



May 5, 2020

MINUTES

The Holly Springs Town Council met in electronic session on Tuesday, May 5, 2020 via video conferencing. Mayor Sears presided, calling the meeting to order at 7 p.m. A quorum was established as the mayor was present in Town Hall and five council members were present via video conferencing as the meeting opened.

Council Members Present via video conferencing: Mayor Sears in Town Hall. Councilmen Dan Berry, Peter Villadsen, Shaun McGrath and Aaron Wolff, and Councilwoman Christine Kelly were present via video conferencing.

Council Members Absent: none.

Staff Members Present via video conferencing: Randy Harrington, *Town Manager*; Daniel Weeks, *Assistant Town Manager*; Scott Chase, *Assistant Town Manager*; John Schifano, *Town Attorney*; Linda McKinney, *Town Clerk* (recording the minutes); Cassie Hack, *Director Communications and Marketing*; Tamara Ward, *Communications and Marketing*; Jeff Wilson, *Director IT*; Patty Dressen, *Interim Director of Finance*; LeeAnn Plumer, *Director Parks and Recreation*; Gina Clapp, *Director of Planning & Zoning*; Melissa Sigmund, *Planning & Zoning*; Kendra Parrish, *Director Engineering*; Tim Athy, *Engineering*; Irena Krstanovic, *Director Economic Development*; and Leroy Smith, *Fire Chief*.

2. and 3. The pledge of allegiance was recited followed by an invocation by Mayor Sears.

4. Agenda Adjustment: The May 5, 2020 meeting agenda was adopted with changes, if any, as listed: addition of Item 11, Consideration of Non-profit Grants for COVID-19 Relief Efforts.

Motion by: Berry

Second by: 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 granting funds to Western Wake Crisis Ministry for COVID-19 relief.

5. National 2020 Kids to Parks Day

Lee Ann Plumer, Director of Parks and Recreation, said that May 16th has been designated as Kids to Parks day since 2010 by the National Park Trust. The goal is to promote local, national, and state parks, and encourage outdoor activity. Given the current situation with COVID-19, the National Parks Trust is renaming the days "Parks to Kids Day" for 2020 and has sponsored virtual events that bring nature and parks to kids who are social distancing. She outlined programs that the Holly Springs Parks & Recreation Department is running to engage residents during this time of social distancing. Some of the things they are doing to keep people engaged during the stay at home time are nature crafts, cooking programs, virtual fitness classes, and the department is promoting a virtual talent show. She said that the parks and greenways have been open, and are being well used by residents of Holly Springs.

Mayor Sears proclaimed May 16, 2020 Kids to Parks Day.

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6. Public Hearing: Annexation A20-01 Carolina Springs

Gina Clapp, Director of Planning & Zoning, said that a petition had been received for voluntary annexation of 23.64 acres located in the vicinity of Old Holly Springs Apex Road, as part of the Carolina Springs development. The petitioner is requesting annexation in order to connect to town utilities and services. The area proposed for annexation is considered part of the Innovation District area of the Carolina Springs Development, and includes the planned Ice Sports Complex. The property is owned by Capital Properties of Raleigh II LLC and is contiguous with the town limits. The property meets all statutory requirements for annexation.

With that explanation given, Mayor Sears opened the public hearing. The following input was received: none.

Mayor Sears then closed the public hearing.

NCGS 166A-19.24 allows for public comment to be submitted to the clerk 24 hours after the public hearing. The following public comments were received: none.

Action: Motion to adopt Annexation Ordinance A20-01, annexing 23.64 +/- acres owned by Capital Properties of Raleigh II LLC, more particularly described as Wake County PIN 0740032625. *A copy of Annexation Ordinance A20-01 is attached to these minutes.*

Motion by: McGrath

Second by: Berry

Vote: Unanimous

7. Public Hearing: Annexation 20-02, 1012 Bass Lake Road

Gina Clapp, Director, Planning & Zoning said that the town received a petition for voluntary annexation of 4.378 +/- acres at 1012 Bass Lake Road owned by Donald E. Pierce and Sonia L. Pierce. They are requesting annexation in order to connect to water services. The property meets all statutory requirements for annexation.

With that explanation given, Mayor Sears opened the public hearing. The following input was received: none.

Mayor Sears then closed the public hearing.

NCGS 166A-19.24 allows for public comment to be submitted to the clerk 24 hours after the public hearing. The following public comments were received: none.

Councilman McGrath asked if there was a provision for the applicant to be connected to town sewer or other services in the future. Kendra Parrish, Director of Engineering, said that given the geography and the difficulty of connecting to town sewer, the adjacent subdivision was allowed to have town water but keep septic systems. Given the geography it is difficult to connect them to sewer. The trend is for development in that area to have larger lots and use septic systems.

