



**LUCAMA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2024  
LUCAMA TOWN HALL  
BOARD ROOM**

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor, Matthew Creech, (hereinafter “Mayor Creech”) called to order the regular meeting of the Town of Lucama Board of Commissioners (hereinafter “Board”) at 6 pm on January 8, 2024.

**2. Roll Call**

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

Commissioner, Michael Best (hereinafter “Comm. Best”)  
Commissioner, Jeff Johnson (hereinafter “Comm. J. Johnson”)  
Commissioner, Kim Joyner (hereinafter “Comm. Joyner”)  
Commissioner, Jody Teague (hereinafter “Comm. Teague”)  
Town Administrator, Darlene Newsome (hereinafter “Admin. Newsome”)  
Town Clerk, Dena Owens (hereinafter “Clerk Owens”)  
Utility Billing Clerk, Ashleigh Hooks (hereinafter “Clerk Hooks”)  
Town Attorney, Gabe DuSablón (hereinafter “Attorney DuSablón”)

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Creech mentioned that there needed to be an amendment made for two items of business for the agenda. A deletion of Joe Durham as guest from the North Carolina League of Municipalities. He will not be present at the meeting. He also stated that there would be an addition of the acceptance of resignation from the Town Administrator, which will be placed under the Town Administrator’s report.

*MOTION: Comm. J. Johnson made a motion to accept the amended agenda; seconded by Comm. Joyner. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**4. Public Hearings for Ordinance Amending the Lucama Zoning Ordinance**

- Mayor Creech opened the public hearing for the **Patrick Henry Lucas Heirs** property on West Oak Street.

Clerk Owens reported that the Planning and Adjustment Board had met earlier in the year regarding the concern for properties located on West Oak Street. These properties are zoned CH – Commercial Highway. If the homes were to be destroyed, they would not be able to be rebuilt. Therefore, rezoning requests are being presented to the Board for consideration.

Clerk Owens brought before the Board the property better known as Wilson County **Tax Pin Number 2699-10-5076**. This property is currently zoned Commercial Highway but is used as residential. The Planning and Adjustment Board requested that the property's zoning be changed to R-7 designation. This property faces West Oak Street.

There were no public comments.

Mayor Creech closed the public hearing for the Patrick Henry Lucas Heirs property.

Attorney DuSablón mentioned when approving or denying a rezoning request to comply with State Statute, consideration should have been given through the agenda materials on the subject and specifically the Town's Land Use Plan. The agenda items would have detailed how the rezone request is or is not reasonable and is or is not consistent with the Town's Land Use Plan and future Land Use Plan Map. If the Board chooses to approve the request, in the motion it should be included that it is reasonable per reasons stated in the packet to adopt the statement of reasonableness and consistency as stated in the materials. To approve, you are also adopting the statement of reasonableness and consistency. If denied, reasons why it is felt that it is not reasonable should be stated. The law does require these aspects.

*MOTION: Comm. J. Johnson made motion to rezone the **Patrick Henry Lucas Heirs property, better known as Wilson County Tax Pin Number 2699-10-5076** from CH - Commercial Highway to R-7, Residential 7 and to approve to adopt the statement of reasonableness and consistency with the Town's Land Use Plan; seconded by Comm. Joyner. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

- Mayor Creech opened the public hearing for the **Scotty and Donya Mayo** property on West Oak Street.

Clerk Owens brought before the Board the property better known as Wilson County **Tax Pin Number 2699-10-6151**. This property is currently zoned Commercial Highway but is used as residential. The Planning and Adjustment

Board requested that the property's zoning be changed to R-7 designation. This property faces West Oak Street.

There were no public comments.

Mayor Creech closed the public hearing for the Scotty and Donya Mayo property.

*MOTION: Comm. Teague made motion to rezone the **Scotty and Donya Mayo property, better known as Wilson County Tax Pin Number 2699-10-6151** from CH - Commercial Highway to R-7, Residential 7 and to approve to adopt the statement of reasonableness and consistency with the Town's Land Use Plan; seconded by Comm. Best. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

- Mayor Creech opened the public hearing for the **Scotty and Donya Mayo** property at 332 West Oak Street.

