

**TOWN OF HUNTERSVILLE
TOWN BOARD MEETING
MINUTES**

**February 19, 2024
6:00 p.m. – Huntersville Town Hall
101 Huntersville-Concord Road**

PRE-MEETING

The Huntersville Board of Commissioners held a Pre-meeting at Huntersville Town Hall, 101 Huntersville-Concord Road, at 5:15 p.m. on February 19, 2024.

GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Christy Clark; Commissioners Alisia Bergsman, Amanda Dumas, Jennifer Hunt, Edwin Quarles, LaToya Rivers and Nick Walsh.

Fire Department Update. Fire Chief Jim Dotoli provided an update from the Fire Department. *Refer to PowerPoint attached hereto as Exhibit No. 1.*

Staff requested direction from the Board on offering part-time employment to current Huntersville Fire Department, Inc. employees. According to a survey, 78 percent of the Huntersville Fire Department, Inc. employees are interested in changing to a Town employee. If the Board is agreeable, staff will prepare a budget amendment to fund those positions for the remainder of the fiscal year. It was consensus of the Board to direct staff to have budget amendment on the March 4 agenda.

There being no further business, the Pre-meeting was adjourned.

**REGULAR MEETING
TOWN OF HUNTERSVILLE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

The Regular Meeting of the Huntersville Board of Commissioners was held at the Huntersville Town Hall, 101 Huntersville-Concord Road, at 6:00 p.m. on February 19, 2024.

GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Christy Clark; Commissioners Alisia Bergsman, Amanda Dumas, Jennifer Hunt, Edwin Quarles, LaToya Rivers and Nick Walsh.

Mayor Clark called for a moment of silence.

Mayor Clark led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Main Street Project Update

- Pedestrian crosswalks remain closed.
- Traffic signal is fully operational.

- Please use roundabouts correctly and safely.

External agency funding requests are due by March 1, 2024.

Spring 2024 session of Huntersville 101 starts March 13.

Parks & Recreation Survey is live.

Ways to connect with us – website, social media pages, Town of Huntersville app.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Clark reminded everyone to adhere to the Public Comment and Public Hearing Policy when addressing the Board.

Melissa Easley, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education District 1 Representative, provided update on ESSER funds and bond projects.

Mayor Clark proclaimed February as Black History Month.

Town of Huntersville Proclamation

WHEREAS, in 1976, Black History Month was formally adopted to honor and affirm the importance of Black history throughout our American experience, which dates thousands of years and includes some of the greatest, most advanced and innovative societies that we can all draw inspiration from; and

WHEREAS, the second week of February was chosen to coincide with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln, was celebrated by Black people in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Huntersville Board of Commissioners takes pride in recognizing February 2024 as Black History Month, celebrating the many notable contributions that people of African descent have made to our community, state, and country; and

WHEREAS, the omission of much of the history and contributions of Black people from textbooks and other literature has impeded awareness and appreciation; and

WHEREAS, the celebration of Black History Month is a positive way of recognizing the culture and history of Black people vital to the core beliefs and values of this society; and

WHEREAS, Black people living and working in Huntersville— from the time of legalized slavery to the present day — have shown a steadfast determination to live freely and equally and to press the town and the community to make manifest an equitable Huntersville where race is not a determining factor of outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the contributions of Black people have played significant roles and made lasting contributions to our Town's history and the history of our economic, cultural, spiritual and political development, while working tirelessly to contribute to every aspect of American society including business, education, politics, science, and the arts.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Christy Clark, Mayor of the Town of Huntersville, on behalf of the citizens, do hereby proclaim the month of February 2024 as Black History Month in the Town of Huntersville and urge all our citizens to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I do hereby set my hand and cause the Seal of the Town of Huntersville to be affixed, this the 19th day of February, 2024.

