

Zebulon Board of Commissioners
Work Session
Minutes
June 11, 2024

Present: Mayor Glenn York, Jessica Harrison, Quentin Miles, Beverly Clark, Shannon Baxter, Amber Davis, Taiwo Jaiyeoba-Interim Town Manager, Lisa Markland-Town Clerk, Chris Ray-Public Works, Bobby Fitts-Finance, Jacqui Boykin-Police, Michael Clark-Planning, Sheila Long-Parks and Recreation, Kaleb Harmon-Communications, Shannon Johnson-Economic Development, Eric Vernon-Attorney

Mayor York called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Mayor York asked to add a closed session to the agenda as allowed by GS § 143-318.11 (a)(3) – for the purpose to consult with the Town Attorney.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Clark made a motion, second by Commissioner Davis to approve the agenda as amended. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Lisa Markland stated there was an ETJ vacancy on the Planning Board. The Town received five applications of which David Hughes and Laura Johnson were eligible.

Commissioner Clark made a motion, second by Commissioner Harrison to appoint David Hughes to the Planning Board as an ETJ member. The motion failed with a vote 2 to 3 with Commissioners Clark and Harrison voting in favor and Commissioners Baxter, Miles and Davis voting in opposition.

Commissioner Baxter made a motion, second by Commissioner Davis to appoint Laura Johnson to the Planning Board as an ETJ member. The motion was passed with a vote 3 to 2 with Commissioners Baxter, Miles and Davis voting in favor and Commissioners Harrison and Clark voting in opposition.

CAMPO PRESENTATION

Michael Clark introduced Shelby Powell, Deputy Director with CAMPO who gave a presentation on the Wake Transit Plan Update and what it would look like with the future of the program. There had been \$200 million invested since 2017 with \$350 million to be spent in the next few years. Some of those major projects included New Bern bus rapid transit (BRT), design southern BRT, design western BRT, GoRaleigh/GoWake access ADA maintenance facility and call center, Cary multi-modal center and RUS bus. The Wake Transit Plan consisted of four big moves connecting regionally, connecting all Wake County communities, creating frequent, reliable, urban mobility and enhancing access to transit.

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Specific improvements for Zebulon were detailed including ZWX improvements and GoWake Access SmartRide. Ms. Powell spoke about the public outreach included in the plan.

FY '25 BUDGET

Taiwo Jaiyeoba spoke about the budget timeline and details. The Town was significantly growing and could increase to 22,000 residents in seven to ten years. Mr. Jaiyeoba spoke about the importance of the Town remaining competitive and the need to increase staff's salaries. The current tax rate would fund all new positions, increase police starting salaries, provide a 10% salary increase for all employees, fund a splash pad at Whitley Park, bathrooms at Gill Street Park, and dug out shade at Zebulon Community Park.

Commissioner Baxter stated she asked the Police Department, Fire Department and Public Works to provide numbers to be able to solve the hiring and pay compression issue. Commissioner Baxter wanted to address the issues without adding in any tax rate increase. It was suggested to lower the Town Hall and Police Department reorganization study and remove the \$90,000 Community Park bridge replacement. Commissioner Baxter stated she would rather see the pay increases be made in the Police, Fire and Public Works Departments with a smaller increase of 2% to 3% to the remainder of the departments.

Commissioner Davis stated she also wanted to raise salaries in the Police, Fire and Public Works Departments and to consider using some funds toward a youth or senior center. Commissioner Baxter explained that municipalities typically rely on help from county commissioners to help fund those types of centers and would like to see a request go to the Wake County Commissioners. There was discussion about funding a study for what a teen or senior center would look like and cost.

Taiwo Jaiyeoba reminded the Board that the proposed budget expanded youth programming and transitioning the Community Center to be more available. Commissioner Harrison added that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan included a multi-purpose facility and an expansion of programs which could be directed toward teens and seniors.

Sheila Long explained they were looking at ways to engage teens and what other departments were successfully implementing. The proposed budget included part-time funding to help with civic group coordination and to help establish the youth group advisory board.

Commissioner Baxter asked to set aside a \$20,000 placeholder for bringing back a Christmas parade. Also, it was suggested setting aside funds to fix issues on the Town's website.

Commissioner Harrison encouraged the Board to be equitable and inclusive when determining staff salary adjustments. Taiwo Jaiyeoba added there was only one cost of living adjustment for employees since 1996. There were details given about what other municipalities were doing for cost-of-living adjustments.

Commissioner Miles stated he was not putting some employees over others, but issues needed to be intentionally addressed and to look at staff across the board. Commissioner Baxter stated an

accountant would not pull someone out of a burning vehicle, but the Police and Fire Departments were doing that work. Office workers do not jeopardize their lives at work. Commissioner Baxter explained she wanted to get everyone where they needed to be, but this proposed budget did not account for that.

There was discussion about having another meeting about the budget. There was consensus about having a budget discussion at the June 18, 2024 public hearing.

Commissioner Clark wanted to see the costs to bring all staff's salary to where it needed to be. There was discussion about staff increases. Bobby Fitts stated a 10% increase for all staff would be \$650,000. The increase would make positions more competitive. Staff would bring back the options for the Board to address salary issues with and without raising the tax rate.

Commissioner Baxter made a motion, second by Commissioner Harrison to add a work session to the June 18, 2024 meeting. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION

Mayor York stated the Board would go into Closed Session as allowed by GS § 143-318.11 (a)(3) – for the purpose to consult with the Town Attorney.

Commissioner Baxter made a motion, second by Commissioner Davis to go into closed session. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

NOTE: In closed session, Commissioner Harrison made a motion, second by Commissioner Clark to come out of closed session. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Harrison made a motion, second by Commissioner Miles to adjourn. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Adopted this the 4th day of November 2024.




Glenn L. York—Mayor


Lisa M. Markland, CMC—Town Clerk