

Council Meeting Minutes
For
June 2, 2008
Branchville Town Hall
7:00 P.M.

PRESENT

Mayor Tim Cooner
Mayor Pro Tem Glenn Miller
Councilwoman Benita Gibbs
Councilman Chris Ott
Councilman Charles Dukes
Councilwoman Georgianna Harmon

OTHERS PRESENT

Rhonda Thompson Town Clerk

GUESTS

Dan Campbell	Harriet Hughes	Tommy Vickers	Betty Skolasky
Debra Perugini	Carolyn Campbell	Bessie Hardwick	Raymond Hardwick
Beatrice Miller	Betty Blaylock	Jeffrey Hart	John Goodwin
Vivian Fogle	R. Edwards		

Mayor Cooner called the meeting to order and asked that all stand for the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

Mayor Cooner welcomed everyone out tonight.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Cooner asked the pleasure of Council on the approval of minutes Councilman Ott motioned and Councilman Dukes seconded.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – AGENDA ITEMS/NON AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Cooner asked for public comments on any item on the agenda and Ms. Skolasky wanted to know why a water and sewer increase was on the agenda when the Town just raised the rates about a year ago and the Mayor explained because of the cost of gasoline and other expenditures rising.

PUBLIC COMMENTS OF OTHER MATTERS

Mayor Cooner asked for public comments of other matters, Mr. Tommy Vickers approached the Mayor and Council and handed out a resume and advised that he would be glad to volunteer his services and knowledge of police work.

Ms. Vivian Fogle spoke to say that the debris was still in front of her home that she asked about at the last meeting and the lights at the old elementary gym were not totally on they are blinking.

Mr. Jeffrey Hart then approached the Mayor and Council and handed out a copy of what he said the Town owed him compensation for hours worked but he did not get paid for. Then Mr. Hart read out loud a copy of the letter that he was handing out. Mr. Hart then stated that none of the police officers receive holiday pay. Councilwoman Harmon questioned Officer Luck about whether or not she is paid for all time worked and vacation pay. Officer Luck said she was paid for any hours that she works as well as any vacation time owed. Officer Luck was also questioned about whether or not Mr. Hart was paid for all the time owed him and Officer Luck stated that she worked nights and really did not know exactly what hours other officers worked during the day time.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT

Mayor Cooner asked the pleasure of Council for approving the financial report. After several questions from Councilwoman Harmon and Mayor Pro Tem Miller it was then motioned by Councilman Ott to approve the financial report and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Miller. Councilwoman Gibbs and Councilwoman Harmon nayed.

Councilwoman Harmon asked for permission from Council to go through all of the Town Clerks files. Mayor Pro Tem Miller and Councilman Ott voiced their opinions and said that Councilwoman Harmon could not go into the Town Clerk's office and go through the files at her leisure.

COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS

Police Department – Mayor Cooner said the Police Department was doing a good job and the Mayor asked them to try and conserve on gasoline as much as possible.

Administrative Office

-Mayor Cooner asked Mayor Pro Tem Miller if he had anything. Mayor Pro Tem Miller said that he wanted to attend a class in Kingstree about grants. Mayor Pro Tem Miller said the grant he was interested in was for a Healthcare center and that he was told if you ask not you have not.

Public Works

-Mayor Cooner said the public works department was doing a good job and two men were sent to a class in Elloree last week, which was informative.

Mayors Report

-Mayor Cooner said we are moving along on the Streetscape project and the Regional Water project. Mayor Cooner said the architect was working on plans for the New Town Hall.

OLD BUSINESS

Mayor Cooner said resolutions were passed to proceed with plans for the New Town Hall and an engineering committee was chosen of Councilman Dukes, Councilwoman Bryant and Councilman Ott. Councilman Ott resigned. Mayor Cooner mentioned the purchasing of the old Bar B Que place. Mayor Pro Tem Miller said we were being

reckless with the Town's money. Mayor Pro Tem Miller and Councilwoman Gibbs both said to let the record show they do not agree with the purchase, they did not attend the last Council meeting, but were notified of the meeting.

Mayor Cooner then explained the intentions of utilizing the building that has been restored on the outside, but left as a shell on the inside down by Horton Field. Mayor Cooner went on to explain the reason the Town needed to purchase the Old Bar B Que building is because the New Town Hall will have a drive through window in it and the Town will need additional space for parking.

Mayor Cooner asked for any other comments and Councilwoman Harmon said that she would like to put in the form of a motion to utilize Mr. Tommy Vickers offer for assistance. Mayor Cooner asked how Council would like to handle this situation and Councilman Dukes and Mayor Pro Tem Miller motioned for executive session.

OLD BUSINESS

Mayor Cooner said under Sec. 15-16 Unlawful Operation of a Motor Vehicle, would the Town like to pass the first reading. Currently we are using point violation tickets, and in doing so the Town does not get as much revenue from Point tickets as we do from Unlawful Operation tickets. Councilman Ott motioned and Mayor Pro Tem Miller seconded.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Cooner said that the Town needs to consider raising the Water and Sewer Rates again. Mayor Pro Tem Miller and Councilwoman Gibbs said no. Mayor Cooner said we need to do something to offset the price of gasoline and diesel. Mayor Cooner then discussed charging new taps \$450.00 each for water and sewer each and how the Town is losing money at this rate. Mayor Pro Tem Miller said some of the Town's residents struggle to pay the flat rate now and the Town needs to find another means for additional income. Councilwoman Harmon said that maybe we need to stop cutting grass every week and cut it once every two or three weeks. Mayor Cooner said another possibility is to lay off two individuals in the water and sewer department, if we are going to stop cutting grass.

Councilwoman Harmon suggested having a special meeting to discuss ways to save money for the Town. Councilwoman Harmon motioned and Mayor Pro Tem Miller seconded.

PROGRESS ON CAPITAL PROJECTS

Mayor Cooner said this has already been covered.

ITEMS OF INFORMATION

Mayor Cooner said no items of information tonight.

It was then decided not to have a special meeting, and further discuss this issue at the July Town Council meeting.

Mayor Cooner asked for a motion to go into executive session Councilman Dukes motioned and Councilman Ott seconded.

No action was taken in executive session.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rhonda Thompson".

Rhonda Thompson
Town Clerk