



MINUTES

The Holly Springs Town Council met in a duly-called special meeting for its annual Winter Retreat in two sessions from Friday, Feb. 19, 2016 through Saturday, Feb. 20, 2016, at Pine Needles Lodge in Southern Pines. Mayor Dick Sears presided at the Friday session, calling members to order at 9 a.m. Friday, Feb. 19; and Mayor Sears presided at the Saturday session, calling members to order at 9 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 20. A quorum was established for each session.

Saturday Board Members Present: Mayor Sears, Councilmen Jimmy Cobb, Hank Dickson and Tom O'Brien and Councilwomen Linda Hunt Williams and Cheri Lee.

Staff Members Present at the Friday and/or Saturday Sessions: Charles Simmons, town manager; Joni Powell, town clerk (recording the minutes); John Schifano, town attorney; Kendra Parrish, director of engineering; Aaron Levitt, senior engineer; Gina Clapp, director of planning and zoning; Mary Hogan, finance operations director; Daniel Weeks, assistant town manager; Jeff Wilson, information technology director; Len Bradley, parks and recreation director; Adam Huffman, assistant parks and recreation director; John Herring, police chief; Seann Byrd, public utilities director; Luncie McNeil, director of public works; Leroy Smith, fire chief; Ricky Blackmon, code enforcement director; Jenny Mizelle, economic development director and Irena Krstanovic, economic development coordinator.

The purpose of the meeting was to hold a winter retreat to focus discussion on several Town projects and issues as described in the summary on subsequent pages. The summary, which is attached, serves as the minutes of the 2016 Holly Springs Town Council Retreat. Consultants from the Freese & Nichols firm facilitated this year's retreat, providing an agenda of staff presentations followed by interactive exercises to draw out Town Council direction as the Town of Holly Springs continues to experience a healthy sustained rate of growth. Topics covered included growth projections that are anticipated; what needs would arise from that growth and which ones were most important; and how to pay for the most priority projects.

Adjournment: There being no further business for the weekend, the 2016 Winter Retreat of the Holly Springs Town Council was adjourned.



Tuesday, March 1, 2016.



Topic	Discussion Key Points	Council Action / Direction / Consensus
PREPARING for growth	<p>In presentation, staff explained 5-, 10- and 15-year growth projections. All indications are that the Town of Holly Springs will continue a healthy sustained rate of growth over the next decade and reach a population of nearly 50,000 by 2025.</p> <p>In break-out sessions, staff and Council came up with their top challenges and opportunities in the wake of this anticipated growth in Holly Springs (and the region.) Each team returned to the bigger group and shared their ideas. The following are the top issues related to growth that drew consensus of the larger group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the need for elected officials to be innovative leaders; • keeping services and facilities ahead of the growth curve; • balancing growth with maintaining a quality of life in Holly Springs; • traffic – more specifically, rush hour / commuter traffic; • maintaining public safety as the community grows; and • the need for the resources to operate / maintain expanded / new amenities. 	As described.
PRIORITIZING for growth	<p>In presentation, staff updated the Council on how the Town infrastructure is handling current needs and what likely will be needed for the future. The Town is in good shape as far as water and wastewater treatment is concerned with all future improvements to be covered by reserve funds that are funded by development. Future needs that will need more advanced funding strategies are: transportation; parks and recreation; a public works facility; more fire stations and police sub-stations. An objective of this session was to prioritize those needs.</p> <p>In break-out sessions, staff and Council came up with their top infrastructure and facilities needs (not including projects already underway or that are fully funded for the future.) Back in the larger group, each team presented their findings, and the following top priorities emerged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new Public Works facility; • indoor basketball courts; • acquisition of land for future parks; • Avent Ferry Road improvements from Cass Holt to Piney Grove-Wilbon Road; and • expansion of Town Hall space. 	As described

	<p>In presentation, staff updated the Council on how the Town could pay for its priority projects. Topics included the impact on the recent revaluation of property by Wake County. The Council agreed that it would support maintaining a \$.435 tax rate, which actually represents a tax decrease following the revaluation.</p> <p>The revenue-neutral rate provided by Wake County that would provide the same revenue as last year is \$.4381; however, staff and Council agreed that maintaining the current rate – even though it means raising about \$150,000 less than the revenue-neutral rate – was a viable option and would be more amenable to citizens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To fund parks and recreation needs, the Council was comfortable with the suggestion to issue the remaining \$7 million in voter-approved bonds since a tax rate increase would not likely be necessary to fund the debt service. • The Council supported the funding of a space needs analysis for the Public Works Department in the coming fiscal year. • The Council supported using utility fund reserves to fund large water/wastewater infrastructure projects to avoid issuing future debt • The Council supported an option to, at an appropriate time, place a general obligation bond referendum before voters to fund transportation projects with reimbursement agreements in place with NCDOT at the \$20 million to \$25 million level. 	
PAYING for growth	<p>Key points in the interactive discussions on growth were the above bulleted items as well as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth is paying for itself and helping to maintain the quality of life and meeting the expectations of residents; • Communications from the Town to citizens is good, but it always has to continue since there is no definitive “silver bullet” to get all citizens to understand all issues; • Partnerships are important – the Town is expected to “do everything,” but partnerships with civic organizations, the Chamber, other towns in the region, state agencies and the local businesses is the only way to accomplish a lot of those things that people want; • A new public works facility, transportation, parks and recreation projects, acquiring land for future parks, adequate public safety facilities and additional staffing space were identified as priorities. 	As described
Growth Discussion Recap		As described

