

MILTON NORTH CAROLINA TOWN HALL

Town Offices: 173 Broad Street
Town Hall Meetings: 11928 Academy Street
TUESDAY: August 13, 2024---7:00 PM. **Minutes**
Town Hall Hours: Tuesdays 9:00 am.-5:00 pm.
Thursdays- 4:00 pm.-7:00 pm. **Payments Only**

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Angela Upchurch called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Mayor Angela Upchurch stated that this meeting is being recorded and I (Mayor Angela Upchurch) would like to remind you for **Public Comments** please call Town Hall at 336-234-0030 by 2:00 p.m. on the Tuesday the day of the Town Meeting and leave your name, address, and your reason for Public Comments.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Angela Upchurch asked everyone to please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Angela Upchurch welcomed everyone to the August 13, 2024, Town Meeting.

PRESENT: Mayor Angela Upchurch, Mayor Pro Tem. Robert Palmer, Shirley Wilson, Town Clerk, Commissioner Jackie Jeffries, Commissioner Sherri Garrard, Elizabeth Lattime, Finance Officer

Absent:

APPROVALS: Mayor Angela Upchurch called for approval of the August 13, 2024, Agenda:

Commissioner Jackie Jeffries motioned to approve the Agenda for August 13, 2024. Commissioner Bob Palmer seconded the motion. All were in favor. Mayor Angela Upchurch asked for the approval of the July 09, 2024, Minutes. Commissioner Jackie Jeffries motioned to approve the July 09, 2024, Minutes, as they stand. Commissioner Bob Palmer second the motion. All were in favor.

MAYOR REPORT:

- ✚ Getting both signatures on the new Water Application so the owner will be more responsible. (Discussion)
- ✚ Searching for funding for an engineering design to remedy the sidewalk situation or lack thereof at Aunt Millies.
- ✚ DOT is willing to do the work if an engineer assesses the situation.
- ✚ Waiting for Spectrum to remove the leaning meter post at the new parking lot strip. When that is done, we will be adding a handicap parking sign.
- ✚ Some towns people wanted to know where the Towns Backhoe is being stored. It is on Commissioner Palmers' property because it could not continue to be stored on State Property. There are not many places it could be stored and the Pumphouse is too vulnerable.
- ✚ Both the Thomas Day House and the Town office and the Bank Properties do belong to the state.
- ✚ I (Mayor Angela Upchurch) found a shotgun shell pressed into one of the planters in front of the bank at the beginning of July. (State Property)
- ✚ Elizabeth and Roxanne are continuing their sessions with the Rural Community Capacity RC2 with the Department of Commerce. If they complete this Milton should receive an estimated \$45,000.00 dollars for a project or projects. Lizzie Morrison with the department of Commerce will be assisting in helping us make this decision. Which options will come before the Commissioners and there are perimeters for the options. Lizzie came to the round table discussion we had last Friday. Taking the time to learn all of Milton's issues helps her to be a better advocate for the town and for consultation.
- ✚ To be eligible for Federal money for historic grants such as grants for store fronts the town must have a certified local government designation. This involves the Historic District and COA (Certificate of Appropriateness) Compliance. I have a meeting on Thursday to see if it is possible for Milton to be designated certified local government.
- ✚ First, we will be seeking funds on a Municipal level. Many times, the community needs to show it is trying and on board with securing Milton's future and implementing these improvements.
- ✚ The abandon properties that are not contributing to water and sewer cost (the unpaid bills that have to be written off after four year) the unsafe properties, the disengaged property owners, are particularly spending most of my days communicating with those who could help with finding out how. Need the community to show their best interest, their support in making the town more economically attractive for new residents, which we need. This will help us increase revenue for the water and sewer. Help us to secure Milton's future as a town.
- ✚ New water rates will be reflected in the September Water bills.
- ✚ Community Service Workers have been providing labor at Cedars Cemetery suggestion from Deputy Corey Turner and Commissioner Bob Palmer has been working with them. **Explained** (A few impressions have been filled with topsoil and some small granite markers placed at the African American Cemetery.) A sign will be installed soon noting the African American Cemetery with Greenway Trail Funds. The rusty fence along the Cemetery will be painted.

