

MINUTES
ARCHER LODGE SPECIAL MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2010
ARCHER LODGE COMMUNITY CENTER

PRESENT: Mike Gordon, Mayor; Carlton Vinson, Mayor Pro Tem; Jeff Barnes, Councilman; Clyde Castleberry, Councilman; Matt Mulhollem, Councilman; John Perry, Councilman

ALSO PRESENT: David Mills, Town Attorney and Lisa Barnes, Acting Clerk. Approximately 35 citizens were in attendance and one news reporter.

ITEM 1 Call to Order

At 7:07 p.m., Mayor Gordon called the meeting to order. Councilman Mulhollem led us in prayer.

ITEM 2 Action Agenda

(2a.) No adjustments were made to the agenda.

ITEM 3 Public Hearing – Planning Board

Mayor Gordon opened the public hearing regarding the creation and appointment of a planning board. The Town allotted 30-45 minutes for public comment. A number of people spoke for the purpose of expressing their desire to serve on the planning board and a sign-up sheet for those that spoke at the public hearing regarding the Planning Board is included in Minute Book. Mayor Gordon closed the public hearing.

ITEM 4 Action Item – Planning Board

Mayor Gordon said that at this time we will entertain a motion to consider and take action on the creation and appointment of a planning board at a later date. Motion was so moved by Councilman Barnes and it was second by Councilman Castleberry and approved by all with a show of hands.

ITEM 5 Public Hearing – Budget Ordinance

After a copy of a proposed budget was circulated to all present, Mayor Gordon opened the public hearing. The Town allotted 30-45 minutes for public comment period. Signup sheets for those that spoke at the public hearing on the Budget Ordinance are included in Minute Book. Several citizens posed questions regarding the services to be provided by the Town. Mayor Gordon closed the public hearing.

ITEM 6 Action Item – Budget Ordinance

Councilman Vinson made a motion that the Board consider the adoption of the budget after the required waiting period has expired either at the next regular meeting beyond Monday night or at a special called meeting. Councilman Perry seconded and everyone approved with a show of hands. Castleberry offered an amendment to the motion that we vote on the budget at our next regular meeting in February. Mayor said that there was a motion on the floor that we consider and vote on the adoption of the budget at the regular scheduled meeting in February instead of a special called meeting. Second by Barnes, and approved by all. The date is February 8.

ITEM 7 Adjournment

Mayor Pro Tem Vinson made the motion that the meeting adjourn at 8:03 p.m. and was second by Councilman Barnes and approved by all.

Mike Gordon, Mayor

Submitted by: Lisa Barnes, acting clerk

PUBLIC COMMENTS on Planning Board:

Susan Locklear introduced herself. She had an interest in the Planning Board and submitted an application. Currently works for the City of Raleigh in the Planning Department and her specialty is in storm water. She is a licensed Professional Engineer in North Carolina and has a certified flood plain manager certification.

Eddie Boyce introduced himself. He is an applicant for the Planning Board. He resides in the Wyndfall Subdivision and has lived here since 2004. He knows that this is a farming community first and he believes in controlled growth. He has also served on the Johnston County Criminal Judiciary Partnership Advisory Board since 2004 and the Johnston County Justice Board for 3 years and also a teacher and activist member for them as well.

Jamie Cousins introduced herself as an applicant for the Planning Board. Thanked us for the opportunity and to let us know that she is interested in representing the community. She works in public health for the Raleigh Division of Public Health but has an interest in planning but specifically in health and health related issues and wants to help preserve our community.

Wade Bevier, an applicant for the planning board. He is interested in helping with the process. His background is in construction industry and working with construction documentation for 10 years in the triangle and has an interest in seeing what kind of growth and making sure we give due consideration to the process.

Mark Wilson, an applicant for the planning board. Retired military after 26 years in the Air Force as an air traffic controller and also retired from the Federal Aviation Administration Air Traffic Control. He moved into Archer's Cove in 2005. Background experiences with a national union as a president of national association of government representing controllers in the federal aviation administration for 10 years prior to his retirement. He is a relocated person into Archer Lodge and looks forward to possibly serving the citizens of Archer Lodge.

Dan Wall, an applicant for the planning board. He is retired from the navy. He was on the prison advisory board and fire board in Oregon. His personal planning experience is very personal when you have to deal with the federal government and the state the lessons become very hard. He has major experience in this area.

