

Town of Mineral Springs  
Town Hall  
3506 S. Potter Road  
Town Council  
Public Hearing / Regular Meeting  
June 11, 2015 ~ 7:30 PM

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*Minutes*

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The Town Council of the Town of Mineral Springs, North Carolina, met in Public Hearing and Regular Session at the Mineral Springs Town Hall, Mineral Springs, North Carolina, at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 11, 2015.

**Present:** Mayor Frederick Becker III, Mayor Pro Tem Janet Critz, Councilwoman Valerie Coffey, Councilman Jerry Countryman, Councilwoman Melody LaMonica (arrived at 7:32 p.m.), Councilwoman Peggy Neill (arrived at 7:34 p.m.), Town Clerk/Zoning Administrator Vicky Brooks, Attorney Bobby Griffin and Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector Janet Ridings.

**Absent:** Councilwoman Lundeen Cureton.

**Visitors:** Charles Bowden, Sheila Crunkleton, Alesia DiCosola, Bill Howie, Terra Kelley and Linda Smosky.

With a quorum present Mayor Frederick Becker called the Regular Town Council Meeting of June 11, 2015 to order at 7:30 p.m.

1. **Opening**

- Councilman Countryman delivered the invocation.
- Pledge of Allegiance.

2. **Public Hearing – 2015-2016 Proposed Budget**

- Mayor Becker opened the 2015-2016 Proposed Budget Public Hearing at 7:31 p.m.
- Charles Bowden of 6412 Pleasant Grove Road explained that he has three things to say about the budget. 1) Mr. Bowden didn't see on the budget (he is sure that it is hidden somewhere) the town continuing to pay an individual \$600 every two months to maintain the town signs. As Mr. Bowden understands it, this operating individual has no contract with the town and he wonders about the liability issue for that. If he should get hurt; signs on the road - anything could happen. He could be mowing and hit a rock and hit somebody out on the road; this actually happened to Mr. Bowden in Waxhaw one time and he thought the town covered it. Pretty tremendous liability and Mr. Bowden believes that ought to be in the budget and whoever does it needs to have the appropriate insurance and workman's comp, so the taxpayers won't pick up that liability. 2) The town has maintained a phone line in Mr. Becker's home for about 15 years now and Mr. Bowden questions why we are spending, it's only \$65 per month, but if you add that up per year it's about \$790 a year and about \$11,000 for the duration of it. With all the other emails, computers and things, Mr. Bowden questions why we are doing that. It's billed as

a business line, but Mr. Bowden understands that it's hooked up to a personal fax machine. Mr. Bowden stated that he believed the town needs to look at that. "You wonder where you get money; you look at the little things that are not done". 3) Mr. Bowden pointed out that we've got a deputy here tonight and he is glad. A couple of meetings ago we had an incident here where he was intimidated and it actually could be considered an assault, but he didn't do anything about it. Mr. Bowden suggested that they add security cameras; he believes the Sheriff would tell them right quickly that the best security you can have is to put these security cameras up. This meeting should be recorded, then you won't have a problem, if anybody is out of line there would be evidence for everybody to see; that should be in the budget too. Mr. Bowden noted that he has requested that for several years here now and it gets passed over.

- Mayor Becker closed the 2015-2016 Proposed Budget Public Hearing at 7:35 p.m.

### 3. **Public Comments**

- Charles Bowden – 6809 Pleasant Grove Road.
- Bill Howie – 4617 Pleasant Grove Road.
- Terra Kelley – 2303 Potter Downs Drive.

### 4. **Consent Agenda**

- **Councilwoman LaMonica** made a **motion** to approve the consent agenda as presented containing the following:

- A. *May 4, 2015 Special Meeting Minutes and May 14, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes*
- B. *April 2015 Tax Collector's Report*
- C. *April 2015 Finance Report*

and **Councilwoman Coffey** seconded. The motion passed unanimously as follows:

*Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, LaMonica and Neill*  
*Nays: None*

### 5. **Consideration of the 2015-2016 Budget**

- Mayor Becker asked the council if there were any last minute changes, comments or discussion. Nothing has been changed from the proposed budget that was presented in May. Councilwoman LaMonica asked what normally fell under Community Projects. Mayor Becker responded that it was downtown, the Christmas lights, Christmas banners, sign maintenance that Ken Newell does month-to-month (\$200 monthly); the Special Events section under Community Projects is for meeting security (we have added that into this category), greenway/park maintenance and the non-profit contributions. Councilwoman LaMonica asked about the Dues component. Mayor Becker responded that the Dues were what was discussed last month; the big one is the League of Municipalities, then there are Centralina Council of Governments (COG), CRTPO, North Carolina Institute of Clerks [North Carolina Association of Municipal Clerks], the Zoning Administrators' that Ms. Brooks is a member of [North Carolina Zoning Officials Association] and the Institute of Government (Chapel Hill). These are

