



**LUCAMA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 2023  
LUCAMA TOWN HALL  
BOARD ROOM**

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor, Jeff Johnson, (hereinafter “Mayor Johnson”) called to order the regular meeting of the Town of Lucama Board of Commissioners (hereinafter “Board”) at 6 pm on January 9, 2023.

**2. Roll Call**

Mayor Johnson conducted roll call – by use of sign-in. The following were present:

Commissioner, Michael Best (hereinafter “Comm. Best”)  
Commissioner, David Johnson (hereinafter “Comm. Johnson”)  
Commissioner, Peggy Lamm (hereinafter “Comm. Lamm”)  
Commissioner, Julia Mason (hereinafter “Comm. Mason”)  
Commissioner, Keely Pate (hereinafter “Comm. Pate”) via phone conference  
Town Administrator, Darlene Newsome (hereinafter “Admin. Newsome”)  
Town Clerk, Dena Owens (hereinafter “Clerk Owens”)  
Town Attorney, Gabe DuSablou (hereinafter “Attorney Dusablou”)

**3. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting**

Mayor Johnson gave the Board opportunity to review the proposed minutes from the December 6, 2022, meeting and monthly financial report.

*MOTION: Comm. Best made motion to approve the December 6, 2022, meeting minutes and financial report; seconded by Comm. Mason. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

**4. Welcoming of Guests and Public Comments**

Gladys Martinez was present and spoke during public comments. She voiced her displeasure at the manner in which she felt she was treated at the December meeting. It is her opinion that citizens should be able to ask questions after the Commissioners give their reports. Mayor Johnson encouraged Ms. Martinez to write her questions down and bring them to the meeting the following month.

## 5. Approval for Budget Amendments

Mayor Johnson presented the Board with Budget Amendment #3. Clerk Owens mentioned that Budget Amendment #3 was to appropriate insurance proceeds and other revenues for the replacement of the roof at the Community and Bank buildings.

*MOTION: Comm. Best made motion to accept Budget Amendment #3; seconded by Comm. Mason. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Mayor Johnson present Budget Amendment #4 for approval. Clerk Owens mentioned that Budget Amendment #4 was to appropriate additional revenues and fund balances for expenditures in various departments. There was need to increase revenues and expenditures due to the contracted services that were used before the new crew came, as well as contracted services with the water and sewer department.

*MOTION: Comm. Mason made motion to accept Budget Amendment #4; seconded by Comm. Best. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

## 6. Consideration of Electric Rate Increase

Clerk Owens presented an electric rate increase for consideration. The Town is currently in a deficit on what has been purchased versus what has been sold to electric customers. Before the beginning of the fiscal year the Town's electric consultant, Kevin O'Donnell, mentioned raising the electric rates, however, the rate increase at the beginning of the fiscal year was not enough. It is needed that rates increase an additional 15 percent to cover the deficit.

Admin. Newsome mentioned that rates had increased with one of the electric providers the Town uses and that with the recent cold snap, there is not telling what the cost of the bill to provide power will be. This increase could not be projected. Mayor Johnson mentioned that natural gas prices continue to rise. Admin. Newsome mentioned that although we have a deficit, we are one of the Towns with a lower deficit.

The last increase was 10 percent, and it took place at the beginning of the fiscal year. With the 15 percent increase, Comm. Best mentioned that we would be raising rates 25 percent in a fiscal year. Admin. Newsome mentioned that the Town could not absorb the costs. Comm. Mason questioned if we would have to go

## 6. Departmental Reports

Comm. Mason reported that the Fire Department responded to 11 first responder calls, with having a total of 40 calls. She mentioned that it had not been a bad month.

Comm. Mason did not have any information to share regarding the Electric Department.

Comm. Johnson did not have any information to share regarding the Water and Sewer Department.

Comm. Pate mentioned that the Christmas lights were looking good, however, there were a couple not working just past the railroad track on Main Street. He also mentioned that there seems to be a good bit of pine straw in the streets and is afraid if it continues to lay in the streets, that it would go down the storm drains should it rain. He suggested that the street department work to clean it.

Comm. Pate gave information that the Sheriff's Department reported calls for the month. There were 161 total calls, 131 were self-initiated and 30 calls for service. The report also showed three traffic stops.

Comm. Best mentioned that there is a continued wait for another sidewalk quote to come in.

Regarding the Park, Comm. Best mentioned that the recent Jingle in the Park was a great success. He thanked all those who participated. He anticipates that the next event will take place in March or April. He suggested that the porta-johns be picked up and then returned in the Spring.

Comm. Lamm reported that the door count for the Library in November was 170, reference questions 80, computer usage was 20, there was 303 materials checked out and four library cards issued. For the program on Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>, there were 38 bags and three food boxes to distribute in the community. For "Pumpkin Full of Thanks" program there were 22 patrons who took part. During the month of December there will be a story time on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 am and then an activity later that day at 3:30 pm entitled, "Jolly Jumping Holiday." The library will be closed from Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> for the Christmas holiday and will reopen on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

Comm. Lamm reported that the seniors are thoroughly enjoying the new back door. It helps in security because of the window in the door. Being able to see who is at the door before opening it helps the seniors feel safe.

Comm. Pate asked for information as to how the food drive recipients were chosen. Comm. Lamm did not have the information but suggested if there was someone that he would like to refer, to give the information to the head librarian.

## **7. Updates**

Mayor Johnson shared information regarding the roof repair for the Town Hall, Bank and Community Buildings. The Town's insurance carrier, Interlocal Risk Financing Fund, has approved the repair using the quote from Herring Residential, LLC. The total cost of repairs is \$51,037.51 less \$2,000 deductible.

*MOTION: Comm. Best made motion to have Herring Residential make repairs to the building roofs; seconded by Comm. Mason. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Mayor Johnson presented a proposal to purchase a mower to be attached and used with the Town's tractor, being paid for using Powell Bill funds.

*MOTION: Comm. Johnson made motion to purchase a Land Pride FDR1672 - 72-inch, 540 rpm mower in the amount of \$3,687 plus tax; seconded by Comm. Mason. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Mayor Johnson shared information tabled from a previous meeting regarding Electric Cities membership. The membership includes equipment, training, help during storms and disasters, etc. The cost to join is \$2,825.08. With equipment and supplies being difficult and taking so long to receive, the membership will help insure that the Town will have avenues and reserves to pull from. This membership is to be renewed yearly.

*MOTION: Comm. Johnson made motion to join Electric Cities; seconded by Comm. Best. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Mayor Johnson spoke with Cpl. Magana of the Wilson County Sheriff's Department regarding concerns of speeding on Main and Spring Street and Blalock Road. He is aware that the department is trying to alleviate the speeding in the areas, but most recently the speeding has gotten worse. He also mentioned that people are not stopping at the stop lights in Town. He requested that the Sheriff's Department and Highway Patrol work to enforce the concerns.

Comm. Pate mentioned that bus number 227 was failing to stop at stop signs. He mentioned that all buses traveling by his home stop at signs, except 227. Cpl. Magana will check into the concern.

Discussion was rendered regarding yard debris and pick up in Town. Mayor Johnson will follow up with the street department.

**8. Adjournment**

Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:25 pm, December 5, 2022, upon motion of Board.

*MOTION: Motion was made to adjourn by Comm. Mason; seconded by Comm. Johnson. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

*Respectfully Submitted: Dena Owens, Town Clerk*