

## TOWN OF SILER CITY

The Siler City Town Board of Commissioners met in regular session on **Tuesday, January 17, 2012** at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Courtroom with Mayor Charles Johnson presiding. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Mayor ProTem Grimes gave the invocation. Minutes from the December 19, 2011 meeting were unanimously approved upon a motion by Commissioner Adams and a second from Commissioner Constantino.

**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, Town Attorney William Morgan, Planning Director Jack Meadows, Police Chief Gary Tyson, and Town Clerk Karen Alman.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION:**

**Roger Person, 1205 W. Elk Street, Siler City, NC 23744:** Mr. Person addressed the issue of traffic safety in the Siler City Downtown Historic District, specifically the traffic on North Chatham Avenue from Beaver Street to Third Street noting he has witnessed a high number of serious accidents on this three block stretch of North Chatham Avenue. He stated at the intersection of Second Street there is the Family Crisis Center, the Hispanic Liaison and Chatham Together in which there is "a constant stream of mothers and young children coming and going" from these businesses. There is also a lot of foot traffic across the street at the coffee shop. He mentioned that the speed limit of 20 miles per hour "is never observed and is not even posted. The traffic signals are timed to encourage people to speed so they will not have to stop at a red light. Going around the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street obstructs the view at the intersection for speeding traffic" noting there was an accident there because of a speeding car trying to make the light. Person then advised he has seen more semi-trucks with longer trailers using Chatham Avenue and not being able to make the turn because the intersections are too small. This causes traffic and pedestrian safety issues stating that "these trucks need to be routed down Second Avenue where they have room to turn to cross Chatham Avenue in a straight line". He feels this is a serious safety issue and needs to be addressed before someone gets hurt.

Mr. Person then addressed the issue of a need for a community center in the downtown district stating that surrounding communities have centers to support events such as the Milo Holt Film Festival and "thinks it's time for Siler City to step-up and prevent us from losing the much needed income" that comes from these types of events. *(Schedule 9-A)*

**CERTIFIED RETIREMENT CERTIFICATION APPLICATION – CHUCK STIRES:** Mr. Stires who is overseeing the NC STEP Certified Retirement Community Committee presented the application to be sent to the NC Tourism and Travel Department with all the information the department has asked for up to this point. The State has just announced they will be making this program official in the spring. Stires stated there were going to be a smaller number of towns applying which would put Siler City in a better position for approval. He noted that even though the Town could be accepted by the State to be certified, it is not official until funds are received and then the Town will be qualified to be a "certified retirement community". If the Board approves the application, it will be sent to the State by January 31, 2012 which is the first deadline and they will then have 120 days to review it and get back with the committee and at that time can decide whether or not to proceed with this effort. The Town Board addressed some minor corrections to the application. Commissioner Adams made a motion to move forward with the application process and unanimously carried upon a second by Commissioner Price. *(Schedule 9-B)*

**MILO HOLT FILM FESTIVAL REQUESTS – LINDA LEHMAN:** Town Manager Brower explained he along with Police Chief Gary Tyson and Public Works Director Terry Green met with Mrs. Lehman and Jean Baird a couple of times to discuss this film festival to determine how the Town could help the committee. The two requests that need Board approval are the closing of streets in the downtown area which would require DOT permission and the use of the City Hall Courtroom to show the films. The showing of films is in conflict with a policy that has been followed since the 1980's when the courtroom was renovated and has only been used for board meetings and court activities only. Mrs. Lehman then addressed the Board stating she was "presenting these requests on behalf of the Retirement Attraction Committee which grew from NC STEP a festival in memory of her uncle Milo Holt a longtime resident of Siler City who passed away 09/17/11". Milo actually taught a class on "big westerns" in 1981 at NC State University after which the "Old Western Film Preservation Society" was started. Ms. Lehman advised she has been approached by Ray Smith and the Western Historical Preservation Society who have a desire to honor Milo Holt by keeping his name and history alive to have a downtown festival in downtown Siler City on Saturday, May 19, 2012. She stated, "on behalf of the Western Historical Preservation Society, Retiree Attraction Committee, myself and other citizens of Siler City, we request your permission to hold a Milo Holt Old Time Western Film Festival in downtown Siler City on Saturday, May 19, 2012 from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Admission is free to see the movies and be entertained by cowboys through rope tricks, gun fights, etc. We hope to have Wells Fargo Stagecoach with horses. There will be singing on stage by several groups, bands and individuals. Streets will be lined with arts, crafts, bake sales and food vendors. The Western Society predicts a large crowd of 800 to 1,000 people. This will surely be good for our economy as they will be spending money for food, motels, gas and shopping. Several movie stars have accepted our invitation and we are making arrangements for their stay. We have been granted use of land for cowboys, horses, stagecoach, etc. by Jeff McNeely and also permission to park at Boling Company. Movies will be shown at the Chatham Camera Club (Duane Hall) and a downstairs building belonging to Roger Person. We also request the use of the Siler City Courtroom to show the movies as this was the first location for the movies to be shown by him. We would like to block-off Chatham Avenue to East Raleigh Street to Third Street and the side streets of these roads". She noted they hope to make this an annual event if this festival is successful. Mayor Johnson advised the two requests before the Board is the use of the City Hall courtroom to show movies and the blocking of downtown streets. Mayor ProTem Grimes pointed out he had no problem with the blocking of streets and helping in other ways to assist with this effort; however, he does have a problem with changing the longstanding policy of opening the courtroom for anything other than court use and as a Board meeting room. He feels there are other venues that can be used for the showing of films. Grimes mentioned that the old Jones Department store building has been sold and feels the new owner may allow the opening of that building for the showing of films. Commissioner Constantino asked Mrs. Lehman how many venues were needed to show films and how many people typically attend? She answered three venues were needed and approximately 300 to 500 were seated at one time to watch the films. Commissioner Adams agreed that the courtroom was

