TOWN OF HEMINGWAY

MINUTES OF MEETING ON MAY 14, 2020

110 SOUTH MAIN STREET AT 6:00 P.M.

**Present:** Mayor John Michael Collins, George Sutton-Mayor Pro-Tem, Charlie Carter, Keith Baxley, Jimmy Chinnes, Solomon Lewis, Bennett Cox, Joseph Lee-Town Administrator, Samantha Lewis-Town Clerk, Veronica Elliott and Pamela Matthews

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

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

**Approval of Minutes of Meeting:** Approval of minutes of meetings for March 12, 2020 was motioned by Mr. Sutton and it was seconded by Mr. Carter and it carried unanimously.

**Persons Appearing Before Council: None**

**Old Business:** A) Mr. Carter asked how were the bids coming along for the viewing station at the sewer pond. Mr. Lee stated that he is still waiting on a bid and will let them know as soon as possible. Mr. Lee stated that he would like to wait to see how the funds are coming in due to the corona virus. Mr. Baxley stated that it should be pretty good. No one has stopped eating. Some business is stating that they are doing as much with just take out as regular business. Mr. Lee stated that he will have a report next month.

**Fair Housing Resolution:** Mayor Collins read the Fair Housing Resolution declaring the month of April as Fair Housing. Mr. Carter made the motion to accept the resolution and it was seconded b Mr. Baxley and it carried unanimously.

**Administrator’s Report:** a) The corona virus in Williamsburg County is 137 cases with 7 deaths. We have shut the lobby down for a few months. We are looking at the bank to see when they are going to reopen. Mrs. Elliott stated that they are opening the lobby back the following Wednesday. We are thinking about opening and going back to normal the last week in May or the first week in June. Mr. Baxley stated that if we feel that we need to wait, then do so. It is left up to Mr. Lee when to open it back up. He stated that he knows we deal with a lot of people face to face and whatever we feel is safe for our employees. Mr. Carter asked if there has been any problems with the lobby being closed. Mrs. Lewis stated that we haven’t had any problems. Mr. Lee stated that we have had Samantha and Glenda in alternating shifts. If both of them get sick we are going to be in trouble. B) The two buildings on the corner-We have been in contact with the owners. We are trying to get them to fix them up. The building inspector has the plans for the one building on the corner. The second building owner stated that she doesn’t have the money to clean or fix it up. The cost to knock it down is around $20,000 for both buildings. Not sure if the cost will be too much different if it is for just one building. We will have to check for asbestos which will cost around $1500. The building and land are subject to a mortgage to John Beck. We have sent a certified letter to him and he hasn’t responded. The second building is beyond repair and has been condemned. We told them that we will start fining them for each day of the violation. Town will have to undertake the tearing it down and other costs. The $1500 asbestos cost is for only testing. If it tests positive, it will cost a lot more to have it removed. We are hoping she will give it to the Town but not sure if the Town wants it. We are going to take it day by day and see how it develops. Mr. Carter asked if we would take a lien on the property and then clean it up if it comes to that? Mr. Askins stated that we need to be careful how we handle this because we have to feed everyone out the same spoon. Mr. Sutton asked if Mr. Askins had any suggestions. Mr. Askins stated that we continue as we are and see how it goes. C) The election for Town Council seats is July 14th from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Books are open May 6-20th. D) We got a notice from the governor that rescinded the request to not cut off utilities for nonpayment. We will work with customers if they need help in paying their delinquent accounts. We will be putting notice on our Facebook account and website. Mr. Lewis stated that they will use excuses for their bills. Don’t have a headache about it, they know they have a bill that has to be paid. He stated that we need to work with them but don’t let them take advantage of the situation. E) There is a group of parents that would like to have a parade for the graduating seniors. Chief Todd spoke with them and they have decided to do it as a funeral procession and not a parade due to this virus and social distancing. It is schedule for Sunday, May 31st at 4:00 p.m. It will run from the First Baptist Church to the school. Michelle Dukes from the Kingstree News has been notified and have asked spectators to stay in their vehicles if you want to see it. F) The Town has put in for a 25/75 grant. We pay 25% and the government pays 75%. We have asked for police cars, pickup trucks for water/sewer department, generators, lawnmowers and cameras for the 4 ways coming into Town. G) Pastor Williams who is deceased owned a piece of land on North Main Street. His family is taking over his business and would like to donate the piece of land to the Town. Mr. Askins stated that in 1960, Town of Hemingway and Mr. Anderson was in a lawsuit over the right-away on this piece of land. The Town lost but nothing was ever done to correct it. Town has a sewer pipe, three manholes and two to three water lines. The Town currently maintains this property anyway. Mr. Askins stated that he didn’t see any negative to accepting this lot. Mr. Baxley made the motion to accept the offer and it was seconded by Mr. Chinnes and it carried unanimously. H) Williamsburg County gave us a generator. It is the green one in the back. We are in the process of having it hooked up. It will run the Town Hall, Public Works, Police Department and Fire Department. When the electricity cuts off, it automatically cuts on. Richardson Electrical is doing the work. Ken has made a deal with the company that can bore under the road for exchange of water. The transfer switch came with the generator and this saves us a lot of money.

Mayor Collins made the motion to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Mr. Sutton and it carried unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

Sincerely

Samantha Lewis

Town Clerk