<p>Downtown Development</p>	<p>There was much discussion as the mayor and members of the Council discussed ways the Town could make Downtown a more desirable and vibrant destination. A key idea was offered by the Chamber of Commerce wherein perhaps the Town could commit to being an anchor tenant for additional staffing space that is needed for a private developer interested in building a downtown building.</p> <p>The cost of a new building downtown (as opposed to other towns where old buildings exist and can be renovated) is cost prohibitive for developers; however, one might be interested in providing a new building if he were guaranteed a major paying tenant. Since the Town needs additional staffing space, it might be a good partnership.</p>	<p>Direction: The Council agreed that this and similar ideas should be further explored, especially as the Chamber of Commerce relocates to its own place on Main Street.</p>
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Saturday Morning, Feb. 20

<p>REAL ESTATE PLANNING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council is comfortable with innovative land swap ideas that would benefit Holly Springs; • Council believes more property to the west of Hwy. 55 is needed for parks; however, members acknowledge that very little property not owned by Duke Energy exists, and the large parcels that are out there are prime development pieces that land owners want to hang onto; • The Council agreed that a long-term lease with Duke Energy would help meet the objective of increasing parkland to the west. 	<p>As Described</p>
<p>NOTABLE CITIZEN RECOGNITION</p>	<p>Mr. Dickson asked for this discussion. He said the town should have criteria for bestowing awards and recognitions, reserving recognition for those who gain state, national or notable recognition; who are native, current or longtime residents who make noteworthy achievements; or for teams who advance at least to the state competition level.</p> <p>Mr. Dickson outlined his ideas for Town recognition of notable citizens. Council consensus was that this was a ceremonial role that could be left at the discretion of the mayor. They agreed there should be a hierarchy of award levels as Mr. Dickson described since recognitions appropriate to each level could be devised..</p>	<p>Direction: The Council agreed a hierarchy of recognitions should be established. They left the determination of what – if anything – would be appropriate in each instance up to the mayor; and directed the clerk to assist in creating and carrying out each recognition.</p>
<p>5K RUN POLICY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most events that apply would be the lower impact road races that would carry only the \$150 fee; • Larger events would be relegated to Sugg Farm; • The draft should be tweaked to be just for “road races”; • 5K Run routes should be established in more than one area than just the Run for the Ridge route 	<p>Tweak policy and return with it to the Council, but not as a Consent item.</p>

HYDROGEN SULFIDE	<p>Hydrogen Sulfide is a byproduct gas that is eroding the Town's system of force mains, particularly those lines made of ductile iron.</p> <p>A fee increase may be needed in the future to repair our aging system, Council understands</p>	As Described
FOOD TRUCKS	<p>Council members agreed that food trucks are a quirky and growing trend that could add to the personality and vibrance of the Town, if managed properly. The Council wants a policy/ordinance that would prohibit a truck owner from a long-term lease in one location as it may become an eyesore.</p> <p>Council also is very concerned about protecting those who have made brick and mortar investments in the town.</p> <p>Any policies or ordinances should also address push carts and vending trucks like ice cream trucks.</p> <p>Don't reinvent the wheel. Check what others do and be similar.</p>	As Described
CEMETERY UPDATE	Ms. Parrish explained how the cemetery improvements are going. She also covered an idea for a third-party company to take over management of the property. Council indicated support.	As Described
FACILITY MANAGER	Staff and Council agree that the time may have come to create facilities position, but not at the supervisory level. Council suggested a superintendent position be explored in the upcoming budget year.	As Described
MANHOLE COVERS	Ms. Parrish reported that decorative manhole covers are in the budget for this year for a portion of Main Street. She asked the Council if the town seal should be used or the Town's new logo. Council preferred the Town logo.	As Described
ARTS COUNCIL	The Arts Council will be leasing space in the Coworking Station; however, leaders have approached the Town about providing or partnering in a future permanent home and art gallery. The consensus of the Council was that the Town's role in such an endeavor would need to be studied further. Currently, the position would be, "Don't promise, but don't forget."	As Described
NMAC UPDATE	<p>Mr. Dickson reported that he met with the high school cross country coaches and learned that the course at Sugg Farm could be improved with a little grading to the point it could be host to high school meets. He said he would ask the coaches to walk the route with Mr. Huffman and Mr. Bradley to discuss since neither were aware of any problems with the course. They said they would welcome the opportunity to meet with the coaches and discuss what might could be done.</p> <p>Mr. Huffman and Mr. Bradley reported that construction continues on Phase 2 of NMAC. To be completed soon are the beverage pavilion, some road improvements, a playground at the stadium and the installation of bleacher fans.</p>	None. For Information Only.

ONLINE WEBINARS	Ms. Powell explained that money was in this year's budget to hire a summer intern to complete this project to provide slide show presentations on the Town's Website educating citizens about Town processes.	None. For Information Only.
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