PUBLIC HEARING – Budget Ordinance

Mike Johnson – He lives in Creekside Subdivision and has resided there since 2006. He did vote for Archer Lodge to become a town just so you can control your own destiny. Given the fact that we do have a budget now on paper, he was shocked that we do not have a website so we could see before this meeting. Understands that we are suppose to be getting taxed but to see on paper and compare it to the newspapers regarding town secretary at \$55,000 and town computer system at \$18,000 per the News & Observer. He would like some clarification for these, given the fact that we do not have a town hall. Are we going to build a town hall, where will this computer system be housed. These are valid questions and no place to get answers unless we come to this public hearing and get a piece of paper that states that we have \$208,638.00 total budget.

Mayor Gordon told Mr. Johnson that these were all good questions and some we do not have answers to yet. He told him that the budget will not be adopted tonight. This is just a public hearing to give the citizens time to see it. We do have a website at www.townofarcherlodge.com. Mr. Johnson said he pulled up the website and this meeting wasn't even listed. Mayor Gordon said it is a brand new site. Our webmaster is a volunteer. We are a work in progress and we will have these items on it and up and running in near future. The Clerk asked Mayor to make sure he is looking at the right website because the meeting was on the town site. Mayor asked him to make sure he was not looking at the community website. Mr. Johnson said that was the only one he was aware of. Mayor said we would be in the process of getting signage and to bear with us. Mayor Pro Tem Vinson addressed the budget ordinance was based on a more detailed budget and would be available through the Clerk and any of us that have it. We are suppose to have an opportunity for people to look at. The problem is we don't have an office yet so it is difficult to have it available but we do have a town website and will find contact info there and the Clerk will have copy of more detailed budget and if you have questions you can contact us. Some of the things in the budget, there will not be specific answers for. I do want to address one thing regarding the \$55,000 to a town clerk. We never said we were going to pay a clerk \$55,000. There is a difference between a salary and a salary with benefits package. You might pay that person a salary of \$35-40,000, but you have to figure social security tax, insurance and other benefits. When you see the numbers, that is not necessarily the salary we are paying, but you have to budget for the benefits. With that being said, the town clerk position is probably the one any only position we will pay for at least the next year with a full time benefit. That person will assume the majority of the workload for this town. So finding the right person is important. Please understand that we all pay taxes and we want to have a budget in mind that is workable for the town and we don't want to raise taxes, but what we do want is to make sure we have the right people in place. So if you do have more questions, please do not hesitate to call us. Would rather people ask the questions than to assume. Ask the questions, and we will be glad to give you the answers because there is a justification for everything that we have done. With this group of people up here, I can make two promises—one, they will make mistakes. We are a brand new town and there is no way to do everything right. But promise number

two is, you have never seen a group of people that will work this hard for you to do things right so know that this group of people will do. So know this going forward. I know that people don't trust the government sometimes and hope that this doesn't apply to this community. Understand that we are learning. We had some ideas and now we are going through the process. Mayor Gordon said that any of you can email the webmaster and that will be forwarded to us. Just know that we are doing the best we can. We do have limitations because we do not have an office, but we are working on that.

Eric Fisher in Creekside. Just first time looking at cover for the budget. Please explain. He was aware of the 8 cents tax, but seeing the line talking about a collections for motor vehicles, etc. personal property. Is there any amount of taxation that Johnston County has been collecting which will be rerouted to AL in other words, is it what we have been paying to Johnston County plus what we will pay to AL entirely. Is there some offset? Mayor Pro Tem Vinson said the only offset per say would be the fire tax which will eventually move to Archer Lodges' side of the list. Currently you are paying a fire tax of 7 cents to the county our goal is to get that billed through the town for people living in the town. The reason for doing that is by billing that tax through the town we will qualify for more state shared revenues which we are not getting now. The county will still bill it as the county will be for town taxes, but we want to move from their category to our category. What you pay to the county would be reduced by 7 cents and added to our category side of the column, but that doubles the amount of state shared revenue probably by the amount of \$175,000 that the town would have to work with. So it would double what we get and what we have to use. But in terms of reduction of county services, no not really not within that 8 cents. Mr Fisher asked would motor vehicle tax have an additional cost? The Motor Vehicle tax that you pay to the county, every town bills for motor vehicle tax like they do for property tax. It is part of the ad valorem. Mr. Fisher said is this an additional cost above of what has been collected to date or is it being rerouted to the township. Mr. Vinson said no it is an additional tax the 8 cents on real property, on personal property and motor vehicles and additional 8 cents across the board. Above what we are paying now, Mr. Fisher said.

