



**Stanley Town Council Meeting
Official Minutes
Monday, February 1, 2016**

The regular monthly meeting of the Stanley Town Council was held on Monday, February 3, 2016 in the Stanley Town Hall Council Chambers. The following elected officials and staff were present:

Andrew Quinley, Mayor
Danny Sparrow, Mayor Pro-tem
Bud Pate, Council Member
Cathy Kirkland, Council Member
Kerry Hart, Council Member
Rob McMinn, Council Member

Jim Windham, Town Attorney
Heath Jenkins, Town Manager
Craig Roseberry, Public Works Director
Tug Deason, Recreation Director
Derek Summey, Police Chief
Ryan LaBlanc, HDR Engineering

Call to Order:

Mayor Quinley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Invocation:

Council Member Rob McMinn gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance:

All citizens present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda:

Mayor Quinley added Capital Project Budget for Gymnasium under New Business and asked for a motion to accept the February 2016 Regular Meeting Agenda. Council Member Kirkland made a motion to accept the agenda and Council Member Hart seconded the motion. A vote was held and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

Mayor Quinley asked for a motion to accept the December 7, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes. Council Member McMinn made a motion to accept the minutes and Council Member Pate seconded the motion. A vote was held the motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Comments & Presentations:

- A. Citizen Comments** –Ms. Mary Allen from Kiser School presented a plan for 5k Color Run Race to be held in Stanley on April, 2016. The race will begin at 0800 hrs. until 10:00hrs. The race is a color run that will be no cost to the school and will involve the assistance of East Gaston and the entire feeder district. Ms. Allen requested assistance from Stanley Police Department. The race goes inside and outside the city limits and teachers would assist and Stanley Middle School Beta club will assist. Dye packs are given out and are only corn starch and do not leave any permanent stains. The Mayor asked if the route crossed on Highway 27. The Mayor asked Chief Summey what he thought about the safety issues of crossing over Highway 27. Chief Summey stated there are some concerns but he would sit down with Ms. Allen and work with her to come up with a safe route.

Motion was made by Council Member Kirkland to approve the 5k race, but the route to be determined at a later date. Council Member Kerry Hart seconded the motion. A vote was held the motion passed unanimously.

The Mayor asked if there were any other citizen comments concerning the Agenda items. There were none.

Old Business:

No old business at this time.

New Business:

- A. Capital Project Ordinance for Gymnasium Project** - The manager presented that due to accounting requirements by the State and our accountant, the Council must pass a Capital Ordinance that authorizes the finance director to expend funds and keep a record of the expenditures and revenues. The manager stated that it is important not to overspend the total amount stated in the ordinance. There was no further discussion.

Council Member Rob McMinn made a motion to approve. Council Member Danny Sparrow seconded the motion. A vote was held and the motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Comments:

Ms. Mary Koone stated she was tired of coming before Council and she knew the Council was tired of seeing her concerning the sewer project. She stated she received a letter from the Town of Stanley about an hour prior to the meeting. She said the letter didn't address her concerns and she was going to the next step concerning her property. She stated she understood we had bad weather but she wants her property back in shape. She stated she couldn't bring livestock back. She stated she couldn't access the property due to a big hole with rocks that create a pond on the property that needed to be addressed. The Mayor thanked Ms. Koone for her comments.

Department Reports:

Public Works: No report at this time.

Finance: No report at this time. Finance report has been added to Council Packet. The Mayor reported that our Finance Director, Donna Hulseley needed our thoughts and prayers concerning her illness.

Recreation: No report at this time.

Police: Chief Summey stated that at last month's meeting he presented to the Council his concerns about staffing issues. Chief Summey stated at that time we were down 2 positions and now we are down 4 positions. He stated they were reaching a critical level concerning staffing. He stated he had met with the Town Manager several times during the past week. He stated we simply don't have the personnel to cover the time. He stated he had contacted the Gaston County Sheriff to assist with officers. The Town would have to pay the deputies time and a half to ride in our cars and fill in. He stated that he discussed last month that it was difficult to recruit due to Stanley being the lowest paid in the County. He stated the following communities had staffing shortages: Gastonia 12 down, Gaston County 12, Belmont 10, Cramerton 2, Ranlo 2, Mount Holly 2 all of which pay more than we do. We lost an officer to Cramerton making \$2.50 more an hour. Chief Summey stated that he had discussed the incentive packages, including benefits with the other departments and they were close to the same we have. He stated it was an apples to apples comparison. He stated that Ranlo was at \$14.00 starting pay and we were at a little over \$13.00. Chief Summey stated people are not going in to law enforcement due to the problems and scrutiny in the press. He stated that people are leaving the profession and going into the private sector. He stated Gaston College had to cancel a night class due to lack of enrollment. He stated that we are facing several challenges. The pay being an uphill battle but also retaining who we have. He stated we had lost a lot of great officers over the past three years. He stated we lost them to agencies in Mecklenburg County and now agencies in our own back door. Council Member McMinn asked Chief Summey the number of vacancies in the County. Chief Summey stated almost 40 openings. Council Member McMinn asked how many officers we had left. Chief Summey stated we had a total of 7 officers, 5 of which work the road. Chief Summey stated he was wearing the officers thin working them 100 hours every two weeks. Mayor Quinley asked Chief Summey if he had a plan. Chief Summey stated he had met with the Manager but they had not had a lot of time to put together a plan. He stated that he and manager had put together some numbers and to get us through the year we were looking at \$40,000.00. He stated we not only have to get competitive to recruit new officers but keep the ones we have. Mayor Quinley asked Chief Summey if he had a plan and that he had spoken briefly to the Manager about a possible work session following the meeting. The Manager stated no one was prepared for a work session tonight, only that we may want to have one to address this issue. The Manager stated his immediate concern is to stop the bleeding to keep from losing any more officers. Manager Jenkins stated that when you adjust the starting salary that affects the other salaries of current employees and positions. The manager stated the \$40,000.00 number is if all the positions were filled immediately. The Mayor asked if there was a plan to present tonight.