routine dues. We have passed on things like the National League of Cities and some other ones that are many leaps away from what we need, so we don't respond to them, because they are of no interest to us. Councilwoman LaMonica asked about the Elections category. Mayor Becker responded that was the number that the Union County Board of Elections gave the town this year; it is their estimate of what it will cost for this fall's election. The good thing is (it was like a reverse sticker shock for Mayor Becker) when Mayor Becker called John Whitley to ask about the usual \$527 that is normally budgeted at \$600 every year for the contract (it was just a flat rate contract of \$0.13 [or something] per voter for them to administer elections for the town, required by state law), he found out that the fee has been waived, so there is no ongoing expense for the election contract. The budgeted figure is just their estimate for what it costs to rent the three precincts, pay the precinct workers, lug the machines in, print the ballots and set up phone lines. The Board of Elections gives the town a lengthy itemized bill about two months after the election and they usually estimate it a little bit high, so Mayor Becker goes by this estimate for the budget and when the town gets the bill from them it is always under budget (so far).

- **Councilwoman Coffey** made a **motion** to approve the budget and **Councilman Countryman** seconded. The motion passed unanimously as follows:

Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, LaMonica and Neill  
Nays: None

- Mayor Becker noted that there was no change in the tax rate. We are just not going to worry about the drop in the reevaluation; we pretty much picked that up in the Capital end of things, although Mayor Becker thought we had increased our revenues on the Electric Franchise, so it kind of balanced out.
- The Budget Ordinance is as follows:

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
TOWN OF MINERAL SPRINGS

**AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH A BUDGET  
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016  
O-2014-03**

Be it ordained by the Council of the Town of Mineral Springs, North Carolina, the following:

Section I. Appropriations. The following amounts are hereby approved in the General Fund for the operation of the Town government and its activities for the fiscal year beginning 7/1/2015 and ending 6/30/2016, in accordance with a Chart of Accounts to be established for the Town:

ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL GOVERNMENT:		<b>\$277,255.00</b>
Advertising	\$1,800.00	
Attorney	\$9,600.00	
Audit	\$5,100.00	
Community Projects	\$28,100.00	
Contingency	\$3,000.00	
Dues	\$6,600.00	
Elections	\$2,525.00	
Employee Overhead	\$26,500.00	
Fire Protection	\$12,000.00	
Insurance	\$4,500.00	
Newsletter	\$3,000.00	
Office and Clerk	\$118,976.00	
Planning and Zoning	\$43,704.00	
Street Lighting	\$2,000.00	
Tax Collection	\$3,250.00	
Training	\$3,000.00	

Travel	\$3,600.00	
CAPITAL:		<b>\$43,695.00</b>
Capital outlay	\$43,695.00	
<b>TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS:</b>		<b>\$320,950.00</b>

**II. Estimated Revenues.** It is estimated that the following revenues will be available in the General Fund for the fiscal year beginning 7/1/2015 and ending 6/30/2016:

Property taxes	\$61,520.00
Interest	\$1,200.00
Other income	\$1,520.00
Sales taxes	\$247,860.00
Vehicle taxes	\$4,850.00
Zoning fees	\$4,000.00

**TOTAL ESTIMATED REVENUES: \$320,950.00**

**Section III. Project Ordinances.** Capital Project Ordinance O-2014-02 authorizing the design and construction of a park adjacent to the town hall was adopted during the 2014-15 fiscal year and will be funded by means of up to a \$127,000 transfer of fund balance from the General Fund into the Capital Project Fund.

The Mineral Springs town council may approve additional multi-year capital projects during the 2015-16 fiscal year and adopt Capital Project Ordinances to authorize expenditures for those projects. Such projects may be funded either by transfers from the General Fund into a Capital Project Fund, or through other revenue sources such as grants.

**Section IV. Property Tax Levy.** A tax in the amount of \$0.025 per \$100.00 of assessed valuation is hereby levied on property within the Town of Mineral Springs which was listed for property taxes in Union County, North Carolina as of January 1, 2015.

ADOPTED this 11th day of June, 2015. Witness my hand and official seal:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Frederick Becker III, Mayor

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vicky A. Brooks, Clerk

## 6. **American Red Cross**

- Ms. Sheila Crunkleton from the American Red Cross thanked the council and commented that it is always a pleasure to come back and talk to them. Ms. Crunkleton reminded the council that every year she talks about what the American Red Cross does for fire victims when somebody's house burns down; the fire department calls them, they go out and take care of that family, as well as taking care of the fire department if needed (providing snacks and/or meals if they are going to be out there long term).
- Ms. Crunkleton explained that they have a new case work system that they just went to and they were one of six regions across the country that piloted it back in March and April, which has since been adopted. Essentially it is working with a family to make decisions on what is best for them. For example, if somebody had a kitchen fire in the past, unless their power was pulled and they couldn't live in that home, there wasn't really a lot they could do and they wouldn't give them money for a stove. They could give them money for a hotel, food and clothing, but they may not have needed that. In this situation, if they need a stove then they would get the money they were going to give them. The first question they are going to ask is: is this house livable? If it's livable then it's this much money per person living in the house. If it is not livable it's a different amount. The Red Cross works with them and they do case work with them to help them make the best decisions for them. If they need that stove, they will help them with that or they will help them get community referral to make those decisions. This is a little bit of a shift in the

way they were doing things, but so far what they have seen is that it is better for the family, because they are getting more assistance.

- Ms. Crunkleton explained that they have an intern, Ms. Courtney Kelly (in attendance at this meeting) who is a recent graduate of East Carolina and she is fulfilling her obligations to the school by doing her internship with the Red Cross this summer. It is Ms. Kelly's job to line up community education classes across the county and make sure that they are getting people more informed. Next week they are going to be presenting to a group of 200 Girl Scouts at Cane Creek from all across the county. For the older Girl Scouts they will be teaching citizen CPR, which is just compression only CPR; it's making sure that they can at least give somebody a chance. They also have a new part to their partnership with Disney called "Pillow Case Project", which is designed for Red Cross to do three classes with children through the school year; the children get a workbook. Next week they will be concentrating on fire safety with the Girl Scouts (they will be getting one of the "Pillow Case Project" workbooks). They will talk about what their fire safety plan is; making sure families have a meeting place outside [in case of a fire].
- Ms. Crunkleton explained that they have another intern that is working on a second project for Red Cross called "Smoke Alarm Project". They have a five year initiative across the county with the Red Cross where their goal is to install as many smoke alarms in people's homes as they possibly can. Unless that smoke alarm works it will do absolutely no good. The Red Cross will be contacting the fire chiefs across the county to see if they will partner with them in going out and doing some neighborhood walk-throughs and talk with communities. If the council knows of a community the Red Cross needs to go to, Ms. Crunkleton asked that they let them know, because they definitely want to do that for Mineral Springs.
- Ms. Crunkleton stated that the "anniversary thing" the town did last year was wonderful and she hoped they would consider doing that again, because it was a great opportunity.

## **7. Council on Aging**

- Ms. Linda Smosky from Council on Aging commented that it was a pleasure to be here again and thanked the Town of Mineral Springs for what they have given the Council on Aging over the years. Ms. Smosky appreciated the opportunity to come and actually speak to the council and to give them information every year; it means a lot. There are a lot of municipalities who really don't want to hear.
- Ms. Smosky explained that one of the things that she wanted to share with the council tonight is something that she mentioned last year and she thought the council would be interested in it. January before last Council on Aging had a lady that they helped as a client for many years whose home was literally falling down around her. Council on Aging was looking for a new home for her and they found that home here in Mineral Springs; she has lived here since September 6, 2014 and is very happy.
- Ms. Smosky showed a PowerPoint presentation showing the story of their client Phyllis.
  - Phyllis planned to age in place (stay in her home). 18+ years ago she purchased a used mobile home for \$500 and her plan was to spend the rest of her life there. "You can imagine what it must have looked like if it was

\$500 and it was more than 18 years ago”, Ms. Smosky said. Phyllis and a neighbor took seven truckloads of old appliances and trash to the landfill. Phyllis cleared brush, planted grass and mowed the entire park all the time and she had a garden every summer.

