comply. Tenants do not have the resources to go after landlords. This is worth revisiting for future meetings to develop standards. Commissioner Vicky Darden said some people come to her for help because the landlords won't make the needed repairs. She said one woman complained to her property owner about mold and was evicted. The landlord then painted over it.

Mr. Hobart Yates stated a renter's permit needs to be established. The cost for this permit should be around fifty dollars. An inspection would be required before the property could be rented again. Human Resources Director Erin Lambert informed everyone this went before the Planning Board five years ago and it was denied. Ms. Rebecca Whitman with the Duplin Times commented that people who live in these homes don't know their rights and Mount Olive is known for its' slumlords. She is proud of this group for caring.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins thinks that Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill and the Planning Board need to work on an ordinance that will make landlords accountable. Mayor Kenneth Talton stated we can approve, deny, table or direct the Planning Board to review these options but we need to take action tonight and please be specific. He then asked if anyone else wished to speak.

Town Attorney Carroll Turner advised it is not correct to state there are no standards. The state has a minimum housing code which he will research but he doesn't think the town can preclude. The General Assembly passed the following: In a house with no heat – the landlord is only required to provide one source of heat. This is a standard you may not agree with but we can't make them provide any more than the state does. He will be glad to work with Code Enforcement and the Planning Board on this but we have to comply with the law.

Mayor Kenneth Talton asked if there were any actual standards for mobile home parks. Dr. J. Jerome Newton commented the state requires guidance. Federal Law required you only have to have one tail light. The state then institutes you must have two. We should be able to make decisions for our town because we live here.

Mr. Dennis Draper asked, if the state has guidelines does that mean the town can't get any stricter. Mayor Kenneth Talton answered, no the town can set standards. He asked if there were any other questions.

Commissioner Tommy Brown would like clarification regarding the mobile home park bathrooms and the moratorium. He is still concerned regarding this issue.

Mayor Kenneth Talton stated we need to make a decision to either set standards or phase out over time for non-conformance. He asked everyone to please think about this going forward.

Mayor Kenneth Talton requested a motion to come out of Public Hearing. Commissioner Barbara Kornegay made the motion. Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Kenneth Talton then discussed Non-Action Memo – 07-57 – Present Information Regarding the Rural Transformation Planning Grant for Downtown Revitalization. Commissioner Barbara Kornegay wanted to provide an executive summary. She advised we should receive the funds in the amount of \$175,000.00 in November 2022. Mayor Kenneth Talton wanted to know if this is a planning grant only. Commissioner Barbara Kornegay stated that is correct. Mayor Kenneth Talton asked if there were any further questions.

Mayor Kenneth Talton then discussed Action Memo – 07-58 – Consider Adoption of the Mobile Home Ordinance in Mobile Home Parks Only.

Commissioner Barbara Kornegay made a motion to table indefinitely. This will provide the Planning Board time to be better informed. Mayor Kenneth Talton asked Town Attorney Carroll Turner if this is proper protocol. Town Attorney Carroll Turner said it can be tabled indefinitely, removed or until such time, there is a motion to take actions. Commissioner Barbara Kornegay thanked the Planning Board for their service. Mayor Kenneth Talton advised the Board of Commissioners they have a right to put anything on the agenda. Commissioner Tommy Brown seconded the motion and it passed 5-0.

Commissioner Barbara Kornegay suggested a committee be formed with Planning Board, Citizens and Code Enforcement. Mayor Kenneth Talton agreed. He suggested Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill, Commissioner Tommy Brown, Commissioner Barbara Kornegay and Planning Board member Mrs. Linda Boykin. Commissioner Barbara Kornegay feels the Board should tour the mobile home parks; she will set this up with Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill.

Town Manager Jammie Royall Presented Report As Follows:

- He wished everyone a good evening and stated he will go through the questions asked.
- To Mrs. Doris Yates and Linda Boykin – he was under the impression raises were given across the board at 5%
- He will confirm this once the finance director is back.
- He advised Ms. Southerland he will not let them put a sidewalk as proposed. He told her not to worry. The engineer is working on a new design.
- To Dr. J. Jerome Newton, he has spoken with Danny King regarding the Carver Cultural Center buildings and the next steps.
- To Dr. J. Jerome Newton regarding the Emergency Shelter. We applied for this grant but the funding was pulled by the agency. The state took the funding back and never distributed any of it. He has spoken with the Grant Administrator many times.
- The same thing with the drainage funding, we applied through Golden Leaf and the allocated funding was transferred to another fund.
- The grant for the Maple, Center & Nelson Street Drainage was approved in the amount of \$954,000.00
- Regarding the backhoe, the construction part of the grants are subcontracted through the engineer and they have their own heavy equipment.

Dr. J. Jerome Newton stated he needs to know the monies were never received.

The Commissioner's Reports were as Follows:

Commissioner Vicky Darden

- She discussed Breazeale Avenue at the end of County Road and said it is a mess and we need help. There is oil running in sewers and coming into Mount Olive in front of the Boys and Girls Club, Real Deal Tires has so many cars there and it needs to be cleaned up. She advised Human Resources Director Erin Lambert shut them down one time when she was Code Enforcement.

