

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING HELD MARCH 30, 2020

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), this special meeting of the Granite Falls Town Council was held electronically to allow for remote participation by Council Members, members of the media, citizens and members of the general public, and all other interested parties.

SPECIAL MEETING The Granite Falls Town Council held a Special Meeting on Monday, March 30, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Administrative Building.

PRESENT The following member of the governing body was physically present: Mayor Barry Hayes. The following members of the governing body were present by remote participation: Dr. Caryl B. Burns, Larry Knight, Jim Mackie, Mike Mackie, Martin Townsend, and Tracy Townsend.

ABSENT The following member of the governing body was absent: None

STAFF PRESENT The following staff members physically attended the meeting: Town Manager Jerry Church, Town Clerk Paula Kirby, and Administrative Assistant Kara Calloway.

VISITORS BY REMOTE PARTICIPATION Lenoir City Manager Scott Hildebran, and City of Lenoir Public Information Officer Joshua Harris.

NEWS MEDIA Garrett Stell, representing *The News-Topic*, attended the meeting by remote participation.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER Mayor Barry Hayes called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present.

INVOCATION Mayor Barry Hayes led in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Mayor Barry Hayes led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA Martin Townsend made a motion the Council approve the agenda as presented. Dr. Caryl B. Burns seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 17, 2020 Tracy Townsend made a motion the Council approve the minutes from the Regular Council meeting held February 17, 2020 as presented. Larry Knight seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote.

TOWN ATTORNEY REPORT Town Attorney Bruce Cannon did not attend the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD No public comment period was held.

NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

PROCLAMATION DESIGNATING APRIL 18, 2020 AS ELECTRIC LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY APPROVED The Council was requested to approve a proclamation approving April 18, 2020 as Electric Lineman Appreciation Day.

Martin Townsend made a motion the Council approve the proclamation as requested. Dr. Caryl B. Burns seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the proclamation is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

RESOLUTION - MUNICIPAL CLERKS WEEK APPROVED The Council was requested to approve a resolution proclaiming May 3 through May 9, 2020 as Municipal Clerks Week to recognize the accomplishments of all Municipal Clerks and to extend appreciation to the Town of Granite Falls Town Clerk Paula M. Kirby.

Martin Townsend made a motion the Council approve the resolution as requested. Dr. Caryl B. Burns seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the resolution is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

RESOLUTION DECLARING MAY 25, 2020 AS NATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY IN THE TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS APPROVED The Council considered a resolution from the National Center for Exploited & Missing Children proclaiming Monday, May 25, 2020 as National Missing Children's Day in the Town of Granite Falls as part of an on-going effort to prevent the abduction and sexual exploitation of children.

Martin Townsend made a motion the Council approve the resolution as requested. Dr. Caryl B. Burns seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the resolution is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

PROCLAMATION DESIGNATING APRIL 12 – 18 2020 AS NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS WEEK APPROVED The Council was requested to approve a proclamation approving April 12 – 18, 2020 as National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.

Martin Townsend made a motion the Council approve the proclamation as requested. Dr. Caryl B. Burns seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the proclamation is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

RESOLUTION FOR APPROVING LOCAL WATER SUPPLY PLAN APPROVED

The Council was requested to adopt a resolution approving the Town of Granite Falls 2019 Local Water Supply Plan (LWSP). NCDEQ requires the water system's governing board to adopt a resolution approving the LWSP in order for the LWSP to be compliant with NCGS 143-355(1). The Wooten Company submitted the LWSP on behalf of the Town.

Larry Knight made a motion the Council approve the resolution as requested. Tracy Townsend seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the resolution is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS TITLE VI. POLICY APPROVED

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Office of Civil Rights is requiring that municipalities enact a formal Title VI Policy. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that no person shall on the ground of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. The 1987 Civil Rights Restoration Act extended these protections to all NCDOT programs and activities, whether federally-assisted or state-funded. Additional categories of protection have been enacted including sex, sexual orientation, low-income, limited English proficiency, age, disability, and religion/creed. The Title VI Policy must be renewed each year and submitted to NCDOT. This standard resolution has been adopted by several other North Carolina municipalities.

Mike Mackie made a motion the Council approve the Title VI Policy and resolution as presented. Dr. Caryl B. Burns seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. Copies of the policy and resolution are attached and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

ANNUAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS PURCHASING POLICY

The Council reviewed the Town of Granite Falls Purchasing Policy. The purpose of the Purchasing Policy is to document how Town management has fulfilled their responsibility to guarantee competitive and advantageous procurement of goods and services while maintaining compliance with Federal regulations and North Carolina General Statutes. The Purchasing Policy can also be used as a training tool for new and existing employees in administrative and supervisory roles with the Town. The Purchasing Policy is a "living document" that must be reviewed and updated throughout the year as changes are made to NC General Statutes, Governmental Accounting Standards and in Town Staff and their assigned duties. The Town Council reviews and approves the Purchasing Policy on an annual basis. The only change to the Purchasing Policy since the Council review in 2019 is the addition of TITLE VI language on the front page, and on page 15, of the Policy.