- In 2003, the mobile home began to show signs of aging. Phyllis called Council on Aging seeking help to replace windows and a door. Council on Aging connected Phyllis with the Weatherization Program and the work was done on her mobile home. In appreciation, Phyllis crocheted afghans and gave them to Council on Aging; those afghans were passed along to older adults in the community.
- As the years went by, her home became in more and more need of repairs; the roof was leaking, there were plumbing problems and the foundation was unstable. Several times a year Phyllis called Council on Aging and they had to get someone to go out and pour “black stuff” on the roof to make sure that it was not leaking; that was done so many times that the roof was getting heavy. January before last the situation became dire when all the pipes started to break one right after the other.
- Ms. Smosky showed pictures of Phyllis’s home in February of 2014; there was a 2 x 4 holding up the ceiling and the underpinning was falling apart. Phyllis was pictured in her yard with her two dogs.
- Phyllis finally realized after all of the pipes were bursting that she had to do something, so they starting brainstorming; they looked at other mobile homes, rental properties and subsidized housing that would accept her dogs. Council on Aging Board Member Pastor Chris Baucom went out and met with Phyllis.
- A house was found! It had been empty for 12 years and it needed some TLC, which is an understatement. The house was here in Mineral Springs on Potter Road. [A picture of the house was shown] Council on Aging sent out a call for volunteers. The first ones to arrive were gentlemen from the Freedom Biker Church in Indian Trail; they put the siding on the house. The Reach Work Camp students (this group was from Parkwood) worked on the roof taking off the old shingles and putting tar paper down. [A picture was shown of this group and Phyllis] The railing was painted and fixed. Volunteers from Mill Creek Baptist made a fence in the back yard for the dogs. Different Sunday School Classes and other groups chose a room to decorate; they got the furniture and decorated the room. [Pictures were shown of the different rooms] Benton Cross Roads Baptist Church did the living room, Mount Harmony Baptist Church did the dining room, the bedroom and craft room was done by Indian Trail First Baptist Church and the bathroom was done by First Baptist Church of Monroe. There is also a garden.
- Phyllis moved into the house on September 6, 2014 and she has been very happy there. They have had a few issues; they are trying to find someone to maintain the lawn and the house has termites. The house is so low to the ground in the back (there is no crawl space), so they are working with a company to try to figure out something that can be done, because the termites are just having a good time.

- Council on Aging does not charge Phyllis any rent; she has a very low income and the only thing that she is responsible for is paying the insurance premium and the taxes.
- Although Council on Aging owned the house they didn't own the property, which was going to be a problem, so they purchased the two acres of land that the house is on. Ms. Smosky commented that Council on Aging is actually an owner of property in Mineral Springs and she would like to put a little bug in the council's ear. In the future, they would like to make some good use of that land and one of the things they thought about was doing a couple of duplexes that they could rent out to seniors, because senior housing in Union County is lacking.
- Ms. Smosky referred the council to the brochure (fact sheet) that she handed out this evening, which is a little bit different. It includes what the Council on Aging is, information about the staff, some of the questions that they get asked, how they keep informed, how they are able to answer questions that people have for them, how they educate themselves, how to reach them and why they are important.

#### 8. **Catawba Lands Conservancy**

- Ms. Alesia DiCosola from the Catawba Lands Conservancy (CLC) and the Carolina Thread Trail explained that the CLC is the local land trust, which is a non-profit organization that saves and protects natural lands in a six county region in the Southern Piedmont of North Carolina (one of those counties is Union County). Simply put, the mission of the CLC is save and connect lives to nature and the primary way they connect lives to nature is through the Carolina Thread Trail (CTT). The CTT is a regional network of trails, greenways and blueways that spans 15 counties in North and South Carolina. Currently the CLC protects just over 15,000 acres of land across their six county footprint and the CTT has about 230 miles of trails on the ground throughout the region. The CLC and CTT both focus their effort in a few different focus areas. They save land that helps protect clean water and protects our wildlife habitat; they preserve working farms; they protect land that can provide connections to nature and opportunities to get outside to enjoy the outdoors. Referring to a map of their six county footprint on the PowerPoint presentation, Ms. DiCosola pointed out that it showed why the CLC does what they do as she explained that we are going to lose a lot of our natural land to development, so they have a sort of sense of urgency over the next 15 to 20 years as our region continues to develop (this is one of the fastest growing areas in the country) to try to save as much natural green space as they possibly can.
- Showing a slide of the CTT master plan, Ms. DiCosola explained that the master plan calls for over 1,500 miles of trail (natural surface and paved greenways). It's a combination based on what the community wants or needs. The CTT will cover 15 counties in North and South Carolina and the concept is to really connect communities through natural areas. Each community in Union County and Union County itself decided where they would want trails to go (now and in the future) and ideally what will happen over time will be to connect really important nature preserves, parks, historic attractions and other points of interest throughout the region. In Union County the CLC has protected just over 1,200 acres of land and

the master plan calls for 100 miles of trail. There are already a handful of Thread Trail segments on the ground; Mineral Springs was the first Thread Trail in Union County.

