

Edenton Town Council Minutes
July 27, 2020
Special Meeting

The Edenton Town Council met in special session on Monday, July 27, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The following members were present: Mayor Pro Tem Elton Bond, Councilman Roger Coleman, Councilman Samuel Dixon, Councilman Hackney High, Councilman Craig Miller and Councilman Roscoe Poole. Absent Mayor Jimmy Stallings.

Mayor Pro Tem Elton Bond called the meeting to order.

Councilman Roscoe Poole gave an invocation.

The first item on the agenda was a presentation on the earned media report May 2-5, 2019 Media Familiarization Tour.

Craig Distl and Leah Hughes with Distl Public Relations was with the Town Council via Zoom and reviewed the Earned Media Report from the 2019 Media Familiarization (FAM) Tour. The Town's 2018 Strategic Communications Plan recommended the Town host a FAM tour to educate and attract target audiences to Edenton. Craig and Leah invited nine writers/bloggers to participate in the FAM Tour. Nancy Nicholls with the Chowan County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) was terrific in helping to plan, coordinate and host jam-packed three day "emersion". It was noted that to date, 17 stories have been written and published about Edenton.

The second item was the award of bid for the new bulkhead at Queen Anne Creek & Improvements to 48-inch gravity outfall storm sewer discharge pipe.

Corey Gooden, Public Works Director was present and he stated that bulk heading improvements were needed from storm surge. The engineering assessment recommended installation of a new bulkhead at Queen Anne Creek on E. Water Street, east of Hayes Bridge. A grant was received from NC Division of Coastal Management to fund the new bulkhead, that will match the elevation of the concrete bulkhead around the Elizabeth Vann Moore Park and the recently installed bulkhead on Mary and Chris Elliott's property. The new bulkhead will reduce nuisance flooding that causes us to periodically have to close E. Water Street from E. King St to Court St. It won't stop surge from a tropical storm or hurricane.

The assessment of the pump station also found that a 48-inch gravity storm water discharge pipe was for some unknown reason bricked up and taken out of service. We have searched files, tapped previous town officials (former public works directors, engineering consultants) and can't figure out why the pipe was bricked up. The bid for the bulkhead included an engineering plan to restore this discharge pipe back to service.

The cost of the new bulkhead is \$72,000; the grant funded \$110,000. The cost for the contractor to rehabilitate the storm water discharge pipe is \$29,500. The Town Council included \$60,000 in the Powell Bill Fund for improvements to the storm water pump station. In addition to the rehab work to the discharge pipe, a new in-line check valve/flap gate will need to be installed to prevent bay water from backing up into the discharge pipe. Engineers estimate the cost of the flap gate to be \$40,000.

Also, as part of the pump station engineering assessment, the Town received a grant to fund a storm water feasibility study for the east side of town. That engineering study is underway and we should have a report from the engineers to present to you soon. We also received a grant to install a state-of-the-art storm water improvement on property the Town owns on E. Eden Street. The engineers are designing a storm water vault that will have a filter to collect contaminants, preventing from entering Queen Anne Creek. The vault will add storage capacity, slowing down the speed of the storm water entering the storm water system and pump station at E. Water Street.

Councilman Miller made a motion to award the bid as requested. Councilman High seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The next item was a resolution for authorizing upset bid process for sale of 133 East Gale Street.

Ms. Knighton explained that an offer to purchase 133 E. Gale Street was received from Chris O'Neill and his fiancé Emma Ferree in the amount of \$9,200. The appraised value in September 2019 was \$29,000, which is the price the Town paid to acquire the property. She stated that the bid was considerably lower than the appraised value and the Town Council has the right to reject the bid and not start the minimum upset bid process.

It was the consensus of the Town Council members present to table the item and staff will consult with the Town Attorney about rejecting the bid.

Councilman Miller made a motion to table the agenda item until the next Town Council meeting. Councilman High seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The last item on the special meeting agenda was the approval of revision#1 to grant agreement for Colony Tire Building Reuse Grant.

Ms. Knighton reported that as staff was preparing to submit request for reimbursement of grant funds for Colony Tire's \$400,000 grant, an error was found in the grant documents. Colony Tire pledged to create 40 new jobs. The baseline for the number of employees Colony employed in North Carolina as of the date of the grant application (September 2019) was 376. However, Colony employed a total of 525 employees in North Carolina and Virginia. The grant documents approved and executed included the 525 as the baseline. Colony created 32 of the 40 new jobs just prior to the COVID-19 stay at home orders. The company has laid off employees but is slowly rehiring. At last check in with Colony, they were back above the 376 baseline and had created 8 of the 40 new jobs. The company has until October 2021 to create the 40 new jobs. Ms. Knighton stated she has asked Commerce to consider an extension of time for Colony to create the required jobs. That request is under consideration.

Ms. Knighton stated that a new set of documents would have to be approved by the Town Council for the grant agreement – revision#1.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve revision#1 for the grant agreement. Councilman High seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further items on the special meeting agenda, the meeting was adjourned.