

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL  
RETREAT/ PLANNING SESSION  
January 26, 2024**

**THE FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL** held a special strategic planning session on Friday, January 26, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at The Vineyard at High Holly in Scaly Mountain, NC.

**1. Call to Order- Mayor Jack Horton**

**Mayor Jack Horton called the meeting to order at 6:14 p.m. with the following members present:**

Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey, Council Members David Culpepper, Joe Collins, Robbie Tompa, Mike Lewis and Rita Salain.

Staff members present: Town Manager Amie Owens, Finance Director Sarah Bishop, and HR Director/Town Clerk Nicole Bradley.

**2. Year in Review to include a recap from last year's retreat, financial picture, at mid-year, and introduction of budget and policy considerations- Amie Owens, Town Manager and Sarah Bishop, Finance Director.**

Town Manager Owens went over all the Town Council's priorities for FY 2023/2024:

- ABC Store- potential relocation
- Complete Recreation plan @ Whitmire and determine priorities for implementation of infrastructure/amenities/funding
- Potential use of TDA funds for projects that are tourism related
- Housing – incentives for investors
- Sidewalk/paving plan with CIP
- Cost of Service Analysis
- Homelessness
- Event restroom access
- Social District

Finance Director Bishop gave a finance update on Ad Valorem Tax Collections, Local Option Sales Tax Collections, Fire Revenue, and Water/Sewer Revenue. She also went over current Debt Service and upcoming Debt Service roll off.

Town Manager Owens discussed the current Water/Sewer Projects, Recreation and Street Projects, and Other Town Projects.

Finance Director Sarah Bishop presented the proposed Fund Balance Policy for the General Fund. The proposed policy would set the minimum amount held in fund balance to 80% (10 months of expenditures) and the maximum amount to be held in fund balance would not exceed 100% (12 months of expenditures). The amount of Fund Balance above 100% would need to be spent on capital purchases. A capital purchase is any purchase over \$5,000 and not a recurring cost/operational expense. Finance Director Bishop and Town Manager Owens presented a list of potential capital expenditures to Town Council. (List is included in the retreat packet).

Additional discussion on the proposed Fund Balance Policy included: when funds would need to be spent and on what the funds should be spent on. No action was taken on the Fund Balance Policy and it was tabled until the Saturday meeting.

Town Manager Amie Owens presented the proposed Step and Grade Policy. The policy will provide opportunities for salary adjustments for those who may not have the ability to obtain advanced certifications or who have reached a level in their career where there is little advancement potential. Town Council will still have to approve the step increase each year during the budget approval process. No action was taken on the Step and Grade Policy and it was tabled until the Saturday meeting.

**3. Social District Management and Operations Plan, cup logo and signage – Amie Owens, Town Manager**

Town Manager Owens gave an update on the Downtown Social District. She presented the proposed logo and signage for businessowners. A QR code has been developed and will direct individuals to the Town’s Social District website. The website contains information and Frequently Asked Questions about the Town’s Social District. Town Manager Owens showed Town Council a sample 16 oz opaque cup. There was some concern from Council about the looks of the sample cup. Town Manager Owens will request samples for other cup options.

Additional discussion was held about including alleyways. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will need to be executed by the property owners. Town Manager Owens noted that the map can be updated later to include the alleyways if a MOU is obtained, but the map that was adopted with the Ordinance will be the map that is submitted to the State of NC.

**4. Priorities for discussion at Saturday, January 27, 2024 meeting – May Jack Horton and Town Council Members**

Town Manager Owens went over the priorities for discussion, that were given to her by Town Council Members, for the Saturday meeting.

**5. Adjournment**

**Mayor Jack Horton adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.**

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C. Jack Horton, Mayor

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Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk