

BETHUNE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Teleconference

July 9, 2020

The Bethune Town Council met Thursday, July 9, 2020, via teleconference with the Honorable Mayor Charles McCoy presiding.

Mayor McCoy called the meeting to order.

Don Witham opened the meeting with prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of the June 11th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th, 2020 Meetings were read. Councilman Heflin made the motion that all these minutes be accepted as read. Councilwoman Hunter seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial statements were provided to each of the Town council members and to the mayor for review.

Old business:

Councilman Witham gave an update on the water project, but first reported on the recent Covid 19 testing held in Bethune. There were 88 tested. Everything went very well despite the fact that it rained and the site ran out of test kits. Hopefully, another testing can be held in August. Estimated to be either October or November before the water project will be finished. At present, we are down to two crews. Should you hear of any problems, Councilman Witham asked to let him know. There will be 9% rate increase effective September 1st. This will not affect our fee schedule. We are still having problems with some unpaid water bills, and are looking into a debt-set off program whereby any future new customer leaving an unpaid water bill would be reported through proper channels to the SC Department of Revenue and that amount could eventually be returned to us. Councilman Heflin mentioned the drainage problem at intersection of Hwy. #1 and 341 when it rains, and wondered if SCDOT could be of help. Julian Burns, County Council Chairman, stated that if John would send him a memo with the particulars, he would see what he could do.

Councilman Heflin mentioned that by law our Ordinances need to be updated. Santee Lynches Council of Governments will handle this at a total cost of \$14,673.12, or five quarterly payments of \$2,934.62 each. Councilman Heflin made the motion to accept this cost. Councilwoman Hunter seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

New business:

Councilman Witham stated that the Brittingham Group wished to review our audit with Council and asked for a date. After some discussion, it was decided that the Clerk would obtain some dates from them and get back with Council. It was agreed that the audit presentation should be at a regular meeting.

County Council Chairman Julian Burns mentioned several items: Council still working to expand wi-fi throughout the county as the county did receive some funding; Prisma agreed to take over the hospital from LifePoint and will help fund ambulance service and, therefore, no need to raise taxes. With the need to save our small businesses, the Council donated a million dollars to a committee that Amy Kinard, Kershaw County Chamber of Commerce, is spearheading to help keep businesses afloat in these difficult times. The Council hopes that our towns will consider a mask mandatory or at least encourage our citizens to wear masks and to social distance. In closing, Chairman Burns congratulated the Mayor and Council on the way they had handled the protest marches.

Councilman Heflin mentioned a problem with dilapidated houses and inquired of Mr. Burns as to how the County handles this problem. Chairman Burns stated that the previous chairman did away with the authority to enforce; they do not have a county-wide service. Councilman Witham stated that he had a copy of an article that he would like for Mr. Burns to read pertaining to this subject and would forward it to him.

Councilwoman Hunter inquired of Chairman Burns as to how the County Council has been conducting their council meetings. She feels that our Council meetings should be held at town hall with all those in attendance wearing masks and sitting six feet apart. It was agreed to have our next meeting at Town Hall.

Amy Kinard spoke about several things happening at the Chamber: completed the membership renewals; have new board members; and on-line marketing enhancements for members. They also continue to update their website.

Councilman Heflin presented to Council a copy of Bethune's new Mask Ordinance for review. Councilman Witham made the motion to accept Ordinance as printed. Councilman Lucas seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

In 2015, zoning for property at 106 Walton Street was changed to commercial as it became a doctor's office. However, it was stipulated in the minutes that if at any time it does not exist as a doctor's office, it will revert back to residential and no action was needed. Therefore, 106 Walton Street is rezoned to residential.

Councilman Heflin made a motion to accept the bid of Powers Roofing & Home Services for a total of \$18,401.15 to install/repair Town Hall roof. Councilwoman Hunter seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Copy of specifications attached hereto and made a part of these minutes.

After brief discussion regarding a town website, Councilman Heflin made a motion to obtain a website at a cost not to exceed \$10,000. Councilman Lucas seconded the motion. Motion passed with a 3 yes, 2 no vote.

Mayor McCoy received a request from the Bethune Fire Department for a donation from the Town. Since their request was going out to all citizens, and the Council members had not received their request yet, it was decided to wait until next month before a decision was made as to the donation amount.

Councilwoman Hunter made the motion to adjourn, and Councilman Heflin seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Stephens

Clerk

Attachments

Present:

Mayor Charles McCoy

Don Witham

John Heflin

Cindy Hunter

Jimmy Lucas

Unapproved 8-03-2020