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not a good option for the showing of films, but thought having all three venues in the downtown area would be a positive allowing the showing of a variety of films in each location. He noted that because of our First Amendment right that even though the showing of these western films is a positive thing, the next group wanting to use the courtroom may not have as favorable a request. A motion to contact DOT for the closing of streets, if necessary, and assist the event as much as possible was made by Mayor ProTem Grimes, seconded by Commissioner Constantino and unanimously carried.

**APPROVAL OF NCDOT REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT-LOVES CREEK GREENWAY TRAIL PHASE I PROJECT:** Planning Director Jack Meadows reminded Board members that a letter was received from NCDOT informing the Town of the funding award for this project. The total funding awarded is \$1,200,000 (\$250,000 for design, engineering, and administration and \$950,000 for construction). The greenway trail will be located along the southern side of Loves Creek from South Second Avenue to Pony Farm Road and is approximately 1.3 miles in length with a proposed 10 feet wide asphalt paved surface. There will be two-feet of select material shoulders on each side of the trail. Meadows mentioned there will be a couple of connections from the greenway trail to Bray Park. The responsibility of the Town will be the funding for right-of-way/easement acquisition of which \$6,000 has been budgeted in FY 11/12 and the operation and maintenance of the trail when the project is completed. The Town will also be responsible for any difference if the project exceeds the approved funding amount. In response to a question from Commissioner Price, Meadows reported the engineering design completion date is December 31, 2012 with the entire Phase I project completion by December 31, 2015. Mayor ProTem Grimes made a motion to approve the Town's participation in the NCDOT Reimbursement Agreement for the Loves Creek Greenway Project Trail Phase I Project. Upon a second by Commissioner Cheek, the motion unanimously carried. Commissioner Adams asked if the Town would be going out for bids for this project? Brower responded there will be a Request for Proposals for engineering services with the Board approving the engineering firm for this project. *(Schedule 9-C)*

**SILER CITY'S 2007 LOCAL WATER SUPPLY PLAN:** Brower explained the reason the 2007 Plan is just coming before the Board is the fact that the Town submitted this plan to the State several years ago and they have just now notified the Town that it has been approved. It is necessary for the Town Board to approve a Resolution approving this Plan which will then become a part of the 2007 Local Water Supply Plan. Brower also pointed out that production numbers at both the Water Plant and Wastewater Treatment Plant are out of date as well as the population figures. He noted that this Plan will need to be updated next year as it is a five year plan. The Resolution for approval of the 2007 Local Water Supply Plan for Siler City was unanimously adopted upon a motion by Commissioner Adams and second from Mayor ProTem Grimes. *(Schedule 9-D)*

**NATIONAL NIGHT OUT AWARD-POLICE CHIEF GARY TYSON:** Chief Tyson proudly announced that the Town of Siler City has won its 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive award for its participation in the National Night Out Program. The Town ranked 15<sup>th</sup> in the United States for communities under 15,000 in population. He publicly thanked the Town Board, Town staff, and the coordinators for the participating neighborhoods for all their help and the Camera Club for going to all the event locations to take pictures and video. They put together a DVD that was sent to the NNO Award Headquarters. Tyson also thanked WNCA and The Chatham News for going to each location. There have been approximately 800 to 1000 people involved in the NNO over the past four years. Police officers are able to meet and get to know citizens as well as citizens getting to know each other. Chief Tyson hopes to continue to "grow this event" and bring home another award next year. Town Manager Brower thanked Chief Tyson and the Siler City Police Department in advancing community policing. *(Schedule 9-E)*

**WORKSHOP MEETING:** Mayor Johnson announced he wanted to schedule a workshop meeting on Monday, February 20, 2012 to set goals for 2012. The meeting will convene in the City Hall Conference Room at 7:00 p.m.