- In 2014, the CLC worked with a local land owner (Frank Howey) to conserve 109 acres of his farmland in Union County; that tract of land is between Monroe and Mineral Springs. In 2001, the CLC also worked with Mr. Howey to put a conservation easement on 150 acres of farmland in Union County. These two examples are really just part of a much larger plan the he has in mind, which is a long-term plan to eventually conserve 900 acres of farmland. What the CLC is really excited about is that hopefully what Mr. Howey is doing will encourage other farmers and landowners to also conserve their property, so it remains farmland and they can really get a critical mass of farmland that is preserved forever in this area.
- The Waxhaw Creek Preserve is just south of Waxhaw and it's a very significant conservation area focus for the CLC. In 2013, the CLC got support from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund and Duke Energy to purchase 152 acres of land along the Waxhaw Creek in Union County. This is a really important area, because the Waxhaw Creek is a tributary that flows into the Catawba River and it's a relatively clean creek. That's really important for water quality that feeds into the Catawba River, because that's an important drinking source of water (south of Charlotte). It is also a natural heritage site and home to an endangered species of mussels, which is important for State heritage. The other exciting part of this property is that it is going to host a future segment of the CTT. Throughout the Conservancy footprint they have a handful of preserves that they own, monitor and maintain, which are opened up to the public through the CTT, so that in the future anyone will be able to come and enjoy a trail and see this really special place that they've protected. In 2014, Duke Energy gave the CLC a Seed Grant for \$50,000, so that they could continue to protect even more land in this area; they recognize the importance of this tributary to our water quality. The CLC is working with landowners right now to continue that conservation area; it's a critical mass up and down this creek.
- A Cross-State Thread Trail is a really exciting project for the CTT and CLC; it is one of the first Thread Trails that will connect communities across the North and South Carolina State line. What has just been put on the ground in Waxhaw (not too far from Mineral Springs) is a ¼ mile natural surface trail, which was literally done just a few weeks ago and it goes all the way up to the state line. On the other side of that creek there is a 3 ½ mile trail in Lancaster, South Carolina this is finished; it celebrated its grand opening on Tuesday. What is missing is just a bridge that will cross the creek; this will give us a really nice long natural surface trail that people can go out and hike/walk on that will cross state lines. They are really excited about the visibility of that. It's a very big trail project and is actually one of the larger Thread Trail segments.
- Another project that has been rapidly growing is the Rocky River Blueway, which is a 60 mile planned paddle trail for kayaking and canoeing. Currently, they are planning a launch site near Highway 205 in Union County, in working with some landowners there to try to figure out a spot, so that will be access for Union County to get right on that trail. That blueway has three launches already; there are two in Cabarrus County and one in Anson County. There are four or five more launches planned along the route, so people will be able to put in and take out within ten or



so miles of each other; this will give people a really nice paddle experience. The Rocky River is a wilderness experience; you see wildlife, herons and deer. It's a really beautiful place to be.

- Ms. DiCosola recapped that the CLC has over 15,000 acres protected and over 220 miles of Thread Trail on the ground. Mayor Becker pointed out that the newest link of Thread Trail in Union County (the Waxhaw link) will connect to South Carolina with that suspension bridge. Just a couple of miles east, Mineral Springs could extend our trail at the Pleasant Grove end just a couple of miles west and be joining that. It's almost in the realm of possibility that within a few years there could be a trail from our McNeely Road Trailhead into Walnut Creek in Lancaster, South Carolina, which would be really huge if that happened; it's on the plan and it's just a question of plugging away at it.

#### **9. Consideration of the 2014-2015 Non-Profit Contributions**

- Mayor Becker commented that he did suggest that he wanted to and it was interesting that our guests mentioned it, but the town had gotten in the mail Tuesday a mailing from the Parkwood Band Boosters and he said "well they haven't presented" although we kind of got a mini-presentation that we didn't expect, which was good, but he thought that the sponsorship levels were so reasonable and the band has already proven to be such an important part of the Mineral Springs Festival. Mayor Becker pointed out that it is one of Mineral Springs' missions to try to partner more with Parkwood High School and Middle School, so he thought he ought to put this in as a possibility to look at a small sponsorship for the band as well at this time.
- Mayor Becker pointed out that he had made a few notes for the council on their spreadsheet of what the funding requests were. We have quite a few fewer funding requests this year than we have had in previous years. Mayor Becker didn't hear from the Drug Court; they did say last year that they were looking for a large grant and that they might not be coming back right away if they got the grant. Safe Alliance is going to roll their operation in with Turning Point; that is in progress, so nobody is asking for funding on that transition right now. Councilwoman Critz mentioned that she spoke with Ashley Lantz at Turning Point today and Ms. Lantz commented that they know all of the grants that were sponsoring them were coming in their direction, but they are sort of feeling their way through the start-up process. Councilwoman Critz stated that the council might want to just keep that door open for a one-time start-up if that should become a possibility in the next 30 to 60 days; just a heads up. Mayor Becker continued that it looks like the council has room to consider the Parkwood Band at a low level. Mayor Becker suggested keeping the Catawba Lands Conservancy at their same level and then noted that the Council on Aging and Red Cross has made a specific request at no increase, there was a \$100 increase requested by the Arts Council (\$600) and Turning Point requested \$1,000. It was noted that funding requests were down \$2,000 because Safe Alliance wasn't requesting their funding (\$1,000) and the Drug Court Foundation wasn't requesting their funding (\$1,000). If everybody is funded at the same amount and the Union County Community Arts Council at \$100 more we would still be \$1,900 below last year's funding level and we have Parkwood Band to consider if we want to give them a little bit.