John Foster said I'm a resident of Huntersville and I'm also a small business owner in the town of Huntersville. First of all, I'd like to thank the Board and the Mayor and the staff for the job that you all diligently do every month. I wanted to take a few minutes to talk about a few things that you guys have accomplished and have done and some things that you are currently working on. First of all, just the

time and energy that you all put in I want to say that you are to be commended. It's not an easy job and it's a very time-consuming job, so thank you all for what you do. I'd also like to thank you for making a very hard decision at the last meeting in approving to move forward with the development of the new town hall behind us here. The previous two boards failed to make the hard decision to go ahead and approve building and constructing a new town hall which we dearly need. Also, I would like for you all to take a close look, if there's any way possible, I know there was a parking garage that would potentially be done at some point down the road or either done at the same time. When you look at the cost of construction by passing that project down the road for two years or five years, I think we'd be better off when we look at what it would take to do it now and go ahead and do that. It's obvious we're going to need it, so we just need to really to go ahead and seriously think about doing that at this same time also. In addition to that, the great piece of land that the Town owns right in front of Discovery Place Kids, I really hope that we can take a serious look on trying to find a partner to help us develop that piece of land and also we can control what's going to go there. Thank you all for the hard decision on approving the fire department being a full-time position and also remember to do a great job and for us to continue to have the success and the enjoyment that we need, at some point you are going to have to raise taxes. Don't have a fear there. For us to enjoy the life that we've been able to have in Huntersville, it doesn't come free, so remember that. Make the hard decision on everything you all are doing and thank you for the job that you are doing.

Janelle Harris, 14111 Holbrooks Road, said when watching the streaming of the Town retreat and seeing some updates on social media, I'm compelled to come and speak regarding Pottstown infrastructure. Mababu Live along with prominent other non-profit organizations with ties to that community wrote letters regarding the Rebuilding American Infrastructure and Sustainability and Equity, also known as the RAISE grant funding. We are still strong proponents of the funding and do hope the Town will reapply. We also are happy to appeal to more organizations and residents in hopes that it will push us from being in good standing to being granted the funds for Pottstown. As a resident I'm becoming increasingly concerned about road closures and prolonging the road connections. Knowing the railroad is requiring either the road closure of Dellwood Drive or Gibson Park crossings and the delaying of the Church Street Connection to Dellwood and Holbrooks, the traffic on Holbrooks Road is already very congested and we are starting to wonder where we are going to go. Furthermore, please do not allow the sidewalk progress on Dellwood Drive and Central Avenue to be shelved due to avoiding compensating landowners for their right-of-way use. Every time I speak to a resident and ask them why they are not jumping at the chance of seeing this project come to fruition, the consistent response is that we are a long-standing neighborhood and that there has never been so much concern about bringing sidewalks into our community until newer developments came. And seeing the taxes and cost of repairs and expenses rise exponentially, I have to agree. So now is the time to regard these facts and use those RAISE funds to fairly acquire the land needed for these projects. The current efforts made by the county to spruce up Pottstown via the Torrence Lytle and Pottstown Park meetings we will truly need the Town to stay in stride with our infrastructure and safety and preferably begin at the \$8.7 million to contribute in doing so.

Christine Wolak, 14114 Whitney Hodges Drive, said something racist was said at the last Town Board meeting two weeks ago and I just wanted to point it out and hope that we can stop this. There was an item, R23-06, on the agenda, a proposal to rezone a property to accommodate a small office that included outdoor recreation. During the public comment section of the meeting a resident said that he was against the rezoning and said something about basketball and not knowing what that would bring up from Charlotte. This is a racist dog whistle for young black men. This resident felt comfortable using this dog whistle out loud in public on the public record in this forum and indeed he was not challenged. This is not acceptable. It's not acceptable to me and it shouldn't be acceptable to the Board.

I ask the Board to be more proactive in identifying and addressing racist or other discriminatory language in public comments. Prior to today the public comment policy only said that the speaker must be civil and courteous and not use personal attacks. It didn't address racism or other ism's. I saw that they've been updated. I applaud the Board's speed in reviewing the language and updating the policy to cover this kind of language. I hope that going forward this and other public meetings will feel more inclusive and be more productive because of this change.

