

**TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2011
TOWN OF SAWMILLS REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
6:00 P.M.**

COUNCIL PRESENT

Bob Gibbs
Gerelene Blevins
Beverly Fry
Joe Norman
Donnie Potter
Joe Wesson

STAFF PRESENT

Seth Eckard
Susan Nagle
Terry Taylor

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Bob Gibbs called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION: Pastor John Greene gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Gibbs led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPT AGENDA: Mayor Gibbs asked for a motion to adopt the agenda.

On a motion made by Joe Wesson, and seconded by Beverly Fry, the agenda was adopted. All were in favor.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 19th REGULAR MEETING MINUTES: Mayor Gibbs asked for a motion to approve the April 19, 2011 regular meeting minutes.

On a motion made by Donnie Potter, and seconded by Gerelene Blevins, the minutes were approved. All were in favor.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 21st SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES: Mayor Gibbs asked for a motion to approve the April 21, 2011 special meeting minutes.

On a motion made by Joe Norman, and seconded by Joe Wesson, the minutes were approved. All were in favor.

APPROVAL OF MAY 5th SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES: Mayor Gibbs asked for a motion to approve the May 5, 2011 special meeting minutes.

On a motion made by Gerelene Blevins, and seconded by Donnie Potter, the minutes were approved. All were in favor.

RECOGNITION:

YARD OF THE MONTH WINNERS: Mayor Bob Gibbs stated the Town has started a yard of the month program and would like to recognize Mayor Pro-Tem Gerelene Blevins and Councilwoman Beverly Fry, from the Town Beautification Committee. The Mayor asked if they would please call the first two winning recipients up front at this time.

Mayor Pro-Tem Gerelene Blevins presented Mr. and Mrs. Harry Parsons from the 28630 zip code with a certificate for winning yard of the month for May 2011.

Councilwoman Beverly Fry presented Mr. and Mrs. Annas from the 28638 zip code with a certificate for winning yard of the month for May 2011.

No Council action required.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED FY 2011-2012 BUDGET: Town Administrator Seth Eckard presented the Council with the 2011-2012 FY Budget.

Total budget of:	\$2,613,921.00
General Fund Budget of:	\$2,008,221.00
Utility Fund Budget of:	\$605,700.00
Fund Balance Appropriated	\$0.00

As required by State Law the budget is balanced.

The budget includes the current tax rate of .20 (twenty cents) per \$100.00 (One hundred Dollar) valuation.

The water and sewer rates will remain the same, but the sanitation fee will increase from \$4.00 per month to \$7.00 per month.

There is also included in the budget a 2% (two percent) cost of living adjustment for Town employees.

See enclosed list of the proposed FY 2011-2012 fee structure.

On a motion made by Joe Wesson and seconded by Donnie Potter, the Council will hold a public hearing on the budget at the June 21, 2011 Council meeting. All were in favor.

SPONSORSHIP REQUEST: DARE PROGRAM: Town Administrator Seth Eckard stated that the Caldwell County Sheriff's Department is having their annual charity golf outing and are asking for a donation from the Town of Sawmills.

On a motion made by Joe Wesson, and seconded by Joe Norman, the Town will donate \$100.00 to the Caldwell County Dare Program. All were in favor.

PLANNING MATTERS:

NAMING OF TOWN STREET: Town Administrator Seth Eckard stated the street, which runs along the side and back of Sawmills Elementary School, has no name.

The two property owners who live on that street and the Council gave some suggestions of names, which Caldwell County E-911 has pre-approved.

The following names were proposed:

Jake Deal Drive

Henry Harris Drive

Billy Way

Elementary Way

School House Lane or Way

Elementary School Lane

On a motion made by Gerelene Blevins, and seconded by Donnie Potter, Elementary Way was the name chosen for that street. All were in favor.

TEXT AMENDMENT CHANGE FOR ZONING ORDINANCE: Town Planner Emily Hines stated the Planning Commission would like to request Council call a Public Hearing on June 21, 2011 for proposed amendments to sections 93.077 and 93.078. These Amendments are proposed to remove the five year and ten year requirement in the existing ordinance.

The Planning Commission recommended the removal of the age restriction. Town Planner Hines stated the home would still have to meet, or exceed, the construction standards established by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Code and have a HUD seal as well as meet the appearance criteria as outlined in sections 93.077 and 93.078 of the Sawmills Code of Ordinances.

On a motion made by Donnie Potter and seconded by Gerelene Blevins the Council will hold a public hearing on the budget at the June 21, 2011 Council meeting. All were in favor.

CODE ENFORCEMENT UPDATE: Code Enforcement Officer Tony Cline updated Council on the enclosed report, which shows the progress that continues to be enforced in the Town.

No Council action is required.

CODE ENFORCEMENT APPEAL: Code Enforcement Officer Tony Cline cited John and Nancy Greene for having a junk motor vehicle or nuisance vehicle at 4446 Villa Lane. John and Nancy Greene have exercised their right to appeal Mr. Cline's interpretation of the Ordinance.