**LICENSE PLATE AGENCY UPDATE:** Brower reported that renovations are moving forward in the basement of City Hall and he has begun the interviewing process. The opening of the License Plate Agency will depend on the availability of staff (how long a notice they will need to work at their current employer and the completion of the mandatory 3-week training in Raleigh). In answer to a question from Mayor ProTem Grimes, Brower advised the handicapped access will be available at all times during the day and for meetings, etc.

**PRIVILEGE LICENSE UPDATE:** Commissioner Bray asked if Finance Director Tammy Speicher can come to the workshop meeting and explain how she determined the current figures for the privilege licenses and where she is in the process of "tweaking" the current fee schedule? Grimes asked if the Board could get the information Jomus Nobles brought to a previous Board meeting regarding how privilege license fees were figured in other towns such as Charlotte etc, with Brower responding Nobles submitted that information to him. He also stated that Speicher used the ordinance from Asheboro as a guide. Brower hopes to have some information at the next Board meeting regarding different scenarios for privilege licenses and copies of the ordinances that Nobles presented. Commissioner Adams pointed out that he and Commissioner Price volunteered to work on a committee to review the privilege license fees. He would like to see these two along with the Mayor look over these ordinances and try to come up with some different scenarios to present to the Board. Brower advised he would have Speicher attend the next meeting and hopefully bring some information to the Board.

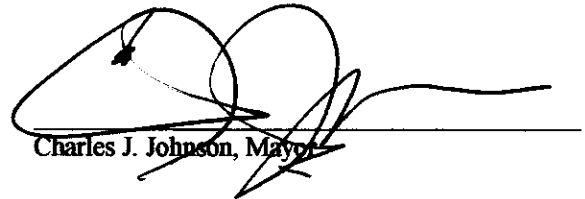
**EDC UPDATE - JENNIFER NELSON:** Ms. Nelson advised there is a new distribution center that will handle everything from computers to furniture in the old Jennifer Convertibles building with a ribbon cutting scheduled for next month. She stated that she has been working on several other projects with existing businesses. Nelson has been busy with several different projects hopefully pointing to a much better year for economic development. Commissioner Adams pointed out that information from Building Codes Administrator Charlie McLaurin shows 141 building permits issued in 2011 which is 51 more than in 2010 showing that there are things going on in Siler City.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:** Commissioner Constantino asked what the status is for the Game Zone application with Planning Director Jack Meadows responding that there has been a site plan approval and a zoning permit with comments sent back to the applicants. Meadows met with the applicants and the property owner because some of the

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improvements will be the responsibility of the property owner and has not received back any comments or the revised plan. Communication is continuing with the Town waiting to hear back from the applicants. In response to a question about the State Credit Union, Meadows advised he has received their plans with a review underway. Commissioner Constantino asked the status of the scrap metal company with Meadows stating that the company hopes to close on the property purchase by the end of January. He also asked about better signage on Highway 64 directing citizens to Chatham Hospital. Jennifer Nelson from the Chatham County EDC answered by stating the County has been in negotiation with the landowner to purchase some property to place a sign for the entire Business Park which would include the hospital. Commissioner Constantino stated he had been contacted by Paul Cuadros regarding the futsal soccer field and needed some clarification on the project since he was not on the Board when this was discussed. Board members advised they had given their permission to use the Bray Park facility for the futsal field once their grant had been approved. Commissioner Adams stated he had recently spoken with one of the coaches who advised the grant was very close to being approved. Cuadros mentioned to Constantino that he felt there was a problem with the field at Bray Park. Town Manager Brower will contact Cuadros to let him know the Town is on board to place the futsal field at Bray Park in an appropriate area. Commissioner Bray asked if the owner of the bowling alley had put in his grill with Meadows stating he was not aware that he had. Brower stated the Board amended the ordinance to allow the owner to put in a grill and get his ABC license. Meadows clarified that what brought the matter to the Board was the fact that Siler City's ordinance read that if an establishment had one pool table a person had to get a billiard license from the Town Board which would prohibit the sale of alcohols. The owner wanted to consider his business a bowling alley first with an accessory pool table. Our ordinance was amended to read that one pool table in an establishment does not make it a billiard hall. It is now up to the bowling alley owner to move forward with the grill if he chooses.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.



Charles J. Johnson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Karen C. Alman, Town Clerk