Anna Rubin, (Jon Eury deferred his 3 minutes to Ms. Rubin), said I do want to say thank you for updating the public comment standards and for discussing those today because I think it's a privilege to come and talk to the Board and share our concerns and comments, but it certainly should never be a platform for some of the circuses that have occurred over the last year. I appreciate that you are allowing the opportunity for public comment, and I expect everyone to be respectful, but I appreciate you emphasizing that a little bit.

Thank you for my time to talk today about the Rezoning Petition R23-11. I know I discussed my concerns at the public hearing and then I attended the Planning Board meeting and discussed my concerns again, then I sent you all a letter and discussed my concerns a third time, so I probably should just shut up and sit down, but I just wanted to reiterate one more time tonight how important I think the decision that you are making is setting precedent along that corridor. That area is a town core, it's a community core in the 2040 Plan and that is a combination of a town core and a business center. I think the decisions that you are starting to make about that are going to set precedent for how that whole area is going to be developed.

I don't have any problem with what's going in that area. I have a problem with the waiving of the buffers. This area, the Dove family has owned for as long as I have lived here, almost 20 years, and I know they owned it way before I got here. They have every right to sell that property and make the highest profit possible. But it's not a violation of their right to uphold the Town's ordinances and site design and architectural standards. You can do both. They can have the right to sell it, but we can also uphold the standards that we have put in place to protect the community.

If this property is sold to Morningstar, by right they can erect a three-story building like they are erecting, but by right it needs to sit 80' from McCord Road, it needs to sit 80' from 115 and it needs to sit 80' from the property to the south. The rezoning petition tonight is just about the south side because there's been an assumption that buffer zone to the north and to the west should be automatically waived. The decision to waive that is based on Article 4, Standards B and C, and I believe it's an inaccurate and it's a subjective decision that's been made and there's too many variables for Town staff to just simply waive it. I think that's a decision that is the Board's and the Board's alone to make and that the decision you are making tonight to rezone also includes the full site plan for this Morningstar development and so we can rezone the back part, but you need to uphold those standards because Article 4 has four parts and the parts that were used to waive it are Parts B and C, but Parts A and D were completely disregarded and I'm going to read those. A and D indicate that the structure to waive those buffers that the structure should perpetuate the unique building character of the environment, should be compatible to the historic architectural vocabulary of the area in their massing, should be designed to form a part of the larger composition of the area and that adjacent buildings should be of similar scale and configuration.

The proposed development does not meet the standards and the required buffer yard should not be waived. This is a massive three-story 103,000 sq. ft. building that as proposed will sit 28' from McCord Road and 28' from Highway 115 and that will tower over the small corner of this town. The proposed

building is not neighborhood serving. It's not consistent with the building character of this area and it is not similar to adjacent buildings. The sites that sit directly north and east are industrial and warehouse in nature, but they are not gigantic buildings towering over the road. If you look at the church to the west side off of 115, it sits way back 80' from the road. It doesn't tower over that corner. If you look at 84 Lumber that sits directly to the east, if you drive by that you barely know it's there. That's because it sits 80' from the road because the board upheld the buffer yard standards when it approved it being built there. Even if you think of the warehouses that were just approved to be across the street on McCord, they are planned to be sitting 80' from the road. My question is why are those buffer yards upheld and this one not being upheld. The only thing that's going to cover the massing of this building is the buffer yards and that's why those buffer yards are in place. That's the whole reason the town put them there, not to waive them automatically but because in places like this those, buffer yards are needed. So please uphold these buffer yards when you look at this tonight. The city can provide full relief of those, but this building does not align with the requirements of Article 4 that would call for that. Again, the only thing that will break up the massing of this development is the buffer yard. I think we want to be able to have this property sold, I have no objection, but let's do it reasonably.