- Councilwoman Coffey recommended \$1,000 for the Parkwood Band, because schools are in real need and she thought it was the appropriate thing to do. Councilwoman LaMonica asked that the council consider a change for the Council on Aging given what they saw this evening and the aging population of our community and the fact that it has shown up on our surveys; there's an opportunity to support the aging. Councilwoman LaMonica recommended increasing that by \$500 to \$2,000.
- Mayor Becker went over the suggested amounts: \$2,500 for Catawba Lands Conservancy, \$2,000 for Council on Aging, \$1,500 for American Red Cross, \$600 for the Community Arts Council, \$1,500 for Turning Point and \$1,000 for the Parkwood Band Boosters. In addition to the \$800 that has already been laid out, that still puts us below last year's level. Mayor Becker stated that it looks like that fits in the budget if the council feels that is a good policy.
- **Councilwoman Critz** made a **motion** to approve the giving to the non-profits with the addition of the changes made to Council on Aging (increasing it to \$2,000) and the \$1,000 additional contribution to Parkwood High School Band Boosters and **Councilwoman Coffey** seconded. The motion passed unanimously as follows:

*Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, LaMonica and Neill*

*Nays: None*

**10. Consideration of Approving the Town Hall Landscaping Agreement with Taylor and Sons for Fiscal Year 2015-2016**

- Mayor Becker pointed out that Ms. Brooks did have an update that Ms. Taylor has offered to renew the contract for the next 12 months at the same \$300 a month level with the same services/terms. Mayor Becker asked the council how they felt about renewing that contract.
- **Councilwoman LaMonica** made a **motion** to approve the landscaping contract with Taylor and Sons for the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 for town hall landscaping and **Councilwoman Neill** seconded. The motion passed unanimously as follows:

*Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, LaMonica and Neill*

*Nays: None*

**11. Mineral Springs 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Festival Update and Query**

- Councilwoman Critz asked if we could consider talking with the Sheriff's Department about blocking off roads to jointly consider this 5K in with the festival. It was determined that September 19<sup>th</sup> was too soon for them [PTSO] to plan another 5K, since they had just done one in April, but the town could meet with them independently about another festival or an event that could take place on the trail.
- Ms. Brooks referred to the memo in the agenda packet and noted that we were starting to get in some sponsorship. Ms. Brooks explained that last year the non-profit tent was sponsored by Councilman Countryman and his wife and Councilwoman Critz donated the tent. Councilman Countryman and Councilwoman Critz responded that it will be again this year. Ms. Brooks further explained that the non-profits that cannot fit in that tent or do not chose to go in that tent will be taking a space and she asked the council how they felt about the fee

(it's a non-profit space fee of \$15). After some discussion, the council determined that if a non-profit requested a space outside of the tent then they will have to pay the non-profit fee for that space.

- **Councilman Countryman** made a **motion** to approve that any non-profit outside the non-profit tent pays a fee of \$15.00 for the space and **Councilwoman LaMonica** seconded. The motion passed unanimously as follows:

*Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, LaMonica and Neill*

*Nays: None*

- Ms. Brooks mentioned that Mr. Howie had suggested that the festival run until 8:00 p.m. and she wanted to get the council's opinion on that. The festival is set from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. right now. There was a consensus of the council that the demand was not there and last year people were leaving at 4:00 p.m. Councilwoman Critz asked if there was a reason given [to extend the time until 8:00 p.m.]. Mayor Becker responded that one of the things was just having it extend into the cooler late afternoon hours. Mayor Becker commented that he was hoping that two weeks later in the month will help a little bit and there is no hired band at the end of the festival this year. After a brief discussion, it was determined that the festival hours will remain the same [10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.].
- Ms. Brooks mentioned something that was not in the memo, but it has come up and it did come up last year – the dunk tank. Councilwoman Critz responded that she was all for it. Ms. Brooks noted that she had a couple of volunteers who will sit in the dunk tank this year and she just wanted to know if the council would like to have one. Mayor Becker asked how you do the dunk tank, because normally you charge. Ms. Brooks responded that was a question for Attorney Griffin. Mayor Becker commented that it involves charging tickets to throw things at the thing and how do you account for the money; is that a problem. Attorney Griffin questioned if it went to the town; recreation fund. Ms. Brooks asked if we could just collect those fees and put it back into the festival [fund]. Attorney Griffin commented that Mayor Becker was the finance officer and he would know. Mayor Becker suggested that we just have somebody with a cash box. Attorney Griffin responded for a contribution of ten cents you get one throw and fifty cents you get two throws to dunk the mayor or whatever. Mayor Becker clarified that he is not going to volunteer. Ms. Brooks commented that we're good with the dunk tank, but no one here wants to volunteer. Councilwoman Coffey and Mayor Becker responded "no". Councilman Countryman volunteered. Ms. Brooks responded okay and that her volunteers would be happy to know they are not going to be in there the whole time.
- Ms. Brooks asked the council if the sale of bricks will take place at the festival [at the town table]. There was a consensus of the council that that was a good place to do it. Councilman Countryman further suggested that prior to the festival that we make the community aware of that opportunity, so that they come prepared to do that. Ms. Brooks suggested the newsletter and website. Councilman Countryman recommended more to the front of the newsletter than the back. Mayor Becker mentioned that we will have prices by the festival if someone wants to give a bench or a tree. Mayor Becker explained that the bricks come with up to four lines of laser engraving that's then filled with ink; the best price that he has found is \$19

