

## TOWN OF SILER CITY

The Siler City Town Board of Commissioners met in regular session on **Monday, September 17, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.** in the City Hall Courtroom with Mayor Charles Johnson presiding. Commissioner Cheek gave the invocation after the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. A motion to approve the regular session minutes from the August 20, 2012 meeting was made by Commissioner Siler, seconded by Commissioner Adams and unanimously carried. The closed session minutes from the August 20, 2012 meeting were unanimously approved upon a motion from Commissioner Adams and second by Commissioner Cheek.

**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, Parks & Recreation Director Donald Dones, Finance Director Tammy Speicher and Town Clerk Karen Alman.

Mayor Johnson officially announced the retirement of Town Manager Joel Brower effective December 31, 2012 along with kind words for his 35 years of service. Brower thanked the Mayor and shared how he has enjoyed working with the Board of Commissioners and town employees through the years and to be able to serve his career in his hometown where he could raise his family. He also thanked the citizens for the opportunity to serve them.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION**

**Roger Person, 405 W. Elk St., Siler City, NC 27344:** Mr. Person stated he wanted to address the CDBG grant application and other grant opportunities commenting that at the last Town Board meeting there were discussions on how to allocate a possible CDBG grant which centered on sports and the Boys & Girls Club. He felt these organizations already had facilities and felt a large portion of citizens would be left out. A community center in the downtown area would benefit all citizens and could be used for many types of events. He would like to see this suggestion considered during the discussions regarding the CDBG grant and other possible resources. Commissioner Bray asked where he would propose this type venue be located with Person responding "in the downtown historic district where all the events take place now". One of the buildings available is where the community college previously offered pottery classes and is owned by the Arts Incubator.

**GENERIC PUBLIC HEARING FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT APPLICATIONS:** Town Manager Brower advised the public hearing has been properly advertised and provides an opportunity for citizens to voice ideas they may have regarding CDBG projects. Mayor Johnson opened the public hearing at 7:12 p.m. Commissioner Constantino began by stating information for a Siler City Soccer Facility Improvement Project has been placed before the Board and asked Dan Stout to speak on the issue.

**Dan Stout, 3936 Chatham Church Rd., Sanford, NC:** Mr. Stout explained in looking at demographics in the Siler City Recreation Department that females and Hispanic-Latino kids were underserved and one the main reasons they would like to see a soccer complex at Paul Braxton field. There is also hope to increase economic development by bringing tournaments to Siler City where the kids, parents and others will eat, purchase gas, shop and possibly stay in motels. Stout advised there is much potential for the Paul Braxton complex as it is being used for many different activities in the "heart" of Siler City. The field at Paul Braxton is currently being used for softball/baseball practice and soccer games. The Jordan Matthews High School soccer team also practices on this field. In Phase I of the project, the hope is to convert this field into a regulation size field which would be the only one in the County which would "create a source for the Chatham Soccer League to come in and cooperate with the community on a whole and help facilitate soccer in this community". Proposed amendments include filling in the baseball infield with grass by seeding or sod, removing one light post, installation of irrigation, grading of field, new fencing and signage for local businesses and Siler City attractions. As a reminder, the project has a pledged gift from the Oak Foundation in the amount of \$40,000. The proposed amendments have an estimated cost of \$35,000. Stout advised San-Lee Irrigation in Sanford recommends the possible installation of a well that would cost approximately \$12,000. Regarding the CDBG funds, the group has come up with a Phase II to include more fencing around the park, improve bathroom facilities at Paul Braxton Gym, signage, improvements to Community Center, addition of futsal court, equipment shed, goalkeeper artificial turf area and sound equipment. There could also be improvements on soccer fields at Bray Park as well as improvements to the bathroom facilities. Commissioner Cheek stated he has been contacted by citizens that would like to see the field at Paul Braxton be used for more than one purpose noting they would like to see the ball field serve a dual purpose and keep an area for softball/baseball. Commissioner Bray and Mayor ProTem Grimes advised they had also had citizens voice concerns about the same issue. Commissioner Price asked what the cost would be for installing sod with Stout answering he believes it will be accomplished through volunteers. In response to another question from Price, Stout stated that he was not sure what type of prep work would be needed before the sod was installed. Commissioner Bray asked if there was a special mower required for upkeep of Bermuda grass with an answer of not sure. Mayor ProTem Grimes asked if soccer play has been held at the Paul Braxton field recently by the Chatham Soccer League without getting permission? Recreation Director Dones advised the Chatham Soccer League had two tournaments, the first one in which they did have permission, but Dones was not notified of a tournament held this past week-end until a couple of coaches advised him of it on the Thursday before. Dones made phone calls seeking information on the tournament as the fields have to be reserved, paperwork filled out and paid for before the event through the Siler City Recreation Department. In response to a question from Grimes as to who will be responsible for the upkeep of the field, Stout responded the Town would be responsible. Grimes then asked how much additional cost above what it cost now would be required? Stout stated it has not been estimated; however, Recreation Director Dones advised in response to Commissioner Bray's question earlier regarding a special mower, that the Town could mow the field with the zero turn mower they currently have, but it would not look professional like the group wants it to look. The type of mower required for the upkeep of this professional regulation soccer field would cost at a minimum \$56,290.00. When visiting a soccer complex in Cary, Dones stated they advised the mowing of Bermuda grass is very important with mowing required sometimes once a day and sometimes twice a day. This would require additional staff. Dones recommended a field supervisor to maintain the field for things such as mowing, trash pick-up, bathroom clean-up and would be necessary 7 days a week. He also stated the field supervisor could help with security of the field in addition to the locked gate and police patrol. Commissioner Price advised nutrient requirements for Bermuda grass will be more expensive than what is currently required for fescue/rye grass. Grimes feels it is a "very expensive proposition". Commissioner Constantino