Ashley Wiley, 12435 Treasure Cove, said I'd like to come to you tonight to tell you my last experience with Huntersville Police was positive. I know I have asked you for assistance in that matter and I wanted to let you know it was good. That is amazing to be able to stand up here and tell you it was good. I have good relationships there, I want to keep those relationships good, and thank you for your assistance. Also, the next thing that I would like to bring to your attention is CMS. Our schools, they need help. We were told that they were going to be completed a lot faster than 2028 for North Meck. We don't even have a start date yet for Huntersville Elementary and I don't know if you all have noticed but when it rains, it rains through the ceiling in Huntersville Elementary. Also, they're not running that weapons detection and violence system appropriately. Kids are figuring out the holes. I've told them where those holes are. They are not fixing it. They are not doing anything about it. If anything, they are making the problem worse. Drugs are getting in. It's bad. You are not getting told the full truth about how bad it really is. It is horrible there. We've already had quite a few kids overdose and CMS has still yet to even respond about that. Granted they got the Narcan, but still. The last incident at North Meck thankfully Huntersville intervened and did get the weapons but there's going to start being more of that. They are not doing it right, I have told the COO, I've told CMS Police Chief multiple times, Chief Graham I assure you has probably tried to tell them hey, what's going on here. And I don't know if you know this, but we can't see inside of CMS police's computer database. They can see in ours, but we can't see in theirs. That's concerning. There's a new lawsuit also that states that they were discouraging reporting sexual violence and assault. They are discouraging that, and I come to you tonight to hopefully to come together so that way we can get to the real root of this issue. We can figure it out and hopefully we can help. If they can't work together with us as a community then we need to show them how a community can work with them, but we need to do this for our kids. Our kids are our future and they need help.

AGENDA CHANGES

Commissioner Walsh made a motion to adopt the agenda.

Commissioner Hunt seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution – Main Street Landscaping Contract. Commissioner Rivers made a motion to adopt Resolution to accept the Main Street Landscaping Contract. Commissioner Bergsman seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution attached hereto as Exhibit No. 2.

Budget Amendment – Grant Funds from State. Commissioner Rivers made a motion to approve budget amendment appropriating grant funds from the State in the amount of \$500,000 to Contract Services to provide initial aesthetics, which includes a stone veneer wall, trees and shrubs, in and around the north and south roundabouts on Main Street. Commissioner Bergsman seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Budget Amendment – Fire Services. Commissioner Rivers made a motion to approve budget amendment appropriating Fire Services fund balance in the amount of \$59,875.40 to Fire Uniform Expense account to outfit nine new full-time firefighters. Commissioner Bergsman seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Budget Amendment – Insurance Proceeds. Commissioner Rivers made a motion to approve budget amendment appropriating Insurance proceeds - Parks & Recreation Revenue in the amount of \$1,203.12 to Contract Services and appropriate Insurance proceeds - Public Works Revenue in the amount of \$1,203.13 to Contract Services to repair a leak in the wall at the Seagle Street building. Commissioner Bergsman seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Property Tax Refund Report. Commissioner Rivers made a motion to approve property tax refund report from Mecklenburg County. Commissioner Bergsman seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Property Tax Refund Report attached hereto as Exhibit No. 3.

Public Comment and Public Hearing Policy Amendment. Commissioner Rivers made a motion to approve amendments to the Public Comment and Public Hearing Policy. Commissioner Bergsman seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Amended Public Comment and Public Hearing Policy attached hereto as Exhibit No. 4.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Street Name Change Petition. Mayor Clark called to order public hearing on Street Name Change Petition, University City Church Drive, a request by Workmanship LLC to rename all of University City Church Drive to Ambassador Christian Way, a length of 0.14 miles, beginning at Sam Furr Road and dead ending.

Patrick Patterson, Planner I, entered the Staff Report into the record. *Staff Report and Staff PowerPoint attached hereto as Exhibit No. 5.*

The applicant is looking to rename University City Church Drive to Ambassador Christian Way. The street is an access street to the new Ambassador Christian School campus. The street name change is to avoid confusion and assist travelers.

Planning staff recommends approval based on the petition meeting the criteria set for in §97.03 of the Code of Ordinances.

