

**Town of Rich Square  
Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, August 1, 2024 – 6:00 pm  
Town Annex Building**

The Rich Square Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting in the Town Annex Building at 112 E Jackson St, Rich Square, North Carolina. Mayor Victoria Newcombe called the meeting to order 6:00pm and Commissioner Larry Godwin gave the invocation.

Elected officials in attendance were Mayor Victoria Newcombe, Commissioner Peggy Cary, Commissioner Larry Godwin, Commissioner Linwood Bryant, and Commissioner Charles Eason.

Commissioner Raymond Joyner was absent.

Town officials in attendance were Town Attorney Cecelia Jones, Clerk Alayna Balmer, and Chief of Police William Smith.

**Public Comment**

Gwen Futrell asked the board to consider providing Creecy Community space in the Maintenance Building owned by the town located on Short Street to hold 1,500 pairs of shoes for their shoe drive until they can get another container to store them.

**Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Newcombe requested to add a letter from Garysburg Chief of Police to the agenda. Commissioner Godwin moved, and Commissioner Eason seconded to approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

1. Approval of Minutes from June 27 Special Meeting prepared by C.D.M.J.
2. Approval of WWTP Project Bids was tabled due to lack of bids and has been re-advertised for August 8, 2024, at 11am in Town Hall.

Commissioner Eason moved, and Commissioner Cary seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

**New Business**

Finance Officer Chiquita Howard planned to present a monthly financial report however she was not able to attend this meeting, and the report was tabled.

Fire Chief Mark Vick presented his monthly report. To review this information, visit our website at [richsquarenc.org](http://richsquarenc.org) in the Meetings tab. You can also visit the Town Hall or the Fire Department and request a copy of this information.

Mayor Newcombe introduced the next item regarding scheduling a special meeting to discuss the next section of town ordinances to review and revise. The town attorney suggested scheduling a meeting time at the end of every special meeting held for ordinance review or scheduling a meeting the same time

every month if the latter is more convenient to the board. The board agreed to meet August 9<sup>th</sup> and schedule the next meeting afterwards.

The next item on the agenda was the Zoning Permit Application drafted by Dennis Patton and a Zoning Fee Schedule based on another town for the board to review and comment on. The Mayor mentioned that the 10-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan was underway with the help of the UCPCOG, the Advisory Committee, and Mr. Patton.

Next was a letter of approval for a resident to shoot squirrels that were attracted to berries on their property. Chief Smith pointed out that a previous police chief provided them with permission to shoot the squirrels since section 5-3 of the town ordinances prohibit discharge of a firearm within the town limits, not including law enforcement. The attorney suggested adjusting this section of the ordinances if it no longer works best for the town.

Mayor Newcombe presented to the board a letter she received from Garysburg police chief regarding their sponsored National Night Out that will take place August 6<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. The police chief inquired about receiving a monetary donation from the town. The topic was tabled for further review from the finance officer's perspective.

### **Old Business**

The following matter discussed was the appointment of a zoning administrator. The clerk, who typically is appointed as the zoning administrator, shared that she would not be willing to fulfill that role until she could receive training in February 2025. The board decided that Commissioner Cary would temporarily fulfill that role until training was completed by the clerk. Commissioner Godwin moved, and Commissioner Eason seconded to approve the clerk for Planning and Zoning training. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Eason asked for an update on the dilapidated house on Drew Ave and overhanging tree limbs on West Jackson St. The Mayor informed him that pictures of the location were taken, and a nuisance letter was sent to the owner of the house on Drew Ave. She added that she met with the owner of the house on West Jackson St and provided a nuisance letter which indicated the owners liability but was told that the house will be put up for sale making the plan to achieve a solution to the problem unclear.

### **Staff & Council Reports**

Chief Smith reported a stolen vehicle that resulted in a police chase through three different counties which ended in the capturing of the juvenile and the return of the stolen vehicle. He also added that there would be an influx of officers on duty in the months of August and September to anticipate the rise of crime levels at the end of the summer.

Commissioner Eason provided a list of street light outages.

Commissioner Godwin reported that the two aerators at the lagoon have gotten too close to the shore line and can't be used because they would damage the roadway, so a probable solution would be to tie them together and put them back into the lagoon. He also reported that they are in the process of getting a bid on having a shelter placed over a pond at the lagoon and added that the brush cutter will eventually need to be replaced since it's inoperative.

Commissioner Cary reported that she is preparing for annual evaluations for the clerk and finance officer with the help of the attorney.

The clerk reported that a resident asked that the town install a speed bump on Cooke Circle to slow down drivers that speed by her as she walks her dog. The suggestion was noted with consideration of installing a sign to slow down.

The Mayor reported that no-tethering of dogs flyers supplied by PETA were sent out with water bills to residents including a message on the water bill card as well. She also reported that the town was awarded two \$200,000 grants that we applied for in April 2024 for the water system asset management plan and the sewer system asset management plan. Lastly, she reported that an appeal was filed for the 2023 Audit report which was late and is scheduled to have that hearing in the company of two elected officials and the finance officer. Ms. Newcombe requested that the Commissioners form a committee to take over the audit process as the 2023 report is still being completed and the 2024 report is due in October. Chief Smith offered to help with this process as well.

**CLOSED SESSION – Personnel – N.C.G.S. Section 143-318.11 (a)(6)**

**Resumption of Open Meeting/Adjourn**

Commissioner Godwin moved, and Commissioner Bryant seconded to terminate Public Works employee Stanyon Manley with two weeks severance pay. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Bryant moved, and Commissioner Eason seconded to approve Public Works employee Sheldon Greene for additional work hours and duties. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Godwin moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Cary. The motion passed unanimously, and the regular meeting adjourned at 7:52pm.

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Victoria Newcombe, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Alayna Balmer, Clerk