

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE NEWTON CITY COUNCIL**

May 5, 2015 – 7 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Newton City Council was held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 5, 2015, at Newton City Hall.

PRESENT: Mayor Anne P. Stedman, Mayor Pro Tem Mary Bess Lawing and Council Members Wayne Dellinger, Wes Weaver, John Stiver and Robert C. Abernethy, Jr.

ABSENT: Council Member Tom Rowe

STAFF: City Manager Todd Clark, City Clerk Amy S. Falowski, Assistant City Manager Sean Hovis, City Attorney John Cilley, City Department Heads and members of the management team

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Anne P. Stedman welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

ITEM 2: OPENING Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Pro Tem Mary Bess Lawing led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 3: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion duly made by Mayor Pro Tem Mary Bess Lawing, seconded by Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr., it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the Regular Minutes of the April 21, 2015, City Council meeting be –
APPROVED

ITEM 4: CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Upon motion duly made by Council Member John Stiver, seconded by Council Member Wes Weaver, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the Consent Agenda be – APPROVED

- A. Proclamation – National Police Week – May 10-16, 2015
- B. Proclamation – National Public Works Week – May 17-23, 2015
- C. Consideration of Budget Ordinance Amendment for Emergency Regulator Repairs
- D. Consideration of Road Closure Requests
 - Cruisin’ Newton Requested by Richard Dixon – June 13th, July 11th, Sept. 12th, and Oct. 10th
 - Thursday Night Thunder Requested by Carolina Vines – July 9th, July 23rd, Aug. 20th, Sept. 3rd, Sept. 17th

(Ordinances, Resolutions and Proclamations are hereby referenced and on file in the Office of the City Clerk)

ITEM 5: COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: PEOPLE WHO WISH TO COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS ARE ASKED TO SIGN IN WITH THE CITY CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING.

Mayor Anne P. Stedman asked if anyone present would like to make comment concerning non-agenda items. No one appeared.

ITEM 6: New Business

A. Consideration of Highway 16 Maintenance Agreement

Public Works and Utilities Director Dusty Wentz stated that staff has contacted the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) regarding maintenance of the Highway 16 corridor between Thornburg Dr. SE and Keisler Dr. SE. Mr. Wentz stated NCDOT has provided a standard contract that would reimburse the City \$7,514.78 (estimated) per year for mowing the right of way, weed eating, and spraying the guardrails. He explained the actual reimbursable amount will depend on bid prices received by NCDOT for other rights of way of similar length and width and that this amount will be subject to change each year. Mr. Wentz stated the contract is renewable annually.

Mr. Wentz stated the Hwy 16 corridor is 3.2 miles long which will require six passes to mow, for a total of 19.2 miles. Spraying along guardrails is also required. Mr. Wentz stated at the current billing rates for equipment and labor, the city would be able to maintain the corridor 2.51 times per year for the estimate figure provided. Mr. Wentz stated any maintenance done beyond two times per year will result in a higher maintenance cost than the City will be reimbursed. NCDOT typically mows the right of way two times a year during the mowing season.

Mr. Wentz stated the labor requirement is of greater concern to staff than cost. He explained that each instance of corridor maintenance will consume 64 man-hours (eight working days) and require three people. Mr. Wentz stated the Street Department has nine full time positions, including the superintendent and supervisor, and one temporary position during the summer. During mowing season:

- One full time position (FTP) mows;
- One FTP bush hogs right of ways and easements;
- One FTP sprays;
- The temporary position weed eats;
- Another FTP is required for operation of the sweeper truck.

Mr. Wentz stated all four tasks require 40 hours per week (full time). This leaves only three FTP to respond to the remaining street and storm water maintenance issues, which include sidewalk repair, potholes, clearing and replacing storm culverts and basins, tree trimming, sign replacement, completing community requests, and maintenance of Boston road, among other responsibilities. Mr. Wentz stated the supervisor usually works in the field during the summer months, increasing the FTP to four, but leaves all paperwork and other office managerial issues to the superintendent. He stated at the beginning of mowing season, the Street Department was approximately seven weeks behind on work orders, mostly due to the backlog created during leaf collection season.

Mr. Wentz stated the Hwy 16 corridor could require 1.6 additional FTP requiring three people for each maintenance, leaving only the supervisor and one other FTP for responsibilities during the mowing season when Hwy 16 corridor maintenance is underway.

Mr. Wentz explained the man hour and labor costs used in the maintenance cost estimate do not include planting of any trees, flower beds or other beautification along the corridor, maintenance of those locations (such as weed eating, mulching, trimming, spraying and planting replacement), NCDOT required traffic control during maintenance activities along the corridor, or sweeping of the corridor after mowing.

Mr. Wentz stated that the portion of Hwy 16 in this agreement is outside of the Newton city limits. Mr. Wentz stated that the staff is requesting direction on entering into the NCDOT agreement attached.

Mr. Wentz explained that if council chooses to enter into the contract, staff is requesting Council direct the level of maintenance desired along the corridor. Cost based on the level of maintenance desired will be estimated and reported back to Council.

Council Member John Stiver asked if the City would be allowed to contract the mowing. Mr. Wentz stated that they could as long as NCDOT requirements are met.

Collette Touchette mentioned that the City of Conover does not have a contract with NCDOT to maintain the section in Conover.

Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr. stated that all of Conover's is in Conover and that is not true for Newton.

Council Member Wes Weaver asked if there was any chance we could ask to partner with the county for the sections that are located in their jurisdiction.

Mayor Stedman asked if the city needs to go through the bidding process. Mr. Wentz said yes, but staff needs to know how frequently Council wants it mowed. Council Member John Stiver said what about once in the spring and once in the fall.

Mr. Jim Gargis stated that he knows someone that is interested in mowing, trimming and weed killing the area for approximately \$7,650. Mr. Abernethy stated that they should submit it in writing to staff.

City Manager Todd Clark stated that staff understands the desire of the City Council is to bring back bids for the area to be mowed once per month, also weed controlled and trimmed. Mayor Stedman stated that is the consensus of the City Council.

B. Presentation of Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Budget

City Manager Todd Clark reviewed his message to the Council on the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Budget.

Mayor Stedman reviewed the Budget Work Session schedule which includes the following dates: May 6th, 13th, and May 14th. Mayor Stedman thanked staff for their hard work and for presenting such a conservative budget.

ITEM 9: City Manager's Report

- **May 6th, 13th and 14th** – Budget Workshops, Council Chamber at 5:15 p.m.
*****dates for additional workshops if needed are May 19th, 20th and 21st**
- May 7th ElectriCities Regional Meeting at Newton Expo 6:00-8:00 p.m.
- May 17th Unity Day, Newton-Conover Auditorium, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- May 19th Presentation of Draft Strategic Plan to City Council
- May 19th Presentation of Animal Control Ordinance Amendment
- May 31st Dedication and Ribbon Cutting New Fire Headquarters, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- June 2nd Public Hearing/Consideration of Annual Budget
- June 2nd Public Hearing on Strategic Plan
- June 15th Streetscape Public Input Meeting at Fire Headquarters 7:00 p.m.
*August 4th Final Presentation to City Council

- June 16th City Council Workshop prior to regular City Council Meeting – Concerning the former Fire Headquarters, 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
- June 19th is Rob Powell and Danny Sigmon’s last day with the city
- August 6-8 ElectriCities Annual Conference (50th Anniversary) at the Myrtle Beach Marriott Resort & Spa at Grande Dunes. Please let Amy know if you are interested.
- The installation of Wayfinding signs is underway, 20-25 still to be installed
- Fiscal year 2015 Street Project Bids are in progress
- Dam – Geotechnical investigation reports are being completed by Wooten Engineering.

ITEM 10: Questions and Comments from Mayor and Council

Mayor Anne P. Stedman asked if any City Council would like to make any comments. There were none.

ITEM 11: Closed Session to Consult with the City Attorney – G.S. 143-318-11(a)(3), G.S. 143-318-11(a)(5)

Upon motion duly made by Council Member Wes Weaver, seconded by Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr., it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the City Council enter CLOSED SESSION per G.S. 143-318-11(a)(3) , G.S. 143-318-11(a)(5)

Council Member Wes Weaver made the motion to go back into open session, which was seconded by Council Member John Stiver. All Ayes.

ITEM 10: Adjournment

Upon motion duly made by Council Member Wes Weaver, seconded by Council Member John Stiver, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the Meeting be – RECESSED

Anne P. Stedman, Mayor

Amy S. Falowski, City Clerk