Clerk Owens brought before the Board the property better known as Wilson County **Tax Pin Number 2699-10-7115**. This property is currently zoned Highway Commercial but is used as residential. The Planning and Adjustment Board requested that the property's zoning be changed to R-7 designation. This property faces West Oak Street.

There were no public comments.

Mayor Creech closed the public hearing for the Scotty and Donya Mayo property.

*MOTION: Comm. Joyner made motion to rezone the **Scotty and Donya Mayo property, better known as 332 West Oak Street, Wilson County Tax Pin Number 2699-10-7115** from CH - Commercial Highway to R-7, Residential 7 and to approve to adopt the statement of reasonableness and consistency with the Town's Land Use Plan; seconded by Comm. Teague. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

- Mayor Creech opened the public hearing for the **Frances Parrish Worley** property on West Oak Street.

Clerk Owens brought before the Board the property better known as Wilson County **Tax Pin Number 2699-10-7167**. This property is currently zoned Commercial Highway but is used as residential. The Planning and Adjustment Board requested that the property's zoning be changed to R-7 designation. This property faces West Oak Street.

There were no public comments.

Mayor Creech closed the public hearing for the Frances Parrish Worley property.

***MOTION:** Comm. Best made motion to rezone the **Frances Parrish Worley property, Wilson County Tax Pin Number 2699-10-7167** from CH - Commercial Highway to R-7, Residential 7 and to approve to adopt the statement of reasonableness and consistency with the Town's Land Use Plan; seconded by Comm. Joyner. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

- Mayor Creech opened the public hearing for the **Frances Parrish Worley** property on 330 West Oak Street.

Clerk Owens brought before the Board the property better known as Wilson County **Tax Pin Number 2699-10-8210**. This property is currently zoned Highway Commercial but is used as residential. The Planning and Adjustment Board requested that the property's zoning be changed to R-7 designation. This property faces West Oak Street.

There were no public comments.

Mayor Creech closed the public hearing for the Frances Parrish Worley property.

***MOTION:** Comm. J. Johnson made motion to rezone the **Frances Parrish Worley property, better known as 330 West Oak Street, Wilson County Tax Pin Number 2699-10-8210** from CH - Commercial Highway to R-7, Residential 7 and to approve to adopt the statement of reasonableness and consistency with the Town's Land Use Plan; seconded by Comm. Teague. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

- Mayor Creech opened the public hearing for the **Phil Stanley Turner Heirs** property on 324 West Oak Street.

Clerk Owens brought before the Board the property better known as Wilson County **Tax Pin Number 2699-20-1347**. This property is currently zoned Commercial Highway but is used as residential. The Planning and Adjustment Board requested that the property's zoning be changed to R-7 designation. This property faces West Oak Street.

There were no public comments.

Mayor Creech closed the public hearing for the Phil Stanley Turner Heirs property.

*MOTION: Comm. Teague made motion to rezone the **Phil Stanley Turner Heirs property, 324 West Oak Street, Wilson County Tax Pin Number 2699-20-1347** from CH - Commercial Highway to R-7, Residential 7 and to approve to adopt the statement of reasonableness and consistency with the Town's Land Use Plan; seconded by Comm. Joyner. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

- Mayor Creech opened the public hearing for the **Phyllis H. and Michael P. Honeycutt** property on 320 West Oak Street.

Clerk Owens brought before the Board the property better known as Wilson County **Tax Pin Number 2699-20-2467**. This property is currently zoned Commercial Highway but is used as residential. The Planning and Adjustment Board requested that the property's zoning be changed to R-7 designation. This property faces West Oak Street.

There were no public comments.

Mayor Creech closed the public hearing for the Phyllis H. and Michael P. Honeycutt property.