Mayor Kenneth Talton asked Town Attorney Carroll Turner to please step in. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill advised Mr. Billy Bennett is scheduled to tow all the cars tomorrow. Mayor Kenneth Talton suggested appointing a committee that would include Commissioner Vicky Darden, Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins, Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill and Town Attorney Carroll Turner.

Commissioner Barbara Kornegay

- She stated that she serves on the Airport Commission, Wayne County Economic Development Committee, Waste Water Treatment Updates Committee and the Grants Search Group.
- The Grants Search Group meets every two weeks on Monday afternoons at the Train Depot.
- Last week she toured the downtown businesses that burned or were damaged in the December 1, 2021 fire. Luckily, most of them will re-open.
- She has also been working on the Public Works Equipment needs.
- She has attended multiple meetings regarding the Fire Department and she took the required training for Viable Utilities.

Commissioner Delreese Simmons

- He spoke with Town Manager Jammie Royall to determine whose job it is to collect the yard waste. If it is Public Works why is Utilities Director Jeremy King collecting them?
- He feels like we give favors out to certain people, the cars on Gordon and Pollock Streets are allowed to stay there because of who owns them.
- He advised he sent an email regarding 300 East Kornegay Street. He asked Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill if they have moved out of the camper. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill stated yes.
- He asked is there ordinance regarding screening dumpsters. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill answered; yes, it is required for all new construction that the dumpsters either be placed on a grate or inside a fence.
- He asked if work on the ditches has stopped. Town Manager Jammie Royall advised the rental was under par for what we needed it for and we only have one backhoe.
- He wanted to know where the body cam footage from the Mount Olive Pickle Company incident was. Police Chief Jason Hughes stated there is a process that has to be followed. Unless a judge orders it to be released they are not allowed to do so. Assistant Police

Chief John Duncan said as far the allegation of use of force, there was no indication of excessive force. The officer was injured trying to make sure of this.

- He asked about the Driver's License office. What will happen to the building once they vacate. Town Manager Jammie Royall advised we either sell it or demolish it. Commissioner Barbara Kornegay said there is a building in town they can lease.
- He commented landlords need to be held accountable. Slumlords like the houses owned by the Oates family look terrible and all they want is money. We need to do something different.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins

- He commended the town employees for all of their hard work.
- He met with the sidewalk contractor
- He attended the Eastern Carolina Council meeting in New Bern.
- He spoke with Mr. Sammie Faison regarding the \$964,000.00 Grant the town was awarded. He advised that it has been in the works for almost five years and will help with flood mitigation. A culvert will be placed under the railroad track. He is so happy this was funded. It will relieve a lot of the areas Mr. Sammie Faison talked about.
- He stated the tree mentioned by Mr. Sammie Faison is still there and the two biggest limbs recently fell out of it. He feels this is our responsibility.
- He informed everyone that Utilities Director Jeremy King has been helping collect limbs because our Public Works equipment stays broken down. Utilities Director Jeremy King has the only good backhoe. Some of our equipment is so old we can't get replacement parts. He has made an inventory list and condition of the equipment and placed copies on the table up front. He asked citizens to please feel free to take one.
- He said we can't lease a limb truck and can only rent a backhoe from time to time.

Commissioner Tommy Brown

- He stated he was saddened by the passing of former Chief of Police Larry Riggle.
- He advised that he believes in being clear and transparent and this need to be discussed. He said that thirty-nine employees received a 5% raise. Eighteen received between 5% and 10%, two received 12%, three received more than 12% and one received 18%. He doesn't know why this couldn't just be put on the table. We have to be open. He advised that Town Manager Jammie Royall and Finance Director Geoffrey Merritt did not receive a raise at all.
- Town Manager Jammie Royall thought everyone received a 5% across the board raise. He will speak with Finance Director Geoffrey Merritt when he returns.
- He asked if there was a need to have this on the agenda for the next board meeting. Town Manager Jammie Royall will have an update at the next meeting.

Mayor Kenneth Talton

- He thinks this board should get together and go visit churches to have a state of the town meeting. He asked if the board was willing to start that again. It is only two or three times a year and a good way to communicate.
- Hurricane Preparedness is very important and we can never be too ready. We already have a hazard mitigation plan and need to do the right thing.
- He asked if Chief of Police Jason Hughes, Commissioner Tommy Brown and Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins would work together with the police department to have an Emergency Services Plan. Commissioner Tommy Brown stated they had a stand up Emergency Operations Center and should have a plan already. They remain in contact with the American Red Cross. During Hurricane Matthew, they used the Train Depot until they could get back over to Carver Elementary School. That shelter stayed open for two weeks. The county said they would take over the shelters but no one could get across the Neuse.
- He feels we should have a mock situation we need the key players and places. We also need to have emergency supplies in place. We have to act like a team when we are cut off from the river.
- He has received several calls regarding fireworks. Please consider bringing them back in the future budgets if it is the consensus of the board public.

There being no further business Mayor Pro-Tempore Steve Wiggins made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Tommy Brown seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Our next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 9, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. in the board meeting room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kenneth K. Talton
Mayor

Sherry Davis
Administrative Assistant/Town Clerk