

TOWN OF SILER CITY

The Siler City Town Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, April 16, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Courtroom with Mayor Charles Johnson presiding. Town Manager Brower gave the invocation after the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. A motion to approve the minutes from the April 2, 2012 meeting was made by Commissioner Adams, seconded by Commissioner Price and unanimously carried.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Sam Adams, Cindy Bray, Larry Cheek, Michael Constantino, John Grimes, Thomas K. Price, III and Tony Siler.

TOWN STAFF PRESENT: Town Manager Joel J. Brower, Planning Director Jack Meadows, Police Chief Gary Tyson, and Town Clerk Karen Alman.

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

Roger Person, 405 W. Elk St., Siler City, NC 27344: Mr. Person addressed the issue of directional signage in Siler City. He stated the Arts Incubator had some good exposure from UNC-TV recently at the Third Friday Artwalk. As a result, he has been receiving phone calls from persons advising they were having difficulty finding the downtown arts community. He pointed out there is one sign on Highway 64 in Pittsboro that directs persons to their downtown shops. His disappointment is that "when entering Siler City there is so much clutter with banners for BBQ's and politicians that we look like the third world. If you think this is going to bring people from surrounding cities for a \$5.00 chicken plate, we need to eat less chicken. We need to have better directions to the important areas of our city". Person stated the STEP program has been working on these signs and advised it needs the Town's support to speed up the process. *(Schedule 16-A)*

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB FUNDING REQUEST: Sarah Marion, Chief Professional Officer, Boys & Girls Clubs of Eastern Piedmont, Western Chatham Club came before the Board to report that in less than two years they have outgrown the space they were given in Sage Academy. The local Boys & Girls Club Board has been working diligently to raise funds to renovate the Paul Braxton school that would provide more space to serve more youth. They hope to accomplish this through working with the school administration and community. Programs have had to stop at the end of the 8th grade as there was no high school program. Many of the youth want to stay in the program which makes it important to continue into the high school years. Marion pointed out it is important to have a separate space and programming for the high school students. The Club is requesting funding in the amount of \$12,000 which is \$2,000 more than last year. She advised \$2,000 would help to pay 1-1/2 to 2 part-time workers in the summer with each one having 20 to 23 kids in their group. There continues to be a waiting list. In calendar year 2011, the Club served 158 youth with hopes to increase to about 175. This program has been very successful as major changes are taking place in these kids in their behavior, making good grades, making better choices, feeling valued and showing respect, etc. Mayor ProTem Grimes asked if there has been a positive impact on teenage pregnancy with Marion responding that none of the girls attending the Club and staying in the program have become pregnant. Kids from 6 years old to 18 years old are served through this program. *(Schedule 16-B)*

CHATHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION FUNDING REQUEST: Tommy Emerson, Vice Chair of the Chatham County Historical Association, addressed the Board to request financial support to help with the new museum project that is being designed inside the new courthouse. This museum will help to save and share Chatham County history including the history of Siler City. He advised the Chatham County Board of Commissioners has provided expanded space in the new courthouse building to the Historical Association for this historical museum. The Association is in the process of fund raising for this project to make this museum first class and one that will make the citizens proud. Emerson thanked the Board for giving this request their consideration during these difficult times. Barbara Pugh, Chair of the Chatham County Historical Association, pointed out again that the Chatham County Commissioners granted the space in the new courthouse for this museum and space for the Historical Association, but no funding. This group is made up of volunteers only and is non-profit. She stated they can fundraise for this museum and are in the process of doing this. One reason for the need of a historical museum is that since very little history is taught in the school system, classes can visit the museum to learn about Chatham County. Local citizens can visit and learn more about their roots and it will also be an opportunity for tourism. Ms. Pugh reported that \$100,000 of the \$140,000 needed has been raised. In response to a question by Mayor Johnson, Pugh stated there is not a specific area dedicated just for Siler City, but will include all communities of Chatham County. The Association is not requesting a specific amount, but will appreciate any consideration of the Board. *(Schedule 16-C)*

HISPANIC LIAISON OF CHATHAM COUNTY FUNDING REQUEST: Hernan Sedda, Executive Director, stated the Hispanic Liaison has been serving the Latino community in Siler City since 1995 with a client base that has grown to approximately 5,000 people each year. Most of these clients live in Siler City. They are requesting \$6,000 in funding for FY 2012/2013 reporting they requested \$6,000 last year, but received \$2,400. Sedda shared the way the funds would be used as follows:

- \$4,000 for the Basic Need Assistance Program & Hunger Relief Initiative
- \$1,000 for Assistance to Latina/o Victims of Crime or Fraud
- \$1,000 for Latina/o Youth Leadership Development & Gang Prevention