*MOTION: Comm. Best made motion to rezone the **Phyllis H. and Michael P. Honeycutt, 320 West Oak Street, Wilson County Tax Pin Number 2699-20-2467** from CH - Commercial Highway to R-7, Residential 7 and to approve to adopt the statement of reasonableness and consistency with the Town's Land Use Plan; seconded by Comm. Teague. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

- Mayor Creech opened the public hearing for the **Erika Garcia Espinoza** property at 6405 US 301 Highway South.

Clerk Owens brought before the Board the property better known as Wilson County **Tax Pin Number 2699-10-6226**. This property is currently zoned Highway Commercial. Property owners have requested that the property's zoning be changed to R-7 designation. This property faces US Highway 301.

Erika Garcia Espinoza, husband and son were present at the meeting to speak with the Board regarding their reasoning for wanting the zoning changed. The question was asked if their property was brought before the Planning Board. Clerk Owens confirmed that the application was given to the Planning and Adjustment Board. Clerk Owens encouraged the owners to speak regarding their reasons for requesting a change to zoning as the Board had not had opportunity to hear their concerns. It was stated that the owner's sister-in-law is widowed and is sick with Polio. They are interested in moving to bring her closer to them for caretaking purposes. They are also members of a nearby church, they work with the youth of the church and are interested in getting closer in proximity to the church facility. It was mentioned that there are other family members that currently live in Lucama and they would like to live closer to the family.

Clerk Owens stated to the Board that within the packet for the public hearings that the concerns of the Planning and Adjustment Board for a change to the property would not be reasonable and consistent with the Land Use Plan due to the location of facing US Highway 301.

Mayor Creech closed the public hearing for the Erika Garcia Espinoza property at 6405 US Highway 301 South.

Comm. Teague asked Attorney Dusablon for further clarification. He stated that it was his understanding that the Planning and Adjustment Board did deny the change, but that the Board of Commissioners is not bound by the decision. He mentioned that the Board should consider all aspects of the current use and the use that is being requested. It is a legislative decision of the Board.

Comm. Best asked what was located on the property previously. Clerk Owens mentioned that it was her understanding that there was a house located on the property at one time, however she was not sure if the home was a doublewide or a stick-built home. She mentioned that the R-7 designation would not allow a mobile home or doublewide to be placed on the property.

Comm. Joyner asked if the owners wanted to build a stick-built home on the property would it be acceptable. Clerk Owens mentioned that unless the designation was changed, residential purposes would not be allowed on the property.

Attorney DuSablou stated that the Board should be strictly deciding whether it is appropriate that the property remain Commercial Highway or for the property to be rezoned as residential. All the uses that are allowed in either designation should be considered.

Comm. Teague asked for clarification that the Board would choose to have the property remain Commercial Highway or change to residential. Attorney DuSablou concurred. The Board would either approve or deny the rezone request. If the Board chose to change the property to residential to build a mobile home on the property, it would still not be permitted despite the rezone.

*MOTION: Comm. J. Johnson made motion not to rezone the **Erika Garcia Espinoza, 6405 US 301 Highway South, Wilson County Tax Pin Number 2699-10-6226** from CH - Commercial Highway to R-7, Residential 7; seconded by Comm. Teague. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

## **5. Approval of Minutes of Last Meetings**

Mayor Creech gave the Board an opportunity to review the proposed minutes from the December 4, 2023, meeting and monthly financial report.

*MOTION: Comm. Joyner made motion to approve the December 4, 2023, meeting minutes and financial report; seconded by Comm. Best. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

## **6. Welcome Guests**

Mayor Creech welcomed Myra Basinger with Meals on Wheels, which takes place at the Town's Community Building.

Mrs. Basinger was present at the meeting and reminded everyone that the Community Building for five days a week from 10 am to 1 pm is a congregate site for the elderly to come and eat meals. Every three months, Mrs. Basinger stated that they are inspected by the Health Department, just as a restaurant would be. There must be high standards. The workers with Meals on Wheels work hard to keep the building clean. For the past year or so, the site has gotten 100s when the representatives from the health department inspects them. It has begun to be

impossible with renting the building on the weekends where renters are not cleaning as required. The building is cleaned thoroughly on Friday before leaving for the weekend. Floors are mopped, bathrooms are scrubbed, everything cleaned. There have been times if the inspector for the health department would have walked in on Monday mornings, that the meals would not have been able to have been served. The workers do not feel that they should be the cleanup crew after the events. She is seeking some type of resolution from the Board of how the building can be cleaned before Monday morning at 10 am. Mrs. Basinger mentioned that Ann Little has said that she would be happy to check the facility on the weekends after events and if the building needs to be cleaned, she will inform the Town office. Ann Little and Brenda Bunn have kept documents of how much they had to clean up after the events. She asked if there was any way that someone could be hired out of the rental fee paid to come in and clean up behind the renters. She stated that even though renters may say that they have cleaned, often the floors are sticky and not swept.

After much discussion the Board chose to raise the deposit for the possibility of paying to have the building cleaned if not done by the renters.

*MOTION: Comm. Teague made motion to bring the deposit for the rental of the building to \$225, rental \$375, making the full balance \$600 to rent the facility; seconded by Comm. Best. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

The Board requested that a quote be gotten for cleaning of the Community Building on Monday, should it be needed.

## **7. Public Comments**

Marianne Crabtree was present at the meeting regarding the sidewalks on Spring Street. Her sidewalk was bypassed. She spoke with Clerk Owens, who mentioned that she would need to sign a release form. Ms. Crabtree stated she was willing to sign the release back in September. It is now January, and she hasn't gotten a release form. Clerk Owens mentioned speaking with the attorney. One of the issues that is being faced now is that the sidewalk work is having to be rebid. The Town currently doesn't have anyone under contract to do the work. The work will need to be rebid, the bids come before the Board for approval and then proceed from there. Clerk Owens mentioned that one of the concerns from the previous construction company was that Ms. Crabtree has a pad in the front of her home that connects to the sidewalk. They did not want to do anything that would cause further damage other than what it already on the existing pad. Ms. Crabtree mentioned that her property line begins and ends at her building, therefore any of the sidewalks that was mentioned does not belong to her. Clerk Owens mentioned



that she was not aware of and could not make comment regarding the property line.

Ms. Crabtree also had a picture of where the sidewalk work had been done months earlier and the men came and poured dirt along the sidewalk. She feels like the area should have been reseeded.

Patricia Denton and Jeff Denton signed up to speak with the Board. Patricia deferred her time to Jeff. The couple resides at 504 Little Rock Church Road. Mr. Denton mentioned that he agreed with Ms. Crabtree regarding the backfilling of the sidewalks. He said that there were a lot of new sidewalks in Town that had not been backed up and reseeded. He stated that the sidewalk on East Oak Street is a trip hazard. Even though the Town has put in new sidewalks, if there isn't vegetation placed back, where will the dirt go when the rain comes. He feels if the Town is going to put in new sidewalks to beautify the Town and give residents a place to walk, then the work should be completed by backfilling the area and putting in vegetation. He stated that he is a contractor and any work that his company does for other towns regarding sidewalks, it is required that they backfill and even possibly place excelsior erosion control blanket down to establish vegetation. Admin. Newsome mentioned that the street department would work to backfill the area.

## **8. Requests for Board Approval**

Commissioner Joyner presented a bid to have work done to lines for video inspections. She also mentioned that there was an email sent saying that the Town had been approved for the preliminary scope of the projects.

*MOTION: Comm. J. Johnson made motion to approve the resolution adopting the capital project budget and awarding construction to Bio-Nomic Services, Inc. through McDavid and Associates; second by Comm. Best. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Mayor Creech presented information from Nunn, Brashear and Uzzell, PA, the auditors currently under contract to do the Town's audits. There are two documents presented. One includes an engagement letter that states the Town is contracted out for the purposes of auditing. It extends the life of the current contract for the audits. The agreement secures the Town has an auditor for the fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025.

The contract included is for Nunn, Brashear and Uzzell to audit the accounts for the fiscal year 2021.

*MOTION: Comm. Joyner made a motion to accept the engagement letter for the fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025; seconded by Comm. J. Johnson. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

*MOTION: Comm. J. Johnson made a motion to accept the contract for Nunn, Brashear and Uzzell, PA to audit the Town's accounts for fiscal year 2021; seconded by Comm. Teague. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Comm. Joyner asked if it would be prudent to get a contract from the accountant for the reason of it being difficult to find accountants with municipal government accounting knowledge and experience. Admin. Newsome mentioned that it could be mentioned to Mr. Overton, who would need to go before the management at his firm.

Mayor Creech mentioned the next item on the agenda was signatures for the Town's accounts at Southern Bank and KS Bank. Admin. Newsome mentioned that Ann Moore with the Local Government Commission had called her. Ann stated that there needed to be three signatures from Board members who will be around town. Admin. Newsome mentioned that Comm. J. Johnson was already on the accounts.

Comm. Joyner appointed Comm. Teague to be placed on the signature card. Admin. Newsome reminded the Board that Ms. Moore said there should be three signatures should one be unavailable to sign. Comm. Teague appointed Comm. Joyner to be added to the signature card. The three to be signatures are Comm. J. Johnson, Comm. Teague, and Comm. Joyner. Mayor Creech asked for further clarification of the cards. Admin. Newsome answered that signature cards are needed giving the ability to sign checks. She stated that Clerk Owens could not be on the signature cards for segregation of duty purposes. She also stated that normally the Town Administrator would be one to sign checks.

*MOTION: Comm. Best made motion that Commissioners J. Johnson, Teague, and Joyner be added to the signature cards at Southern Bank and KS Bank; seconded by Comm. Teague. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Admin. Newsome requested that a camera be installed over the boardroom door on the inside of the reception area, picking up the entire area including her office door. The current camera only picks up Clerk Hooks' area. The estimate from Security Erectors, Inc. is to run cables and includes the purchase of a new camera.

*MOTION: Comm. Teague made motion to approve the estimate for Security Erectors, Inc. to add a camera to cover the entire reception area at the cost of \$2,135.25; seconded by Comm. Joyner. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Mayor Creech continued with Board approvals. The next item on the agenda is an amendment to the Resolution Establishing the Powers of the Mayor and Commissioners. He deferred to Attorney DuSablou. He mentioned that a similar resolution was adopted during the Emergency Board meeting the prior week. After having more time to study and research the resolution, he felt it prudent to refine and make changes to it. The amended resolution accomplishes the same objective but is trying to avoid any vague or ambiguous language. A redline of the changes to the resolution was provided to the Board. The amended resolution will repeal the prior resolution and adopt the new language of the new resolution.

Mayor Creech mentioned that he had read over the document and mentioned that there are some issues that he would like to address. He mentioned that clause one states that the mayor will serve as the ceremonial head of the Town. He said that it contradicts the Town's charter. It specifically indicates that the town mayor will serve as a chief executive officer, not a ceremonial head. He feels that clause one needs to be stricken or defined to include chief executive officer. He sought clarification for clause three, "unduly interrupt or harass workers and town personnel". He said that if in the event Town staff leave and someone else has to be brought in, who butts heads with a Commissioner or Mayor – that clause causes a problem. He would like more definition. Mayor Creech stated his last concern was clause five which states the "Mayors or Commissioners can only sign documents including checks on behalf of the Town where is authorized by law," he asked what is entailed in the clause. Attorney DuSablou stated that certainly there are documents that need to be signed such as resolutions or ordinances, the mayor would need to sign. Any contracts that the Board would enter would require to be signed. Documents are required to be served to you as a matter of law, litigation documents you are the designated agent of the Town for purposes of accepting services. The Town cannot enter contracts just by having one of the commissioners sign an agreement. It must be approved by the Board and duly authorized. Mayor Creech stated that looking at the charter, he is the only one allowed to sign documents for the Town. He asked if clause five eliminated that ability. Attorney DuSablou, answered no, that the Town's charter is law.

