

Edenton Town Council Minutes
Special Meeting
June 27, 2023

The Edenton Town Council met on Tuesday, June 27, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. This was the reschedule date for the meeting of June 26, 2023 that was postponed due to inclement weather. The following members were present: Mayor Jimmy Stallings, Councilman Elton Bond, Councilman Roger Coleman, Councilman Aaron Coston, Councilman Hackney High and Councilman Craig Miller. Absent was Councilman Samuel Dixon.

Mayor Jimmy Stallings called the meeting to order.

Public Hearing FY 23/24 Annual Budget

Councilman Miller made a motion to open the floor for public comment. Councilman Coleman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Susan Inglis: Asked if there was funding included in the budget for pedestrian and bike improvements, including crosswalks and bike lanes. She pointed out areas at the post office, grocery store and pharmacy's.

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated yes funding was included for this.

John Mitchener: Asked if there were funds included for improved lighting.

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated yes funding was included for lighting improvements.

Councilman Coston made a motion to close the public hearing. Councilman High seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of FY 2023/24 Budget and Budget Ordinance

Councilman Bond made a motion to approve the FY 2023/24 budget and budget ordinance. Councilman Miller seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman High expressed concern regarding the stipend increase for Town Council members.

Councilman Coleman stated that he felt that this increase in stipend could encourage residents to run for elected position.

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that the last stipend increase was in 2018.

Councilman Bond made a motion to approve the FY2023/24 budget and budget ordinance. Councilman Miller seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of FY 2023/24 Storm water Fee

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that in the FY23/24 budget is the initial creation of a storm water fee that will generate a total of \$99,000 for the maintenance and repair of the Town's storm water infrastructure. He stated that historically the Town used Powell Bill funding for the majority of the necessary repairs and with the rising cost of materials and the declining annual revenue of the Powell

Bill funding an additional/alternative revenue source was needed. The storm water rate is structured as a \$3 dollar per month residential fee; an \$8 dollar per month commercial fee; and a \$12.50 per month industrial fee.

Councilman Bond made a motion to approve the storm water fee. Councilman Miller seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of FY 2023/24 Electric Rate Increases

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that included in the FY23/24 budget are the electric rate increase for the year. There was an overall increase in electric charge of 1.62% for energy cost & 11.24% for demand cost. These increases were needed for two reasons: one, to forecast for the increase in purchased power pricing and that the Power Agency is projecting a budget increase for the release of the bad debt (from Sharron Harris Sale) in September or October of 2023; and two, the inflation of material/equipment cost since the last re- evaluation from July 1st, 2019.

He stated that there was also an increase in residential basic customer charge to \$15.50 (from \$11.10) for residential, a \$30 customer charge (from \$25.50) for small commercial & public housing, a facility charge of \$500 (from \$105) for large general service & coincidental peak demand.

There was discussion amongst the Town Council regarding the penalties and late fees that are placed on delinquent utility bills.

Staff agreed to look at the fee structure and report back to the Town Council.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve the electric rate increases. Councilman Bond seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Updated Salary Schedule

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that the updated salary schedule will allow the Town to operate during the FY23/24 budget cycle and align all employees within the correct range for their pay scale.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve the salary scheduled. Councilman Coleman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Budget Amendment and Work Authorization-Hanger Taxi Lanes Project

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that this budget amendment was needed to accept the funding under the Grant Agreement (36237-15-17.1) with the NC Division of Aviation for the addition of taxi lanes, access road and parking to support future hangar development at the Northeastern Regional Airport.

Councilman Bond made a motion to approve the budget amendment and work authorization. Councilman Coleman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2023 Audit Letter to Governance

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that as part of the process for the Town's annual audit each year the auditor must provide a letter of governance to the Mayor and Council. The letter is strictly

informative and provides the Mayor and Council with the auditor's responsibilities, work scope, and timing for providing services. This was a no action item, only public meeting review.

Resolution-Funding Acceptance for Project VUR-D-ARP-0055

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that at a recent meeting Town Council approved a resolution to submit applications for a state loan/grant assistance project to install two new well site to replace two aging wells. The NC DEQ has awarded the Town a grant in the amount of \$4,479,725 as part of the American Rescue Plan State Fiscal Recovery Fund for this project. This grant will allow the Town to establish two new water wells that will improve our current water quality and water infrastructure system. The resolution presented will allow the Public Works Director and Town Manager to accept the grant and to proceed with the project.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve the resolution. Councilman Bond seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Town Council Meeting Procedures Review

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that at the March 27, 2023 meeting the Town Council decided to table the Town Council meeting procedure review due to the majority of the Town Council were out of town attending the National Main Street Conference in Boston. He stated that since this time, the administration and the Council were tasked to revisit this document and note any changes or modifications that were requested since that meeting.

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that he reviewed the document and included a marked-up version in the Agenda Packet. He noted that there are three revisions in the packet, which are listed beside the lines that are/could be impacted.

The first item to edit was that those wanting to make public comment should be a resident of Edenton/Chowan County and that no comments can be made on Zoom.

The second item was to place the Public Comment portion of agenda at the beginning of the meeting.

The third item was adding language to item 26 that minutes are posted on the Town's website.

The fourth item was to insert new item 28 that meeting recordings are posted to the YouTube channel and the public access channel on Mediacom and to include information on the Town's website for viewing meetings on Zoom.

Councilman Coleman made a motion to approve the four items as presented.

Councilman Bond stated that he disagreed with moving the public comment to the beginning of the meeting.

Councilman Coleman rescinded his motion.

Councilman High noted that this document can be reviewed and changed by the Town Council when it is necessary.

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that he hoped that this document would be reviewed yearly by the Town Council.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve item #1 as presented. Councilman Coston seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Coston made a motion to approve item 2. Councilman Miller seconded the motion. The following voted affirmative: Councilman Coleman, Councilman High, Councilman Miller, Councilman Coston. Councilman Bond voted No. The motion carried.

Councilman Coston made a motion to approve Item 3. Councilman High seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve Item 4. Councilman Coston seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

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