

Minutes for Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting
Pikeville Town Hall
6:00 pm, Monday, Jun 10, 2024

Present: Mayor Johnston, Commissioner West, Commissioner Thomas, Commissioner Langston

Absent: Vacant Seats (2)

Staff Present: Tim Biggerstaff, Town Manager, Harry Lorello, Town Attorney, Rodney Jarman, Police Chief, Wendy Holland, Town Clerk

Mayor Johnston called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Mayor Johnston gave the invocation.

Mayor Johnston led all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Adoption:

Commissioner Langston made a motion to adopt the agenda adding Ricardo Baron with Praise Army to presentations. Commissioner West seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Approval of Minutes:

Mayor Johnston requested a motion to approve the regular session minutes for May 13, 2024, and special meeting minutes for May 30, 2024. Commissioner West made a motion to approve the regular session minutes for May 13, 2024, and special meeting minutes for May 30, 2024., Commissioner Langston seconded. Motion carried. 3-0.

Presentations:

A. MAPS Group- Human Resource Consulting

Rebecca "Becky" Veazy, president of the Management and Personnel Services Group (MAPS) The MAPS group will review job descriptions classification and perform a pay study. Recommendations will be made to the town based on the study. The town's personnel policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated.

B. Chapter 160D Presentation – ECC

Carlton Gideon, Senior Community Planner of Eastern Carolina Council (ECC) Handles regionalization economic development and planning. Mr. Gideon presented recommendations on changes to the town's land use ordinances. The town was advised to adopt a land use plan to maintain zoning.

C. Praise Army – Non-Profit Organization

Ricardo Baron, President of Praise Army requested granting of the Pikeville Library, 106 W. Main Street to be donated to his organization. Praise Army is a

nonprofit organization which provides resources to the residents of Pikeville and neighboring towns.

D. FY24-25 Budget Ordinance Presentation

Tim Biggerstaff, Town Manager, the proposed 24/25 town budget was presented in the amount of \$2,735,903. The General Fund totals \$794,100. The town will absorb inflationary increases from insurance premiums, purchase of water, fuel, supplies, and other critical materials. Property tax remains unchanged. Sales tax provides an estimated \$235,000, same as fiscal year 2024. Water rates will not be increased although the supplier of water has increased their rates 5%. The town's electricity supplier has raised wholesale rates and will have another increase in the fall. The town will increase electrical rates 7.5% effective July 1, 2024. Employees will receive a 4% increase and a New Public Works Director and part-time public works staff member is included in proposed budget.

A meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 27, 2024, to vote on the proposed budget.

Old Business:

A. Vote to Change the Form of Government

Garrett Johnston, Mayor stated changing the form of government has been considered, talked about, looked into, developed and researched for months. The board has adequate information to make an informed decision.

Commissioner West made a motion to change the form of government to mayor-council. Commissioner Langston seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Thomas made a motion to change the form of government to mayor-council form effective July 1, 2024. Commissioner West seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

New Business: None

Administrative Reports:

Tim Biggerstaff, Town Manger

- Trello Board Notable Updates
 - Completed
 - Library Assessment Complete
Appraisal Market Value \$165K
Monthly Lease Value \$1203.00 per month
 - Hired New Public Works Staff
Dylan Champion

On Hold

- Many of the On Hold items have been moved back to In Progress.
Jeremy to update accordingly.

In Progress

- Forming a Steering Committee for Park Masterplan
Meeting to be held June 18, 2024
- Museum Renovation – June 15th – Ceiling and cleanout scheduled, AK Grading and Demolition have been contacted to schedule abatement thereafter. Waiting to hear a specific date.
- Website to go live by Monday, June 10th. Awaiting company to reroute. Will need more continuous updating with photos and new valuable information but framework of the site is much better and easy to work with.

Ready to Start

- Working with Jimmy Butler of Southern Power to assist in getting a quote for replacing electric poles to help with our grant application

Ideas – To be discussed and placed

- Around Town Updates
 - Local Nonprofit's proposal for library (included in meeting agenda)
 - Wendy and I attended a day long Financial Management class last week and received our Financial Management Certificates from the NCLM.
 - A renovated house on Washington St that had sat empty for years went on the market this week and the new owners of the property of 109 SE Railroad Street are working hard to renovate that house and get it on the market asap.

Wendy Holland: Finance

Ryan Marlar will be in the office on June 11, 2024, to gather information for the 22/23 audit. A budget amendment was presented in the Water/Sewer Fund increasing sewer operations contractual services and decreasing sewer maintenance & repair infrastructure \$5,800.00.