Action: Motion to adopt Annexation Ordinance A20-02, annexing 4.378 +/- acres owned by Donald E. Pierce and Sonia L. Pierce, more particularly described as Wake County PIN 0658888350. *A copy of Annexation Ordinance A20-02 is attached to these minutes.*

Motion by: Villadsen

Second by: Kelly

Vote: Unanimous

Consent Agenda

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

8. Minutes – The Council approved minutes of the Council business meeting held April 21, 2020.

9. Avent Ferry Road Re-alignment (19-07) Change Order– The Council approved Mead & Hunt Design/Survey contract Change Order #2 in the amount of \$45,000, and a budget amendment transferring \$25,752.40 from contingency 58 620 82.97 to project account 48 620 12.01. *A copy of the budget amendment is attached to these minutes.*

NEW BUSINESS

10. Holly Springs Road Widening – Phase II, LAPP Grant Review and Oversight Agreement

Tim Athy, Engineering, said that the goal of the Holly Springs Rd. Phase II project is to reduce traffic congestion and improve motorist and pedestrian safety. He said that the Review and Oversight agreement is required by NCDOT as part of the LAPP grant review and administration process. The fee is estimated by the NCDOT based upon the scale of the project and must be submitted with the Review and Oversight Agreement. Any portion of the fee that is not used will be refunded to the Town. If costs are more than the collected fee, NCDOT will charge the Town any additional fees. Mr. Athy said that signing the Agreement is vital for keeping the project on schedule. He said that the Municipal Agreement is still to come, but must be signed by September of 2020.

Councilman McGrath asked if any projects are being accelerated during this time while there is less traffic. Mr. Athy said that his experience is that the consultants and the DOT are very responsive during this time, so the design phase seems to be moving a little more quickly than usual.

Action: Motion to approve NCDOT Review & Oversight Agreement for the Holly Springs Road Widening – Phase II Bond project in the amount of \$25,000, utilizing funds from the interfund loan 22 95.04 and transferred to project 48 818 91 12.01.

Motion by: Berry

Second by: McGrath

Vote: Unanimous

11. Consideration of Non-profit Grants to Support COVID-19 Relief Efforts

Randy Harrington, Town Manager, said Councilman Wolff reached out to him over the weekend because he had received a request from Western Wake Crisis Ministries for funds to provide relief for residents affected by the COVID-19 situation.

Councilman Wolff said there has been shared concern regarding the impact that COVID-19 has had on the community and they have all been looking for ways to assist those impacted. At the last meeting Council made the grant to assist small businesses, but Holly Springs has many residents who do not own small businesses or work for small businesses. He said he was pleased with the request from WWCM for funds for assistance to people who need help with utilities and rent support. He thought it might be a good time to assist other agencies who provide support to local residents. He said the Town does have a grant process, but those grants made at the last meeting were applied for in February, before this crisis, and there was a feeling that they might need additional funds. He said there was discussion about where the funds would come from, as the Town is also losing money in the current situation. Staff found savings that could be used without

impacting Town services, up to \$16,000. This is a way to get the money into the community quickly, while the crisis is still happening.

Councilwoman Kelly said she wanted to put forward the group that is providing meals, sponsored by Kirk of Holly Springs and located at Holly Springs United Methodist Church. It has been going for 7 weeks, and is serving local families. They could use some support, and Kirk is collecting the funds. Councilman McGrath said he supports what his colleagues are proposing, but he thinks the Town needs to set up a task force in Holly Springs to coordinate and highlight efforts. He would like to see a process to lead through synchronization, to be facilitators to bring these groups together to make sure gaps are not being missed and effort is not doubled.

Mayor Pro Tem Berry said that town revenues have also gone down, and as part of that, staff has set aside \$1.1 million out of the budget. Many of the individuals who would benefit from this grant are indeed in need, and he supports the grant process. Additional grants at this point are outside of the budget envelope. He said the Town is finding money without prioritizing these needs against the needs that are being put aside. He said he is disappointed that it circumvented the process that is in place.

Councilman McGrath said he agreed with Mayor Pro Tem Berry, because he said these are not “unchartered waters”, we deal with crises all the time, and we need to follow our process. He would like to see more of a return to process.

Councilwoman Kelly acknowledged that the work to create the process was good, but this situation feels different. She doesn't want to change the grant process, but there is a sense of urgency to this situation. This grant would prime the pump to encourage others to contribute as well. She said she would like Council to move forward on this motion.

Councilman Villadsen said that moving forward with this, it would be good to have a report or some accountability that the funds are used for the intended use. But he said he sees this as a grants “cost overrun”, like a construction project. It is a near term emergency that the Town could help out with in some small way. He appreciates Town Manager Randy Harrington's contribution in finding these funds and sharing the impact that they would or would not have. He is comfortable with this if there is accountability. He has seen it in action, and there is great need out there.

Councilman Wolff asked the Town Attorney if there was a way to assure the accountability. John Schifano, Town Attorney, said that if they made the motion to leave the Manager and Attorney to set an accountability process, staff can make sure that the funds are spent properly. Council does have more authority under the Emergency Act to spend money to allay the effects of a declared emergency than it would have under other circumstances. He said that if Council makes the grant subject to a grant agreement, he thinks it can accomplish Council's objective.