To briefly address the ceremonial head portion of the amended resolution, Attorney Dusablou stated that it is state statute, saying that the mayor is the ceremonial head is consistent with state statute. Mayor Creech said he understood but that that charter had also been signed by State legislature designating him as the Chief Executive Officer, not the ceremonial head. He said that the state legislation would be required to vote to call him the ceremonial head. Either it can be served as a ceremonial head or it needs to be addressed as ceremonial head and also chief executive officer. Attorney DuSablou stated that the Board could decide to strike the clause, however in reality it adds nor detracts nothing from the state of things,

which is that the mayor is the ceremonial head pursuant state statute, and that the mayor is the chief executive officer pursuant to the Town ordinance. It neither adds nor detracts from the mayor's authority, but if he would like to have it removed, the Board can take it into consideration.

Mayor Creech asked if there was a motion on the floor to strike clause one. There was no motion.

Mayor Creech asked if there was a motion on the floor to define unduly interrupt town employees, town personnel. Attorney DuSablou stated that there is an age-old problem with a legal document, in which any word used is subject to interpretation. He said that he could go back to the drawing board and come up with a lengthy definition of what unduly interrupt is, but it is a term that has relatively understood meaning. Adding could cause room for misinterpretation or disagreement as to intent. Mayor Creech stated his concern was if he were to ask for documents, if the employee was busy could state that he unduly interrupted them. He stated that it was an issue. As mayor, he stated that the "unduly interrupt" needs to be further defined.

After much discussion, the motion was made.

*MOTION: Comm. J. Johnson made a motion to adopt the amended Resolution Establishing the Powers of the Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of Lucama as is, and if there is need of any documentation or information from employees that it be given to the employee in writing; seconded by Comm. Joyner. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Attorney DuSablou reported to the Board that the League of Municipalities offers training for newly elected officials. He felt it would be a good resource for the newly elected commissioners and mayor. He stated that it would be good to put before the Board for consideration of paying the cost to have them attend. He stated that the cost is about \$300 per person.

*MOTION: Comm. Joyner made a motion to approve sending the newly elected officials to the Essentials of Municipal Government 2024 Ethics Training; seconded by Comm. Best. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

## 9. Departmental Reports

Comm. J. Johnson reported that the electric department continues to cut trees off the lines. They are currently waiting for switches for the new business at the corner of Radford and US Highway 301. The line truck that was ordered in December should be in a few weeks. The department plans to work on reclosures throughout the year. They've got to reamp some of the reclosures in certain areas, so no one gets hurt when fuses blow.

Comm. J. Johnson reported that the Fire Department had a total of 31 calls for the month of December. Total calls for the 2023 year were 387, five more than in 2022. There were 334 calls for the County and 53 calls in Town. There were 20 first responder calls, one auto accident, one vehicle fire, two unauthorized burns, one grass fire, one disregarded, and five mutual aid with other departments, making 31 calls for December.

Comm. Joyner reported that there was an issue at the Cabin Branch Lift Station during the month of December. She mentioned that the team worked relentlessly to get the station repaired in the cold, doing dirty work. She stated that she is grateful for the crew and is thankful the Town has them. She mentioned that there were small leaks around town the crew had responded to and repaired as needed. She reminded the Board of the project that was mentioned earlier in the meeting as having been approved. She took the opportunity to ride through Town with Jake, the water and sewer technician. He mentioned that he is very knowledgeable about the work he is doing. He shared information on the work that he does daily. He is conscientious about what is going on with the Town's water. Comm. Joyner understands that there have been some concerns and complaints about the water, but states that Jake is working very hard to ensure the water is good and clean.