Commissioner Thomas made a motion to approve the budget amendment. Commissioner West seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Police Report: Chief Rodney Jarman: See Attached

Jeremy King- Public Works Director

Jeremy King, Public Works Director, is looking forward to upcoming challenges with his position. Mr. King located a new 2023 F-600 dump truck fully loaded, full warranty and no miles. A \$300 deposit has been put down on the truck and the truck will be purchased in the 24/25 budget year. Mr. King is compiling an inventory list which he plans to be completed by the July meeting and is working with

Consolidated Pipe to bring in inventory at no expense. Consolidated Pipe will take a monthly inventory and bill accordingly. Tree trimming to prevent electrical outages is a major issue and plans are being made to address the issue.

Committee Reports: None

Public Comments:

Jerry Bailey- 419 Washington Street, Pikeville NC

Mr. Bailey spoke with the NCLGC and stated that they strongly recommend not changing the form of government. As for Pikeville Improvements, Mr. Bailey mentioned elected officials need to take care of their own yards before complaining about others.

Katie Chegwiddden-307 W. Ham St, Pikeville NC

Katie Chegwiddden came tonight hoping for a different situation but was not surprised by the outcome. She would like to know the thought process of the commissioners. Mrs. Chegwiddden said the State came in and overhauled Pikeville and the town got a fresh clean slate. Now the commissioners have ruined it by going back to the previous form of government. She said it's not just commissioners but the citizens of Pikeville that must live with decisions made by the board. You think you are higher than everyone because you're a commissioner of a town with 800 people, a mayor of a town of 800 people. She said she had lived in Pikeville her whole life and had never been so disgusted by this town. She loves to work on committees and loves to see town employees cutting grass and doing what they are supposed to be doing. She said they do a great job, and the police officers are amazing, but the board was a whole different story. She said every time she thinks the board is going to prove her wrong, they just prove her right.

Joanna Johnston -304 NE Railroad St, Pikeville, NC

Mrs. Johnston said she was fine with the change of government. The displeasure of an abstract form of government does not make any sense. Forms are forms and people are what operate the forms. Elected officials are the ones that make or break a form. Most people in this town are probably unsure of what the difference is between a manager form of government and a mayor-council form of government. It has a lot to do with job performance and whether you are doing your job and can make hard decisions. She is not upset with changing the form of government but just wants everyone to do their job. She feels there is no reason to be upset about the change. She said the Local Government Commission works with towns under administrator and manager forms of government. There can be problems with both forms of government. The form is not the make or break but it's the people in those positions.

Darryl Johnston-105 W. Church St, Pikeville, NC

Mr. Johnston agreed the form of government does not make a difference it's the people. He addressed the board and said you are not the last commissioner or mayor that's going to be on this board. That's the reason they changed the form of government. You know the mess the town had before, and you know how it's been for the last two years since

we were taken over and changed to a manger form of government. You see the difference.

Mr. Robert Hooks has been deceased since March and town has not made a motion to replace Mr. Hooks. Mr. Johnston feels there should have been a special election this November to replace Mr. Hooks. The board wants to appoint and pick the replacements for the open seats. Another commissioner has resigned as of today. This is a dictatorship from day one. They want to appoint who they want to appoint and want on the board who they want on the board so they will have “yes” men and get to do what they want to do. Dissent in government is necessary to have good government. Everyone voting the same way will get you in trouble.

Lyman Galloway- 303 W Main St, Pikeville, NC

Mr. Galloway was a commissioner for 25 years. He stated he knew who he worked for when he was on board, it was the people of Pikeville. A replacement for Mr. Roberts' seat should have taken place in 7-10 days. There were candidates that were previously voted for.

Mary Bailey – 419 Washington St, Pikeville, NC

Mrs. Bailey is concerned that there are only three people making decisions for the Town of Pikeville and out of the three only two were elected. She questioned why they would change the form of government when the current form is working. There are two vacant seats on the board and one seat has been vacant since March 11, 2024. No mention has been made to fill the vacant seats, but the decision has been made to change the form of government. Mrs. Bailey does not understand how only three can make a decision.

Garrett Johnston, confirmed with Harry Lorello, Town Attorney there is another vacant seat. Anyone who wants to run can register with the town hall and come to a special meeting to make their case why they want the seat.

Closed Session:

Commissioner Thomas made a motion to go into closed session. Commissioner Langston seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioners Comments: None

Adjournment:

Commissioner Thomas made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner West seconded. Motion carried 3-0.



David M. Thomas, Mayor Pro-Tem



Wendy Holland, Town Clerk