

CITY OF CHERRYVILLE
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY MARCH 9, 2015 @ 7:00 PM
CHERRYVILLE COMMUNITY BUILDING

The Honorable Mayor H.L. Beam called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Present were Council Member's Jill Puett, David Kiser, Brian Dalton, and Malcolm Parker. Also present was City Manager Ben Blackburn, City Clerk Paige H. Green, City Attorney Palmer Huffstetler Jr., Public Works Director Brandon Abernathy, Fire Chief Jeff Cash,

Michael Powell was present for media coverage.

The invocation was given by Rev. Jerry Lail of the Second Baptist Church and it was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS:

"The public works department has finished installing the information kiosk on the ground of the Chamber of Commerce. This will be used to provide information to the public concerning not only the Main Street Program but for city functions and activities as well."

"Speed limit signs noting the change from 45 mph to 35 mph have been installed on W. Academy Street and "No Thru Trucks" signs have been installed on the Ramsey and Dale Streets."

"The new handicap parking space at the City's mini park has been completed. Because of the unavailability of asphalt concrete was installed at this location. It was a win for the City because the cost of the project was not affected and concrete is much more durable for the long term life of the parking area."

"Last week was quite busy for the mayor. On Tuesday I visited East Elementary School and had breakfast with a large number of the students. Principal Lonnia Beam and Assistant Principal Hubers gave a gracious welcome and introduction."

"On Thursday I was honored to present past police Chief Yates McGinnis with his past Chief's badge as well as some patches representing our city police. Mr. McGinnis served as police chief from 1957 to 1965. A large number of family members were present as well as City Manager Blackburn. Michael Powell of the Cherryville Eagle was also present."

“On Thursday night I attend the annual chamber of commerce banquet. A large crowd was on hand and the theme for this year’s event was a presentation by representative of the firm of Arnett-Muldrow who prepared the City’s branding study thru the Main Street Program.”

“I will be attending the NC Main Street Program’s annual conference in Morganton on March 19th. Others slated to attend are Mayor Pro-Tem Dalton, Council Person Jill Puett, Andy & Karen West, Roger & Sue Hollifield, Jean Skibo, Sherry Bingham, Debbie Hopper, Ken Bowen, Richard Randall, and Ben Blackburn. Cherryville will be presented as a recipient of a NC Main Street Award for organization.”

“The Cherryville Fire Department has received some good news this past week. Jimmy Johnson was been awarded the “2015 National Volunteer Fire Council Junior Firefighter of the Year”. In addition to national recognition, Mr. Johnson will receive a trip to the April 27th awards banquet in Alexandria, VA for himself and additional guests as well. He will also receive a \$500 scholarship. The council will be making an official recognition to Mr. Jimmy Johnson at its May council meeting.”

“City Manager Blackburn and myself will be attending the Mayor/City Manager meeting on March 23rd. This event will be hosted by the City of Bessemer City.”

“Finally I will be attending the ribbon cutting for the opening of Dr. White’s office on East Main Street Thursday at 11 a.m.”

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

City Council Members were given the minutes from the previous meetings. Council Member Kiser made a motion to approve both sets of minutes. Council Member Puett seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF JOHN CHAVIS MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS OF THE MONTH, PRINCIPAL BRYAN DENTON:

Principal Bryan Denton of John Chavis Middle School was present to recognize the students of the month for December, January and February.

DECEMBER:

6th grade: Andrey Gorettoy; Kimberly Belman; Lizbet Castillo
7th grade: Matthew Rhyne; Jessica Carver; Krystal Deveney
8th grade: Payne Wallace; Carlie Grace Jackson; Gabe Shumaker

JANUARY:

6th grade: Ella Harmon; Kenzie Little; Colton Godfrey
7th grade: Kaitlyn Hutchinson; Nykera Bush; Mallory England

8th grade: Sydney Narron; Luke Rayfield; Shamyiah Jefferies

FEBRUARY:

6th grade: Madison Pruitt; Allie McCloskey; Christian Hahn

7th grade: Elliott Greene; Luv Shah; Jimmy Conner

8th grade: Maggie Barnes; Burgess Beam; Christina Worley

PRESENTATION OF THE 3RD ANNUAL RELAY FOR LIFE, ALLISON ABERNATHY:

Mrs. Allison Abernathy approached the podium to share with Mayor Beam and the Council that the 3rd annual Relay for Life will be held May 2, 2015. It will begin at 3:00 pm till 9:00 pm. The committee will use the Dr. Seuss Theme to tie into the "Whoville" Christmas Theme. Mrs. Abernathy shared that on March 9, a Hoops for Hope basketball game will be held to raise money. Carson Kelly a 5th grader at W.B. Intermediate came up with the idea of Hoops for Hope and the game will feature area school staff and others in the community. The cost will be \$2.00 to get in and concessions will be sold. On March 28, 2015 there will be a Cheerleading Exhibition Event will all proceeds going to Relay for Life. The cost of this event will be \$5.00 for all cheerleaders as well as spectators. Vendors will be on hand selling cheer and other monogrammed items. Concessions will be available and Relay for Life T-shirts will be sold. On April 16, a Survivor Dinner will be held from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at the Christian Outreach Center at First Baptist Church. This evening will be to celebrate cancer survivors with a meal, entertainment, door prizes and special recognition. On April 26 the first annual Survivor Sunday will take place. Mrs. Abernathy is hoping that all places of worship in Cherryville will join with Relay for Life and help celebrate cancer survivors. Mrs. Abernathy wanted to share at tonight's meeting to get the support of Mayor Beam, City Council, City staff, and all citizens. She is hoping that this will help get the word out and make everyone aware that the event is once again being held.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

No citizens spoke.