Comm. Teague reported that the Sheriff's Department in the month of December responded to 170 self-initiated calls, 23 calls for service for a total of 193 calls. There was one call for shots fired, one call for an accident in a parking lot, one for an alarm at a business or residence, one animal enforcement call, one careless and reckless, two calls for disturbance of peace, three domestic in progress calls, 54 escort calls, two calls for missing juvenile/adults, one open door or window, one welfare check, one psychiatric or suicide attempt, one repossession, one return call, one speak with an officer, security checks totaling 81, a suspicious person / vehicle, 8 traffic stops and 23 subpoena and warrant services.

Comm. Teague mentioned on December 28<sup>th</sup> she received information that the Wilson County Sheriff's Office was returning a check that had been submitted for the purchase of a 2023 Dodge Charger. On December 29<sup>th</sup>, she contacted Chief

Wanda Samuels to inquire what had happened, because due to her knowledge the Board had not authorized anyone to make any changes. She told Chief Samuels that she had very recently been assigned to oversee the department and had not been made aware of the possibility of any changes. Chief Samuels mentioned that the mayor had made numerous calls to several departments, and a letter and voided check were on her desk to be returned. Comm. Teague requested extra time, at least till the following Tuesday to try to ascertain what had happened, piece everything together because she was unaware of what had happened. Again, Chief Samuel mentioned that the decision had been reached, the check voided, they wanted to finalize and move forward. Shortly after the conversation the deputy delivered a letter and the voided check to her at Town Hall. On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Town received a letter from Sheriff Woodard that their office would not seek to renew the contract which ends June 30, 2024. Comm. Teague spoke to the citizens in attendance and assured them that she did not know what was occurring until she was notified that it was a done deal. She mentioned that she had not had a chance to meet with the Sheriff but does have plans to. She said that contract was still in effect until June 30<sup>th</sup>. Between that time, she will seek opportunity to speak with the Sheriff to see what can be done.

Admin. Newsome mentioned that she had talked with Chief Samuels who stated that they would not renew the contract. It is a done deal.

Mayor Creech gave an explanation of his dealings with the Wilson County Sheriff's Department and Wilson County manager, Ron Hunt. Much discussion was rendered regarding the Sheriff's Department contract and the subject.

Comm. Best asked if there were any updates on bids for sidewalks. Admin. Newsome stated that one had been received, but that she hasn't had a chance to pursue any further bids.

Comm. Best mentioned that the park is being used even though it is wintertime. He mentioned that there would be an event planned for Easter. There are no details currently.

Comm. D. Johnson was not in attendance to give the report for the Library or Community Building.

#### **10. Town Administrator Report**

Mayor Creech stated that there was a resignation letter from Admin. Newsome and read the contents out loud.

Admin. Newsome had nothing further to report.

**11. Closed Session**

Mayor Creech requested that the Board go into closed session pursuant to NCGS §143-318.11 regarding personnel matters.

*MOTION: Comm. J. Johnson made motion to move into closed session; seconded by Comm. Joyner. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

**12. Re-opening of Open Session**

*MOTION: Comm. Best made motion to adjourn the closed session and move back to open session; seconded by Comm. Joyner. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

*MOTION: Comm. Best made motion to hire Ralph Clark as Interim Town Administrator; seconded by Comm. Joyner. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Attorney DuSablon mentioned that considering the resignation of the Town Administrator, the Town is required to have a Finance Officer. A new finance officer would need to be appointed.

Admin. Newsome mentioned that a commissioner also needed to be appointed for a finance commissioner to oversee the finance of the Town.

*MOTION: Comm. Joyner made motion that Clerk Owens be appointed as Interim Finance Officer; seconded by Comm. Best. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

*MOTION: Comm. Teague made motion that Comm. Best be appointed as the finance commissioner oversight; seconded by Comm. Joyner. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

**13. Adjournment**

Mayor Creech adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:26 pm, January 8, 2024, upon motion of Board.

*MOTION: Motion was made to adjourn by Comm. Best; seconded by Comm. Joyner. Motion passed by unanimous vote.*

*Respectfully Submitted: Dena Owens, Town Clerk*