

TOWN OF SILER CITY

The Siler City Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on **Monday, October 4, 2021**, at 6:30pm in Multipurpose at the Wrenn Memorial Library with Mayor Pro Tem Bray presiding. Commissioner Siler gave the invocation with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance following. Commissioner Boone recited the Town of Siler City Mission Statement and Mayor Pro Tem Bray recited the Town of Siler City Vision Statement.

ELECTED TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT: Cindy Bray, Norma Boone, Curtis Brown, Lewis Fadely, Thomas "Chip" Price, and Tony Siler

ELECTED TOWN OFFICIALS ABSENT: Bill Haiges

TOWN STAFF PRESENT: Town Manager Roy Lynch, Planning Director Jack Meadows, Police Chief Mike Wagner, Parks and Recreation Director Jack Clelland, and Town Clerk Jenifer Johnson, Zoom: Town Attorney William Morgan

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Commissioner Fadely, seconded by Commissioner Price, and unanimously approved.

CONSENT

A motion to approve the consent agenda which includes the September 20, 2021, Minutes (Incorporation by reference as if fully set forth herein Schedule A), September 27, 2021, Minutes (Incorporation by reference as if fully set forth herein Schedule B), Amendment to Contract To Audit Account – Dixon Hughes Goodman (Incorporation by reference as if fully set forth herein Schedule C) was made by Commissioner Fadely, seconded by Commissioner Siler, and unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Terry Dorsey, 578 Wellawary Lane, Siler City, NC 27344

For the last ten years, my wife and I have been addressing animal issues here in Siler City. For the last twenty years we have been addressing issues in Chatham County. I'm here to respectfully ask you to ask animal services of Chatham County to address the stray population in Siler City. There are several cats behind Walmart and in the woods next to Walmart. A little background, fifteen years ago I started the humane society called guardians of angels and we helped with an effort to have the county to build a new adoption center for cats and dogs, which they did. In the last few years animal control has spent somewhere in the range of seven million dollars, they have a 1.2-million-dollar operating budget. They have four field officers and eight and nine support staff at the new adoption center. I encourage you to go see it, it's well done. Hats off to the commissioners that stepped up. Several republicans and democrats saw the need for that. The issue for stray is personal for me because I'm in Siler a lot and I see stray dogs and I am the guy for the last ten years that has trapped and fixed many of the cats near the Walmart, that's ok I enjoyed doing it. It was part of my mission as a pastor and I'm getting older and I'm running out of funds and energy that went to that. It is the mandate of animal services to trap stray animals. We want to make sure we keep disease under control. There was recently an outbreak of parvo among stray cats in Guilford County. Where there's disease in one county, there's going to be disease in another county. I spoke with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and the state's vet office, and make sure I was not making this up, but it is expected that animal services in every county does trap stray cats. If they get them young enough, they can be socialized and adopted and that would be my first choice, but not every stray animal can be adopted.

Prepared by Jenifer K Johnson, Town Clerk

Town Clerk called time on the public comment. Mayor Pro Tem Bray told Dorsey that he could have three more minutes.

Dorsey continued: It is the responsibility of animal services to do this and they're not going to do it unless you make them. We want to help Siler City, we want to stay here, we moved here from Pittsboro, and we live on the Rocky River, we love that. We are thinking about leaving that behind to the county because we don't have kids. But in terms of dynamic partnerships and a safe community, it is safer for everyone if there's not a lot of stray cats running around and it's better for the animal because a lot of those cats die of starvation or dehydration. Cats breed every two months, and they begin to breed around six months of age and they will breed with their own litters. I've been behind Walmart in the last week and I've spotted about six and for every six you see there is one that you don't see. I've contacted animal services and I've asked them to help, and they suffer from a case of the jumpies, whatever jumps in front of them first is what they address, and they were going to meet me out there four times and cancelled all four times. I feel like I have done what I can do and I'm hoping you as our representatives will have conversation with, I know Sheriff Mike, he's a great guy and a good leader, his heart is in the right place. For twenty years they've been saying they didn't have the staff and didn't have a facility and now they have both. Let's nudge them to start addressing and be proactive in terms of the stray population.

Commissioner Price stated that the Assistant County Manager Bryan Thompson was in the audience and asked him to report this back to the county.

