

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held via Zoom.us on Monday, May 4, 2020 at 6:00pm. Mayor Ward did a roll call for all members present.

The following members were present: Mayor Larry Ward, Mayor Pro Tem Deanna Grubb, Commissioners: Barbara Hogan, Julie Loflin, David Askew and Scott Morris  
Town Attorney: Paul Mitchell, Town Manager: Ken Gamble, Town Clerk: Angel Jenkins  
Department Heads: Troy Branch, Heather Hicks, Mark Hicks, and Travis Morris  
Absent: Michael High

1. Call to Order- Mayor Ward called the meeting to order at 6:00pm
2. Pledge of Allegiance – Mayor Ward led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of April 6, 2020 Minutes – Commissioner Hogan made a motion to approve the April 6, 2020 Minutes. Commissioner Askew seconded. Motion passed unanimously. (5-0)
4. Public Comment – Citizens were provided an email address to send any comments or concerns to be shared with the Board during the meeting. Mrs. Jenkins reported there were no citizen comments.
5. Adoption of Agenda – Commissioner Grubb made a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Loflin seconded. Motion passed unanimously. (5-0)
6. Public Hearing – Application by Buddy Ball for Water & Sewer Tap Grant Under Denton Jobs & Business Creation Program –The Public Hearing was opened at 6:05pm.  
Mr. Gamble stated that Mr. Buddy Ball has submitted his grant application for the Water and Sewer Tap Grant for the property at 174 Floyd Street. This property added \$135,000 to the tax base of the Town. The tap fees were paid prior to construction in the amount of \$2000. Davidson County has issued a certificate of occupancy. All requirements have been met in section three of the Denton Jobs and Business Creation Program for a water and sewer tap grant.

Mayor Ward recognized Town Clerk, Angel Jenkins to read the public comments into record. Mrs. Jenkins stated that there were two comments from Karen and Billy Biscoe, 240 & 330 Garner Street:

Comment 1: We are opposed to the individual using tax payer funds or grant funds to profit his own building project by using The Water and Sewer Tap Grant under Jobs & Business Creation Program. Buddy Ball is not creating jobs or business for Denton residents, he is using labor from Archdale/High Point area. He is building a house for an individual person (20-696) for his profit. He should have to pay for the water and sewer connections just like other residents. Request a(n) electronic copy of the Denton Jobs & Business Creation Program and the Water & Sewer Tap Grant.

Comment 2: Buddy Ball had trees removed and buried trees and brush on the property where he is building a new house. Tree Canopy Landscaping & Screening, Tree Permit 9:1 Purpose & Intentions the Town of Davidson regulates the preservation, planting and maintenance of trees through the Davidson Planning

Ordinance. Section 9, Tree Preservation, Landscaping, & Screening, contains the standards which individual buildings or development projects must meet when they are constructed in Davidson. Updated in 2019, the standards cover:

Mrs. Jenkins stated that is the end of the public comment from Karen & Billy Biscoe. Mr. Gamble stated that the Grant requires that the water & sewer taps are paid in advance and Mr. Ball has paid the tap fees, along with all requirements per the grant.

Mayor Ward closed the Public Hearing at 6:09pm.

7. Water & Sewer Tap Grant – Ken Gamble – Mr. Gamble stated this is the approval part of the Grant process for a \$2000 Water & Sewer Tap Grant. Mr. Buddy Ball has met all the requirements for the Grant.

Commissioner Morris made a motion to approve the Water & Sewer Tap Grant for Buddy Ball in the amount of \$2000. Commissioner Hogan seconded. Motion passed unanimously. (5-0)

8. 2020 Law Enforcement Officer Week Proclamation – Mayor Ward read the Proclamation declaring May 10-16, 2020 Law Enforcement Officer Week.
9. 2020 Public Works Week Proclamation – Mayor Ward read the Proclamation declaring May 17-23, 2020 as Public Works Week.
10. Revision to Denton Code of Ordinances – Chapter III, Subchapter A – Fire Hazards – Ken Gamble – Mr. Gamble stated that this will not be a full ordinance, this is the beginning conversation to see what the Board would like the ordinance to look like. The current ordinance conflicts with State statute and the State administrative codes for open fires. We are trying to bring our local ordinance to what the State Statute states. The State says that if a local Municipality offers brush pickup, the resident is not allowed to burn brush, limbs, leaves and other forms of yard waste. This Ordinance is being looked at because of a complaint that was made by a resident. In talking with Chief Morris and Chief Hicks, and there was some confusion as to what may have been done in the past and what the Ordinance says we should do. Fire Chief Morris stated that the Ordinance is kind of new to the Fire Department, they have not enforced this Ordinance in the past. They reviewed the Ordinance when they received a complaint and they have been explaining to the residents that they are not allowed to burn. Chief Morris stated there is a large number of residents that do burn limbs, leaves and debris in Town. Chief Morris stated that in his experience, there are ways that the resident can get around the ordinance and still follow the State law. If the fire is for Religious purposes, cooking or heating, they can build a fire. If the resident has a large amount of brush that is not picked up by the Municipality, the resident would be able to burn the debris.