PUBLIC HEARING: RE: CONSIDERATION OF REZONING PROPERTY LOCATED AT 305 N. CHERRY STREET, GASTON COUNTY PID# 129271, FROM B-3 (GENERAL BUSINESS) TO R-15 (SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) CITY MANAGER BEN BLACKBURN:

Council Member Parker made a motion to enter into a Public Hearing. Council Member Kiser seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

City Manager Ben Blackburn share that Ms. Pat Beam has requested the property located at 305 N. Cherry Street be rezoned from B-9 to R-15. Mr. Blackburn shared that the request was taken before the Planning Board on February 16, and it was agreed unanimously to recommend this change to the City Council. Ms. Beam filled out the application for the rezoning and paid the fee. Mr. Blackburn asked the Council if there was any questions that he could answer.

Mayor Beam asked if any citizen would like to speak.

Mr. Kelly Beam shared that he and his mother had tried to rent the property for a business but have not been successful in getting a tenant so they are asking for the rezoning.

Council Member Kiser made a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing and Council Member Puett seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

The City Council voted unanimously on the Statement of Consistency. A copy of the Statement of Consistency follows:

STATEMENT OF CONSISTENCY

**CITY OF CHERRYVILLE
REQUIREMENT OF SECTION 19.1.10 OF
THE CITY OF CHERRYVILLE ZONING ORDINANCE**

The City Council of the City of Cherryville, held a Public Hearing on March 9th, 2015 to consider Rezoning Parcel ID# 129271 located at 305 N. Cherry Street. After the Public Hearing and discussion of the rezoning the Council draws the following CONCLUSIONS:

1. It is the Council's CONCLUSION that, the proposed rezoning's **IS/IS NOT** consistent with the City of Cherryville Land Use Plan adopted in August, 2012.

2. The Council finds the proposed rezoning's **IS/IS NOT** reasonable and **IS/IS NOT** in the public interest. This conclusion is based on the following:

Ordered this 9th day of March, 2015.

City Clerk, Paige H. Green

Mayor, H.L. Beam III

Council Member Kiser made a motion that the rezoning IS NOT consistent with the City of Cherryville's Land Use Plan, that the rezoning IS reasonable and IS in the public's interest. Council Member Puett seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Council Member Kiser made a motion to rezone the property from B-3 to R-15. Council Member Puett seconded the motion and the City Council voted unanimously to rezone the property.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE CLEVELAND-GASTON-LINCOLN REGIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN, FIRE CHIEF JEFF CASH:

Fire Chief Jeff Cash addressed the Mayor and Council and explained to them the City of Cherryville's Mitigation Action Plan that he and City Manager Blackburn have worked so hard on putting together. Mayor Beam and the Council were given a copy of the plan that will reduce or eliminate the long term risk to human life and property from hazards. The plan that Chief Cash shared only pertained to Cherryville, however Cleveland, Gaston and Lincoln Counties all are a part of this. A total of 29 towns, cities, and counties are participating in this plan. The plan has been deemed by FEMA to be approvable pending adoption by the City Council. The Council also had a Resolution before them for adoption of this plan. After some discussion Council Member Dalton made a motion to adopt the Resolution for the Hazard Mitigation Plan and Council Member Puett seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. A copy of this plan will be in the City Clerk's Library for any citizen to review.

UPDATE FROM THE MARCH 4, 2015 ELECTRICITIES RATE COMMITTEE MEETING, COUNCIL MEMBER BRIAN DALTON:

Council Member Dalton reported that he, Council Member Puett and City Manager Blackburn attended the March 4, 2015 Electricities Rate Committee Meeting. Seventeen of the nineteen members of Electricities were present at the meeting and they discussed restructuring the debt that is owed and to give Municipalities some relief now. They looked at ways to stop the increases and to possibly give decreases in the electric rates. Council Member Dalton shared his history of Electricities since he has been on the board. The first year he attended the meeting Electricities told the members that when we got to 2020 there would be a 26% decrease. That has already gone down three years later to possibly only 11% decrease. Council Member Dalton explained that the decrease is going away and the reason for that is because Electricities is taking on more debt to improve the Catawba Nuclear Plant. What they are looking at doing is restructuring the debt to get the rates to where they level off where we can try to stay consistent. Council Member Dalton shared that there are no guarantees in the nuclear power energy business. Council Member Dalton shared that the discussion was heated at the meeting but it was good discussion and a discussion was reached by the members. The

vote was to restructure the debt and start passing on decreases to the customers immediately. The vote was 10 to 7 in favor of restructuring the debt. At this time no one knows what will happen because the members vote will be taken to the Board of Directors for consideration. The member's recommendation is taken very serious by the board and hopefully we will have good news by the end of the month. We are hoping that we will be able to have a decrease this year. Council Member Dalton explained that the vote has some more hurdles to go but he is hopeful. He feels like it is the best thing for Cherryville because we can get some relief now and not have to wait. He shared that it will benefit the citizens that have paid into this for so long and have never benefited from it.

City Manager Blackburn thanked the Council Members that have work so hard on decreasing our proposed rate last year and again this year on the restructuring. It is proposed that the recommendation will be taken to the board on March 24th and the final decision will be made on March 27th. We should know more after March 27, 2015.

CONSIDERATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO SENIOR CITIZENS CLUB, COUNCIL MEMBER MALCOLM PARKER:

Council Member Parker shared that he had been approached by some senior citizens in the community asking for help from the City. Council Member Parker shared that to his knowledge the City of Cherryville has never helped The Cherryville Senior Citizens Club and they are the back bone of our City. Council Member Parker shared that he feels like we need support our seniors any way we can. He asked the other Council Members to consider giving The Senior Citizens Club a \$1,000 donation. He went on to say that when the group does get together they usually pay any expenses themselves.

Mayor Beam shared that he talked to some of the members of the club and they have a good group. He asked if they had formally made a request. They have and the letter was in the agenda packages.

Council Member Dalton asked if the club was going to turn in requisitions to the City to get reimbursed or how will it be disbursed. Mr. Blackburn shared that it would be a onetime contribution.

Council Member Kiser asked if the club was going to keep any records of how the donation will be spent. He stated that he was in favor of helping the club.

City Manager Blackburn shared that the club does have a secretary and a treasurer. Laura Homesley is the current treasurer.

Council Member Puett asked how many members are in the club. Mr. Blackburn shared that there are anywhere from 10 to 30 members that show up.

Mayor Beam asked if this was the first time they have ever asked. Yes it is.

Council Member Parker made a motion for the City of Cherryville to give The Senior Citizens Club \$1,000 to help them out in their organization. Council Member's Puett and Dalton both seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

OTHER BUSINESS:

City Manager Blackburn shared that he had been waiting all evening to make this presentation. Mr. Blackburn shared that the City of Cherryville has won the NC State Treasurer's Award for 2014 for financial reporting and accounting practices. Mr. Blackburn shared that this is a huge award considering the financial position that the City has been in for the past three or four years. This shows a remarkable recovery based on the City and its finances and based on the leadership of both the Council and the audit committee that was appointed and put in place by the Council. Mr. Blackburn shared that because the Council and staff have put new practices and policies in place this was possible. Mr. Blackburn shared that Sharon Edmundson, the Director of Financial Reporting for the NC State Treasurers Office will be here for the April 13, 2015 City Council Meeting to present this award. The City received notice that we had won the award last week. Mr. Blackburn thanked the Mayor, Council, staff and the citizens for rolling up their sleeves, changing policies, changing mind sets, and changing ways of doing things. This award shows the direction that the City of Cherryville is headed in to rebuild the confidence and trust that we once had with our community.

Council Member Parker shared that it was his understanding that Cherryville has never received this award. Mr. Blackburn agreed.

Council Member Dalton shared that the citizens have been a big part of it because drastic changes had to be made three years ago when it was so bad. Council Member Dalton shared that it has been difficult and decisions have been made that they wish they would never have had to make.

Mayor Beam added that this award is not usually presented at a City Council meeting that it is usually mailed out. Mr. Blackburn shared that usually this award is given out at the Finance Officers Convention that took place last week but Sharon Edmundson knows better than anyone the path that the City of Cherryville has been on for the past several years and as a result she wants to come and make the presentation. Ms. Edmundson has seen the dark days of the city and she has worked with us.

Council Member Puett shared that not only is this good news for the City of Cherryville but also the award that will be picked up next week for the Main Street Program. Council Member Puett shared that this town has so much to be proud of.

Mr. Blackburn shared that the City is in the process of getting the 2015-2016 budget prepared for consideration. Staff will present their proposals to the finance director and himself no later than March 23. Mr. Blackburn shared that a meeting needs to be set up with the Mayor and City Council within the week following the week of March 23 for a budget retreat so it can be discussed these matters more in depth. Council Member Dalton asked Mr. Blackburn by saying retreat you do mean a retreat here in town. We don't go out of town. Mr. Blackburn shared that Council Member Dalton was correct, the retreat now consist of an all meeting here in Cherryville usually one whole day. Mayor Beam shared that lunch is usually brought in. Mr. Blackburn will get with Mayor and the Council about a date later this week.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Beam asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Puett made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Council Member Kiser. Vote was unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Adopted this 13th day of April, 2015.



City Clerk Paige H. Green



Mayor, H.L. Beam III

