

TOWN OF UNIONVILLE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

The Town Council of the Town of Unionville met Monday, May 15, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. in Town Hall, 1102 Unionville Church Road, Monroe, NC. Mayor Baucom and all Commissioners were present. Town Attorney Ken Helms was also present.

Everyone stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag, after which Commissioner Andrew Benton led the prayer of invocation.

In Public Comments, Mr. Steve Swann, with American Legion Post #535 addressed Council. He stated that the post wishes to sponsor a Union County high-school girls fast-pitch team again this year and they would like to use the name "Unionville Fast Pitch" since the American Legion has split into two organizations, and they will not be a part of the legion organization. There being no objections to this request, the consensus of the Council was to allow the use of the name, "Unionville Fast Pitch" this year.

Upon motion duly made by Andrew Benton, seconded by Jeff Broadaway, Council unanimously approved the minutes of the April 17, 2023 regular meeting.

Mayor Baucom recognized Finance Officer Darrell Baucom, who reviewed the Financial Statement, a copy of which is appended to these minutes. He stated that the Certificate of Deposit has been set up with Pinnacle Bank with over \$3.5 million with a variable interest rate of 4.5-4.7%. Total Income through today is \$483,000 versus budget of \$349,000 including \$218,000 to savings. Total expenses are \$246,000 versus budget of \$349,000. Income is \$237,000. In Transactions by Account, significant items are Baucom Lawn Maintenance for \$2,500 and American Legion for \$3,000. The final payment for the Unionville bell plaque of \$2,058 is pending, as Clerk Gaddy made the initial deposit. Zoning enforcement was higher at \$2,650 this month. The bond for Tax Collector Gaddy and Finance Officer Baucom is \$1,000. Upon motion duly made by Gene Price, seconded by Jaren Simpson, Council unanimously approved payment of pending bills.

Regarding the 2023-2024 Budget, Finance Officer Baucom reviewed the proposed budget, a copy of which is appended to these minutes. The difference this year is capital improvements for the Town Hall and capital outlay. We are estimating \$500,000 to be spent on Town Hall renovations, so we must take some from the fund balance of \$202,000. Investment income is expected to be \$150,000 based on a rate of 4.25 percent, which gives us total income of \$860,900. This budget proposes ad valorem taxes of \$.02/\$100 valuation. Franchise taxes are lower this year as the state projected lower revenue increases. Sales and use taxes are up by six percent. The expense side includes \$500,000 capital outlay for Town Hall, \$110,000 for contributions and a small increase for insurance. Maintenance and repairs and office expenses remain the same. He proposes a 5.7% payroll increase, as page 15 shows calculation of payroll increases of 5.7 a midpoint between average low and high for our population size. Accounting, legal and zoning are addressed under assumptions. The expense amount for this year is \$860,900 and does contemplate the same tax rate as previous years. Mr. Baucom will be on vacation the third week of June and suggested a public hearing the week before or the week after our regular meeting. Deputy Clerk Braswell offered to set up a zoom call. Mayor Baucom set a public hearing for Monday, June 19, 2023 at 7:15 p.m. for the 2023-2024 budget consideration.

Mayor Baucom recognized Mr. Andrew Friend with Union County Council on Aging. Mr. Friend thanked the Council for their past support and reported that they are a non-profit organization which helps older people in Union County stay independent as long as possible. He is requesting a \$5,000 contribution. Population projections indicate that there were 48,000 Union County citizens age 60 and over in 2021. In twenty years, that number is projected to grow 95 percent. Today there are 2,500 Union County citizens age 85 and over but that number will triple in 20 years. They provide in-home care at no cost, durable medical equipment, home repairs and incontinence materials for older citizens. They also provide respite care and caregiver support. ARPA funding has provided a pilot program designed to prevent falls in the home. They provide medical alert buttons, grab bars and address signs also. Mayor Baucom made inquiry as to the number of Unionville residents they serve. Mr. Friend stated that it is difficult to make that determination, as we do not have a separate zip code. Upon motion duly made by Jeff Broadaway, seconded by Andrew Benton, Council unanimously approved a donation of \$5,000 to Union County Council on Aging.