OLD BUSINESS

Chatham 250 Grand Finale Event

Lynch stated that over the past year, we have been celebrating Chatham County's 250th anniversary. A committee called Chatham 250 was created with the following guiding values: equitable engagement, community centered, culturally responsive, authentic celebration and preservation, and transparency with Dr. Carl E. Thompson, Sr., Senior Pastor at Word of Life Christian Outreach Center and former Chatham County Commissioner; Renee Paschal, retired Chatham County Manager, local government budgeting consultant and Chatham County Council on Aging Board Member; and Lendy Carias, Chatham County Schools Teaching Assistant as Chatham 250 co-chairs. (Incorporation by reference as if fully set forth herein Schedule D)

Lynch stated that sub-committees were formed including Creative Arts, Growth and Change, Agriculture, Diversity and Community, and Natural Environment. Through events, activities, and historical projects around these themes, to expose residents and visitors alike to the rich and diverse cultures, places, and people of Chatham County.

Lynch stated that the Board of Commissioners approved being the sponsor of the grand finale event. During the planning and discussions about the event, we first planned a caravana/parade, now we are heading in a different direction.

Lynch stated that representatives from the Community and Diversity Sub-Committee and Chatham County attended the meeting. Assistant County Manager Bryan Thompson presented the proposed event and answered questions the Board of Commissioners.

Thompson shared the following updated with the Board of Commissioners:

The Mission of Chatham 250 is to celebrate Chatham County through diverse community centered events and activities that highlight Chatham's uniqueness, rich history, and promising future. The Chatham 250 Celebration Themes are Creative Arts, Growth and Change, Agriculture, Natural Environment, and Diversity and Community, which is the even Siler City is sponsoring. Our main activity has been the Chatham 250 passport – a "Self-guided tour meets scavenger hunt" that helps people explore Chatham County and connect with new places and experiences. Over 500 people are registered for the passport. There have also been a number of Chatham 250 sponsors events, all of which have happened either virtually or outside and socially distanced. Outdoor, socially distanced events include Founding Day in April in Pittsboro, the Great Chatham County Camp Out at B. Everett Jordan Dam, and the Sidewalk Chalk Festival at the Park at Briar Chapel. The celebrations are edging toward the close. The town has generously offered to support our Grand finale celebration, which will be the Chatham 250 Community and Diversity event. Since the beginning of the Chatham 250, we had hoped to do a Parade/Caravana in Siler City on October 23rd.

Thompson stated due to a number of circumstances we have decided to move in a new direction. And that direction is to instead host a Grand Finale Fireworks Display on Saturday, November 13th at 6:30 PM in Downtown Siler City. This fireworks display would occur on the Wren Industries property, most everyone knows as the former Boling property, and would be presented by Jeff Hale with Hale Artificier, who is the pyrotechnic recommend by the Chatham County Fire Marshall Billy Judson.

Thompson stated that fireworks have happened on multiple occasions during the pandemic in areas close to Siler City, including the Liberty July Festival Fireworks, the Summer Spectacular in Silk Hope, and most recently fireworks display at Chatham Charter School this past weekend. It is worth noting that all of these displays have been presented by Hales Aritficiier, the same company we will be working with.

Thompson shared the many benefits to hosting fireworks display as the Grand Finale to Chatham 250.

- Fireworks at the proposed location will offer ample space for social distancing. The display will be large enough that folks can watch from around downtown. They can sit in their car or stay in their own area.
- Because the fireworks will be downtown in the evening, it is a great opportunity to support the central business district. The Siler City Merchant's Association has been involved in this planning process and are supportive of this fireworks display.
- Fireworks display will cause limited traffic impact. No roads will need to be closed for the display. We can also further discuss any possible traffic impact later in this presentation.
- The fireworks display will occur at a time that would be beneficial to align with other Chatham 250 and community activities – including celebrating Veteran's Day, Chatham 250 volunteer appreciation, and the Chatham 250 youth committee event.
- And finally, it's hard to imagine a more exciting way to conclude this year-long celebration of Chatham County.

Thompson stated that the committee has experienced an overwhelming positive reaction to this idea when shared with others. We expect a good crowd, and that people will be very excited to see a fireworks display.

Thompson reviewed some critical logistics for the event including the Site Map prepared by Hale Artificier, which showed that the launching will be from the back corner near the tree line. The proposed seating areas are marked by the brown boxes along West 3rd Street, W 2nd Street, and on North Chatham Avenue, although there will be additional seating areas throughout downtown again to support social distancing. Parking is proposed on the two lots marked in red – City Hall on West 3rd Street and the Municipal lot at corner of 4th Street and Chatham Avenue. There will be parking available throughout the downtown area like we generally do for the Christmas Parade.

Thompson stated that Public and Fire Safety have been involved in this planning process from the beginning. They were present during the site visit with Hale Artificier and have experience working with the company. Hale Arificier came highly recommended by the Fire Marshall because of his extensive experience and knowledge. He is considered one of the experts in pyrotechnics throughout the state. Fire Marshall Billy Judson, Fire Chief Scott Murphy, Police Chief Mike Wagner and Public Works and Utilities Director Christ McCorquodale have reviewed and approved the plans and will be on site before, during and after the display.

