August 13, 2013

7:00 P.M.

The Town of Pink Hill held its monthly board meeting on Tuesday, August 13, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the town hall board room. Present for the meeting were Mayor Carol Sykes, Commissioners Mike Hill, Donald King and Marion Mitchell, Town Attorney George Jenkins, Public Works Director Timmy Kennedy, and Town Clerk Kimberly Mitchell. Chief Joey Thigpen was unable to attend.

Visitors present - County Commissioner J. Mac Daughtey.

Mayor Sykes called the meeting to order. Mayor Sykes welcomed everyone to the meeting. Commissioner King then led everyone in the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Hill made a motion to approve the regular board minutes from July 9, 2013. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Commissioner Hill made a motion to approve the agenda and amendments if needed as presented. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The first item on the agenda was County Commissioner J. Mac Daughety to speak. Commissioner Daughety wanted to bring the board up to date on a couple of things. He stated that he was here last week meeting with Leigh Ann Hardy, Principal at Pink Hill Elementary and with Parks & Recreation and DOT. He said they have been talking with Leigh Ann and the school about their need for ball fields at the school. They have a playground but no place for organized sports. Commissioner Daughety said, the spill over lot on the left as you go in the driveway where you have to cross the bridge to come in is where the ball fields will be. He was able to get Bill Ellis down here to look at it and Mr. Ellis is going to have his people come and put bases on two fields, a pitching mound, and mark the field off. This will make them able to play organized sports when school opens this year. Commissioner Daughety said he also brought Johnny Metcalf from DOT down here because it is a big concern of the fire department and the school that they only have one way in and one way out. He stated he has been working with DOT for about a year and thought they had it in the last legislative session. Commissioner Daughety said he brought Johnny Metcalf and they walked around with Leigh Ann and Brent Williams from the Central Office. Commissioner Daughety said when you turn on Turner Road you will see on the right a bean field and then if you will look to the border of the bean field from there all the way over belongs to the school and as far back as you can see. He replied that there is a tremendous amount of room. Commissioner Daughety stated that DOT is going to come out here in the next month or so and start surveying and then you will see them come a little bit later and they will run a road from the edge of that bean field all the way back beyond where the old house was that the fire department took down recently. He also stated there is a cut out place where the field has been cleared and we are going to dump it there and it will be potentially a staff parking lot for the teachers. He said DOT is going to come around at the other end off of the paved road you go in now and cut an in and out driveway to that lot over there. Commissioner Daughety said they are going to do two things: (1) create an emergency exit and entrance for your emergency service trucks and (2) simultaneously going to create a parking lot for the teachers. He stated this is going to be done without any expense to the town or the county. Commissioner Daughety said they are hoping after the ball fields are done that they can go back on that playground and maybe put up volleyball net or something. Mayor Sykes stated she was very happy to hear that because every school needs those items. Commissioner Daughety said that it appears that the schools are heading toward having K-8 schools and it is potentially down the road to do this on the south side. Commissioner Daughety then said he was going to give us an update on the Hwy. 11/Hwy. 241 bypass project. He stated there was a feasibility study done and DOT came back to us with two or three different items to update us on. Commissioner Daughety said it appears based on the report here that the data is dictating that it probably would have been on the western side. He stated again it is not carved in stone but the data is indicating that that would be the better route. He said it would go around Hwy. 11 and bypass Pink Hill on the western side and come back to Hwy. 241. Commissioner Daughety said in the previous division under Lassiter in the preceding meetings he had encouraged these folks to go study turning all of this into interstate quality road. In doing so they came back with costing studies that make it very cost prohibitive to do that. Two things happened in that meeting: (1) I told him to go back and study it and to build it just north of Pink Hill because we want to make it cost efficient where we can get it built. Our goal in all of this is to get a four lane highway from the port to the GTP. What is north of Pink Hill works fine and if we can get that to Hwy. 24 then we will be free of it. It does not have to be interstate quality just as long as we get a good road that we can connect to the port and that we can use for economic development. Mayor Sykes asked if he was talking about connecting with the four lane on Hwy. 11 now. Commissioner Daughety said the Pink Hill bypass will connect with Hwy. 11 as it exists now. Mayor Sykes asked Commissioner Daughety where the bypass is going. Commissioner Daughety stated it would go on the western side it appears. Mayor Sykes stated so you want to bypass Pink Hill and Commissioner Daughety replied yes but the western part will come close to us. If they do a western route, it is actually going to be closer to us than an eastern route. Commissioner Daughety stated with bypasses comes growth. He said if you four lane Hwy. 241 coming through here from the port of Wilmington, you are going to see growth because Pink Hill is going to be right in the middle of the port and the GTP. He stated the other piece that has happened since that meeting is we have partnered with several partners including Duplin County, Lenoir County, and the eastern part of the state. He said the Jacksonville folks have come to us now and they want to take this project once it hits Hwy. 24, they want to run it all the way down to the military base. He said this would make Jacksonville and Onslow County a route through Pink Hill, Hwy. 11, and Hwy. 70 to the interstates which Jacksonville does not have. They are one of the few metropolitan areas in the country that is not connected to an interstate by a four lane highway. Commissioner Hill asked if something is going to be done on Hwy. 258 to get rid of some of those traffic lights and are they going to bypass Richlands. Commissioner Daughety stated he did not know the mechanics of what they want to do in Jacksonville. As it stands now there is a Hwy. 11/Hwy. 903 project that was on the books for 30 years and that is a strategic corridor for DOT and then there was the four laning of Hwy. 258 from Richlands to Kinston that is also a project that was on the books and it is a strategic corridor. The goal of this project is to take these strategic corridors off of those two roads and put it on this road which will give you greater exposure and to eliminate those other two projects which will save the state 3 to 4 million dollars. Commissioner Hill stated if it goes around Beulaville that it is going to hurt them worse than us. Commissioner Daughety asked them to refer to the second email he gave them. He stated he is very supportive of DOT and they have a lot of good people in the Department of Transportation but it has it limits. He said they have a small division called their Transportation Planning Division that does traffic counts. There have been some issues with them on traffic counts. He stated that they came back and said if this became a four lane road and we didn’t four lane Hwy. 258 and Hwy. 11/Hwy. 903 and this was the four lane connecting to Hwy. 24 and Hwy. 40 into Jacksonville and Wilmington, that it would create one additional car on this road. He stated that everyone in the meeting was floored by what they said. At that point he said he told them they needed to go back and re-cost it just like a freeway like Hwy. 11 North is so it is more reasonable in cost and we can get the thing built. He also told them that if it took them 90 days longer or 120 days longer that these traffic count numbers were not acceptable to us and that they needed to go back and restudy because the information they put in there was not scientific and not real world and it was just unbelievable. Commissioner Daughety said in response to that we are having a meeting on September 9, 2013. He said that meeting is only to talk about the traffic counts because they demanded a meeting to sit down and talk about this. He said they are not going to accept the numbers they gave them. Mayor Sykes asked where the meeting was going to be. Commissioner Daughety said it is going to be in Raleigh at the Complex off of Poole Road. Commissioner Daughety said anyone is welcome to come. He said Duplin County is well represented. He stated this is the good news but the bad news is that he is not sure if anything is going to be funded. This new transportation strategic funding formula that they have done is highly tilted toward congestion. Congestion is related to population so he does not know how this is going to play out for us. This includes all of eastern North Carolina. He said in Kinston and Lenoir County we are looking at a bypass and we thought for years it would likely be funded, but now that Kinston bypass, New Bern bypass, and all the bypasses on Hwy. 70 that aren’t funded individually will be competing on a statewide level with all the other major projects in areas like Charlotte, Raleigh, and Greensboro. So when you are doing a bypass in Raleigh or some kind of project like on Hwy. 440 and you stack the congestion there against the bypass in Kinston, if it is weighted to congestion then the metropolitan areas are going to win. Commissioner Daughety said he does not know how it is going to play out but it doesn’t vote well particularly for this project because we do not have a lot of existing congestion. He said this is more about projected congestion for this project. He stated to help you understand that is why usually he will have private conversations with folks about disagreements with DOT but he had to take a stand because from now on traffic counts are going to be of premier importance to us in eastern North Carolina. We cannot get short changed on county traffic because that traffic is going to have to stand up against traffic in these other areas. Commissioner Daughety said he thinks this transportation thing is going to have to settle itself out. We are going to wake up and find that the eastern part of North Carolina is not funded or not going to be taken care of the way it should be. He said he thinks it is going to require the legislature to come back and make some adjustments. He stated when you look at eastern North Carolina our major assets are the ports, GTP, and the military and when you look at the new strategic funding formula, there is not much weighting toward the military and not as much weighting toward connectivity as there is to congestion. He said they are going to use an economic development model but the truth of the matter is if you apply the logic in that to a Goldsboro bypass singularly or a Kinston bypass, they will only measure the impact of a Goldsboro bypass in Wayne County. It will only measure the impact of a Kinston bypass for the distance of that bypass. Well if you cannot apply that to the economic impact of a similar size road in any metropolitan area, you are talking a whole world of difference. Commissioner Daughety said he thinks this is going to have to sort its self out down the road. Mayor Sykes asked how many years are we talking about this is going to be taking to see where we may or may not be. Commissioner Daughety said he thinks within the next year it will begin to sort its self out. Mayor Sykes thanked County Commissioner Daughety for coming. Mayor Sykes stated if anyone would like to go to the meeting in the morning at 8:30 it will be at the Lenoir County Administration Building which is the old Wachovia building. Commissioner Daughety told the board that he would not get too excited one way or the other about this project until they figure out what really is going to happen.