Councilman McGrath asked if anyone knew when these organizations would run out of funds if they did not receive this grant. Councilman Wolff said WWCM did not share their bottom line, but the crisis started in March when schools were closed, and the increase of need could have them running out of funds by the fourth quarter. Given that North Carolina is months from a full re-opening, and that economic crisis may continue after re-opening, and that health officials predict a second spike in the fall, the need is there throughout the year.

Mayor Pro Tem Berry said that since utilities cannot be disconnected at least through June, this money would be for rent payments. Also, he did not want to hand out money without a formal request. WWCM was the only group that provided a request. Last spring there was discussion of adding more money to the grant program, and it is being considered again in the next budget. He said if they do it that way, there would be more discussion and vetting than what they are doing now.

Councilman McGrath said that he wants a task force and a more holistic approach. If it is not an emergency request, they would do well to take some time, allow other requests to come in, and make sure they are leading out of this crisis.

Councilwoman Kelly said she did receive a request by email from the other group, but can get a more formal request from them if her colleagues would like. She asked if they should fill out the grant application.

Mayor Pro Tem Berry said they don't have to use the grant application, but they should make a formal request.

Councilman Wolff said if a formal request from the Food Cupboard is needed, that is something that he can facilitate, but he would like a motion made on the WWCM request tonight.

Councilwoman Kelly said she was OK with going forward with WWCM request tonight and bringing the others to the next meeting.

Action 1: Motion to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a contract with Western Wake Crisis Ministry for COVID-19 relief grant money in the amount of \$10,000.

Motion by: Wolff

Second by: Kelly

Vote:

Yes: Wolff, Kelly, Villadsen

No: McGrath, Berry

The motion passed.

Action 2: Motion to transfer \$16,000 from Parks & Rec Operating Budget 10-425-30 90.03 to the Town Clerk Operating Budget 10-412.14 82.01.

A copy of the budget amendment is attached to these minutes.

Motion by: Kelly

Second by: Wolff

Vote:

Yes: Wolff, Kelly, Villadsen

No: Berry, McGrath

The motion passed.

Town Manager Randy Harrington asked what the requested process would be for any additional grants, whether they would go through the grants committee or to come back to the full council. Consensus was that they come before the full Council.

Mayor Sears asked for discussion on whether to bring this up at the Workshop on May 12th or the Business Meeting on May 19th.

Councilman McGrath said that if Council was going to do this, he thinks it should be opened up to all organizations, not just these two. So there should be time to advertise it. He doesn't get the same sense of urgency that the other councilmembers do. He thinks waiting until the May 19th meeting would be more appropriate.

Mayor Pro Tem Berry said not to forget about the small business community. They may want some more money. He doesn't think that cherry picking the ones that we know need money, rather than letting others approach us, is the best way.

Councilwoman Kelly asked if it would help if he knew how many groups are providing food to the community.

Mayor Pro Tem Berry said that there are other things are out there, other than food. The Town could fund things like resume writing, or job training or other things that people need.

Councilman Wolff said that food and shelter are basic needs of residents. While career readiness is a worthy thing, it is not a basic need. He said the organizations Council discussed are the ones meeting those basic needs. The money given to the Chamber for small business has not all been dispensed, because it was matching funds.

Mayor Sears asked to go down roll call and ask which meeting to have this discussion:

Mayor Pro Tem Berry: May 19th

Councilman Villadsen: May 12th

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Councilwoman Kelly: May 12th

Councilman McGrath: May 19th or until such time as we know the needs

Councilman Wolff May 19th.

Mayor Sears – this will be put on the agenda for the May 19th business meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

None that required action.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Randy Harrington, Town Manager, said he wanted to recognize Jeff Wilson for the great job he has done on the virtual meetings. He would like to propose that next week's Workshop meeting be in person with social distancing. The Law Enforcement Center would give us more space to social distance and allow some room for the public. But the meeting will also be on Zoom for the public who do not feel comfortable coming in person. The May 19th meeting will be in the Council Chamber, with social distancing and a Zoom option. Councilman Villadsen asked what the mask requirement would be. Mr. Harrington said he would certainly encourage it, but would like to know what Council prefers. Mayor Sears said he thinks masks should be encouraged, but not required.

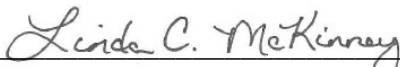
Second, Mr. Harrington said that the Governor announced the move into Phase 1 as of May 8th at 5:00 pm. Along with that, we are planning on opening some town facilities starting on Monday. If you are listening to this meeting, please stay tuned to the Town's social media for more information over the next few days. Parks and Rec may wait longer for some limited opening, but more will be coming out later.

Lastly, it is Economic Development week and he wanted to recognize Irena Krstanovic and Anna Murphy for their dedication to the Town. Communications and Marketing has been putting information out all week regarding economic development in Holly Springs. We value our local businesses and appreciate the challenges they are facing in this time and want to support them.

CLOSED SESSION: none

Adjournment: Councilman Berry made a motion to adjourn at 8:28 pm. It was seconded by Councilwoman Kelly and passed with a unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted on Tuesday, May 19, 2020.



Linda C. McKinney, Town Clerk

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