

## PUBLIC HEARING

The Town Council of the Town of La Grange, North Carolina held a Public Hearing on June 13, 2007, at 7 pm at the Town Hall with the following present:

Mayor Woodard H. Gurley; Mayor Pro Tem Bobby R. Wooten; Council Members Larry Gladney, Walter Ellis, Jr., George Koonce, Elliott Sutton; Town Manager, John P. Craft; Nelda H. Johnson, CMC, Town Clerk.

Absent: Jeff Thomas, Council Member  
George Jenkins, Jr., Town Attorney

Guest: 2

Mayor Gurley called the meeting to order and ask Council Member Sutton to give the invocation.

Mayor Gurley turned the meeting over to Manager Craft.

Manager Craft requested that before the Public Hearing opened that a budget amendment be approved concerning the new council chambers addition expenses. Construction was progressing well and contractors would need to be paid before June 30.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Wooten, seconded by Council Member Ellis to approve the amendment. Motion carried 5-0 in favor of motion. Copy of budget amendment hereto attached.

Motion was made by Council Member Ellis, seconded by Council Member Sutton to open the public hearing for the purpose of hearing public comment on the 2007-2008 Municipal Budget. Motion carried 5-0 in favor of motion.

There was no public comment.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Wooten, seconded by Council Member Sutton to close the Public Hearing. Motion carried 5-0 in favor of motion.

- Manager Craft reported that Public Works Superintendent, Tyrone Morgan, went to the City of Kinston to look at their grapple machine that is used for the purpose of picking up trash, limbs and debris piled along side the street. Tyrone did not feel that this type of machine was right for our needs in picking street trash for our customers. The cost of a grapple machine could cost \$65,000 to \$100,000. One additional public services worker at an entry level position with full benefits would be approximately \$26,300. To pay for one worker, water rates, sewer rates and garbage rates would have to be raised \$1 for each service.
- Manager Craft stated that he did not recommend hiring an additional full time worker or temporary worker for the Public Works Department. Manager Craft's recommendation was to continue to use inmate labor as this program was working out well and the Town had been using their services only for a short period of time.
- The purchase of vehicles used by the Town was discussed.

Mayor Gurley stated that the Town should go through State Contract procedures to purchase all vehicles.

The Town's policy for the Police Department concerning the "taking home" of police vehicles was discussed. At present, a full time officer is allowed to drive their assigned police car home if they live within 15 miles of La Grange.

After discussion, motion was made by Council Member Gladney, second by Council Member Ellis to change the "15 mile policy" to 20 miles for all full time police officers except for police investigator positions and that policy would be a 25 mile policy. Motion failed 2-3. Mayor Pro Tem Wooten, Council Member Koonce and Council Member Sutton opposed.

Motion was made by Council Member Sutton, seconded by Council Member Koonce to change the "15 mile policy" allowing full time officers, that live within 20 miles to take home their assigned police vehicle; also, the give Manager Craft the authority to make the decision on investigator positions with the Police Department if they live outside that "20 mile policy. Motion carried 4-1 in favor of motion. Mayor Pro Tem Wooten opposed.

- The Town's policy on recycling was discussed.
- The Town's policy on Town personnel reporting water leaks to the customers or landlords was discussed.

There being no further discussion concerning the FY 2007-2008 Municipal budget, motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Wooten, seconded by Council Member Ellis to adopt the budget as prepared by Manager Craft. Motion carried 5-0 in favor of motion. Copy of budget ordinance hereto attached. Copy of budget and rate schedules on file in Clerk's office. Highlights of the approved budget are:

- 3% Cost of Living Adjustment for all full time employees and a limited number of merit increases
- No tax rate increase
- Purchase of 3 new vehicles for the Police Department though a 4-year lease
- One additional investigator position in the Police Department
- \$42,000 Gang Grant Department Expenditures
- \$50,000 for Storm Drainage work in the Eastwood area
- Decrease in water rates
- New rates established for irrigation - residential or commercial users (water not connected to sewer use that is used by customers for sprinkler systems, gardens, etc.)
- Increase in sewer rates
- Purchase of a \$36,000 vacuum trailer
- No electrical rate increase
- \$35,000 Marketing Campaign for Town of La Grange

There being no further business, motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Wooten, seconded by Council Member Gladney to adjourn. Motion carried 5-0 in favor of motion.

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Nelda H. Johnson, CMC, Town Clerk

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Woodard H. Gurley, Mayor