OTHER BUSINESS

Street Name Change Petition. Street Name Petition, University Church Drive, is a request by Workmanship LLC to rename all of University City Church Drive to Ambassador Christian Way, a length of 0.14 miles, beginning at Sam Furr Road and dead ending.

Commissioner Quarles made a motion to approve the Street Name Change Petition to change University City Church Drive to Ambassador Christian Way, a length of 0.14 miles beginning at Sam Furr Road and dead ending.

Commissioner Walsh seconded the motion.

Mayor Clark called for the vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Petition #R23-11 – Morningstar Storage. Petition #R23-11 is a request by Morningstar Storage, a request by Morningstar Properties to rezone +/- 3.934 acres located at 16230 and 16204 Old Statesville Road from Special Purpose and Highway Commercial to Special Purpose - Conditional District for an indoor storage facility.

Jesse James, Principal Planner, entered the Staff Report into the record. *Staff Report and Staff PowerPoint attached hereto as Exhibit No. 6.*

This is a conditional district rezoning for a rezoning from Special Purpose and Highway Commercial districts to Special Purpose – Conditional District. Some of the updates from the public hearing, during the second review of this plan the storm water BMP that you see on the grading plan was actually within the 66' proposed buffer. Per staff comments and Planning Board conditions, that BMP has now moved to underground detention in the parking lot. That allows for the full 66' buffer to have vegetation in it.

The second item updated is the applicant has agreed to solar panel incorporation and native plant incorporation into the site plan as conditions for approval.

The third item, on the public hearing there was a four specimen tree tree-save. Through review of the plans, the applicant has determined that the fourth tree, which is a 52" oak tree, will not be able to be saved which makes the tree-save for specimen trees meet the minimum of 30 percent, so three specimen trees out of ten will be saved per the plan.

As far as staff recommendations go, as far as Land Use Policies LU-5.1 and T-5.1 set forth in the 2040 Community Plan, staff believes that the applicants have shown that they do meet those items which are specific to site design and architectural standards of the building, however we believe that the envisioned uses set forth in the 2040 Plan, specifically LU-1 and 6.3, have not been obtained by the proposal. However, three of the four acres are currently Special Use district for zoning so the acquisition of the fourth acre to accommodate the buffer yard, staff believes it is appropriate for the rezoning, with the conditions that the proposal has for a 66' buffer. Through site design and staff reviewing of the

plans, we believe that the 66' buffer meets the intent, which is the amount of plantings that would have taken place in the 80' buffer can be met, and that any other minor staff comments through review.....we are on the third review cycle, so there are a couple of minor staff comments that still may need to be addressed.

From the Planning Board meeting, the Planning Board did recommend approval 8-1, with the condition that the BMP is moved out of the buffer area and put into the underground system of the parking lot and that any minor staff comments are corrected.

Commissioner Hunt said can you or Jackie talk about the tax revenue from sales tax and property tax?

Jackie Huffman, Deputy Town Manager, said I would say the property tax impacts would be the change in what the property is valued at today and what it would be valued at at full build-out. Our current tax rate is \$0.1760 per \$100 of assessed valuation, so that increased value is how the Town would benefit. Do recall that the tax bill is also going to have a county component on it as well. For purposes of sales tax, the most recent information that we have is that storage units are not subject to sales tax.

Commissioner Walsh made a motion to deny the Rezoning Application R23-11. In considering the proposed Rezoning Application R23-11, Morningstar Storage, the Town Board denies the application based on the plan being inconsistent with the envisioned uses set forth in the 2040 Huntersville Community Plan Sections LU-1 and LU-6.3. It is not reasonable and not in the public interest to approve the rezoning plan because this development would not have a large employment base or match the encouraged development pattern or small scale or neighborhood serving commercial uses.

Commissioner Quarles seconded the motion.

Commissioner Bergsman said I went back and forth on this one a lot. I went out to the site. I met with the current property owner, and I fully respect his rights as an individual to sell his property. For me this came down to mainly two things and that's the size of the building in that location on that lot and what was on the Staff Report that it's not consistent with the envisioned use. I do support the denial, but I just wanted to kind of explain where I was at.