After discussion, Donnie Potter made a motion, and Gerelene Blevins seconded, to deny the appeal. Those in favor to deny the appeal were Donnie Potter and Gerelene Blevins. Those opposed to the motion were Joe Norman, Beverly Fry, and Joe Wesson for a 3-2 vote to deny the appeal. The motion did not carry.

After discussion, Joe Norman made a motion, and Joe Wesson seconded, to table this issue until the next meeting. All were in favor.

REQUEST TO SPEAK: Councilman Donnie Potter introduced Kim Nichols and Kevin Nichols from Young Lives. Kim Nichols, Young Lives Coordinator, stated this program ministers and mentors teen moms, meeting with them twice a month. They also provide the young moms with rides, help with clothes, diapers and food. This program is currently active at South Caldwell High School. In addition, Ms. Nichols would like the Council to consider a donation in the amount of \$250.00 out of next year's budget as this program is a non-profit (501C), non-denominational program and receives no funding from the state.

No Council action was taken.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Town Administrator Seth Eckard would like to say thank you to the Town Public Works employees who have done an excellent job with removal of all the brush as a result of the storms which accrued the week of May 9th-13th. Administrator Eckard announced on May 30, 2011 the Town Hall will close for Memorial Day.

Administrator Eckard stated the Sawmills Farmers Market begins June 7th from 3:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m. and will continue every Tuesday until late December. The Farmers Market will be located in the empty lot across the street from the Sawmills Fire Department. Administrator Eckard invites everyone to stop by and shop, or just look. If anyone is a vendor and would like to be part of the Farmers Market, they may contact the Town Hall for an application.

Administrator Eckard stated that Lenoir News-Topic has prepared the Caldwell Magazine available at the Chamber of Commerce, with a full-page ad on Sawmills. The goal is for people who are not familiar with our community to read and view this. In addition, Administrator Eckard met with Mark Jackson, Editor of the Granite Falls Journal, who is going to start doing two (2) pages a week for Sawmills news and publications.

Administrator Eckard gave an update on the Greenway Project at the Veteran's Memorial Park stating the engineering firm, through Duke Energy, contacted the town and are doing the preliminary designs right now. The timeline for getting the job done is probably years out as our town is about one of twenty-five others along the Catawba River Basin.

Administrator Eckard would also like to recognize that today is the Mayor's birthday and wishes him a Happy Birthday.

Administrator Eckard stated that the Mayor has started probably his second publication on Sawmills Today and he will let the Mayor speak on that.

Mayor Gibbs stated that each month cable channel 10 has given him the opportunity to talk about Sawmills and promote the town on the show Sawmills Today. In addition to Sawmills Today, the town is also on Facebook, having fifty people "like" the town, and now has a link on the Granite Falls Journal Facebook page, which had over one hundred people "like" the town within a day and a half. The Mayor stated the town publicizes meetings, schedules and events on Facebook and the town's website with Administrator Eckard doing a great job with that.

Mayor Gibbs would like to thank everyone for their patience as the town goes through changes, and things that come about in the town, as we are trying to do what is best for our town. Mayor Gibbs would like everyone to take a look at the town's website, Facebook page, and Sawmills Today and if anyone has suggestions, concerns, or remarks, good or bad, please come by the Town Hall, or call, as Administrator Eckard is here everyday and the Mayor is here most days and not hard to find.

Administrator Eckard would like everyone to expect the next newsletter by the of June or the 1st of July. The release date should be June 20th.

On May 4, 2011, Councilman Donnie Potter and Administrator Seth Eckard traveled to Raleigh for Town Hall Day to lobby with State Legislatures about issues that effect the town and he will let Councilman Potter talk about some of the things discussed.

Councilman Potter stated that towns receive Powell Bill funds from the state and use the money to maintain the roads. Currently this money can be saved over ten years and the talks are to change this to five years putting a burden on towns that would now only have five years, to raise the money to complete projects instead of the current ten years. In addition, Councilman Potter stated that the State was trying to quit the program that allows prison inmates to go out and work in towns, but there was some support to appeal that and the program should remain active with a few changes. The other topic of discussion was annexation.

No Council action is required.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Gibbs asked if anyone would like to comment at this time.

Mr. Bill Absher who lives on Diamond St. in Virginia Acres would like to address the Council about an issue that has been ongoing in his neighborhood with ducks. Mr. Absher stated that one of the neighbors on Diamond Street has a tremendous amount of ducks that come onto other people's property and make messes. Mr. Absher stated he has contacted Caldwell County Animal Control, NC Division of Wildlife, Councilman Potter, and Sawmills Code Enforcement Officer Tony Cline and there has been nothing done. In addition, Mr. Absher stated Caldwell County Animal Control and NC Division of Wildlife stated these ducks were a nuisance animal and not a protected animal and that he could dispose of them as long as he does so in a legal manner. Mr. Absher would just like to know why no one would do anything to help.

Mayor Gibbs stated that he would make some phone calls and see if he cannot get something done or find out why there has been nothing done.

ADJOURN: On a motion made by Donnie Potter, and seconded by Joe Wesson, the meeting was adjourned. All were in favor.

Susan Nagle, Town Clerk

Bob Gibbs, Mayor