The next item on the agenda was Darnell’s Produce – sewer bill. Mr. Jack Jones did not show up for the meeting.

The next item on the agenda was adopt the Resolution for the Annual Settlement of Property Taxes Collected FY 12-13. Mayor Sykes stated after school starts back she is going to Darryl Parrish’s office to sit down and discuss unpaid real estate taxes in Pink Hill. She said they are going to work together to get a letter done and sent to these people telling them to pay their taxes or face foreclosure. Mayor Sykes asked everyone to look at the list of everyone who has not paid. Commissioner Hill made a motion to adopt the tax resolution for FY 12-13 and to amend the resolution to say Donald King and not Ronald King. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to Set Public Hearing to amend Town Charter for absentee and one stop voting. Mayor Sykes stated that this was discussed when Treva was mayor and when we amended the town charter for staggered terms, but somehow this didn’t get included in the amendment. Mayor Sykes said we are going to amend the charter again. Commissioner Hill made a motion to set a public hearing to amend the town charter to include one stop and absentee voting on September 10, 2013 at 6:55 p.m. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was a Letter from Melissa Quinn. Mayor Sykes asked the board to read over the letter. She said it is for informational purposes.

The next item on the agenda was Police Updates. Joey was unable to be at the meeting so Kim read the report for him. Since the last meeting on July 9, 2013 the police have had a total of 7 reported incidents, 3 arrest, 3 accidents, and they issued 26 citations for a total of 33 charges.

The next item on the agenda was the Deed for the cafeteria at old school. George stated everyone has a copy of the deed to look at. He said the original was not sent to Town Hall and it was not sent to his office. He stated it looks like it was returned to White & Allen but he is pretty sure they would have mailed it to probably 300 S. Front Street. The deed is recorded and it is a conveyance to the Town of Pink Hill which is appropriate. There is no restriction on the deed as to who gets to use it. It is town property to do with as they see fit. George said technically the old cafeteria can be sold. It would have to be declared as surplus just as you would any other real property.

