

MINUTES
VILLAGE OF FLAT ROCK COUNCIL MEETING
ASSEMBLY ROOM – VIA ZOOM
MARCH 11, 2021
9:30 A.M.

Mayor Weedman presided over the March 11, 2021, council meeting at 9:30 a.m. Those present in addition to Mayor Weedman were Vice Mayor Coletta, Council Members Carpenter, Dethero, Gooch, Gregory, Tiles, Village Clerk Parker and Village Administrator Christie.

MOMENT OF SILENT MEDITATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Weedman led the group in a moment of silent meditation. He then led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments – Village Clerk Parker reported no public comments were received.

Agenda Approval/Changes – No changes were made to the agenda.

Consent Agenda

1. The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:
 - February 1, 2021 – Agenda Workshop Minutes
 - February 11, 2021 – Council Meeting Minutes

Vice Mayor Coletta had one correction to the February 11, 2021, minutes. Council Member Carpenter made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Council Member Gregory. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Special Reports

2. Administration – Village Administrator Christie

Administrator Christie reviewed the February 2021 zoning report dated March 3, 2021, and the Village Administrator report dated March 3, 2021 (see attached reports).

3. Park Update – Council Member Carpenter

Council Member Carpenter reported the Park Commission met February 25, 2021, and discussed the following:

- Implementation of QR Reader infrastructure: This will begin with the Pollinator Garden, then spread to the Wildflower Garden and other sections of the Park in stages. This may be a multi-year project. Cost of the QR Reader is \$300.00. Gina Moffit and Wendy Beville will keep the information up to date. A motion was made and approved to purchase the QR Reader using park budget funds.

Update: The couple who were going to set up the implementation of this system on the Internet have decided to close their business, so a new company will need to be selected to finish this work.

- Election of Park Commission Vice-Chair and Secretary: Bay Chamberlain was appointed as the Vice-Chair of the Park Commission. Sally Boyd agreed to serve another term as Secretary. John Wilkerson will remain on as recording secretary. All appointments are for one year.
- The new draft Facility Reservation Fee Waiver Policy for the Park was revised as per Council input at the February Council meeting. This revision will be discussed under Old Business.
- Pollinator Garden update: The Park Commission approved the placement of new stepping-stones in the Pollinator Garden. The Commission would also like to install a new perimeter path around the Pollinator Garden consisting of granite fines. The cost of this path would be \$3,600. Since the money for this project is not in the current budget, a budget adjustment will need to be done for this fiscal year.
- The weather station that was discussed at the February Council meeting was installed on March 8. The readouts will appear on a screen mounted in the Nature Center. The readings can also be viewed on the Weather Underground website under Station 41. The screen will be in the Welcome Center hallway.
- The downed pine tree in the Park is scheduled to be removed in early April.
- Tree City USA/Arbor Day Observance: As previously stated, a discussion group was organized to consider ideas for an Arbor Day observance on Saturday, May 1, 2021, in order to fulfill the final obligation for our application to be awarded Tree City USA certification. The group consists of Matt Toner, Duncan Fraser, Georgia Bonesteel, and Tom Carpenter.

It was decided that the Village would invite the Boy & Girl Scouts to the Park to participate in a tree planting ceremony to take place between 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., on Saturday, May 1, 2021, in observance of National Arbor Day (officially designated for April 30 of each year). Six (6) hardwood trees will be planted. Georgia Bonesteel has contacted Ace Hardware on Greenville Highway and Raymond's Garden Center to ask if they would be willing to donate trees for this event. Ace Hardware will contribute three (3) hardwood trees to the Park, with the species to be determined when their spring trees arrive. Raymond's Garden Center has also agreed to donate three (3) trees to the Park, consisting of a Sugar Maple, a native Red Maple, and a River Birch. The Park Commission is looking for ways to publicize this event, keeping in mind the Governor's crowd restrictions that may be in place on May 1, 2021.

The North Carolina Forestry Service has agreed to staff a table at the event to hand out tree and forest related literature and answer questions on tree propagation and care. The Park Foundation will also be on hand for this event.

- Council Member Carpenter drafted a resolution to proclaim Flat Rock Arbor Day as being celebrated on the Saturday closest to April 30 each year in accordance with the Tree City USA requirements. This will be discussed under New Business.

4. Foundation Update – Council Member Gooch

Council Member Gooch reported Friends of the Park total donations of \$66,000 through the end of the year with 140 new members. Mr. Dennis Flanagan stated the Foundation met with Pardee about getting programs started in the Park the end of April with yoga classes, and one Saturday each month having educational programs.

5. Transportation Update – Vice Mayor Coletta

- There will be no MPO board meeting this month.
- The Village received a revised municipal agreement from NCDOT about cost sharing for paths/sidewalks associated with the N. Highland Lake Road project. Mayor Weedman is currently reviewing that for any additional changes/corrections.
- The culvert under Mary Place in Flat Rock Forest collapsed several month ago, which caused flooding problems in some adjacent properties. This has been reported to NCDOT, and they are working on a temporary solution to reduce any flooding. The culvert is not scheduled to be replaced until later this summer, and instead of one large culvert, will be a series of smaller pipes to avoid interfering with utility infrastructure that runs under the road.
- On February 16, at the invitation of Historic Flat Rock, Inc. (HFR), Vice Mayor Coletta listened in on an online meeting among NCDOT, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), HFR and the Army Corps of Engineers about the effect of the Kanuga Road project in the Flat Rock historic district. While NCDOT presented some mitigation solutions for changes on the road, the representative from SHPO, in concurrence with the Army Corps of Engineers, determined that the NCDOT changes would have an “adverse effect” on the road. This has now moved under federal regulations, and NCDOT will be working on mitigating any effects to the satisfaction of SHPO and the Army Corps.

6. Financial & Tax Report – Mayor Weedman & Paul de Chalain

Mayor Weedman reported Mr. de Chalain prepared a Statement of Revenues and Expenditures Budget and Actual for the eight months ended February 28, 2021 (see attached report).

Mayor Weedman reported that, as of March 10, 2021, the current fiscal year tax collections are at 99.1 percent with \$1,246,846.12 total collected (see attached report). Mayor Weedman made a motion to direct the Tax Collector to advertise delinquent accounts any time at her choice

prior to the end of the fiscal year. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Coletta and carried by unanimous vote.

Old Business

7. Fee Waiver Policy – Council Member Carpenter

Council Member Carpenter reported the revised policy had been sent, and he is the designatee to grant any waiver of fees for rental of park facilities. If Council Member Carpenter is not available, Administrator Christie will be designated. Council Member Carpenter made a motion to approve the revised Fee Waiver Policy for the Park Commission, seconded by Council Member Tiles. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

New Business

8. Appointment of Carl Shaw as Auditor for FY 2020/2021

Mayor Weedman mentioned Mr. Carl Shaw has increased his fee an additional \$300 for the FY 2020/2021 audit contract. Mayor Weedman made a motion to approve the appointment of Carl Shaw as Auditor for FY 2020/2021 and authorize Mayor Weedman to sign the contract. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Coletta and carried by unanimous vote.

9. 2021/2022 Budget Discussion

Mayor Weedman sent budget worksheets to council members and asked them to prepare a proposed budget for their designated accounts in the next three weeks. He mentioned the final budget has to be adopted by June 30, 2021.

There were discussions of whether to postpone the annual Ice Cream Social usually held the first Saturday in June, or hold the event at a later date, possibly in August or September. After discussions, it was decided to make a decision after the Governor's coronavirus update on March 26, 2021, and discuss at the April council meeting.

10. Historic Flat Rock Landscaping NCDOT right-of-way – Vice Mayor Coletta

Vice Mayor Coletta reported Historic Flat Rock has two properties in the Village, the Old Post Office and the Bird Sanctuary Preserve. Both properties have a strip of grass in front that is located in the NCDOT right-of-way. HFR is proposing to landscape these areas but needs approval from Village Council. They will be working with professional landscape designers and will go through proper procedures in conforming with NCDOT requirements for planting in the right-of-way.

Vice Mayor Coletta made the motion that the Flat Rock Village Council approve the request from Historic Flat Rock, Inc., to replant areas in the NCDOT right-of-way along Greenville Highway (NC 225) in front of two HFR owned properties: the Old Post Office (118 Village Center Drive; PIN #9577219848) and the Preserve and Bird Sanctuary (PIN #9577217448), following *North Carolina Department of Transportation Guidelines for Planting Within Highway Right-of-Way* and with the understanding that HFR, Inc., is responsible for maintaining these planting areas. The motion was seconded by Council Member Carpenter, and carried by unanimous vote.

11. Tree City USA - Council Member Carpenter

Council Member Carpenter read Resolution No. 224 into record (see attached copy). Council Member Carpenter made a motion to approve Resolution No. 224, seconded by Council Member Tiles. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

12. Henderson County Comprehensive Land Use Plan – Council Member Carpenter

Council Member Carpenter reported that the Henderson County Commissioners are renewing and updating the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan. He feels that the Village and Historic Flat Rock need be involved to give input. Mayor Weedman stated he and Vice Mayor Coletta have already discussed and Bill Lapsley has indicated the municipalities should be involved. Mayor Weedman feels this needs to be handled through the LGCCA (Local Government Cooperative Community Action).

Other Business

13. Mayor – Council Reports

Council Member Tiles gave an update on the following:

Census – The Census Bureau will deliver population counts by April 30, 2021, but redistricting counts to states have been delayed until September 30, 2021.

Health – Governor Cooper's Executive Order #195 took effect February 26, 2021, and is in effect until March 26, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. Changes include that the modified stay-at-home order is lifted as well as the 10:00 p.m. curfew. Indoor bars may be open with reduced capacity, with alcohol sales curfew at 11:00 p.m. instead of 9:00 p.m. Mass gatherings limit increases to 25 people indoors and 50 outdoors. Council Member Tiles thanked Vice Mayor Coletta for including COVID updates on the Village's website. Hendersonville is currently vaccinating Groups 1, 2, childcare and school workers in Group 3. Due to the high population of 65+ in the county (26.4%), the remaining in Group 3 are on hold until more progress is made vaccinating 65+. There remains 21,099 on the waitlist, with 18,533 having received the first dose and 11,562 having received the second dose. The Community Health Assessment was released March 10, and Henderson County ranked 8th out of the 100 counties in the state.

Playhouse – Council Member Tiles met with Lisa Bryant and Kim Hinkleman via Zoom on February 17. The Playhouse is currently relying on gifts and grants to maintain the facilities and cover monthly overhead costs. 75 percent to 80 percent of Playhouse income is generated from ticket sales. Due to COVID-19, little income has been generated this past year, and the staff was reduced from 33 to 13, with those working at reduced pay.

The Rock Solid Campaign has thus far received \$500,000 in donations toward a \$1.5 million goal. This goal amount is needed to cover overhead if no shows can be generated again this year. Lisa and Kim are willing to meet with Village Council to answer any questions.

Mayor Weedman reported there is discussion at the state level to consider postponing the municipal elections from November 2021 until a date sometime in 2022 because of the census. Village Council has an opportunity to make their voices heard to our Representative and State Senator to say whether Village Council supports or is opposed. The vote carried a 5-opposed, 1-supports. Mayor Weedman will send an email to Rep. Jake Johnson and Sen. Chuck Edwards stating Village Council's position of being opposed to postponing the municipal election from November 2021.

Vice Mayor Coletta reported on June 11, 2020, Council passed a motion to ask that the Henderson County Board of Commissioners not rezone property at a location on Spartanburg Highway proposed as an asphalt plant. The plant owner dropped his rezoning request last summer but has now reapplied to the County for the zoning change, which is from Community Commercial to Industrial. After discussion, the Council reiterated their support for the June 2020 motion opposing the zoning change. Mayor Weedman will let the County Board of Commissioners know of the Council's continued opposition.

Mayor Weedman reported the Village hired Land of Sky Regional Council to change our Land Development Ordinance to comply with 160D state regulations. Land of Sky has finished, and the changes have been sent to Sharon Alexander, Village attorney, for review. Mayor Weedman stated funds for these services were never appropriated in the budget. Mayor Weedman made a motion to appropriate \$9,000 to pay Land of Sky Regional Council for work done on the 160D revisions. The motion was seconded by Council Member Carpenter and carried by unanimous vote.

Mayor Weedman reported by consensus Village Council has agreed to hire Myra Grant to research available grants for stream restoration in the park. Mayor Weedman made a motion to appropriate \$3,500 to hire Myra Grant, seconded by Council Member Gooch. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Public Comments – None

Adjournment

With no further discussions, at 10:45 a.m., Council Member Gooch made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Council Member Tiles.

Michelle Parker, CMC
Village Clerk

Nick Weedman
Mayor