TOWN OF HEMINGWAY

MINUTES OF MEETING ON MARCH 14, 2019

HEMINGWAY TOWN HALL AT 6:00 P.M.

**Present:**  George Sutton-Mayor Pro-Tem, Keith Baxley, Jimmy Chinnes, Doug Joy, Charlie Carter, Joseph Lee-Town Administrator, Samantha Lewis-Town Clerk, Chief Bryan Todd, Denise Santoro, Ken Laster-Public Works Director, Jonathan Laster, Gregg Askins, Shamira McCray-Pee Dee Weekly, Dianne Owens-The News, Robert Bell

**Council Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.**

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

**Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Baxley made the motion to accept the minutes as written for February 6, 2019 and February 14, 2019 and it was seconded by Mr. Chinnes and it carried unanimously.

**Persons Appearing Before Council: Denise Santoro:** Ms. Santoro is working with the communities, families and now with he churches to help get the word out about illiteracy. She visited Donnelly community this week and saw young black men and young white ladies that can’t find a job. This breaks her heart. She said there is no incentive or encouragement to make something of themselves. Drugs have taken over and they need education. The good Lord has given her a passion to help all people. She is going to raise her voice for Williamsburg County and Hemingway for our young children.

**Construction Update:** Mr. Lee told council that there are a few more things that have to be done. The shoe molding, glass for the counter windows, and other things that have to be done before we can move over there. We have started cleaning out this building in order to get moving over to the next one. After we move in there, they are going to start in this building. Mr. George and Mr. Charlie commented that it looks good.

**1st Reading on Williamsburg County to Collect Town Taxes:** Mr. Askins was asked by Town Administrator to allow the mayor and clerk to enter into an agreement with Williamsburg County to collect our town taxes. The Town will still set the millage rate. The other municipalities in the county let the county collect their taxes. The ordinance that Mr. Askins gave to council amends our ordinance to allow them to collect our taxes. This contract can be terminated by either party prior to a July 1st date. Mr. Sutton asked Mr. Askins recommends this. Mr. Askins stated that it would take a lot off of our staff. Mr. Chinnes make the motion to accept the ordinance with an amendment of 2019 tax year and it was seconded by Mr. Joy and it carried unanimously.

**Hospitality Request from BBQ Shag Festival:** The BBQ Shag Festival is asking for $10,000 from the Hospitality Fund. They requested $8,000 last year. Mr. Carter stated that the Shag Festival has a history of a successful festival unless mother nature decides different. This shines a good light on the Town. He has not problem with this and wants it to go statewide. This might bring more people from all over the state. Mr. Baxley stated that he wanted an itemized expenditure stated from them. The last one we got was very sketchy. He stated it isn’t his money or any council’s money but the public’s money. The council needs to get behind what the community would like to have. The playground equipment has rave reviews. Mr. Carter made the motion to give the Shag Festival $10,000 from the Hospitality Fund with an itemized expenditure report. It was seconded by Mr. Joy and it carried unanimously.

**1st Reading on Mutual Aid Agreement with Williamsburg County Sheriff’s Office:**  Mr. Lee stated that he and Chief Todd have been going back and forth on this resolution. The Chief would have last word if our officers is going to respond to out of town requests. Chief Todd stated that it is according to what kind of call if our officer will respond. The MASC did an audit review and stated that a mutual aid agreement has to be in place. Mr. Carter asked that if an officer is in trouble and they ask for our officer to respond, would we respond. Chief Todd stated that we never refuse help when an officer is in trouble. Mr. Sutton asked if he can’t be reached and something happens, who will make the decisions. Chief Todd stated that he is always a phone call away and also second in command is able to make that choice. We have a few new officers that aren’t experienced enough to go to some calls. Mr. Sutton read the agreement proposed to council as A RESOLUTION AMENDING RESOLUTION RATIFYING AND APPROVING MULTI-JURISIDICTIONAL AGREEMENTS ENTERED INTO BY THE HEMINGWAY POLICE DEPARTMENT WITH SURROUNDING LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER AND CHIEF OF POLICE TO APPROVE AND SIGN MATERIALLY EQUIVALENT AGREEMTNS ENTERED INTO BY THE POLICE DEPARTMENT IN THE FUTURE. Mr. Carter made the motion to accept the first reading of the resolution and it was seconded by Mr. Chinnes and it carried unanimously.

**Administrator’s Report: 1)** The special election filing is March 18th at 12:00 through March 29th at 5:00 p.m. You can sign up here at Town Hall Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Cost is $50 for council seat and $75 for mayor seat. There are forms that need to be filled out. Election day is May 14th at Town Hall. Mr. Carter stated mayor is for three years and council seat is until June 2020. Mr. Carter said we need to encourage people to participate. Mr. Chinnes asked if it was on the website. Mrs. Lewis stated that it was. 2) Drainage Study that Mike Hanna presented last month will cost around $189,000 just to do the study to apply for the money to do the project. We have to do the study before we can move forward with obtaining grants. Both the general fund and the water fund have been spending a lot of money lately. We are looking at different pots to get his money from. Mr. Laster stated that Mr. Hanna suggested that we do this in stages to keep the cost down. Mr. Lee stated that the county has been cleaning out a lot of ditches and breaking up beaver dams in this area. He is hoping that this will help with the Town’s problem. 3) Mr. Lee stated that he got a call from David Mace and he is working on getting Snow’s Lake landing fixed. There is a 3 ½ acre tract of land that could be owned. DNR and Pee Dee Land Trust and county will help with the liability and maintenance of keeping the area. There could be picnic tables, sheds, etc. put down there and it would be nice. Mr. Sutton stated that now the bridge to Soccee is out and to get to the river, people are using Snow’s Lake as an entrance. This is used for fishing, boating, kayaking, etc. This would be a good thing to do. Mr. Sutton asked Mr. Lee to keep them posted.

**Old Business: 1)** Mr. Sutton stated that here are two ball fields that are not used. He asked council to come up with some ideas to do with the land. They both have lights around them that work. 2) Mr. Joy stated that Kingstree and Lake City Hospitals have obtained MUSC to build them a new building and since then there has been no activity on the Outpatient Facility. He said that two months ago they discussed talking about lowering the cost again if there is no activity. He has tried Doctor’s Care, etc. and no interest. It is up for $550,000. He asked council about lowering the cost again. Mr. Chinnes stated that he feels that this needs to be discussed in executive session as discussed at the previous meeting. Mr. Carter told Mr. Joy to bring any reasonable offer to them. Mr. Joy stated that there isn’t any offers. He stated that we need to reduce the cost again and talk to churches, funeral homes, etc. Mr. Sutton stated that with the new hospital coming, it doesn’t look good for a doctor’s office. Mr. Carter stated that $25,000 isn’t going to entice anyone. He suggests a $50,000 deduction. Mr. Baxley stated that he feels even $50,000 won’t get an interest. The building is going to start costing us to keep it. The electric bill runs around $1,000 per month. Once the EMS moves to their new building, we will have that cost. Mr. Sutton stated that next month we will put it in executive session to discuss this. Mr. Lee stated that the next meeting this room will be under construction. He asked council where will they like to meet. He suggested Fire Department, Medical Building or the Library. They agreed to the Medical Building. Mr. Baxley asked about the increase of the water and sewer rates. Mr. Lee stated that when we have a full council it will be discussed.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Sincerely

Samantha Lewis

Town Clerk