Suzanne Morse does not live here. She lives in Clayton and is considering moving here. The police protection—do we really need it, can't the Johnston County Sheriff's office provide it or State Patrol. It is a small community and there is not much crime. Vinson said we agree. She thought that might be a money saving and Vinson said that is why you see a \$0 there right now. How many citizens are there—approximately 3,000. We will know more in a year. Fill out your survey's please. Gordon said we do have good police protection through the Sheriff's department and Morse said they are excellent. Yes patrol is out here in full force. Morse is surprised. Not all towns had their police department, but if they did they might have 4-6 but you did have the County Sheriff and State Police. But we seem to have more crime—not as much as Clayton has but she is concerned that we do not want to get ahead of yourself with the budget business. Vinson said police protection can be one of the most expensive things you can put into a budget it can double a town's budget our contention has always been this is that if we had two dedicated deputies from the sheriff's department before we became

a town, simply because we become a town, we do not automatically get more crime and need more protection. The Sheriff's department agreed with us for some period of time we will keep the same level of protection at no additional cost to us that doesn't necessarily please the other towns in Johnston County we would be the only town that has a contract with the sheriff's department at this time and hopefully will have a long term contract to provide this protection even if at a minimal cost at some time. It is traditional for most new towns at some time in their development to add perhaps an additional deputy. If indeed that is what we need to do, is to provide a minimal amount of added protection, an assigned deputy to this town that will be here full time. Ms. Morse said and this may not have anything to do with it, she is involved with the Harbor program for domestic violence and sexual assault so therefore, I am in court a lot. And also a student at the community college and sees so many police officers just standing around at the college! At least six. To me that doesn't not make sense and that is a waste of money and that money could be used somewhere else. But I understand they have to be careful of weapons, but that's a lot of police officers. So each town, like Clayton, the sheriff's department patrols there and then Clayton pays them, is that right? Vinson said the sheriff's department doesn't specifically patrol within other towns, they serve more as a backup force in other towns. They still serve warrants within town limits but in terms of specific patrolling and police protection, they do not do.

Terry O'Rourke had a follow-up question on police protection. Agrees with our approach for reasons of cost and tax increases, but the contract as we describe, under what circumstances would it or could it be revoked, renewed, etc. because it sounds to me like we would be certainly want to maintain the protection provided by the county but would it be their decision only and if so under what circumstances would they be able to void the contract and then what would our options be at that point for us for police protection. Vinson said the agreements that he has seen with other counties and other new municipalities the county police departments were for basically a year at the time once right now we have a two year agreement but we do not have an official contract, we have an agreement that the ALMEC signed with the sheriff's department, but we will put that into a contract form as soon as possible that is for two years. During that second year, we will be analyzing what our needs will be if things have changed and at the time enter into another agreement. Probably for a year at the time as it goes forward. The new town of Eastover and Mills River in the mountains those towns have one additional assigned deputy. What essentially what it costs the town at that point is a car and salary of that one deputy and other expenses but that one deputy is assigned to that town. They write an article for the town newsletter, they are the representative of the sheriff's department in that town. So those costs across the board seem to run around \$70-75,000 a year, so it's not a tremendous amount and that is essentially what we would like to build towards as we move forward but for the time being we do not need anything. Mulhollem said we are not trying to reinvent the wheel and build police departments and hire police forces and pay benefits and insurances, we are trying to keep as simple and low costs as possible. O'Rourke said, I'm glad to hear that, he comes from a very high cost and high tax state and that is one of the reasons he was very attracted to this area. We had local police, county, state police and it seems too much for the costs there as you describe. Mulhollem said, quite frankly as we were

researching this from the process of incorporation had that not been an opportunity to contract with the sheriff's department we would have most likely not considered police protection as one of the four services we would be providing or required to provide. Because simply building a police department is too expensive. Castleberry said that we talked with several towns and some of them that started their own police departments and those towns had to every year or so keep upping their taxes because the insurance for police department is ridiculous so all this works into that salary.