Commissioner Walsh said in and of itself it's probably not a bad plan, but I don't think we need any more storage units along Old Statesville Road. It's a very visible corner and I think something like a restaurant, retail, or some other commercial use that would more broadly benefit the surrounding communities would be in order. I just think we could do better on that corner.

Mayor Clark called for the vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Petition #R23-10, Commercial Communication Tower. Petition #R23-10, Commercial Communication Tower, is a request by Berkley Group III, LLC to rezone +/-6.00 acres located at 15105 Holbrooks Road from Transitional Residential and Neighborhood Residential District to Special Purpose - Conditional District.

Nathan Farber, Planner II, entered the Staff Report into the record. *Staff Report and Staff PowerPoint attached hereto as Exhibit No. 7.*

The applicant Berkley Group and Property Owner Greenway Recycling are proposing to rezone 6 acres of TR and NR to Special Purpose with conditions for a commercial communication tower. The Vermillion subdivision is located to the north of the site, the landfill to the east and south, and vacant and residential properties to the west. I do want to point out a correction on the Staff Report. The applicants had made a change to their tree save – 100 of the 120 specimen trees will be saved, which is 83 percent, and the district requires a 30 percent specimen tree save.

The Planning Board met on January 23 and recommended approval with a vote of 9-0. Staff recommends approval because it is considered a public utility that helps communication coverage for both the general population and emergency services. We also recommend that a condition be added that all outstanding minor staff comments are addressed.

Commissioner Bergsman made a motion to approve Petition R23-10 to rezone approximately 6 acres for a commercial communications tower. In considering the proposed rezoning petition the Town Board recommends approval based on the petition being consistent with the Huntersville 2040 Community Plan Policies PS-1, LU-1 and the Holbrooks Road Corridor Plan. It is reasonable and in the public interest to approve the rezoning petition because it is consistent with the envisioned use and development pattern set forth in the 2040 Community Plan, Holbrooks Road Corridor Plan and in keeping with the spirit of the ordinance. All outstanding planning staff comments shall be addressed by the applicant.

Commissioner Hunt seconded the motion.

Mayor Clark called for the vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Petition #TA23-06. Petition #TA23-06 is a request by the Huntersville Planning Department to amend the Zoning Ordinance to comply with House Bill 488.

Nathan Farber, Planner II, entered to the Staff Report into the record. *Staff Report and Staff PowerPoint attached hereto as Exhibit No. 8.*

Petition TA23-06 is a text amendment to comply with House Bill 488 regarding changes to the NC Residential Code, alternative pavement design standards within developments, and updates the increased threshold for requiring a GC license for construction work.

On October 6, 2023, the Huntersville Ordinances Advisory Board recommended approval by a vote of 4-2-1 with a recommendation that staff further review language related to items listed that generally require a building permit. Staff did look into this further and determined that the original language was sufficient.

The Planning Board met on January 23, 2024 and made a motion to recommend approval with a revision to Section 3.1 and that motion was approved. Planning staff recommends the original language that staff presented.

Planning staff recommends approval based on consistency with all policies of the Huntersville 2040 Community Plan and compliance with state statutes.

Commissioner Hunt made a motion to adopt TA23-06 as drafted by staff to comply with House Bill 488. The proposed amendment is consistent with the policies of the 2040 Community Plan and state statutes.

Commissioner Dumas seconded the motion.

Mayor Clark called for the vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Petition #TA23-07. Petition #TA23-07 is a request by the Huntersville Planning Department to amend the Zoning Ordinance, Article 12, Section 12.2.1 “Interconnected” to clean up definition.

Patrick Patterson, Planner I, entered the Staff Report into the record. *Staff Report and Staff PowerPoint attached hereto as Exhibit No. 9.*

In the previous Zoning Ordinance we had several images showing different types of street networks. In 2018 those images were removed with the adoption of the Engineering Standards and Procedures Manual which replaced these images. The proposed ordinance change is to remove irrelevant text from Article 12 Definition of Interconnected that refers to those images.

