



C O U N C I L M I N U T E S F E B R U A R Y 2 9 , 2 0 2 4 , 3 : 3 0 P M , S F D T O W N H A L L

The special called meeting was called to order at 3:31pm by Sessoms.

The following were present:

Council

Tim Sessoms, Mayor
Lynne Williams DeVaney, Mayor Pro-tem
Heath Clay
John Doggett
Jonathan Hamilton
Janelle Robinson

Staff

Scott Whitaker, Manager
Dee Hall, Finance Officer
Sarah Tibbetts, Clerk

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

DeVaney motioned to approve the agenda as presented, the motion was seconded by Robinson and carried unanimously.

DE-ANNEXATION NOTICE/RESPONSE/PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM

DeVaney read a statement that the Council is anticipating de-annexation to be pursued in April during the General Assembly’s short session due to a recent conversation between Senator Berger and Council member. Berger stated he still supports the passing of HB-5. Hamilton stated he spoke with Berger directly at recent meeting at Stokesdale Town Hall. Hamilton believes the Council should attempt to contact David Couch to see if he has interest in filing a re-zoning application. There was Council consensus to contact Couch and Berger to see what compromises could be made. Hamilton suggested contracted attorney Michael Thelen could reach out to Couch’s attorney (Tom Terrell) and discuss a way to approach Berger. Hamilton offered to ask Thelen to contact Terrell.

There was a lengthy conversation between Hamilton and Sessoms regarding the release of de-annexation-related emails among attorneys, and three resolutions passed prior to the most October 5 text amendment was also discussed. Hamilton stated that the resolutions hold no legal weight and Council could undo them. Sessoms stated the resolutions were passed to build trust and show the town was willing to work with the General Assembly and developer. Clay asked Sessoms if he could contact Berger and attempt to facilitate a meeting between him and Council.

DeVaney stated Council’s desire to hire a PR firm and a recommendation and pricing would be forthcoming. There was consensus to allow DeVaney to find a PR firm and work with Hall to get the contract pre-audited and make budget amendments. Whitaker suggested a cost cap for the services. Hamilton motioned to hire a PR firm and for DeVaney to be appointed to retain one, the motion was seconded by Robinson and carried 4-1 with Doggett opposed. Doggett stated he felt spending more taxpayer money wasn’t in the best interest of the town at this point due to the statements made by Berger and the power he holds.

NOTICE OF BOB HORNIK, TOWN ATTORNEY

DeVaney stated she asked for the attorney’s resignation to be posted online and was told by



Whitaker that the majority of Council should direct the social media post. Council agreed by consensus to have Whitaker post the resignation letter on the town's Facebook page. Hamilton stated he has a few attorneys lined up to interview for the position. DeVaney stated they plan to interview in groups of two Council members to avoid a quorum or an effective majority.

LOBBYIST – MODIFICATION OF CONTRACT

DeVaney stated the current King and Co. lobbyist contract has verbiage that only allows King to work on matters for the town related to de-annexation. Council desired to change the language so that King could do other lobbying to the town's benefit. Hamilton stated the language would be modified to the effect of "work would include additional subject matter as agreed upon by both parties." Hamilton motioned to amend the contract to say that King could work on behalf of the town for additional matters if agreed upon by both parties, the motion was seconded by Doggett and carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Doggett motioned to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Clay, and carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 4:16pm.

Tim Sessoms, Mayor

Sarah Tibbetts, Town Clerk