The next item on the agenda was the Wooten Company to inspect Broadway Tank. Timmy stated he had gotten the final inspection back from Utility Services and he has pictures. Timmy said there was just a little bit of settlement in the bottom of the bowl and you can plainly see it in the pictures where the water is going up and down. Timmy explained that Public Water Supply also took some samples but he has not heard any results yet. Timmy said the way the state works is it is first come first serve and they are pretty swamped right now. Timmy stated that in talking with Public Water Supply they recommended that he try for a short period of time just using one tank and that is what he is doing right now. He said they are filling the Broadway Tank all the way up, where used to because of the elevation of other tanks we only could fill the Broadway Tank to about three fourths full. Timmy said he talked with the WASA Plant and they have lifted the fill line and he is filling the tank all the way up now. He said they are using 60 to 70 thousand a day and that is turning that tank over pretty much every day. He said the Pinewood Tank is cut off but it is full of water. Timmy said his numbers are staying fairly stable but it is hot weather and hot weather kills your chlorine residuals. Timmy said they are not completely diminishing like they were. He said this is working for one problem but for fire flow he is in a bind. Timmy explained that he was leaning towards going back to two tanks when it gets a little bit cooler. Commissioner Hill said in talking with other systems some of them are having the same problems with chlorine. Timmy said the wash out went good and he got a good back T-sample from them. He said he got the okay to turn the tank back on and dumped the water. Timmy explained that there is no need for the Wooten Company to come at this time. Timmy said he and Kim had sent some information to Utility Services to get a price on a mixer just to see if that was something they could do to keep the water mixed. The purpose of the mixer would keep the water mixed so the water on the top would not get stagnate.

The next item on the agenda was Water Project/Driveway Issues. This issue was tabled until some more information could be gathered.

The next item on the agenda was Fire Department Report. Timmy stated since July 1, 2013 they have had 1 structure fire, 3 EMS calls, 4 vehicle accidents, 1 vehicle fire, and 2 automatic fire alarms. He said everything else seems to be going pretty well. Timmy said they are having their annual gun raffle and they have started selling tickets which are $20 each. It will be held on October 11, 2013 and they will also be having their fish stew and chicken stew that night also.

The next item on the agenda was Water/Sewer Updates. Timmy said everything seems to be going fairly well with the water project. Timmy stated they have finished Rosewood and it has been tested. Harpers’ Landing has been finished and tested. Mayor Sykes asked if they have gone online yet. Timmy replied no because they have to get at least a partial certification before they can open it up. Timmy said they have also done Leighton Drive and Johnson Street and have them full of water but have not done the testing yet. Timmy stated they have started on Debbie Street, Davis Street and VFW and that is where they are at right now. They also did some work around the tank. Timmy said they also did some work on the unnamed road over by the park. Commissioner Hill told Timmy that he appreciated the job he and his boys are doing. Mayor Sykes thanked Timmy for his work.

The next item on the agenda was Budget Amendments if needed. Kim said there were no budget amendments or transfers at this time.

The next item on the agenda was Remarks by Town Attorney. George said thank you for letting him be here.

The next item on the agenda was Comments by the Board. Commissioner King wanted to give an update on his condition to the board. He said he did have a mild heart attack. He then stated in the process of doing the test, they gave him a dye which caused his kidneys to malfunction and his nose to bleed which prevented the doctors from doing what they were supposed to have done. He said they went in a small hole in his wrist to fix the 90 percent blockage and the ache he was having went away immediately. They put him back in his hospital room and kept him two more days and his kidneys were supposed to be coming back up. He said they sent him home for two days and his kidneys didn’t come back up and he had congestive heart failure. He was sent back to Kinston and they kept him a week. They got his kidneys cleared and he is okay now. Commissioner King told the board he appreciated their prayers.

The next item on the agenda was Public Comment Period. There were no public comments at this time.

The next item on the agenda was Closed Session. There was no need for a closed session at this time.

With there being no further business to be discussed the meeting was adjourned.