Commissioner Rivers made a motion to approve TA23-07, a request by Planning Staff to update Article 12 of the Zoning Ordinance. In considering the proposed text amendment, the text amendment will provide clarification to the language of the Zoning Ordinance and is consistent with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan policies.

Commissioner Walsh seconded the motion.

Mayor Clark called for the vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Huntersville Ordinances Advisory Board Appointment. Consider appointing one member to the Huntersville Ordinances Advisory Board, due to one expiring term, from five applicants.

1. Three-year term, expiring 2/28/2027 (Kathy Jones has served one term and is eligible, and has applied, for another term)

Mayor Clark called for nominations.

Commissioner Bergsman nominated Kathy Jones.

Commissioner Quarles nominated Kathy Jones.

Commissioner Hunt nominated Kathy Jones.

Commissioner Dumas nominated Kathy Jones.

Commissioner Walsh nominated Kathy Jones.

Commissioner Rivers nominated Kathy Jones.

Commissioner Dumas made a motion to reappoint Kathy Jones to the Huntersville Ordinances Advisory Board.

Commissioner Bergsman seconded the motion.

Mayor Clark called for the vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution – Approving Installment Financing. Pattie McGinnis, Finance Director, said what you have before you is the final Resolution of the terms of the limited obligation bonds. This document authorizes the staff to execute the document. The terms will be 20 years and the net proceeds will be \$30 million. The interest rate will be set by the LGC on March 6.

Commissioner Hunt made a motion to adopt the final Resolution that authorizes the Limited Obligation Bonds statement and executes the Debt Contract and the Deed of Trust for the new town hall.

Commissioner Quarles seconded the motion.

Commissioner Walsh said this evening there will be two votes solidifying the building of a new town hall. While there is no dispute that we need a new building, I will not be supporting it. As I said during the last meeting, I'm not opposed to a new town hall. This one is just too expensive. About three years ago the town board that I was a part of then sat out to look at options for a new town hall. Without going into all the details, there was a public engagement process and we reviewed multiple options. Ultimately a \$14 million solution that would have provided immediate and long-term needs was agreed upon. Funding for this option was discussed and considered. We were going to sell three existing Town properties including the current town hall for about \$5 million. That would leave us with about \$9 million to finance. For some inexplicable reason the last town board decided to scrap that plan and move to build their \$30 million Taj Matownhall. On the evening of September 6, 2022, a commissioner made a motion "to approve and fund Option 4B." While the build directive to staff was clear, there was no explanation on how to fund it. Tonight, this Board bears the burden of directing staff to borrow \$32 million to fund a new town hall building. During that same year when the previous board created this \$32 million expense, they cut the tax rate. That's right, they created that while cutting the tax rate. Let me be clear tonight that is going to be paid for by the taxpayers of Huntersville. There will be no choice but to raise taxes in the budget this spring to pay for our new \$32 million town hall building.

Commissioner Dumas said I just want to revisit the numbers as I understand them - \$14 million or \$16 million I've heard in regards to the first town hall plan. And then an estimate today if we were to go back to that plan is \$22 million, with a delay of potentially two years before we break ground and an unknown of whether that \$22 million could potentially could go up. The original plan wasn't a bad plan. I would have been in favor of it back then, but we are where we are at today. We have an opportunity to have a town hall that suits all of our needs for a long time and yes, it is expensive. We are where we're at. We're in a tough situation. I probably would have preferred the last design and expense, but I will be voting in favor of this today as it is \$2 million already spent and multiple hours, so many hours spent on this.....moving forward three years of delay with constant increase in expense, I will be in favor of this.