Police Chief Hicks stated that this is an Ordinance that has not been enforced in the past. He is in agreement with Chief Morris.

Commissioner Morris stated that the Town of Denton is rural and people do burn

sticks and debris in their yards. He stated that he does at least once a month. There may be a way to allow both.

Mr. Gamble stated that the Board could allow for fire pits, a burn barrel and chiminea. The Town does pickup yard waste, this would not be allowed burn. There is a difference in clean wood and wood used for construction. This would need to be specified in the ordinance.

Mayor Ward stated that there is no action required tonight. Mayor Ward did ask who would enforce this Ordinance.

Mr. Gamble stated that is would only be enforced by complaint.

Chief Hicks stated that they would handle the complaint and contact the Fire Department if they needed the fire put out. Chief Hicks stated that there is a State ordinance that prohibits burning trash.

Commissioner Grubb asked if the ordinance had to list fire pits.

Mr. Gamble stated if the Board wants to allow fire pits, it needs to be listed in the ordinance. The Town ordinance can be more restrictive we just can't be less restrictive than the State.

Commissioner Hogan states that she is okay with the fire pits.

Mr. Gamble stated that burn barrels were popular years ago when the Town did not pick up brush, trash and other items.

Attorney Mitchell stated that it might be good to have the wording in the ordinance that prohibits burning trash.

11. Budget Amendment 4 – Angel Jenkins – Mrs. Jenkins stated the budget amendment is to amend the Sales & Use Tax due to the current economic status with the Covid-19 event. This will be for the fourth quarter of the FY19-20 and may need to be amended again in July.

Mr. Gamble stated that the State just approved a deferment of payment for Sales & Use tax which will cause even more of slow-down in receipt of revenues.

Commissioner Loflin made a motion to approve Budget Amendment 4 for \$45,000 Sales & Use Tax. Commissioner Grubb seconded. Motion passed unanimously. (5-0)

12. Debt Setoff Resolution – R-2020-09 – Angel Jenkins – Mrs. Jenkins stated that the NC Debt Setoff would assist in recovering uncollected Utility Payments. The NC Debt Setoff was established in 2006 and works with Counties and Municipalities across the state. They have assisted in collected over one million dollars since they started. Any account that is over \$50 and not over three years old can be sent to the program for collection processing.

Commissioner Hogan made a motion to approve the Local Government Debt Setoff Resolution R-2020-09. Commissioner Askew seconded. Motion passed

unanimously. (5-0)

13. Utility Cut Repair Quotes – Ken Gamble – Mr. Gamble stated that the quotes for the Utility Cut Repair work would be used throughout the year when Public Works makes a cut in the roads for utility repairs instead of waiting until the yearly paving work is done. If the Board accepts the bid from Yates Paving and Grading, the agreement is that they will have the utility cut repaired within 96 hours of being contacted. This will be helpful in the FY20-21 Budget year due to budget cuts that were recommended to the Paving program.  
Commissioner Morris made a motion to award the Utility Cut Repair contract to Yates Paving and Grading. Commissioner Grubb seconded. Motion passed unanimously. (5-0)

14. Lawn Maintenance Quotes – Ken Gamble – Mr. Gamble stated that eight bid packets were sent out and only one was returned. The one bid was received from Cranford Lawn Care. This is for maintenance at Harrison Park, Denton Cemetery, Police/Fire Department, and Town Hall weekly. Johnson Park would be twice a month. This represents about three work days for one Town employee per week during mowing season.  
Mr. Gamble stated that Water & Sewer Plant would continue to move their property. The bid is from Benjy Cranford Lawn Care at \$11,000. Mr. Gamble recommends that the Board approves the bid.

Commissioner Hogan made the motion to accept the bid from Cranford Lawn Care for the Lawn Maintenance for Town facilities. Commissioner Askew seconded. Motion passed unanimously. (5-0)

Mr. Gamble asked the Board to allow him to negotiate additional locations up to a total cost of \$15,000.

Commissioner Hogan made a motion for Mr. Gamble to negotiate additional locations up to a total contract cost of \$15,000. Commissioner Grubb seconded. Motion passed unanimously. (5-0)

15. Harrison Park Rail Replacement Quotes – Ken Gamble – Mr. Gamble gave an update on the Harrison Park Rail Replacement Project. He stated they had reached out to 10-12 contractors. The first set out quotes came from two contractors. The first round of bids was given to Smith Iron Works. When the final cost was given, it was above the original quote. The project was rebid and neither of the first two contractors rebid. Mr. Gamble stated that at this time, there is no interest from anyone to do the project.  
Commissioner Loflin asked what the last quote was on the project.  
Mr. Gamble stated that the original quote was \$13,000-\$16,000, with the final quote being at \$20,000.  
Commissioner Morris asked if we are still looking at metal?  
Mr. Gamble stated that we are looking at wood and vinyl.  
Commissioner Morris asked if they could refinish the existing wood.  
Mr. Gamble stated that the type of wood is made to age naturally.

16. FY20-21 Proposed Budget – Ken Gamble – Mr. Gamble reviewed the proposed budget with the Board. Mr. Gamble reviewed the Power Point presentation with the

Board. A copy of the Power Point is attached to the minutes.

Mr. Gamble stated that COVID-19 is the biggest impact on our budget projections right now. Usually we can get advice from experts, Twitter, Mastercard, Discover and Square have all canceled their fourth quarter earnings. The head economist at Raymond James said it best, we do not know what the full economic impact of COVID-10 will be.

When trying to figure out what is going to happen, we look back at similar times in the economy and we can see how the economy reacted. Looking at the 2008 recession, our sales tax revenues saw almost a 10% decline between 2007 & 2008. This occurred over a period of twelve to eighteen months. During that time, we saw property tax collections go down by 2.1% and that was a reflection of homes going into foreclosure. The best we can do is make the best budgetary adjustments we can and look at those changes going forward. The budget that will be discussed tonight can change.

COVID-19 is affecting the second quarter GDP (Gross Domestic Product). The GDP is down twenty-four to thirty percent. This is a huge decrease. The State could be looking at a four billion dollar short-fall this year.

Mr. Gamble review the General Fund stressors on the revenue: Personnel Costs, Fire Engine Payment & Liability Insurance. In order to balance the budget, there is a \$361,874 shortfall. This results in a 16% cut in requested funding from the Department Heads.

There was discussion about the pay increase to the Fire Chief. Chief Travis Morris spoke to the Board about the increase responsibility the Fire Chief has, attending meeting, state reports, grant processing, and staff evaluations. Chief Morris stated that the pay has not been increased in 15 years.

The Enterprise Fund is projecting a 10% reduction in water-sewer revenues without a rate increase.

Mr. Gamble reviewed the stressors on the Enterprise Fund: Personnel Costs, Accelerated Load Repayment & Liability Insurance.

Mr. Gamble stated that the Board's priorities to balancing the budget are: Maintaining the Current Street Paving Activity / Funding; Fund Water & Sewer Infrastructure Improvements; No Increase to Property Tax Rate/Town Fees; Improve Town Appearance; Replace Failing / Maintenance Intensive Equipment; Ensure Revenues are Sufficient to Pay for Staffing Levels.

There was no other discussion.

Copies of the proposed budget will be available at Town Hall for public review.

Commissioner Grubb made a motion to approve the FY20-21 Proposed Budget. Commissioner Morris seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Yay- Grubb, Morris, Loflin & Askew. Commissioner Hogan lost connection.

17. Town Attorney Update – Paul Mitchell – Mr. Mitchell stated he was contacted by the Town's Insurance Company in regards to a case from a couple years ago. They have a new Attorney assigned to the case.

-Mr. Mitchell reviewed the Master Plan for the PART-F Grant.

- Information was provided on the burning ordinance.
- Reviewed the USDA loan for the purchase of the Fire Truck, Police Car and Public Works Skid Steer.

18. Town Manager's Report – Ken Gamble- Mr. Gamble's report is attached to the minutes. Mr. Gamble reviewed the lost and delayed Enterprise Fund Revenues.
- Public Works has almost completed the hydrant & valve repairs in Town.
  - The Old PD building is ready to be demolished.
  - A Town employee has taken the open position at the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP). He will split hours between WWTP and Public Works.
  - The Nuisance Abatement will hopefully be closed out by the end of this budget year with NFocus.

Commissioner Morris asked if there would be one officer in charge of the Nuisance Abatement.

Mr. Gamble stated that there is one dedicated officer, Chief Hick and himself working on the information.

19. Commissioner Comments / Concerns – Commissioner Loflin asked how residents can get their golf carts inspected. Chief Hicks stated they are still doing golf cart inspections at the Police Department and instructing the resident how to contact Town Hall for the stickers.


Commissioner Morris asked when Town Hall would be open for the public. Mr. Gamble stated that Town Hall would probably reopen during phase two of Governor Cooper's Executive Order. Mr. Gamble stated that he will also follow what the County and other Municipalities in our area are doing.

20. New Business/Other Updates – Mayor Ward stated if it is possible, he would like to hold the Memorial Day Service at Harrison Park. He stated they can look at the crowd restrictions when it gets closer to Memorial Day.

21. Announcements

May 2020 – Complete CENSUS

22. Board of Commissioners Adjournment – Commissioner Morris made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Loflin seconded. Motion passed unanimously. (5-0)  
Meeting adjourned at 7:50pm.

  
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Larry Ward, Mayor

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Angel Jenkins, Town Clerk