Thompson shared that insurance is included in the contract for Hale Artificier. Siler City, Chatham County and the property owner will be added as additional Insured under Hale Artificier insurance with a \$2 million limit.

Thompson stated that the estimated cost of the fireworks display is \$6000 for a 20 – 30-minute show. Chatham 250 and Siler City will each cover 50% of the cost.

Thompson stated that the committee would like to thank the Town Board and the Wren Family for the opportunity to bring fireworks back to Siler City after a generation. We are going to go out with a bang. Lynch stated that Department Heads have discussed the grand finale and are very excited to be a part of the event.

The Board of Commissioners asked questions about parking, traffic, insurance, and asked the committee to contact the neighbors.

A motion that the Chatham 250 Grand Finale is approved, and the Town cover fifty percent of the cost was made by Commissioner Fadely, seconded by Commissioner Price, and unanimously approved.

Redistricting Initial Meeting

Lynch stated on December 7, 2020, the Board of Commissioners contracted with Tharrington Smith LLP to assist the Town through the redistricting process due to the 2020 Census. (Incorporation by reference as if fully set forth herein Schedule E) Lynch introduced Deborah Stagner with Tharrington Smith LLP and Blake Esselstyn with FrontWater, LLC + Mapfigure Consulting.

Stagner stated that this will be the initial meeting to review census data, determine if there is a need for redistricting, and give an overview of the process.

Stagner stated that the local redistricting service is a project of North Carolinians for Redistricting Reform which includes non-partisan redistricting expertise for local governments that use districts to elect

members and an open, public and non-partisan process with no election data and open meetings. Stagner stated that she would cover the following topics: who needs to redistrict, demographic changes, legal considerations. overview of the process and the timeline.

Esselstyn shared maps of the change in NC population from 2010 to 2020, NC population change since 2010 by tract, and current districts, which covered the need to redistrict.

Esselstyn stated that there is substantial equality among districts as defined by statute using the total population from the 2020 Census and determine that the Town’s current election districts within +/- 5% of the ideal population.

Esselstyn shared the change in population: 2010 population: 7887 and the 2020 population: 7702. Esselstyn stated that the ideal district population or target number is 1540, with a permissible range of 1463 to 1617.

District	Population	To Target	Dev%
1	1,427	113	-7.34%
2	1,540	0	0.0%
3	1,665	-125	8.12%
4	1,586	-46	2.99%
5	1,484	56	-3.64%

Stagner stated that the normal statutory authority to redistrict is covered in N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160A-23 and § 160A-23.1, but this year its N.C. Session Law 2021-56 (S722): “the regular 2021 elections in any municipality . . . where less than the entire jurisdiction is eligible to vote for candidates for one or more offices . . . shall be delayed until 2022” and “upon the release of the 2020 Census data . . . each municipality with elections delayed in accordance with this act shall review and revise its electoral districts in accordance with State and federal law”

Stagner stated that race cannot be the predominant factor in redistricting unless the use of race is narrowly tailored to a compelling governmental interest. Predominant means the race of voters better explains the boundary of a district than traditional redistricting criteria. A compelling governmental interest is potentially, Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, which is the minority group sufficiently large and geographically compact to form a majority in a district, is the minority group politically cohesive or does the majority vote sufficiently as a bloc so that it usually defeats the minority-preferred candidate?

Stagner stated at this meeting, the Commissioners should be prepared to consider and adopt a set of redistricting criteria to guide the drawing of new districts. Guiding Principles include substantially equal population, which is required, total population, not voting age population or registered voters, contiguity, administrative boundaries, communities of interest which is prioritizing the intactness of neighborhoods, or other historical, cultural, or economic communities, boundaries follow visible physical features like roads, waterways, and water bodies, preserve the core of existing districts, compactness, avoid pairing incumbents, and plan for future population growth / annexation. But no partisan considerations can be included.

Stagner stated that the following process will be followed.