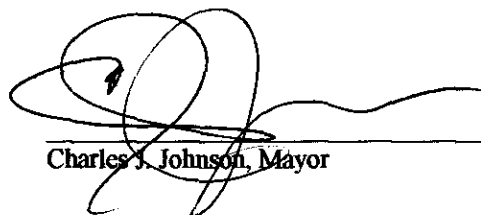
Silvio Balcazar, Youth Coordinator with the Hispanic Liaison, stated he has been working with youth through the Liaison for about 15 months hoping to give them "vision of the future" as they come from many difficult situations. Through different programs, they are now starting to take pride in themselves and their community. He stated these requested funds are necessary to continue this very important youth program. Mayor Johnson asked how many persons coming to the Hispanic Liaison seeking help actually have a Siler City address with Sedda answering around 90-percent. He pointed out that the population of Siler City is approximately 51-percent Latino. Sedda advised they were serving around 4,000 clients in the Basic Need Assistance Program, 580 in the Victims Services program and 82 kids are served in the Youth Program. *(Schedule 16-D)*

BRANDING IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE – JACK MEADOWS, PLANNING DIRECTOR: Mayor Johnson asked Meadows what progress the NC STEP Way Finding Committee has made? Meadows replied the committee is meeting monthly and are trying to locate where these way finding signs will be most appropriate. One of the best locations

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is on private property or Town owned property. Other locations will have to go through NCDOT which has strict regulations. Meadows pointed out business district signage was placed on Highways 421 and 64 about 2 years ago. He also advised lettering on signs that read "CDB" for Central Business District located on 421 has been changed to "Downtown". Commissioner Adams reminded Board members that they approached the DOT a few years back regarding historical downtown signs such as Pittsboro had and were told these signs were no longer allowed. Meadows then shared the recently received Branding Guide from Arnett Muldrow. This guide will be helpful in showing how this information can be used in a correct way. These slides contained the color palette selected, the tag line of "Delightfully Unexpected", the various logos that can be used, typography, options to use with other organizations, how to use the brand logo in advertising, the use on banners, option for way finding signs, etc. Meadows stated he is trying to let persons know that if they are interested in this information to use in their businesses or organizations to contact him for the file. Commissioner Adams asked Brower if the Town planned to use any of these logos on their stationary with Brower responding it will be up to the Board to make that decision. Commissioner Constantino feels the STEP project is moving too slow pointing out he attended a couple of STEP meetings about 8 months ago and they were discussing signage then and are still talking about it today. He commented there is no signage on Highway 64 directing persons to the Arts Incubator, downtown Siler City or to Chatham Hospital and what is on Highway 64 looks like "clutter". With the critical situation of the Arts Incubator it is important to have attractive, modern and informative signage directing persons to these areas also noting that the downtown will not grow without it. Constantino feels there is an urgency to the sign issue and is frustrated that the STEP committees have been meeting for 2 years without much to show. Meadows advised the branding guide he presented is the final product. Constantino feels there are too many options which will lead to confusion. Meadows stated they all have basically the same look no matter what colors are used and will become synonymous with Siler City. Constantino stated "we have to put some urgency behind a couple of pieces of this thing because they are critical to the success of our downtown district". He reiterated "I don't understand what the drag is. I don't understand why we haven't already done some of these things, because they are not that big a deal". Planning Director Meadows pointed out the STEP Committee is made up of citizens of Siler City and the surrounding community stating "the program is going to move as fast as those folks are working and I think they are working very hard". Constantino commented it is easy to "confuse activity with productivity". Meadows advised the STEP project committee just reviewed the Branding Guide last week and are in the process of doing a RFP for a graphic designer to give guidance. He is in the process of learning pointing out this is a big marketing effort and he is relying on others to give direction. Commissioner Constantino reiterated that the branding needs to be specific to Siler City so it can be easily recognized. Commissioner Cheek wanted to clarify that the Siler City Town Board amended the sign ordinance in order for a sign to be placed on Highway 64 for those businesses located in the Chatham Business Park including Chatham Hospital. The delay has been negotiations between the Chatham County Board and the landowner. Commissioner Constantino feels, as a Board, they need to be more diligent in following up on issues as no one seemed to know where these negotiations stand. He also wants to see the Board ask the STEP committees to speed up their process as they are very critical. In a response to Commissioner Price, Meadows responded there are 14 projects in the STEP program with each project having a chair person and team members. The committee for the directional signage is currently identifying the best locations for the signs and choosing the design. If some of the locations identified are on private property, it will be necessary for them to approach the landowners to receive permission to place signs on their property. The Board will also approve all locations of these directional signs. Commissioner Adams asked Meadows to encourage the STEP Signage Committee to identify the design they want for the signs which they will then be able to show the property owners which Commissioner Price agreed with and asked that he encourage them to make it a #1 priority. In defense of the STEP teams, Meadows advised he believes they have been working very hard. They have procedures to follow as well such as sending of RFP's which slows down a project, then seeking approval from the project team, and then approval from the full STEP team. All of this takes time pointing out "they are working hard internally to get to you". Commissioner Constantino asked Meadows to find out distance required for sign to be placed off right-of-way.

Mayor Johnson reminded Board members of the Third Friday Artwalk, Spring Cleanup, National Day of Prayer, Relay for Life, Siler City Alive, Milo Holt Western Film Festival and the webinar for the required ethics training on May 16th. Mayor Johnson asked Town staff to check with the Towns of Pittsboro and Goldston to see if they would like to join in with Siler City. With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.



Charles J. Johnson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Karen C. Alman, Town Clerk