

TOWN OF HOPE MILLS
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Monday, June 7, 2021 5:00 P.M. Continued from Monday, May 17, 2021
BILL LUTHER BOARD MEETING ROOM

Mayor Jackie Warner called the regular meeting of the Hope Mills Board of Commissioners to order on Monday, June 7, 2021 at 5:04 p.m.

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Jackie Warner, Mayor Pro Tem Kenjuana McCray, Commissioners Jessie Bellflowers, Pat Edwards, and Bryan Marley were present. Commissioner Jerry Legge participated via Zoom.

STAFF PRESENT

Interim Town Manager Bill Zell, New Town Manager Scott Meszaros, Town Clerk Jane Starling, Finance Director Drew Holland, Police Chief Joel Acciaro, Fire Chief Chuck Hodges, Parks & Recreation Director Lamarco Morrison, Stormwater Administrator Beth Brown, Planning & Economic Development Director Chancer McLaughlin, Chief Building Inspector Ray Reeves, Deputy Building Inspector Kenny Tatum, Public Works Director Don Sisko, and Deputy Public Works Director Bruce Clark.

Interim Town Manager Bill Zell opened by thanking the Board of Commissioners for the opportunity of being the Interim Manager and offered some observations. First, he observed that sometimes items are requested to be added to the agenda and only the person making the addition is aware until everyone arrives to the meeting. Secondly, he stated that the Board uses Town Staff as their staff, they are staff to the Town Manager and things work better when you go through the Manager so as not to place staff in an awkward position.

Manager Zell went on to state that at the May 17, 2021 workshop the Board was presented with a 14.3-million-dollar balanced budget with no tax increase. There was discussion on adding here, changing that but there was no consensus of the Board. We would like for you to accept the budget as it was presented. We have received some things from the Historical Committee that came in way late. Their original request had nothing for the period house and your original priority at the March 5th retreat was to get the Chapel finished. There is money in the budget to do the bathrooms at the Chapel. When you are ready to get to the period house do a budget amendment for a bid amount to do the work for a true dollar amount. You have a budget that meets most of staff needs and most of citizen's needs, not all but most. We are asking that you pass this budget. Discussion ensued.

Parks & Recreation Director Lamarco Morrison commented that he has spoken with McAdams, and they can start some preliminary drawings for the Reid's Journey Inclusive playground. Once we have those "stick drawings" or "Schematic drawings" so that we can take them through the plan approval process then a budget amendment can be done to have them complete the plans for the playground in conjunction with the splash pad.

Commissioner Bellflowers asked that Town employees receive a cost-of-living allowance for the entire year, for the Basketball court to be reopened and for ADA compliant water fountains to be installed in the park.

Commissioner Edwards moved to approve the operating budget for FY 21/22. It was pointed out that the Board cannot vote on the budget until after the public hearing is held during the upcoming regular meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem McCray commented that she disagrees with the idea of not funding any positions because you cannot fund them all. She would like the Town to add staff in phases, one or two per year. People will not stay if they are overworked, stretched, and not appreciated.

Both Manager Zell and Director Holland commented it is not a good practice to use fund balance to pay for ongoing costs.

Commissioner Legge moved, and Commissioner Marley seconded to adjourn at 5:25 p.m.

Jackie Warner, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jane G. Starling CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk