

TOWN OF SILER CITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
July 17, 2023, MINUTES
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TOWN OF SILER CITY

The Siler City Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on **Monday, July 17, 2023**, at 6:30pm in the City Hall Courtroom with Mayor Price presiding. Commissioner Boone gave the invocation with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance following. Commissioner Brown recited the Town of Siler City Mission Statement and Commissioner Underwood recited the Town of Siler City Vision Statement.

ELECTED TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT: Albert Alston, Cindy Bray, Norma Boone, Curtis Brown, Lewis Fadely, Bill Haiges, and Thomas "Chip" Price, and James Underwood

TOWN STAFF PRESENT: Town Manager Hank Raper, Town Attorney William Morgan, Public Works Director Cal Pettiford, Public Utilities Director Chris McCorquodale, Human Resource Director, Nancy Darden, Police Chief Mike Wagner, Parks & Recreation Director Tylr Stinson, Budget Manager Jenifer Johnson, Senior Planner Danielle Orloff, Finance Director Mandy Cartrette, and Town Clerk Kimberly Pickard.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Underwood requested 3.4 Sharpe Patel FY 2021 Audit contract amendment to be moved to Old Business.

A motion to approve the agenda amendment was made by Mayor Pro Tem Haiges, seconded by Commissioner Fadely, and unanimously approved.

A motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Commissioner Brown seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Haiges, and unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion to approve the consent agenda which included the June 20, 2023 Minutes (Incorporation by reference as if fully set forth herein Schedule A), Grant for Police Department (Incorporation by reference as if fully set forth herein as Schedule B), Transportation Infrastructure Resiliency Grant (Incorporation by reference as if fully set forth herein as Schedule C) NC Railroad Grant (Incorporation by reference as if fully set forth herein as Schedule E) was made by Commissioner Fadely, seconded Commissioner Brown, and unanimously approved.

PRESENTATIONS

Town Manager Hank Raper introduced new staff members including Danielle Orloff as the new Senior Planner and Tylr Stinson as the new Parks and Recreation Director.

OLD BUSINESS

Town Manager Hank Raper discussed the Sharpe Patel FY21 Audit contract amendment with the Board of Commissioners. Raper, explained that the amendment was needed because the audit has taken longer than expected.

A motion to approve the Sharpe Patel FY21 Audit contract was made by Commissioner Fadely and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Haiges and unanimously approved.

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NEW BUSINESS

Town Manager Hank Raper asked Taylor Hobbs to come forward to discuss the Raleigh Street Building Design. Architect Taylor Hobbs discussed the pre-design for the Raleigh Street Building. The pre-design process involves hiring an electrical engineer as well as determining any ADA, and or building code issues that could arise. The pre-design would also determine the first floor and second floor pre-liminary plans not limited to evaluating, conference room, potential elevator, restrooms, and public interface counters.

Mayor Price voiced his opposition to the Raleigh Street Building Design, Mayor Price stated that the town has too many projects going on at once and needs to complete projects such as wastewater before moving on to the next one. Mayor Price also felt that the project would take time away from the Staff to handle this project when their time is much more valuable handling current projects. Taylor Hobbs assured the Board that the staff's involvement would be minimal and that his staff would be handling the project. Mayor Pro-Tem Haiges voiced his approval for the project stating that the Town needed to be able to plan for Capital Improvement Projects and with this study, the Board would know funds needed to move forward. Commissioner Fadely voiced his approval for the project design plans, stating that the Town has run out of offices, and if we do not move forward, we will end up renting space. Commissioner Alston voiced his opposition to the plan stating we need to table it. Commissioner Boone was concerned if the project was tabled for two months, then in two months it would be tabled again.

A motion to approve the Raleigh Street building pre-design presented by Taylor Hobbs with Hobbs Architects, P.A. was made by Commissioner Fadely seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Haiges yay, Fadely, Haiges, Bray and Boone, Nay, Alston, Brown and Underwood.

The motion passed.

A motion to approve the 2023/2024 Budget Amendment 2024.2 to move funds from fund balance in both the general fund was made by Commissioner Fadely seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Haiges, voting yay, Fadely, Haiges, Bray and Boone, Voting Nay, Alston, Brown and Underwood.

The motion passed.

A motion to approve to establish a Capital project ordinance to provide funding for the Raleigh Street Building was made was made by Commissioner Fadely seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Haiges, yay, Fadely, Haiges, Bray and Boone, Nay, Alston, Brown and Underwood.

The motion passed.

Town Manager Hank Raper then asked Taylor Hobbs to present the Public Works Facility Design. Architect Taylor Hobbs presented a pre-design for a new proposed public works headquarters. The plan would include building programming needs, site programming needs, building and site planning. With this, pre-design the Town would have a better understanding of the cost and total needs that Public Works is seeking to accommodate the needs of not only the Public Works staff but being able to better serve the Town of Siler City businesses and residents. Mayor Price voiced his opposition asking again to table the design until other projects were finished.