Commissioner Hunt said I heard Commissioner Walsh say that some people wouldn't be questioning that we need a new town hall, but I have heard people question that, so I wanted to address that briefly. I'd encourage anyone who thinks we don't need a town hall to come take a tour of this space. It's 8,000 sq. ft. Folks who question whether we need 54,000 sq. ft. in the age of remote work should know that only a tiny fraction of employees work remotely. Town employees make Huntersville run and without their dedication and professionalism nothing would get done. We need to treat them like professionals and

give them and future employees an appropriate place to work that doesn't shuffle them around from cubicle to cubicle like furniture. If someone is still skeptical about the need for a new town hall, I would encourage them to come to a board meeting when a topic of interest is on the agenda and see that residents are sitting in the lobby because there isn't enough space. If we want people to be involved and engaged in this civic process and the current atmosphere is not conducive to that, a new town hall is essential and the longer we wait to move forward, the more dire the situation becomes. If we continue to delay action, we will need to make emergency accommodations costing everyone more time and money. We have heard that people will only invest in our downtown once the town hall issue is settled. The plan to build in town center is predicated on hypotheticals that cost more time and money due to the unknown. However, the plan before us is fully flushed out and has no unknown variables. A vote to delay and go back to the previous plan which is no longer an option but if we did, that would just hinder our progress. Previous boards have delayed progress enough and I am unwilling to do that. I want to see our downtown thrive, so I support moving forward with the current plan.

Commissioner Quarles said it was said from the dais that the previous two boards failed to move forward and we also heard the same during public comments. We do have to make tough decisions and taxes should have been raised sometime ago. This decision should have been completed sometime ago. We need to move forward with a 50-year plan. This new town hall will have a 50-year lifespan. I don't think any of us will be here in the next 50 years. I think it's being good stewards if we move forward and not prolong this and pass it on to further boards in the future, so I will be making a tough decision this evening and supporting this.

Commissioner Bergsman said for me it's about moving forward. I'm not here to criticize or get in a big debate about what previous boards have done. Those decisions have been made and I personally feel that it's best for our community to continue to move forward with this particular decision, so as I've said at our past meetings and tonight, I support that. I don't remember who was at our planning retreat or our last meeting, but our Town Manager had mentioned that we're out of space for staff. And you came up with one idea that maybe we have room for someone that could fit out in the lobby off to the right. So just as you are leaving tonight, I want you to take a look at that space. Talking about we don't have enough room for our residents to come and sit in at meetings, we also don't have enough space to add to our staff as our community continues to grow.

Commissioner Rivers said as a native here growing up I remember this space being our local post office and it was already a small spot then where people could not even park. There was not available parking spots. When this town hall was created, it was created for that time. But what we have to look at is the now and the need for the now. I am in favor of this project. I think it is important. I think that we need to have our staff together and like many of my colleagues have said coming into our meetings not having enough space, people sitting outside, that's not good customer service for our constituents and for our residents, so I am in favor of this project.

Commissioner Hunt made a motion to adopt the final Resolution that authorizes the Limited Obligation Bonds statement and executes the Debt Contract and the Deed of Trust for the new town hall.

Commissioner Quarles seconded the motion.

Mayor Clark called for the vote.

Motion carried 5 to 1, with Commissioner Walsh opposed.

Resolution attached hereto as Exhibit No. 10.

New Town Hall – Construction Contract. Emily Sloop, Town Attorney, said you have in your agenda package a construction contract that incorporates the previously approved GMP for the project.

Commissioner Quarles made a motion to approve the construction contract for the new town hall project with Edifice LLC.

Commissioner Rivers seconded the motion.

Mayor Clark called for the vote.

Motion carried 5 to 1, with Commissioner Walsh opposed.

Contract attached hereto as Exhibit No. 11.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Commissioner Bergsman provided update from Visit Lake Norman.

Commissioner Quarles reminded everyone that primary early voting has started and ends on March 2.

Commissioner Rivers announced the Pottstown Heritage Group will host their first annual fundraising event – Flannel and Fun Chili Cook-off at 760 Craftworks on February 24.

In honor of Black History Month I wanted to leave everyone with this thought by the great Desmond Tutu – “My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together.” How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity. We all live with objective of being happy, our lives are all different and yet the same. Sticks in a bundle are unbreakable.

There being no further business, Commissioner Dumas made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Bergsman seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved this the 4th day of March, 2024.