



**Town of Franklin Council**

**Strategic Planning Session**

**February 22, 2020**

**9:00 a.m.**

1. Call to Order- Mayor Bob Scott
2. Introduction of Facilitator Russ Harris
3. Discussion on Town Liaisons
4. Discussion on Town Appointments and Re-Appointments
5. Discussion on Redevelopment Authority and NC Neighborhood Revitalization Program
6. Discussion on Memorial Park Opportunities
7. Items from Mayor Scott and Town Council
8. Adjourn

## **February 22, 2020 meeting,**

The Franklin Town Council held a special called retreat on Saturday February 22, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. at Town Hall Board Room. Mayor Robert S. Scott presided. Vice Mayor Barbara McRae, Council Members Joe Collins, David Culpepper, Jack Horton, Mike Lewis, and Dinah Mashburn were present.

Town Staff present were, Interim Police Chief Danny Bates, Accounting Technician Sarah Bishop, Assistant Fire Chief Tim Chavis, Town Attorney John Henning Jr., Town Planner Justin Setser, Town Clerk Travis Tallent, Streets Crew Leader Chris Waldroop, and Town Manager Summer Woodard.

### **Introduction of Facilitator Mr. Russ Harris**

Russ Harris from Region A of the Southwestern Commission introduced himself as the facilitator of the Town's retreat.

### **Discussion on Town Liaisons**

Town Attorney John Henning Jr. read NC statutes that describes open meetings law and said that two members or more assigned to a department committee would meet requirements for Open Meetings laws.

Mayor Scott said the Town Board got rid of committees in 2013 because there wasn't a need for them in a manager form of government.

Council Member Culpepper said that he would like to see a liaison to appointed boards like Planning Board, ABC Board, TDA, etc.

Harris said that he sensed that some board members wanted to be more involved with departments but cautioned against being involved in day to day operations with staff.

Council Member Mashburn said that appointed boards are a different issue than departments. She said she asked Freyda Bluestein from the UNC School of Government about department committees and Bluestein seemed confused why it was necessary in a Manager form of government.

Henning Jr. said that he wasn't dissuading committees for departments if that was what was wanted but that the Open Meetings Law needs to be followed and that he would suggest the committees to meet with the Manager who would then deem the necessary staff to be present for the meeting if that was the direction taken.

Vice Mayor McRae said that she thought committees would be more beneficial towards projects like sidewalk projects or water and sewer projects, but not in day-to-day operations.

Council Member Horton said that there was no need to go back to the way it was before there was a Manager form of government. He said he could see a benefit in having a liaison to appointed boards for informational purposes or to serve as a go between for the boards and Town Council.

**February 22, 2020 meeting continued,**

Council Member Lewis said that he could see where a liaison would benefit the departments. He said that person would have inside knowledge and acknowledged that employees will call council members regardless.

Town Manager Summer Woodard said that having a liaison has been beneficial and that having somebody to consider ideas with helps with projects.

Harris said he thought that was a benefit and again cautioned any actions of the board members that would circumvent the professional staff.

Council Member Collins said he thought there was a consensus to have a liaison or committee to work through the Town Manager. He said one liaison to police and one to fire made sense, but that two may be necessary to water/sewer and streets.

Vice Mayor McRae said that it could turn into a lot of commitments.

Council Member Horton said that if what we are doing now is working and benefits the Town Manager then he didn't see a need to change it.

Interim Chief Bates said that he supported having a liaison to bounce ideas off of but knew that Woodard is the boss.

Woodard said that she would distribute a list of departments and current needs to liaisons for the March meeting for appointments to be made.

Council Member Horton said he thought that was a good idea since it seems to be working well.

Woodard and Land Use Administrator Justin Setser also explained how liaisons to appointed boards would work. Woodard said she thought that would be a welcomed change.

**Discussion Town Appointments and Re-Appointments**

Council Member Culpepper said that he would like to see reappointments to boards advertised instead of automatically reappointing current board members.

Henning Jr. said that would be okay but there would be times that it would be very important to consider the current board members' backgrounds and experience.

Council Member Collins said that the Planning Board and the ABC Board are different. Planning has 7 members whereas ABC only has 3.

Council Member Mashburn said that she didn't like that ABC doesn't have term limits.

Council Member Horton asked if the Town Council is required to take a board's recommendation for reappointment.

## **February 22, 2020 meeting continued,**

Mayor Scott said no.

Woodard said she thought a good starting point may come with liaison appointments and then they could provide feedback about the process. She said it may be better than overwhelming the boards with both changes at once.

Council Member Collins said that he thinks the board agrees that they do not want to blindly reappoint board members. He asked about term limits for the ABC Board.

Henning Jr. said that there are statutory regulations about ABC Boards but that the Town Council can manage the boards however they deem fit. He said he could begin to work on some options.

### **Discussion on Redevelopment Authority and NC Neighborhood Revitalization Program**

Vice Mayor McRae discussed the Redevelopment Authority and NC Neighborhood Revitalization Program. She said the Lyman Fields neighborhood may benefit from the program.

Harris said that the Town could declare itself a Redevelopment Authority which would allow the Board redevelopment opportunities that it doesn't currently have.

Henning Jr. said that he thought it would be something to explore.

Woodard suggested that once the Comprehensive Plan is completed that the Planning Board could begin to focus on this program.

### **Memorial Park Opportunities**

Council Member Lewis said that he would like the board to consider a multigenerational park at Memorial Park. He presented the board with ideas of various games that could be placed on the option and referred to a skate park request made by local teenagers recently.

Council Member Culpepper said that sponsorships could help offset costs.

Streets Crew Leader Chris Waldroop said that a lot of the ideas presented could probably be taken care of in house.

Council Member Horton asked if there had been any consideration for games at the Town Square.

Woodard said she thought that a chess table or something would be good for the area at the Gazebo.

Council Member Culpepper said he would like to see more funding for recreation.

**February 22, 2020 meeting continued,**

**Items for the Mayor and Council**

Mayor Scott said he had gotten complaints about dogs at Pickin' on the Square. He also said some things for consideration in the upcoming year are: alcohol at events, streets closing requests and costs, the future of the Old Texaco property, substandard housing, the hospital, infrastructure, and possible Town Hall meetings.

Council Member Collins said that he was looking forward to sidewalk construction and improved infrastructure.

Council Member Culpepper said the board should be thinking about ideas for forest service land as the forest services is beginning to take surveys on activities in the surrounding forests.

Vice Mayor McRae said that she would like to talk to the County about dressing up their courthouse parking area for Arbor Day.

Council Member Mashburn reminded the Town Council that there is an opportunity to partner with the county on a substance abuse position.

**Motion was made by Collins, seconded by Culpepper to adjourn the meeting at 12:20 p.m. Motion carried. Vote: 6 to 0.**

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Robert S. Scott, Mayor

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Travis Tallent, Town Clerk