

REGULAR MEETING

The Town Council of the Town of La Grange, North Carolina met in Regular Session at the Town Hall on January 7, 2008, at 7 p.m. with the following present:

Mayor Woodard H. Gurley; Mayor Pro Tem Bobby Wooten; Council Members Larry Gladney, Elliott Sutton, George Koonce, Gregory Rouse and Clifton Harrison; Town Manager, John P. Craft; Town Attorney, George Jenkins, Jr.; Town Clerk, Nelda H. Johnson, CMC.

Absent: None

Guest: 9

ITEMS 1, 2, 3: CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, WELCOME

Mayor Gurley called the meeting to order and asked Mayor Pro Tem Wooten to give the invocation. Mayor Gurley welcomed all guest

ITEM 4: PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

ITEM 5: PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mayor Gurley announced that Ms. Carolyn Ellis had requested to speak during the Public Comment Period.

Ms. Ellis spoke in reference to the third annual Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday parade celebration on behalf of the Youth Council of the NAACP. The parade is scheduled for Monday, January 21, 2008, at 2 p m and requested the presence of the Council. Ms. Ellis thanked the Council and Police Chief John L. Sullivan in advance for their presence and participation for this scheduled event.

Ms. Ellis spoke stating that she was not aware that she needed to notify the Town each year concerning this event. The Clerk had made Ms. Ellis aware that a parade permit needed to be on file with the Town as well as the Department of Transportation has to be contacted every year to get approval to close state roads that were involved in the parade route. Also, the Town has to make arrangements to close/block Town owned streets and emergency personnel (fire and rescue) have to be notified concerning the closures during the specified time of the road closures. Ms. Ellis asked that since this was an annual event, was it necessary to get permission from the Town each year.

Manager Craft stated that there was a formal process that the Town must follow in order to request closure of state roads/streets. Although this event is planned on an annual basis, the Town does need a written request from the Youth Council of the NAACP concerning the parade stating the date, time and parade route. Manager Craft informed Ms. Ellis that in the agenda tonight was an item requesting that the Town Council approve this event on an annual basis but a written request from the Youth Council of the NAACP would still be required every year.

ITEM 6: AMENDMENT(S) TO AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Manager Craft requested that one item be added to the agenda:

ITEM 9B: Establish a date of January 16, 2008, for a Special Meeting to discuss two items: (1) Discussion of the Marketing Campaign for the Town (2) Formally Approve the PARTF Grant Application to be Submitted by January 31, 2008.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Wooten, seconded by Council Member Koonce to add the above item (ITEM 9B) to the original agenda. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion.

ITEM 7: CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of Minutes
 - i. December 3, 3007, Regular Session
 - ii. December 10, 2007, Recessed Session
 - iii. January 2, 2008, Recessed Session
- b. Approval of 2008 Fire Department Slate of Officers (Copy hereto attached)
- c. Approval of 2008 Fire Department Roster (Copy hereto attached)

Motion was made by Council Member Sutton, seconded by Council Member Rouse to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion.

ITEM 8: NEW BUSINESS

ITEM 8A: INFORMATIONAL ITEM – HOLIDAY WORK SCHEDULE FOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY

The Town offices will be closed on Monday, January 21, 2008, in observance of the holiday.

ITEM 8B: APPROVAL OF ANNUAL STREET CLOSURES FOR THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. PARADE, GARDEN SPOT FESTIVAL AND CHRISTMAS PARADE ON AN ANNUAL BASIS

Manager Craft requested that the Council approve the closure of the streets for all of these events for all future occurrences as long as these events remain substantially the same to eliminate the need to present it to the Council every year. All that would be required would be to have a written request from a representative from the La Grange Chamber of Commerce and a written request from a representative from the sponsors of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Parade to enable the Town's staff to request the closure of the State Roads/Streets when appropriate for all future occurrences of these events. Any other event(s) that need streets or roads to be closed would continue to require the Council's approval.

Motion was made by Council Member Gladney, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Wooten to grant the above request as presented by Manager Craft. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion.

ITEM 8C: DISCUSSION RELATED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PROCEDURE FOR ELECTION OF MAYOR PRO TEMPORE

Manager Craft stated he was recommending that the Town Council establish a procedure for all subsequent elections of a Mayor Pro Tempore. Manager Craft's recommendation was to establish a procedure in keeping with Robert's Rules of Order which should avoid any confusion in the future.

Manager Craft discussed in detail the procedure that should be followed according to Robert's Rules of Order.

Mayor Gurley stated the Town's Charter had the following information and read directly from the Ordinance Book.

"In accordance with applicable State laws, the Town Council shall appoint one of its members to act as Mayor Pro Tempore to perform the duties of the Mayor in the Mayor's absence. The Mayor Pro Tempore, as such, shall have no fixed term of office but shall serve in such capacity of the pleasure of the remaining Board Members."

Motion was made by Council Member Gladney, seconded by Council Member Koonce to approve Manager Craft's recommendation for all future elections of Mayor Pro Tempore according to the procedure of Robert's Rules of Order as recommended. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion.

ITEM 8D: DISCUSSION RELATED TO THE "SUMMER HOUSE" (CARETAKER'S BUILDING) WITHIN THE MUNICIPAL CEMETERY

Manager Craft informed the Council that the "Summer House" (as it is commonly referred) is the building located at our Municipal Cemetery (Fairview Cemetery) that has been used in the past by the cemetery caretaker to store equipment and tools. The structure needs major repair to the exterior and interior and one quote received for repairs is approximately \$3000; which does not include the replacement of the roof. This building sits on two large lots that could be sold for grave sites for approximately \$10,000. The building is no longer used and only serves as a landmark within the cemetery. Manager Craft stated that the building was a unique feature and could hold some sentimental value to the citizens; but, looking at it from a business perspective, it would make more sense to demolish the building and sell the lots.

Manager Craft asked the Council for their wishes and direction concerning the repair or demolition of the building. He asked the Council to determine the maximum amount the Council is willing to spend for the repairs, if it was their intent; or, to demolish the building and make the lots available for sale.

Discussion followed among the Council and Manager Craft concerning the "Summer House" at Fairview Cemetery.

Council Member Harrison stated that he was aware that the building was at the cemetery but never looked at from a perspective if the building was needed.

Mayor Gurley stated that he knew that the building had been neglected over the years but possibly did have some sentimental value for some people. Mayor Gurley thought the original purpose of the building was a gathering place for people to wait after a funeral until a grave was covered and flowers placed. Later, the Maintenance Department for the cemetery kept their equipment in the building.

Council Member Gladney asked if the building served a purpose at the present time and Manager Craft stated that the Town staff does not utilize the building for anything related to the upkeep of the cemetery.

Council Member Sutton stated that he felt that the building held historical value for the cemetery and that part of Town, but did not know exactly how old the building might be.

Mayor Pro Tem Wooten stated that he could appreciate the sentimental value, but saw no reason to invest in the building when the Town did not plan to utilize it.

Council Member Koonce agreed with Mayor Pro Tem Wooten.

Motion was made by Council Member Rouse, seconded by Council Member Gladney to demolish the building and make the lots available for sale. Motion carried 5-1 in favor of motion. Council Member Sutton opposed.

ITEM 8E: APPROVAL OF PROPOSED UPDATED WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

Manager Craft stated that in preparation for the Town's submission of the NC Rural Center's Clean Water Partners Infrastructure grant application the Town needed to update the Town's Water and Sewer Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan. Manager Craft stated that the original plan was presented by the former Town Manager and approved by the Council in 2002. The updated proposed plan is in keeping with the original plan other than the time period, some modifications to the proposed figures and the installation of the lift station generators. Manager Craft stated that this plan was not

set in stone with a timeline in which the Town had to comply and it was his recommendation to approve the Amended Water and Sewer Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan.

Motion was made by Council Member Gladney, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Wooten to approve the Updated Water and Sewer Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion. Copy of Plan hereto attached.

ITEM 8F: APPROVAL OF MUNICIPAL EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT PLAN

Manager Craft stated that he had been in the process of preparing an equipment replacement plan that will enable the Town to equalize expenditures to replace equipment over the coming years while maintaining a fleet that is in good repair to minimize the likelihood of costly major repairs on older equipment that is nearing the end of its service life.

Manager Craft stated that he had prepared a plan that accomplishes these objectives and enables the Town to transition away from lease purchases to replace aging equipment. Under this plan, the Town would have to make only one more lease purchase to bring the Town's fleet of major equipment to a point where it is replaced regularly, which should eliminate the need for costly repairs to aging equipment. The plan also enables the Town to make equal payments for the next several years with minimal increases in the next couple of years to accomplish the intended goals.

Manager Craft stated that he wanted to review and discuss the Proposed Municipal Equipment Replacement Schedule by each fund.

Manager Craft provided schedules showing the department, kind of vehicle/equipment, year of the vehicle/equipment and scheduled replacement Fiscal Years 2007-2008 through 2015-2016 for the General Fund, Water and Sewer Fund and Electric Fund. All departments and their respective equipment/vehicle replacement timelines and projected costs were reviewed in detail.

After discussion and review concerning the replacement schedule in all funds, motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Wooten, seconded by Council Member Harrison to approve the use of drug seizure funds plus \$6,000 in Capital Improvement Funds from the Police Department budget to purchase a fourth police vehicle this Fiscal Year to add to the vehicle fleet. (Note: The drug seizure funds must be utilized this Fiscal Year in order to be used for the purchase of a vehicle as these funds cannot be used to replace vehicles, only to add to the fleet.) Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Wooten, seconded by Council Member Harrison to adopt the Proposed Municipal Equipment Replacement Schedule as presented by Manager Craft. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion.

ITEM 8G: INFORMATIONAL ITEM – CITIZEN OF THE YEAR BANQUET

Manager Craft informed the Council that the Chamber of Commerce has scheduled their annual Citizen of the Year Banquet for Tuesday, January 29, 2008, to be held at the Rotary Club Building. All Council Members and their guest are invited and Manager Craft requested that each Council Member notify the Town Clerk by Friday, January 11, 2008, if they plan to attend.

ITEM 8H: PRESENTATION OF THE ANNUAL AUDIT (FY 2006-2007)

Manager Craft recognized Dean Horne with Pittard Perry and Crone to present the FY 2006-2007 audit report.

Mr. Horne gave an overview of the financial audit report for the General Fund, Water and Sewer Fund and Electric Fund stating that the budgeted revenues versus the budgeted expenditures were very favorable as the Town operated within the budget. The State requires a Fund Balance of 8% of the total budget and the Town was at 49%,

well above the required percentage. The final audit figures reflect that the Town's financial condition continues to be strong and is improving.

Mr. Horne did inform the Council that the State of North Carolina is a party to the audit contract representing the Town. The State of North Carolina receives a copy of the audit first and has to sign and approve that the audit is accepted and is in accordance with accounting standards. This is required before the audit is presented to the Town for approval.

Motion was made by Council Member Sutton, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Wooten to approve the FY 2006-2007 financial audit as presented by Dean Horne. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion.

ITEM 9: OLD BUSINESS

ITEM 9A: APPROVAL OF PHASING PLAN FOR PARTF GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED RECREATION COMPLEX

Manager Craft stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to develop a phasing plan for the proposed recreation facility. Manager Craft stated that he had met with Mark Garner, with Rivers and Associates this morning and Mr. Garner had given to him a Preliminary Opinion of Probable Cost at Complete Development of the proposed Municipal Multi-Purpose Recreation Complex. The projected cost was in excess of \$4.7 Million.

Manager Craft stated that Mr. Garner already discussed with the Council indicating that the projected cost would probably be around 2.7 Million. The latest estimates from Mr. Garner projected costs to be approximately \$4.7 million.

Manager Craft stated that he had related to Mr. Garner that he was shocked at the preliminary cost estimate. Manager Craft discussed in detail the figures that Mr. Garner had presented and how they were probably calculated.

Manager Craft began with the site development, which is the backbone of the facility, and continued through the site amenities, which includes the playground, playground fencing, picnic shelter with restrooms, paved walking trail, batting cages, flagpoles, combined concession and restrooms; multi-purpose field; four softball fields; two tennis courts; a three-court basketball facility. Additional costs factored in were contingency, topographic survey, design and construction administration engineering, construction inspection, and regulatory/administrative permits and fees.

Manager Craft stated that he felt that the Town could have a great deal of cost savings in several areas by doing some of the work by Town personnel and by contracting the project out itself. The Clean Water Management Trust Fund Grant would pay for the irrigation system. Also, the Town could downsize the project in several areas.

Manager Craft told the Council that based on the figures presented by Rivers and Associates plus the Town has to match the PARTF grant funds each time the Town is awarded the grant, he was not comfortable at this time to continue pursuing the PARTF grant this year. Manager Craft stated that he was definitely for the plan and wanted to see the recreation facility and hated to delay it; but, did not want to make a rush decision on a phasing plan that he was unsure of the cost involved. Mark Garner, with Rivers and Associates, has to know immediately the decision on the first phase if the Town Council still wanted to submit the PARTF application for funding in 2008.

Manager Craft and the Council discussed at length the cost of the proposed recreation facility and the Town applying for a PARTF grant for 2008.

Manager Craft recommended to the Council that in order to proceed with the proposed recreation facility, more investigation should be done to determine the cost and begin fundraising efforts and be ready to apply for the PARTF grant in January 2009.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Wooten, seconded by Council Member Harrison to table the proposed recreation facility at this time as to allow time for the Town Manager to investigate cost estimates and then apply for the PARTF grant in 2009. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion.

ITEM 9B: ESTABLISH A DATE OF JANUARY 16, 2008, FOR A SPECIAL MEETING TO DISCUSS TWO ITEMS (1) DISCUSSION RELATED TO THE MARKETING CAMPAIGN FOR THE TOWN (2) FORMALLY APPROVE THE PARTF GRANT APPLICATION TO BE SUBMITTED BY JANUARY 31, 2008

Due to the PARTF grant being tabled in ITEM 9A, the above item was not discussed.

ITEM 10: CLOSED SESSION

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Wooten, seconded by Council Member Harrison to go into Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (4) (5) (6) (7). Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion.

ITEM 11: ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Council Member Sutton, seconded by Council Member Harrison to adjourn. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion.

Nelda H. Johnson, CMC, Town Clerk

Woodard H. Gurley, Mayor