each (shipped) and there might be a little bit of additional cost for putting them in. Councilman Countryman suggested charging \$50 each. Councilwoman Coffey commented that her church did it several years ago and she thought they paid \$100 for their bricks. Councilwoman Critz responded that she thought that was too high. Councilwoman Neill suggested \$45. Councilwoman Coffey noted that it was a fundraiser, which is what we are doing now is a fundraiser for the children playground; anytime you have a fundraiser you are trying to raise capital. Councilwoman Critz asked for clarification, because she was under the assumption that we were going to do the brick, benches, picnic tables, shrubs and these kinds of donations that it was not necessarily a fundraiser, but it was just a part of giving the community an opportunity to participate and make it more personal to individuals within the community. After a brief discussion that included a suggestion that the bricks be \$25 to cover the installation, because this is to allow for personalization of the park. Attorney Griffin commented that this was out of his league, but municipalities budget and raise taxes to support its needed services, so how do you fundraise for a municipality. Churches fundraise, but this is a municipality. Councilwoman Coffey explained that she was thinking in terms of affording some more things for the playground and that she misunderstood. Attorney Griffin suggested that the town needs to check into whether or not they can have a fundraiser. Mayor Becker will research this; it should be a contribution type thing.

**12. Resignation of Councilwoman Critz as the Alternate Delegate for CRTPO**

- Mayor Becker reminded the council that when the town joined CRPTO he was the delegate, because the mayor has to be the delegate and Councilwoman Critz volunteered to be the alternate. Mayor Becker explained that Councilwoman Critz has found just that it's a Charlotte thing, she has never been to one meeting (Mayor Becker has missed one or two) and if you miss one meeting you've missed a lot, so she has requested that her name be taken off that list for now. Councilwoman Critz added that she is not really playing any kind of active or influential role at all and she was inundated with emails during the whole conversation with Charlotte going over this toll road, Mayor Becker went and made a public statement and got on the television, and then as the delegate all of her public information was out there, so one night she got 134 emails. Councilwoman Critz stated that she thought it was time to back out; however, if she thought she was playing any type of vital role she would stay put, but at this point she is not, so she sent an official notice to Robert Cook and cc Mayor Becker. Councilwoman Critz was asking for the council's permission to resign that position; we don't actually need a delegate to meet our criteria. Mayor Becker clarified that she was an alternate.
- **Councilman Countryman made a motion to allow the resignation effective today and Councilwoman LaMonica seconded. The motion passed unanimously as follows:**

*Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, LaMonica and Neill  
Nays: None*

13. **Staff Reports**

- Ms. Brooks noted that Mayor Becker had forgotten something in the budget. Mayor Becker responded that the council can do that next month, because it will fit before the payroll.
- Ms. Brooks informed the council that the lot next to the fire department (the old greenhouses) had been cleaned up. In addition, over the last many months, she had been working with the landowner who had seven junk cars, which have all been removed from downtown Mineral Springs.