- ✦ The Joint Commissioners Meeting will be held Thursday August 15, 2024, at Co-Square in Yanceyville NC at 6:00 p.m.
- ✦ Has a list of organizations that will help with utilities?

Financial Report: Elizabeth Lattime

STAFF REPORT:

General Fund Revenue: As of July 30, 2024
Budget for Beginning Fiscal Year: \$99,800.00
Income: \$5,766.00
Expenses: \$6,516.00

Water Sewer Fund: As of July 30, 2024
Budget for Beginning Fiscal Year: \$158,940.00
Income: \$11,003.00
Expenses: \$14,313.00

Bank Statement General Fund: \$22,069.20
Cash On Hand: \$20,544.00 less the outstanding checks. \$1,452.55
General Fund Balance: \$19,091.45

Bank Statement Water Fund: \$32,652.00
Cash On Hand: \$31,561.35 less outstanding checks \$1,293.98
Water Fund Balance: \$30,267.37

NC Capital Trust SCIF: Closed payment went to Withers Ravenel
Investment Management Trust: \$127,730.42
Change in Value Interest: \$566.81
Ending Balance: \$128,297.26

Public Comments: Taco Smith

- ✦ Have you heard anything about our little river? (Sidewalk flooding issue) Mayor Angela Upchurch stated we have not heard anything yet, but it is on the list. On the list with the Department of Commerce for Pedestrian Improvements.
- Pastor David Barnette: Pastor New Haven Baptist Church Milton NC—Founder of New World Ministry Outreach**
- ✦ **Rural Community Relief: Explained. Reaching out to help communities in rural areas. On August 24, 2024, 3:00-7:00 we will sponsor a Community Day at God's Blessing Center, Caswell County Outreach with bounce houses, gospel singing and vendors giving away food and school supplies, town official introducing themselves to the citizens of Milton and surrounding areas. We adopted to the Brian Center Rehabilitation.**

Old Business: Mayor Angela Upchurch

- ✦ Reminder Public Hearing About the Zoning Change, mixed Use, **August 22, 2024**, at 7PM at this location. (**11928 Academy Street**)
- ✦ .

NEW BUSINESS:

- ✦ Alliance Code Enforcement: Third Party Entity for a fee will help with the code enforcement and **Commissioner Jackie Jeffries and Roxanne Palmer** will elaborate on the meeting with the Planning Board last night.
- ✦ Jackie stated the Planning Board met with Mr. Brandon Emory last night. She stated that Mr. Emory described the benefits Milton can receive. The company finds out who owns these dilapidated houses and fixes them up. They partner with Habitat for Humanity, and this is income for the town.
- ✦ **Jackie Jeffries and Roxanne Palmer Explained** (This is Good for Property Value.) Discussed and explained.
- ✦ Alliance Code Enforcement- \$50 per hour, at least 10 hours at a time. Willing to work on an as needed basis.
- ✦ We would like to see the Commissioners discuss this and move forward. We need Ordinance enforcement. (Discuss that Ordinances are available to the residents.) Planning Board available for questions. Emory will come to our next meeting for further discussion. September 10, 2024. It was motioned by Commissioner Palmer and seconded by Commissioner Garrard that the planning board extend an invitation for Mr. Emory to speak at the next town meeting. All were in favor.
- ✦ We had a round table visit last Friday. Some good things came out of that.
- ✦ Today we had a visit from Southeast Rural Assistance.
- ✦ Random PH test today and Milton had a perfect reading 8.2 **Explained.**
- ✦ Milton Utilities last month was declared distressed.

- ✦ USDA loan was approved by voters through a general obligation bond. This means that Milton's residents at that voted to be responsible for that debt. This responsibility does not disappear with time. The Town is therefore authorized to increase property taxes to take care of this debt. Which is an annual payment of \$16,307.50 for about 25 more years. This debt is allowed to be paid annually through an increase in our property taxes. This will remove a great burden on the sewer fund as we do not collect enough revenue for the cost of maintenance and repairs. Remains to be seen to increase property taxes.
- ✦ The USDA cannot forgive the debt. Loan forgiveness is not provided for in their regulations.
- ✦ Learning of the General Obligation Bond that Milton voted on back in the two thousand has complicated the situation.
- ✦ To define the Obligation Bond more in depth: A type of debt or municipality issues to fund non-self-supporting projects. These projects include schools, roads, parks, and government buildings. An exchange for borrowing the money the government pledges to use all available resources including tax revenue to repay the bond holds. In Milton's case it was the USDA.