Tracy Townsend made a motion the Council approve the Town of Granite Falls Purchasing Policy as presented and authorize the Town Manager to update the policy as needed. Martin Townsend seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the policy is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

ANNUAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS INTERNAL CONTROL POLICY

The Council reviewed the Town of Granite Falls Internal Control Policy. The purpose of the Internal Control Policy is to document how Town management has fulfilled their responsibility for implementing and maintaining a sound and comprehensive internal control framework. Internal Control policies help identify and address areas of risk of fraud, waste abuse and mismanagement. The Internal Control Policy can also be used as a training tool for new and existing employees in administrative and supervisory roles with the Town. The Internal Control Policy is a “living document” that must be reviewed and updated throughout the year as changes are made to NC General Statutes, Governmental Accounting Standards and in Town Staff and their assigned duties. The Town Council reviews and approves the Internal Control Policy on an annual basis. There have been no changes made to the Internal Control Policy since the Council review in 2019.

Larry Knight made a motion the Council approve the Town of Granite Falls Internal Control Policy as presented and authorize the Town Manager to update the policy as needed. Dr. Caryl B. Burns seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the policy is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS ETHICS POLICY FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS AND THE TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS CONFLICTS OF INTEREST POLICY FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS, APPOINTED OFFICIALS AND TOWN EMPLOYEES

The Council approved an Ethics Policy for Elected Officials on November 2, 2009 and a Conflicts of Interest Policy for elected and appointed officials and employees on July 10, 2010. While there have been no violations of either policy since their respective approvals and all elected officials have completed all required ethics training in a timely manner, it is good governance to review these policies periodically.

Mike Mackie made a motion the Council verify that all members have read and understand these policies. Tracy Townsend seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. Copies of these policies are attached and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

TOWN MANAGER AUTHORIZED TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS PERSONNEL POLICY, OR IMPLEMENT NEW TOWN POLICIES, RELATED TO FEDERAL LEGISLATION FOR THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

On March 18, 2020, President Trump signed the Family First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) after this important piece of legislation was passed by the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives. FFCRA becomes effective April 1, 2020 and implementation guidelines are forthcoming from the U.S. Department of Labor. Town Manager Jerry Church needs the authority to make changes to the Town of Granite Falls Personnel Policy or implement new Town policies that are related to any federal legislation for COVID-19. The Council will be required to approve policy changes or new policies at the next Council meeting.

Martin Townsend made a motion the Council authorize Town Manager Church to make changes to the Town of Granite Falls Personnel Policy or implement new Town policies related to Federal legislation for the COVID-19 pandemic as requested. Dr. Caryl B. Burns seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote.

FINANCIAL REPORT Town Manager Jerry Church presented the Financial Report for February 2020. The financial dashboard and an analysis of current year sales tax revenue and current year property tax revenue versus prior year and budgeted revenues, for the seven months ended February 29, 2020, were presented for the Council's review. These reports represent 66% of the current 2019 – 2020 fiscal year budget. Copies of these reports are attached and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

ADVERTISING OF TAX LIENS ON 2019 TAXES DELAYED On February 3, 2020, Granite Falls Tax Collector Kim Anderson submitted a certified list of property owners who have unpaid taxes that represent an unpaid tax lien. Council approved setting Thursday, April 2, 2020 to advertise the 2019 unpaid taxes on real property as required by NCGS 105-369(c). Town Manager Jerry Church requested that Council delay the advertisement of 2019 unpaid taxes from Thursday, April 2, 2020 until Thursday, May 14, 2020 to give residents more time to pay the 2019 unpaid taxes.

Larry Knight made a motion the Council approve the delay as requested. Tracy Townsend seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote.

TOWN HOLIDAY SCHEDULE The Town of Granite Falls Administrative Office, the Recreation Center, and the Public Works and Electric Departments will be closed on Friday, April 10, 2020 in observance of the Good Friday Holiday. The Police and Fire Departments and the Water and Wastewater Facilities will be on duty as scheduled and those employees scheduled to work the holiday receive alternate time off with pay. Republic Services will pick up garbage and recycling on their regular schedule.

CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE APPROVED The Council was requested to cancel the regular Council meeting scheduled for Monday, April 6, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. and meet at the regular Council meeting scheduled for April 20, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

Martin Townsend made a motion the Council cancel the meeting as requested. Dr. Caryl B. Burns seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote.

MANAGER UPDATE

Town Manager Jerry Church shall update the council on the following:

- 1) Enclosed with the Council's agenda package was a calendar of events through the end of March, 2021. Revisions since the last calendar were highlighted in yellow. The WPCOG Annual Dinner on April 23, 2020 and the NCLM Annual Conference scheduled for May 5-7, 2020, and the Art in the Park concert on Monday, May 18, 2020 have all been cancelled due to COVID-19.

2) COVID-19 Update:

Town Manager Church informed the Council that on Friday, March 27, 2020 Governor Roy Cooper signed Executive Order 121, ordering North Carolinians to remain in their homes except for performing essential work and essential activities to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

The Neighborhood Park, Recreation Center ballfields, tennis courts, playgrounds and restrooms will be closed effective March 30, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. The walking track at the Recreation Center will be open to the public and Porta-Jon's will be available. The Porta-Jon's will be sanitized as regulated.

The Town will not be disconnecting utility services for non-payment and no penalties will be added for late payments through the end of May 2020.

Town Manager Church is currently working on Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) Emergency Leave and FMLA policies.

INFORMATION ITEM

1. The Granite Falls Land Use Plan Steering Committee meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 28, 2020 has been cancelled.

MEETING ADJOURNED Martin Townsend made a motion the Council adjourn the meeting. Dr. Caryl B. Burns seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote.