

REGULAR MEETING

The Town Council of the Town of La Grange, North Carolina met in Regular Session at the Town Hall on March 6, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. with the following present:

Mayor Pro Tem Bobby R. Wooten; Council Members Larry Gladney, Walter Ellis, Jr., George Koonce, Elliott Sutton and Jeff Thomas; Town Manager, John P. Craft; Town Clerk, Phyllis T. Harrison, CMC; Town Attorney, George Jenkins, Jr.

Absent: Mayor Woodard H. Gurley

Guest: 10

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

Mayor Pro Tem Wooten called the meeting to order. Council Member Koonce gave the invocation. Mayor Pro Tem Wooten welcomed all guest and Council Members especially Chad Horne who was working on his merit badge in communications for Boy Scouts.

ITEM 4: PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no public hearings for this meeting.

ITEM 5: PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no request from citizens to speak to the Council.

ITEM 6: AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Manager Craft requested that Mr. Norman Joyner who represents Frink Alumni Association be allowed to address the Council and that we amend the Agenda to put him at 9A.

Motion was made by Council Member Thomas and seconded by Council Member Ellis to approve the original agenda and amend it to add Mr. Joyner. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion.

ITEM 8: CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by Council Member Gladney and seconded by Council Member Thomas to approve the consent agenda which includes the following items:

- A. Approval of February Minutes**
- B. Approval of Seller's Agreement With Gov Deals** – Copy of Agreement hereto attached.

Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion.

ITEM 9A: MR. NORMAN JOYNER REPRESENTING FRINK ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Mr. Joyner thanked the Council for allowing him to speak. He stated that by the middle of April that their financing would be in place to start work on the Cultural Center in La Grange that would be handled by Frink Alumni Association. He said hopefully by July 1, 2006 ground breaking ceremonies would be held. Mr. Joyner said that the facility would have a multi-purpose room that could be used by citizens in La Grange and the surrounding areas. They would also provide Senior Citizens programs, K-5 programs and numerous other programs. Mr. Joyner said they would be working in conjunction with the Goldsboro YMCA for several programs.

9B: AUTHORIZE THE TOWN ATTORNEY TO RELEASE THE LIEN AND PROMISSORY NOTE FOR FLOSSIE S. WHITE

Manager Craft informed Council Members that the Town was served a Civil Summons regarding the foreclosure by Lenoir County on property formerly owned by Ms. Flossie S. White. The property is located at 204 East Boundary Street. Mrs. White is deceased and the property is currently owned by her heirs. The Town has a lien on the property as a result to a Community Block Grant project. Under the CDBG program, the obligation on the part of the homeowner is automatically reduced every year for an eight year period. After eight years has passed, the obligation/debt is forgiven. This CDBG project was completed in 1995 so her obligation/debt to the Town has been satisfied.

Manager Craft said in order to remove the lien the Council needs to instruct the attorney to release the lien and promissory note. He will then complete the necessary paperwork with the Clerk of Court to release the lien.

Motion was made by Council Member Ellis and seconded by Council Member Thomas authorizing the Mayor and Town Clerk to execute said documents to release the lien on the Flossie S. White property. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion. Copy hereto attached.

ITEM 9C: CONSIDERATION OF AMENDED WATER RATE SCHEDULE

Manager Craft told Council Members that as discussed during the February 25, 2006 work session he had prepared and attached two proposed water rate schedules for their review. He stated as was explained at the retreat, as a part of the Town's Water Purchase Agreement with the Town of Farmville, we will have to increase our revenues to meet the required \$30,000 monthly payments for the purchase of water rights. The estimated increase cost per thousand that will be required to meet this payment will be approximately \$2.80 per thousand. Manager Craft said that an increase in rates ahead of the purchases from Farmville will enable us to create a rate stabilization fund which will allow us to delay the increase to the full \$2.80/thousand for approximately two years. This time period depends heavily on when we are actually able to begin the purchase of the water rights from Farmville. Smaller planned increases will also make the transition easier on our customers than a sudden larger increase.

Manager Craft presented Council Members with two options for their consideration. Option #5 would delay the increase by two years. The effect on the average customer would equate to an increase of approximately \$10.00 per month. The average monthly bill would be approximately \$25.10 per month for in Town users and \$38.20 for out of Town users.

Option #9 would delay the eventual increase by a little over two years. The effect on the average customer would equate to an increase of approximately \$10.50 per month. The average monthly bill would be approximately \$25.60 per month for in Town users and \$38.70 for out of Town users.

After discussion motion was made by Council Member Thomas and seconded by Council Member Sutton to approve Option #9 to be effective with the next billing cycle. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion. Copy of rate schedule hereto attached.

ITEM 9D: OFFER TO DONATE PROPERTY

Manager Craft informed Council Members that he had a couple of citizens inquire as to the possibility of the Town accepting the donation of their property in La Grange. Both of these properties have geographical challenges in that one is totally landlocked, with no formal access to the property and the second is shaped like a piece of pizza and is only 30 feet in width at its widest point.

Manager Craft said the benefits to the property owner are obvious, they would no longer pay taxes on a property that is of very little use to them and they would also get a tax deduction for making a contribution/donation to the Town.

Manager Craft stated that the landlocked property is fairly large lot and could be some benefit in the future as possibly a well location. The smaller lot's shape would make it difficult to use but it may be of some use in the future.

After discussion, motion was made by Council Member Ellis and seconded by Council Member Gladney to table this item at the present time. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion.

ITEM 9E: APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION DESIGNATING FINISTAR CASH MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS AND ITS ASSOCIATED BANKS AS CUSTODIAL AGENTS OF THE TOWN OF LA GRANGE

Manager Craft explained to Council Members that Finistar is the newest of the investment opportunities that has been approved by the Local Government Commission. Finistar complies with N.C. General Statute 159 which regulates our investments. All deposits with Finistar are FDIC insured as they invest our money in increments of \$100,000 or less with multiple banks (the Little Bank holds some of Finistar's investments).

Manager Craft stated that Finistar generally offers a slightly higher rate than North Carolina Capital Management Trust. If Finistar is approved we will have another financial option/resource to choose from.

Manager Craft requested that the Council approve a resolution that would make it possible for the Town to invest with Finistar in the future.

Motion was made by Council Member Thomas and seconded by Council Member Gladney to approve said resolution. Motion carried 6-0 in favor of motion. Copy of resolution hereto attached and on file in Resolution Book 111, Page 2006-03-172.

ITEM 9F: DISCUSSION PERTAINING TO THE PLAYGROUND AT LA GRANGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

For information only Manager Craft informed Council Members that problems have arisen with the use of the park at La Grange Elementary School after school hours. There are significant concerns relating to the safety of the children. The school staff currently has to go out in the morning before the children get there to "police" the area for dangerous items such as broken beer and wine bottles, knives and even needles that were left out during the night before. Manager Craft said unfortunately no one has come up with an idea of how to rectify the situation without securing/closing the playground when the school staff is not present.

Manager Craft stated that the \$15,000 donation that the Town made to La Grange Elementary School to help purchase the playground equipment was a good thing to do regardless of the outcome.

Discussion was held among Council Members concerning this item.

ITEM 10: OLD BUSINESS

ITEM 10A: WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM REHABILITATION PROJECT UPDATED

Manager Craft stated that there were four more manholes to replace and patching to do on Caswell Street and the project would hopefully be finished in May.

ITEM 10B: UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE MONROVIA RE-USE PROJECT

Manager Craft stated that the engineers are in the process of surveying and construction on the project should be started soon.

ITEM 10C: UPDATE ON JOHN C. WARD CLINIC BUILDING

Manager Craft informed Council Members that we had advertised for bids for the Clinic building but did not receive any.

ITEM 11: ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Council Member Ellis to adjourn at approximately 8:35 p.m.

Phyllis T. Harrison CMC, Town Clerk

Woodard H. Gurley, Mayor