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stated that a portion of the expense for maintaining the field is already being spent for the current upkeep. There is also expense for the supervision of the field. He pointed out this soccer field will bring many people to Siler City and allow children to play on a field in Siler City instead of traveling to Pittsboro or another town. The soccer field would generate a lot of activity in the downtown area and also generate monies that we do not currently have. Constantino pointed out the possibility of raising the \$10.00 rental fee for the field. Bray asked how the charge for the use of the field will work? Constantino commented it would work the same as it does at Bray Park. Dones explained that for softball/baseball tournaments at Bray Park, the organizer would come to Dones to rent Bray Park for the use of the fields in which they are charged at the end of the tournament for the number of fields used and the number of hours. The organization sponsoring the tournament is responsible for charging admission which they keep. The Town will have the fields ready for play. Again, the fee is \$10.00 per hour per field and if lights are needed the fee is increased to \$20.00. Commissioner Bray advised that the Jordan-Matthews soccer games do not generate enough money to pay for officials. In response to a question from Commissioner Siler, Dones stated any monies made from the concession stand goes to the organization. The rental fee for the use of the concession stand is \$100 per day. Commissioner Cheek again asked if the field could be used as a multi-purpose field with part as a soccer field and the other used as a softball field? Dones replied it is not feasible to have a regulation size soccer field and a softball field. He did mention they could practice on the field but it would not be the dirt diamond. Commissioner Constantino pointed out the field could be multi-purpose, but not for baseball because the baselines will be worn out; however, it could be used for a lacrosse field. In response to a question from Constantino, Dones stated that during baseball season there is a daily request for practice of softball and baseball at Paul Braxton. Town Manager Brower asked Dones to estimate the monies earned on a typical week-end during a softball tournament on Saturday and Sunday at Bray Park with all 4 fields being utilized with Dones answering \$1600 to \$1800. Commissioner Adams pointed out that the fields at Paul Braxton were used years ago for football and baseball at the same time and asked why that could not be the case today? Discussion ensued regarding the "rough survey" and the orientation of the soccer field and why it is located where it is. Constantino advised this orientation best meets the needs for things such as warm-up practice areas, etc. Commissioner Bray asked that if the grant monies are received for a particular project, does it have to be used for that purpose permanently? Brower stated he did know that follow-up inspections from CDBG personnel would be performed and that HUA believes the project would need to run for at least 5 years. Tony Patnode, Engineer with Hobbs Upchurch & Associates, added that this is one of the newest grants, but his understanding is the same as Brower. Constantino reminded Board members that the Oak Foundation has pledged \$40,000 for Phase I of the Paul Braxton soccer field project and that these CDBG grant funds will be used for other improvements at Paul Braxton and Bray Park. Grimes asked Dones to provide the projected costs for the maintenance of the proposed soccer field at Paul Braxton versus the current costs. Price feels that if the field can serve two different purposes instead of one, there would be less resistance from citizens and feels maybe there is a way to configure the proposed soccer field another way to allow for this without interfering with each other. Commissioner Bray asked if money could be saved by using fescue and rye grass instead of Bermuda stating that the \$56,000 needed to purchase a special mower could possibly be used for a downtown community center? The response was that fescue and rye will not last as long as Bermuda grass. Commissioners Constantino, Adams and Planning Director Jack Meadows will work on a reconfiguration of the proposed soccer field. Those interested in a community center downtown will need to bring information to the next meeting on site location, purchase or lease on building, estimate on repairs, etc. Bray asked if the CDBG monies can be used for leasing instead of purchasing? Patnode will ask the community development experts at the state level before answering. He pointed out tonight's public hearing is generic with the next public hearing on October 15<sup>th</sup> being project specific. It would be beneficial to have the application in draft form for the second public hearing, but is not necessary. The submittal deadline for the CDBG Application is October 31, 2012.