OPTIONS:

- ✦ State takes over if bankrupt, we have already learned.
- ✦ Privatization. There are companies buying small municipal water and wastewater systems so towns can get out of the business, which is really what water and sewer is. In town hands the systems are not for profit but must meet costs. All of the water and sewer revenue goes into operating the water and sewer, and currently not enough.
- ✦ Privatization would be a money-making enterprise. Then the Town has absolutely no say in anything regarding its function or rates. Even this does not necessarily end well. I heard the example regarding another town, in another meeting I was in, that transferred their systems to a private company: the company later went bankrupt and had sold all of the equipment that the town had transferred with the systems. The town had to start all over

The community can rise up: If at all possible, return unused and/or abandoned properties to contributing. If you know heirs around the country who still own property here, encourage them to agree to sell so it can be used for home or, if in the Commercial District, business sites. Tell them it is imperative that Milton grows in this way.

SERCAP visit: The round table team will be going through the processes of applying for a grant, looks like \$50,000, for grinder pump purchase, to help get us through as these pumps fail.

- ✦ The round table team will be looking at the possibility for the future of installing an easier to maintain system, one that's gravity fed from septic to perhaps three or so main pump stations that pump up to the wastewater site. Pace Analytical told us that they normally would keep a check on those pumps in that situation. When they heard each property would have a pump, they were not willing to get into all that. Bob and I were glad to finally meet Matt Smith and see what they do. We have truly had a gap in communication without knowing exactly what Mike Behler did. Jessie Mullins is able to handle the plumbing and green tank issues, but he is not in the position to do what Mike did at the wastewater treatment pump station. It has been stressful that we cannot know what Mike knew and did, though we can tell he was truly making do with what he had, which was not the best but got whatever working at the time. Mike was truly a nice guy, and everyone appreciated what he tried to do at minimal cost. It is still running because of him.
- ✦ We have occurred a long list of repairs: Well Pump Water treatment Filter, Switch that operates the well pump, currently falls out too easily, this is an electrical issue. Pump comes on, on a timer every day for a couple of hours, but in event of a fire the switch should be turned on. It needs to be repaired. Need two Core-In Chemical pumps, received two of those and they are ready for use. (Check off the list) Matt Smith will install. We do not have a Generator for the Well Pump. We need to investigate. We have at least a daily supply of water in the well, maybe more. Small Plumbing issues gauge, check valve, galvanized material is not good. It erodes. Danger Keep Out signs for all locations. Stainless Steel triple and quadruple in cost. Broken Flow Meter we ordered that. This is a massive purchase of \$13,000.00. The generator is not working required and needs to be repaired SERCAP gave us an electrician and will be coming Thursday. Bar Screen replacement.
- ✦ Estimate: Olive Hill Welding Estimate- \$4700.00 **Vote on in the September Meeting.**
- ✦ Jarrett Welding Estimate
- ✦ Blowers not working. Explained Alarms not working.
- ✦ **Marty** will help with Oil Change.
- ✦ **Thomas Gilreath** will take care of the issue from the Wastewater Plant to the Creek
- ✦ **This is the list and funds are limited.**

Economic Development Commission: Ex-Officio member for TDA Commissioner Bob Palmer made the motion to have an Ex-Officio member non-voting member for the EDC from the TDA, Commissioner Jackie Jeffries seconded the motion.

EDC Report: Shirley Wilson

- ✦ **Reviewed information from Senator Graig Meyers visit. Municipalities come together and help each other. What Yanceyville to work withal municipalities and town and determine what is needed.**
- ✦ **Senator Meyers was so excited about Milton being a part of the RC2.**
- ✦ **PCC has grants that will help all students.**
- ✦ **The nursing program was 100% passing.**

✚ **PCC had Second Harvest Food Give away.**

✚ **Food Insecurity (Explained)**



CLOSE OF MEETING: Mayor Angela Upchurch asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Commissioner Bob Palmer** motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner **Sherri Garrard** seconded the motion. All members were in favor. **Time: p.m.**
Next Meeting September 10, 2024

Minutes humbly submitted by: Shirley Wilson