A motion to approve the Public Works Facility Design pre-design presented by Taylor Hobbs with Hobbs Architects, P.A. was made by Mayor Pro Tem Haiges, seconded by Commissioner Fadely, yay, Fadely, Haiges, Boone and Bray, Nay, Alston, Brown and Underwood.

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The motion passed.

A motion was made to amend the 2023/2024 budget ordinance to provide the funding for the professional services for pre-design services for the New Public Works Headquarters by Commissioner Fadely, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Haiges voting yay, Boone, Bray, Fadely and Haiges, Nay, Alston, Brown and Underwood.

The motion passed.

A motion was made to establish a capital project ordinance to provide funding for the New Public Works headquarters was made by Commissioner Fadely seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Haiges, yay, voting yay, Boone, Bray, Fadely and Haiges, Nay, Alston, Brown and Underwood.

The motion passed.

Proposed Restructure of Finance and Budget Departments, Town Manager Hank Raper proposed changing the vacated assistance finance director position to a budget analyst position, which would report to the Budget Manager. Create a utility billing and customer service manager who would report to the finance director, and lastly create an additional finance analyst position who would report to the finance director. Raper, went onto explain that the Finance Department affects every department within the Town of Siler City, and it is important that the finance department have adequate staff. Mayor Price voiced his concerns over not only the turnover in the Finance department but the Parks and Recreation department, he has concerns that there must be some type of personnel issues that are not being told, he went on to say that something just does not seem right. He went on to say that based on the different things that past and current employees have told him is that employees do not feel like they can go to their supervisor and voice their concerns. Mayor Price also felt that a third party should be put into place when someone does leave, they can talk to this third party without fear of reprisal and until the current personnel issues are addressed, we are going to continue to have a revolving door. Town Manager, Hank Raper explained to Mayor Price that interim staff as well as two new positions have been put into place to ensure the Finance department is staffed until the vacant positions are filled. Mayor Pro Tem Haiges went on to ad that he feels confident the interim finance staff will be able to fill the needs until the new staff is adequately trained and a new Finance Director is hired, he is concerned that if we do not move forward with this new structure there will not be a separation of duties and responsibilities and we will be dinged on our audits, and we are in a position where the Town of Siler is growing and we do not have a choice but to ad positions. Commissioner Fadely agreed that Separation of duties was extremely important, discussed when the study was done the biggest employee morale that was noted was money and staff is overloaded with work, so adding these new positions will help, but again according to the study it all comes down to money and we can not compete with Sanford, Randolph, and Wake. Commissioner Underwood did not agree and stated that the employees are still leaving even after their pay has increased so he still believes something is going on. Commissioner Fadely does not want to go backwards and believes the new finance structure is needed to move forward. Mayor Price, again stated he still thinks there is an employee morale issue, he also thinks that money is an issue but not the only issue because job satisfaction can go a long way because if someone is not happy you can throw all the money you want to at them they are not going to stay, he still thinks there is morale problem that has not been addressed and needs to be addressed before we embark on just adding more people. Commissioner Fadely stated that he does not think we are just adding people to be adding people we are restructuring to address the morale issue by lightening the workload and this would in turn help morale issues.

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A motion to approve the proposed restructure of the finance and budget departments was made by Commissioner Fadely, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem was made by Commissioner Fadely seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Haiges, yay, Bray, Boone Fadely and Haiges, nay, Alston, Brown, and Underwood. The motion passed.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager, Hank Raper discussed the current Finance Director position that was open and the lack of applicants, and fulfilling the position would be difficult. The hiring of a future police chief was discussed upon the retirement of our current chief.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion to go into Closed Session §143-318.11(a)(3) To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged at 7:56pm was made by Mayor Pro Tem Haiges, seconded by Commissioner Boone, and unanimously approved.

A motion to come out of closed session at 8:06pm was made by Commissioner Fadely, seconded by Commissioner Brown, and unanimously approved.

A motion to go into Closed Session §143-318.11(a)(3) To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged at 8:07pm was made by Commissioner Fadely, seconded by Commissioner Brown, and unanimously approved.

A motion to come out of closed session at 8:32pm was made by Mayor Pro Tem Haiges, seconded by Commissioner Fadely, and unanimously approved.

A motion to go into Closed Session at 8:33pm was made by Commissioner Fadely, seconded by Commissioner Brown and unanimously approved §143-318.11(a)(6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee.

A motion to come out of closed session at 8:52pm was made by Commissioner Fadely and seconded by Commissioner Underwood, and unanimously approved.

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ADJOURNMENT

With no further business the Board of Commissioners adjourned at 8:53pm.



Thomas K. Price, III, Mayor

ATTEST:


Kimberly D. Pickard, Town Clerk