**Sara Marion, Director of Boys & Girls Club:** Ms. Marion stated renovations at Paul Braxton School will begin soon with their hopes in the future of bringing the entire complex to its original condition. She has a vision of picnic areas, playground improvements, flower garden with benches, upgrading the grounds to make this "the center of the community" as it is in the downtown area making it accessible to many by walking or riding bicycles. She reminded Board members that 73% of the kids that attend the Boys & Girls Club are at poverty level or below. They served 158 children last year with an expectation of 175 next year hoping to increase the number to 200 when the move is made to Braxton School. Marion stated she likes the idea of the soccer field with the fencing and police patrol as there is some vandalism in that area. With the Braxton School located in the same complex, these two projects would work well together pointing out it will benefit kids, adults and be an economic plus for the Town. She advised they currently have approximately \$155,000 to spend now for the renovations; however, any amount up to \$30,000 would allow them to complete the total project. Commissioner Bray brought up that since the County owns this building and the Boys & Girls Club will be leasing it from the County, can the CDBG grant monies be used for a building that is being leased and not owned and asked what the difference would be between leasing the Braxton School for the Boys & Girls Club versus leasing a building downtown for a community center? Brower pointed out one is a publicly owned building which CDBG monies can be used for where the other would be a privately owned building. This is something Patnode will check on and advise Brower before the next meeting.

**Bray Park Bathrooms - Donald Dones, Director of Parks & Recreation:** Dones explained he researched information for bathrooms at Bray Park as requested by the Town Board. He pointed out that portable toilets are now being used on the lower level fields in which a permanent bathroom would be a welcomed amenity. Estimated costs for a 4 stall 2 lavatory prefab unit is \$65,500. Additional costs for electrical and plumbing connections and concrete sidewalk and apron would bring the total estimated costs to \$81,000. A similar unit could be located on the upper level fields to supplement the existing bathroom facility at an estimated cost of \$72,000. The \$9,000 difference is the that the sewer pumping and water line extension would not be necessary. Commissioner Adams stated he would like to see local contractors contacted and keep the money in our local economy instead of possibly going with the company Donald has been communicating with in Washington state. Several Board members agreed that they feel a stick built bathroom facility could be built cheaper or for the same price. Brower pointed out there was not enough time to contact an architect and obtain a set of plans in the time limits of having the information for the Board at this meeting. He asked Patnode if the Town were fortunate enough to receive some grant funds, could they then go out for sealed bids for a stick built facility or prefab unit? Patnode responded that the important thing is to budget money for the facility and then go out for sealed bids to see which one is more cost

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effective. Commissioners thanked Dones for a quick turn around on these estimated numbers with Commissioner Bray again pointing out that the Bray Park facility is used every day. Mayor ProTem Grimes asked if the County was still contributing funds to the Siler City Recreation program with Brower answering it was eliminated last year. This is what triggered the doubling of fees for out of town residents. Brower advised that Town crews have made some preliminary repairs at the Boling Lane tennis court. Dones pointed out that the cost of overlaying the existing tennis court with 1-1/2-inch asphalt will cost \$8,000. After the resurfacing is accomplished, a professional company will need to paint and seal new games lines which have been estimated to cost \$3,000. Repair and tightening of the existing fence is estimated to cost about \$500 for a total estimated repair cost of \$11,500. Bray Park tennis courts were resurfaced and repainted in 2008; however, spider cracks in the current surface need repair. A professional company has estimated sealing crack repairs and the application of a rubber clear epoxy to cost \$2,000. The cost to repair and tighten the fence is \$500 with an estimated total repair cost of \$2,500.