10. **Other Business**

- Councilwoman Critz thanked Mr. Howie for all that he said and explained that the town is partnering with Mr. Chris Platé in the county who is head of the Economic Development for the county. Mr. Platé has been working with the town and will continue to work with the town to try to generate businesses and industry that would be very complimentary to our community.
- Councilwoman Critz mentioned that she had handed out a chart to the council, which was emailed to her per her request by Ashley Lantz from Turning Point. Councilwoman Critz explained that she had been concerned over the last months with some things that happened, not only in the realm of our meetings, but demands that are being placed on our staff that can be considered excessive. Councilwoman Critz offered a couple of things that the council can take objectiveness off the table, because she thought we have crossed the line into the area of some abusiveness and harassment that she didn't think any of them should be willing to endure. Councilwoman Critz stated that we are elected to represent our community and certainly we are going to have to withstand a difference of opinion from time-to-time and disagreements/debates, but nothing beyond that. Growing up in an abusive home, Councilwoman Critz is very sensitive to this and she does not wish for any of us to tolerate it in any shape or form. Councilwoman Critz read a couple of definitions and asked that the council review the handout. When people go to Turning Point they use this power and control chart for violence to determine whether someone has crossed the line or whether there are red flags of someone asserting themselves beyond a strong opinion and into an abusive or harassing situation. From the World Book Dictionary the definition of abusive is "using harsh and insulting language, reviling harsh and insulting manipulations, being scrupulous", in addition "to use wrong or to make wrong use insulting language", "things that imposed on to mislead or deceive". The definition of harassment is "to harass to trouble by repeating attacks, to worry or unnerve and enemy by continuous small attacks". Councilwoman Critz explained that what she had noticed with staff and with this council is that that's exactly what has been happening; these continual small attacks that keep you in this high level of alert wondering what's going to be asked of you next and how quickly you can get someone's demand met so that you don't have to be attacked again. The council should all be aware. Councilwoman Critz stated that she appreciates the presence of our deputy tonight and she hopes this will continue for the foreseeable future, so that we can offset any further situations that could compromise any and/or all of us. This needs to be a safe environment for those that attend and for each of us as we serve this community as well. Councilwoman Neill responded that she was glad

Councilwoman Critz had done that – it was long overdue and there was so much truth in that. Councilwoman Critz commented that she just thought this would provide them with an opportunity to be objective and to use something that is factual; we don't have to be, it's not an opinion, this is how it's defined by Webster and this is how it is defined and used by people that handle abusive, controlling, power control behavior in our county/state. It is good information and we need to be conscientious of it. Councilwoman LaMonica offered that there is training available as well; you run into it more in Corporate America than you do in government positions, but intimidation, harassment and abusive gestures/body language, physical as well as verbal can occur and to some extent it helps to have training to be able to understand and identify it when it happens and how to keep your emotion in check when it happens and how to diffuse it or how to exit it quickly. If it makes sense for the council to look into any kind of training; maybe COG can help along those lines. Councilwoman LaMonica shared that from a corporate perspective having that training has been invaluable when you are dealing with other people on a day-to-day working situation. Councilwoman Critz commented that it might be good to see what the Institute of Governments has to offer; we might even consider hosting something and inviting other municipalities. Mayor Becker suggested "conflict resolution and negative interactions". Attorney Griffin asked if they were speaking between council members and where does their jurisdiction go beyond their council members and staff. Mayor Becker responded "interacting with the public". Councilwoman Critz responded that she was just saying interacting with the public and in our meetings. Attorney Griffin commented that he wasn't sure that elected people need to get involved in that; if people are dissatisfied with you they can vote you out of office if you aren't being nice to people and courteous/kind; he didn't think the council should use taxpayers' money to make them "people-sensitive". Councilwoman Critz responded that she was speaking more from the other objective, not that we shouldn't be held in check and accountable for our conduct, but we are being subjected to conduct that goes beyond strong opinions, which is why she brought this before the council. Attorney Griffin responded that was a legal matter and they can deal with it in that respect. Attorney Griffin asked what Councilwoman Critz was really driving at – is somebody really harming or interfering with the function of the duties of employees. Councilwoman Critz responded that she believed so. Attorney Griffin commented you believe that, but do we have evidence of it. Councilwoman Critz responded that she believed so according to these definitions. Attorney Griffin explained that in the New England states it's just harassment all the time; at every town hall meeting there's harassment, they get up and just lambast each other. After a short discussion, it was determined that Councilwoman Critz would get in touch with Attorney Griffin and look to and follow his guidance considering the outcome of their meeting.

- Councilwoman Coffey asked Mayor Becker if he had an opportunity to follow up with Attorney Griffin about the insurance carrier, which he had stated that he would do in reference to the equipment in the park. Mayor Becker explained that in the process of renewing our general liability and property/casualty insurance he made sure that he described the new park that is going online; the general thing will completely cover any kind of park like that. Mayor Becker then described specific equipment and they said that is completely covered. Mayor Becker also described the boulders and some natural obstacles for play and the insurance representative

said “I don’t see boulders in here”; she was going through a list [of exclusions] and she was very confident that everything we have planned for the park was completely covered by our liability coverage.

11. **Adjournment**

- **Councilwoman Coffey** made a **motion** to adjourn and **Councilwoman LaMonica** seconded. *The motion passed unanimously as follows:*

*Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, LaMonica and Neill*

*Nays: None*

- The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.
- The next regular meeting will be on Thursday, July 9, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. at the Mineral Springs Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Vicky A. Brooks, CMC, NCCMC, Town Clerk

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Frederick Becker III, Mayor