- Determine need to redistrict based on population disparities
- Adopt criteria/guiding principles
- LRS consultants prepare 2-3 alternative plans
- Hold public hearing
- Review/revise plans
- Adopt resolution by December 17
- Export plan to Board of Elections

Stagner shared the following timeline for the redistricting process:

1. November 1 – Second meeting to present and review up to two proposed redistricting plans/maps, answer questions, and receive feedback from Commissioners.
2. November 15 – Public Hearing - required by S.L. 2021-56 § 1(b).
3. December 6 – Final meeting to adopt revised districts and redistricting resolution.
4. Candidate Filing Period: Open at 12:00 noon on January 3, 2022, and close at 12:00 noon on January 7, 2022, for municipalities providing the electoral districts revised in accordance with State and federal law to appropriate county board or boards of elections on or before December 17, 2021.
5. March 8, 2022 – Date of Election of the following:

Seat	Current Official
Chatham – Siler City Mayor (Election Rescheduled to 2022)	Vacant
Chatham – Siler City Town Commissioner At-Large (Election Rescheduled to 2022)	Cindy Bray
Chatham – Siler City Town Commissioner District 1 (Election Rescheduled to 2022)	Tony Siler
Chatham – Siler City Town Commissioner District 2 (Election of Appointed Seat)	Norma Boone
Chatham – Siler City Town Commissioner District 5 (Election Rescheduled to 2022)	Lewis Fadely

The Board of Commissioners discussed the guiding principles, and the consensus of the Board of Commissioners was to include substantially equal population, which is required, total population, communities of interest which is prioritizing the intactness of neighborhoods, or other historical, cultural, or economic communities, preserve the core of existing districts, avoid pairing incumbents, and plan for future population growth / annexation.

Lynch stated the Board of Commissioners would need to make a motion with the guiding principles.

A motion that the guiding principles for the redistricting should preserve the core of existing districts, avoid pairing incumbents, planning for future growth, communities of interest which is prioritizing the intactness of neighborhoods, or other historical, cultural, or economic communities, and substantially equal population was made by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Brown, and unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS**106 E. Raleigh Street – Unsafe Building Condemned**

Meadows shared that in 1910, the existing 23' by 75' one story brick building (Wrenn Brothers Co. Annex) was added to the east side of a no longer existing 1902 Wrenn Brothers Co. building which was located on the southeast corner of S. Chatham Ave. and E. Raleigh St. (Incorporation by reference as if fully set forth herein Schedule F)

Meadows shared that the existing side and rear brick walls are original. The front façade was built in 1924 at the same time as the 110 E. Raleigh St. building. The building is located on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building within the Siler City Commercial Historic District. The building is landlocked to the rear. The last fire inspection was 2014. Water service to the building ended in 2016.

Meadows stated that a complaint was received regarding rotten wood on the exterior ceiling and mold on the window interior on September 3, 2020. Ordinance enforcement officer talked to the owner. On April 21, 2021, the Board of Commissioners adopted the minimum nonresidential code which became effective on July 1, 2021, and the unsafe building condemned ordinance on June 21, 2021.

Meadows shared that Town Staff held a public informational meeting on July 14, 2021 and added the building to the minimum nonresidential list on August 6, 2021. Town Staff received complaints that the roof collapsed on August 26, 2021, and town violation letters were mailed to the owner (James Jordan & William Jordan) and posted on the property on August 31 and sent by email to James Jordan on September 7, 2021.

Meadows stated that Chatham County Building Inspections boarded by the windows on September 16, 2021, and condemned the building, the Public Works installed barricades along the sidewalk and streets on September 17, 2021. The power was removed from the building by Duke Energy on September 17, 2021, and town violation letters were mailed to the owner and posted on the property on September 20, 2021. The Town held an administrative meeting on September 24, 2021 and received an email from Jayme Jordan on September 28, 2021.

Meadows asked the Board of Commissioners to provide direction on the desire to protect the historical walls. The Board of Commissioners discussed the property and the condition.

A motion to authorize the Town Manager to contract with a structural engineer to analyze, prepare a report, and make recommendations on the condemned building at 106 E. Raleigh Street after October 10, not to exceed \$4,000.00, was made by Commissioner Fadely, seconded by Commissioner Boone, and unanimously approved.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Lynch shared the following with the Board of Commissioners: He and the Town Clerk have moved to the basement in City Hall while construction is taking place in the suite, Fifth Street is delayed due to the backorder for culverts, road at cemetery has been sealed, Police Department will have coffee with a cop on Wednesday.

TOWN ATTORNEY INFORMATION

none

GOVERNING BODY COMMENTS

Commissioner asked about the old Farrar Funeral Home. Meadows stated he would check on it. Commissioner Boone asked about the Ramsey Gym sign. Clelland stated the sign had been ordered. Mayor Pro Tem Bray stated the post office announced that they would be running a delayed delivery schedule and asked about customers billing being delayed. Lynch stated that staff has spoken about it.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business the Board of Commissioners adjourned at 8:34pm.


Cindy B. Bray, Mayor Pro Tempore

ATTEST:


Jenifer K. Johnson, Town Clerk