Mayor Baucom recognized David Yarborough, President of Unionville Lions Club. He thanked the Council for their past support and stated that the club has met needs of residents with Christmas gifts; Hometown Heroes participation, vision therapy for a local student, visually-impaired North Carolina residents, COVID-19 nurses and Unionville movie night. They are requesting assistance with the July 4th celebration. Mrs. Betty Hinson addressed the Council also thanking them for their past support. They previously asked for \$10,000 for entertainment but would like to request \$15,000 to subsidize the barbecue chicken plates to be able to sell them for \$10 to the public. Last year the charge was \$15 per plate. In comparison, pork plates would be \$18 and beef would be \$20 per plate. Other vendors don't want to cater on July 4th. They also reached out to churches and the American Legion but were unsuccessful. Union County Humane Society will also sell hamburgers and hot dogs and will share their profit with the Lions Club. Upon motion duly made by Gene Price, seconded by Jaren Simpson, Council unanimously approved a donation of \$15,000 for July 4th chicken barbecue plates so they may be sold at \$10 per plate at the July 4th celebration this year.

Mayor Baucom recognized Piedmont High School football coach Aaron Braswell, who distributed letters to the Council. He played football at Piedmont and Davidson College and then worked in business for a year prior to becoming the head football coach at Piedmont. He is working to make the facilities and equipment right to keep the athletes interested and prepared for football. The school is losing players to private schools. He has gone from five assistant coaches to 15 assistant coaches. They've ordered new uniforms and have installed new floors in the locker room. Old lockers have been removed and new ones need to be installed. They raised \$20,000 in April toward the upgrades. He has asked businesses and towns to sponsor them. He is requesting a \$15,000 donation for wrestling, football and 150 weight-lifting students daily. Mayor Baucom made inquiry as to capital improvement funding. Coach Braswell will check on that. A new turf field has been installed but the locker rooms need work. Attorney Helms stated that the Town has limitations as to what they are allowed to contribute to. He sees this as a gray area regarding lockers and locker rooms, as this may not benefit the community as a whole. Commissioner Broadaway made inquiry as to Town of Fairview's contribution. Coach Braswell stated that it is not currently in their budget but one of the Commissioners supported them with his business. Upon motion duly made by Chad Simpson, seconded by Jeff Broadaway, Council unanimously agreed to table this decision until our attorney can determine the Town's statutory liability.

Mayor Baucom recognized Union County Urban Forester Keith O'Herrin, who presented a power point presentation. He has been an urban forester for 15 years and in Union County for two years. His job is split between planning and outreach/education through the extension office. The population in our area has exploded over the past 30 years and will continue to increase over the next 30 years. Urban trees created health benefits in the area due to the close proximity to Charlotte and the concentration of heat overnight as a result of roads and buildings. The only negative is tree pollen. He pointed out hot spots in Unionville near the roundabout, Piedmont High School and Smith Field subdivision due to limited tree canopy. He has recommendations for landscaping and buffering wording for the Town's Land Use Ordinance. He is our consultant, as the Town participates in the Urban Forester program annually. He will work with Land Use Administrator Gaddy regarding text amendments for our ordinance. Mayor Baucom made inquiry as to his findings regarding the trees at Unionville Community Center. He has made recommendations for those trees and any residents may call him for any questions they have about trees as well.

Mayor Baucom referred to the Piedmont High School Top Female Athlete and Top Male Athlete and the Top Ten Seniors, who will be recognized with awards from Town of Unionville at their Awards Ceremony Tuesday, May 16, 2023. A list of these students is appended to these minutes.

In other business, Clerk Gaddy reminded Council about the upcoming Unionville Heritage Day on Saturday, September 9, 2023 at Unionville Elementary School and asked for volunteers to spend some time at the Town's display during the day and asked for any suggestions they might have. She also reported that construction on Town Hall will begin May 22, and she will be moving her office to Unionville Volunteer Fire Department #22, 3229 Concord Highway, Monroe, NC. Town Council and Planning Board meetings will be held at that location through October, 2023 and will be advertised as such. She has added signs at Town Hall and the VFD to this effect. Town Hall phones will be forwarded to her cell phone for convenience. She also requested four days of vacation Tuesday – Friday, May 23-26, 2023. Upon motion duly made by Jeff Broadaway, seconded by Gene Price, Council unanimously approved this vacation request.

There being no other business, Mayor Baucom declared the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonya W. Gaddy
Clerk

Approved as to form:

R. Kenneth Helms, Jr., Town Attorney