Manager Jenkins asked Chief Summey if he was prepared to inform the Council the options for filling staffing shortages. Chief Summey stated he was prepared to enter into an agreement with the Gaston County Sheriff's Department to help fill positions as of this Wednesday. The Mayor stated he understood that part. Council Member McMinn stated he felt the Mayor was asking if there was a Band-Aid we could put on it tonight? The Mayor stated the Council they would support the needs of the police department concerning salary adjustments. The Mayor stated the Council would want to see something in writing concerning the adjustments made. The Manager stated that they would absolutely provide them something in writing and would be accountable for any salary adjustments made. The manager stated the numbers being put out would be the highest range, if all positions were filled. The Manger stated what he would like to see the Council do, if they trust the Manager and Police Chief to do so, would be for them to sit down and put together a proposal based on the numbers we have now and where we need to be and provide Council with some numbers. The Manager stated we need to move quickly before some of the really good officers were hired by another department. Council Member Sparrow stated an article in today's observer stated Charlotte P.D. was 80 officers short. Council Member Kathy Kirkland asked how long it takes once they are hired. Manager Jenkins stated it takes a long time due to field training, etc. Manager stated what you don't want is the officers that no other agency wants, that leads to other issues. Chief Summey stated what he needs is something he can take back to his officers and let them know this Council takes them seriously and supports the police department and the officers. Chief Summey stated the Manager was correct in that we only receive applications from officers who didn't get a job anywhere else. Chief Summey clarified that he has not hired any of these officers. Council Member McMinn stated we needed to send a message to the other communities that we pay good and support the police. Manager Jenkins stated he agrees. Manager Jenkins stated the cost we were talking about is not equal to the cost of losing officers we have invested in. Including heir equipment, training, in-service, etc. Manager Jenkins stated we had other ideas to address the problems, but we would bring that at budget time. Manager Jenkins stated they would put something together and bring back to Council quickly. Mayor Quinley asked Chief Summey how long it takes to hire an officer. Chief Summey stated it takes over a month, depending on type of officers. Council Member Sparrow asked if police officers that were retired could come back without it hurting retirement. Manager Jenkins stated they can't, unless out of state and then they would not be a lateral transfer. Manger Jenkins explained the certification process and in-service requirements, revocations, etc. Council Member Sparrow asked if we just move the starting pay, what would happen. Chief Summey stated we would then have starting officers making the same as officers what had been here a long time. Chief Summey stated there is no way we would spend the \$40,000.00 because we will not fill all of the positions before the end of the budget year. Mayor Quinley stated we made a budget amendment for \$20,000 worth of computers that we surly could make this one to help this situation. Manager Jenkins stated he agreed and recommend they did so. Mayor Quinley asked for a motion to allow Manger Jenkins and Chief Summey to make the necessary salary adjustments, not to exceed \$40,000 before the end of the budget year.

Council Member Kerry Hart made a motion to allow Manger Jenkins and Chief Summey to make the necessary salary adjustments, not to exceed \$40,000 before the end of the budget year. Council Member Cathy Kirkland seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously

Chief Summey wanted the Council to know he would be utilizing the Sheriff's Department to fill in positions until we fill them, starting this week. Chief Summey stated that last night they had an armed robbery just outside the city limits and we assisted. We need to have backup to the officers. The Council supports this measure.

Mayor Quinley asked if there were any other agencies that could assist and mentioned the County Police. Chief Summey said they were short of officers. Chief Summey explained how the sheriff's staffing worked. Manager Jenkins thanked the Council for the quick action to address the staffing issues.

Fire: Chief Keller explained yearly reports he had sent out to Council for the year. Chief Keller stated this was just a snapshot of the last six months. Next year's report will provide more information. Manager Jenkins thanked Chief Keller for his hard work and following the Council's direction for updates of information on how the fire department is progressing. Council Member Sparrow stated he like the reports. Manager Jenkins explained that all reports had been emailed but if they would like a hard copy to let him know.

Manager's Report:

Manager Jenkins requested the Council to give direction on the zoning matter and application for a zoning change in the downtown central business area. Mayor Quinley stated he didn't think it was good idea. