

**TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2019**  
**TOWN OF SAWMILLS REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**  
**6:00 PM**

**COUNCIL PRESENT**

Mayor Johnnie Greene  
Keith Warren  
Rebecca Johnson  
Joe Norman  
Clay Wilson

**STAFF PRESENT**

Christopher Todd  
Terry Taylor  
Julie A Good  
Karen Clontz

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Johnnie Greene called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00pm.

**INVOCATION:** Pastor Don Ingle gave the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mayor Johnnie Greene led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ADOPT AGENDA:** Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to adopt the June 18, 2019 Agenda.

Keith Warren made a motion, and Rebecca Johnson seconded, to adopt the June 18, 2019 Agenda. All were in favor.

**APPROVE MARCH 7, 2019 BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES:** Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to approve the March 7, 2019 budget workshop minutes.

Rebecca Johnson made a motion, and Joe Norman seconded, to approve the March 7, 2019 budget workshop minutes. All were in favor.

**APPROVE APRIL 4, 2019 BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES:** Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to approve the April 4, 2019 budget workshop minutes.

Joe Norman made a motion, and Keith Warren seconded, to approve the April 4, 2019 budget workshop minutes. All were in favor.

**APPROVE APRIL 18, 2019 BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES:** Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to approve the April 18, 2019 budget workshop minutes.

Joe Norman made a motion, and Rebecca Johnson seconded, to approve the April 18, 2019 budget workshop minutes. All were in favor.

**APPROVE MAY 21, 2019 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES:** Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to approve the May 21, 2019 regular meeting minutes.

Rebecca Johnson made a motion, and Keith Warren seconded, to approve the May 21, 2019 regular meeting minutes. All were in favor.

**APPROVE JUNE 5, 2019 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES:** Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to approve the June 5, 2019 special meeting minutes.

Joe Norman made a motion, and Keith Warren seconded, to approve the June 5, 2019 special meeting minutes. All were in favor.

**APPROVE JUNE 5, 2019 CLOSED SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES:** Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to approve the June 5, 2019 closed special meeting minutes.

Joe Norman made a motion, and Rebecca Johnson seconded, to approve the June 5, 2019 closed special meeting minutes. All were in favor.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mayor Johnnie Greene asked if anyone had any questions or comments at this time.

Megan Clark, a citizen of the Town of Sawmills, spoke on the topic of recycle. Ms. Clark would like the Town to continue the recycle program.

**RECOGNITIONS:**

**RECYCLE REWARDS WINNER:** Mayor Johnnie Greene announced Ms. Lesly Maldonado as the June Recycle Rewards winner. A credit of thirty-two dollars (\$32.00) will be added to her sanitation bill.

No Council action was required.

**PUBLIC HEARING: FY 2019-2020 BUDGET:**

**OPEN PUBLIC HEARING:** Mayor Johnny Greene asked for a motion to open the public hearing.

Joe Norman made a motion, and Clay Wilson seconded, to open the public hearing. All were in favor.

**STAFF COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS:** Town Administrator Christopher Todd stated that the budget is balanced as required by the NC Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act. The Town's overall budget for FY 2019-2020 totals three million one hundred

twenty-four thousand two hundred fifty-eight dollars (\$3,124,258.00). A few highlights of the proposed budget include no property tax increase; funds to allow for Republic Services to provide both recycling and sanitation collection; zero percent (0%) increase of the sewer rates; an appropriation of Water and Sewer Fund reserves will be made this fiscal year; maintains current levels of benefits for employees. The Town will also maintain its current levels of service to the citizens.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mayor Johnny Greene asked if anyone wished to speak on the FY 2019-2020 Budget.

Alan Hall spoke on the topic of recycling. Mr. Hall would like the Town to continue the recycle program.

Johnny Wilson spoke on the topic of recycling and giving Republic Services the Town's sanitation pickup. Mr. Wilson stated that the Town of Sawmills started as a Sanitary District and the Town should continue to collect sanitation and not contract it out. Mr. Wilson stated that no one else but the Town should take care of Town business. Mr. Wilson stated that he is against excess spending by the Town.

Olivia Ford spoke on the topic of recycling and giving Republic Services the Town's sanitation pickup. Ms. Ford stated that she agrees with the Town continuing the recycle program, but feels the Town did not take the time to look at other options besides Republic Services. Ms. Ford wanted to know what the current cost of the sanitation pickup for the Town is. Ms. Ford stated that the Town should continue to pick up sanitation and not contract the service out.

Kelly Price spoke on the topic of recycle and giving Republic Services the Town's sanitation pickup. Mr. Price stated that he has watched reports regarding recycling and most of the time the recycle goes to the landfill. Mr. Price stated that he could not see spending money on the recycle if the recycle products just go into the landfill. Mr. Price asked if anyone can tell him where the recycle goes. Mr. Price stated the he agrees with Ms. Ford and the Town should explore other options. Mr. Price asked if it was more cost effective for the Town to keep sanitation pickup instead of contracting the service out. Mr. Price stated that the Town should discuss this issue more because to him it seems that this discussion has been rushed.

**CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING:** Mayor Johnny Greene asked for a motion to close the public hearing.

Joe Norman made a motion, and Rebecca Johnson seconded, to close the public hearing. All were in favor.

**COUNCIL ACTION:** Mayor Johnnie Greene asked Council if anyone had anything to add before voting on the budget.

Rebecca Johnson stated that there had been lots of discussion about the budget and the recycle and sanitation pickup. Councilwoman Johnson stated, in her opinion, that when the sanitation driver the Town has now retires that some Council members would like for the Town to hire someone to replace him and keep the sanitation pickup in the Town. Councilwoman Johnson

stated that she believes that the Town should wait a year and explore other options regarding the recycle pickup. Councilwoman Johnson stated that there was a twenty-six thousand dollar (\$26,000.00) increase to the recycle contract and she just doesn't feel that it is a good use of Town resources.

Joe Norman stated that he is in favor of recycling. Councilman Norman stated that the citizen's pay taxes and the Town should provide the services. Councilman Norman stated that he did not feel that the cost of recycle was too bad. Councilman Norman stated the he feels that the Town should take care of its citizens. Councilman Norman also stated the he felt the Town was saving money by giving the sanitation pickup to Republic Services and the Town can always go back to picking up the trash after the contract is up in three (3) years.

Clay Wilson stated that he is for recycling, but the contract from Republic Services is seventy-two thousand dollars (\$72,000.00) to ninety thousand dollars (\$90,000.00) with a three point five percent (3.5%) increase per year. Councilman Wilson stated that it would only cost the Town tipping fees of approximately fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000.00) per year to take the recycle to the landfill. Councilman Wilson wanted to know where the Town should draw the line for the cost. Councilman Wilson stated that only about sixty-six percent (66%) of the Town recycles now. Councilman Wilson stated that Council was informed of a company out of Morganton, Simply Green, that would pick up the recycle for citizen's that wanted to sign up for the program for approximately sixteen dollars (\$16.00) per month. Councilman Wilson stated that the sanitation driver was retiring, but stated so did the last Public Works Director and we replaced him with the Assistant Public Works Director. Councilman Wilson stated that giving up sanitation felt like he was signing the Town away. Councilman Wilson stated that Sawmills was started so the Town could be self-sufficient and take care of its self. Councilman Wilson stated that there is no weight in recycle which is why the value has plummeted and the cost for the Town to have the recycle picked up has skyrocketed. Councilman Wilson stated that the Town should continue the sanitation program in house with the cost being around forty-five thousand dollars (\$45,000.00) per year compared to ninety thousand dollars (\$90,000.00) per year with the Republic Services contract and look at recycle in another year. Councilman Wilson stated that the budget was completed and agreed upon until about ten (10) days ago when Facebook blew up and now the budget is changing.

Joe Norman made a motion, and Keith Warren seconded, to adopt the FY 2019-2020 Budget. All were in favor.

#### **FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

**SPARTAN ATHLETIC CLUB DONATION REQUEST:** Mayor Johnnie Greene stated that the Spartan Athletic Club had requested a donation in the amount of two hundred dollars (\$200.00).

Clay Wilson made a motion, and Joe Norman seconded, to give a donation in the amount of two hundred dollars (\$200.00) to the Spartan Athletic Club. All were in favor.

**REPUBLIC TRASH AND RECYCLING COLLECTION CONTRACT:** Town Administrator Christopher Todd stated that Council had a draft agreement with Republic

Services to provide both trash and recycling curbside collection. The agreement would be effective July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2022, at which point the agreement can be renewed.

The projected cost for FY 2019/2020 is projected to be two-hundred seventy thousand dollars (\$270,000.00). This cost will have a three point five percent (3.5%) CPI increase annually over the course of the agreement.

Joe Norman made a motion, and Keith Warren seconded, to approve the agreement with Republic Services in the amount of two-hundred seventy thousand dollars (\$270,000.00) with a three point five percent (3.5%) CPI increase annually over the course of the agreement. Clay Wilson and Rebecca Johnson voted against the agreement. With a tie vote of two (2) in favor and two (2) opposed, Mayor Johnnie Greene broke the tie by voting in the affirmative.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

**WATER AND SEWER GIS:** Town Administrator Christopher Todd stated that as part of the FY 2018/2019 budget the Town Council included funding to create a Geographic Information System (GIS) for both the water and sewer infrastructure. This system will allow town staff to better track and assess the quality of both the water and sewer system.

The Town partnered with the WPCOG to create the GIS system.

Tom Bell from the WPCOG gave a presentation on the system.

No Council action was required.

**COUNCIL-MANAGER FORM OF GOVERNMENT:** Town Administrator Christopher Todd stated that in order to promote a high level of professionalism and long-term sustainability within the professional staff of the Town of Sawmills, the Town Council is currently considering a charter amendment, pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 106A-102, to change the form of government from Mayor-Council to Council-Manager. The Town of Sawmills currently employs a Town Administrator who acts in a similar role to a Town Manager. The Town Manager would have all of the duties described in North Carolina General Statute 160A-148, and any other duties as determined by the Town Council.

Council must hold a public hearing to amend the charter of the Town of Sawmills, changing the form of government from Mayor-Council to Council-Manager.

Joe Norman made a motion, and Keith Warren seconded, to hold a public hearing during the regularly scheduled July 16, 2019 Council meeting, to amend the charter of the Town of Sawmills, changing the form of government from Mayor-Council to Council-Manager. All were in favor.

**APPOINT ETJ PALNNING BOARD MEMBER:** Mayor Johnnie Greene stated that Ryan Wilson, Town of Sawmills ETJ Planning Board Member, contacted staff and informed them that he had moved out of the Town of Sawmills ETJ. Mr. Wilson also informed staff that he had spoken with Adam Wilson, who lives in the Town of Sawmills ETJ, and Mr. Adam Wilson would be willing to serve on the Planning Board.

Joe Norman made a motion, and Clay Wilson seconded, to appoint Adam Wilson to the Town of Sawmills Planning Board in the ETJ seat for a term of two (2) years beginning July 1, 2019 and ending July 1, 2021. All were in favor.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Kelly Price stated that he appreciated the Council's discussion before voting on the Republic Services agreement. Mr. Price stated that personally he thought that the agreement was a waste of Town money. Mr. Price also stated that he appreciated all the Council does and he hopes they keep up the good work.

**JUNE CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT:** There are seven (7) code enforcement cases open:

- Chaney Carter, owner of 4361 Sawmills School Rd. Overgrown vegetation. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that a letter was sent on July 19, 2018, with a deadline of August 3, 2018. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the nuisance was abated by the Town on August 10, 2018. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that a lien will be placed on the property for the cost of the mowing. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that a hearing was held on September 6, 2018, and Ms. Carter did not show so Town will proceed to demolish house;
- Jessie Kristian Smith, 4215 Trojan Ln. Fowl running loose. Town Planner Hunter Nestor received a written complaint from adjacent property owner stating that resident at 4215 Trojan Ln had approximately one (1) to fifteen (15) chickens and six (6) ducks running loose. Traveling public along Trojan Ln are consistently having to stop to wait on ducks to cross the road or sunning in the road. School buses have needed to blow horns to get them to move. Also, the chickens are digging up the neighbor's property. Town Planner stated that a certified letter was sent to home owner on February 21, 2019. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the site was visited and there were fowl running loose in the back yard and roosting. There are also materials accumulation surrounding the home, which looks as though property owners are building a fence. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that a second notice was sent on April 16, 2019, with a deadline of April 27, 2019. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he visited the site and a pen looks to be completed and fowl were in pen;
- Carolyn Bray/Robyn Brittian, 2570 Baker Circle. Abandoned mobile home. Town Planner Hunter Nestor states that he is working with Town Attorney Terry Taylor to abate;

- Horror Fields, Kiser-Sawmills, Helena St. Fence/buffer. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that a complaint was received on April 10, 2019. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the property is not in compliance with the conditions set in CUP. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that a NOV letter was sent out on April 11, 2019, with a deadline of May 10, 2019. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he made a site visit on May 30, 2019 and owner is working to get property in compliance but there are still some other areas that need to be addressed;
- John Wilcox, 2322 Ellen St. Overgrown vegetation. Town Planner Hunter Nestor received a written complaint on April 22, 2019. Town Planner Hunter Nestor sent a NOV letter with a deadline of May 5, 2019. Town Planner Hunter Nestor visited the site on May 7, 2019. No improvement had been made. Town Planner Hunter Nestor sent another NOV letter. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he spoke with property owner on May 23, 2019, and property has been mowed and is now in compliance;
- Charles and Patsy Crofts, 4200 Crofts Mobile Home Park Dr. Overgrown vegetation. Town Planner Hunter Nestor received a written complaint on May 21, 2019. Town Planner Hunter Nestor sent a NOV letter with a deadline of June 3, 2019. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the letter came back and was resent to updated address on May 28, 2019. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he has not received a response and no progress has been made at the property as of June 11, 2019;
- Debra Baker, 4476 Rual Dr. Overgrown vegetation/garbage and rubbish. Town Planner Hunter Nestor received a written complaint on May 22, 2019. Town Planner Hunter Nestor sent a NOV letter with a deadline of June 11, 2019. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he has received no response and no progress has been made at the property as of June 11, 2019.

No Council action was required.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:** Town Administrator Christopher Todd wanted to thank Council for all their hard work on finalizing a budget. Town Administrator Christopher Todd stated that the June meeting would be his last council meeting at the Town of Sawmills and that he wanted Council to know what an honor and privilege it has been to work with everyone at the Town. Town Administrator Christopher Todd stated that Sawmills will always hold a special place in his heart because it was his first Town Administrator job.

**COUNCIL COMMENT:** Mayor Johnnie Greene asked if anyone on Council had any comments or questions at this time:

Keith Warren wanted to thank everyone for coming out.

Rebecca Johnson asked that everyone come back next month.

Clay Wilson wanted to thank everyone for coming out and stated that everyone might not always agree but we are all Sawmills regardless of the outcome.

Mayor Johnnie Greene wanted to thank everyone for coming out.

**CLOSED SESSION: ATTORNEY CLIENT PRIVILEGE:** Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to go into closed session.

Rebecca Johnson made a motion, and Clay Wilson seconded, to go into closed session at approximately 7:30 pm. All were in favor.

Rebecca Johnson made a motion, and Clay Wilson seconded, to come out of closed session at approximately 8:07pm. All were in favor.

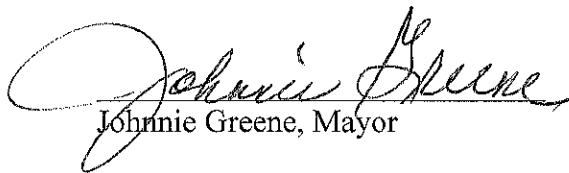
**OPEN MEETING ACTION ITEMS:** After returning to open session, Mayor Johnnie Greene stated that Council had discussed an Interim Town Administrator position.

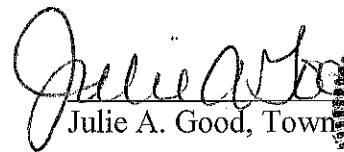
Clay Wilson made a motion, and Keith Warren seconded, that effective July 13, 2019 Finance Officer Karen Clontz would be Interim Town Administrator for the Town of Sawmills. All were in favor. Interim Town Administrator Karen Clontz will be paid weekly base on, and not to exceed, a \$5,000.00 per month salary for the time served.

**COUNCIL ADJOURN:** Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to adjourn.

Rebecca Johnson made a motion, and Clay Wilson seconded, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:10pm.

  
Johnnie Greene, Mayor

  
Julie A. Good, Town Clerk