At the end of the public hearing, Roger Person commented that the Arts Incubator is asking \$230,000 for the downtown building that could possibly be used for a community center and that \$500,000 in renovations have been done on this building. Mayor ProTem Grimes advised he would not consider paying that amount of money for that building. Bray asked that if this building could be converted to a community center what type of renovations would need to be made with Person responding he has not been in the building and is not sure. Mayor Johnson stated he believes it is in good shape and is one of the nicer buildings. In response to a question from Bray as to what type of activities could be held, Person stated many different types of public activities and could be used for things such as dance studio, music venues, Milo Holt Film Festival, showing movies, etc. Person also commented that "the sports thing is wonderful and Siler City is known for its sports, but we are leaving 80% of the rest of the community out". Mayor Johnson closed the public hearing at 8:34 p.m.

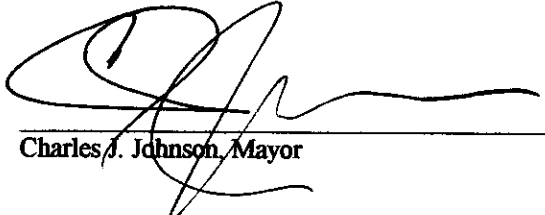
**NCDOT PEDESTRIAN PLANNING GRANT RELATED ITEMS, JACK MEADOWS, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** Meadows advised the Board that the NCDOT Pedestrian Planning Grant package was received on August 13, 2012. The estimated cost of this project is \$31,000, with \$24,800 coming from federal funds, \$3,100 from the Town and \$3,100 from NC STEP. Board direction on establishing a steering committee is needed. Meadows noted there are approximately 15 persons needed for this committee with about half of them being staff. He needs about 8 more people in the community and would like the Board to help in putting those names together. Meadows has a list of persons who may be interested in serving that he will share with Board members. A motion to approve the municipal reimbursement agreement for the NCDOT Pedestrian Planning Grant was made by Commissioner Cheek, seconded by Commissioner Siler and unanimously carried. Commissioner Adams made a motion for approval to submit RFQ seeking qualified planning firms and was unanimously approved upon a second by Commissioner Siler.

**DIRECTION ON SELECTING TOWN MANAGER:** It was decided to draft an advertisement for the town manager's position and send to the Mayor and Board to review. Commissioner Cheek would like to see "Master of Public Administration preferred" in the ad. The ad will run in newspapers, NC League Letter, Southern Cities publication, NCLM website, Town's website and Brower will post on the Manager's Listserv with resumes due by Friday, October 26, 2012. Resumes will be sent to Town Clerk Karen Alman who will in turn get them out to the Mayor and Board to review. Brower stated he is willing to do what he can to make a smooth transition and also offered his help in the future, if needed. Commissioner Constantino noted in attending the Essential of Municipal Government class that they mentioned offering a service as a consultant and guidance in the hiring of personnel such as a town manager. He is not sure whether there is a charge or not. Brower will check into this.

**OUTDOOR STORAGE AND APPEARANCE OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES INFORMATION:** Commissioner Adams asked that Planning Director Jack Meadows research and bring back to the next meeting wording that might cover a specific area ordinance regarding this issue in the downtown area. Adams is trying to keep the ordinance from affecting businesses in the ETJ.

**CLOSED SESSION:** At 8:58 p.m., Commissioner Adams made a motion to adjourn from regular session and convene into closed session for the purpose of property acquisition. Upon a second by Commissioner Price, the motion unanimously carried.

The Board reconvened into regular session at 9:05 p.m. Mayor Johnson reminded Board members of the invitation to participate in the parade for homecoming at Jordan Matthews on October 5th. With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

  
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Charles J. Johnson, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Karen C. Alman, Town Clerk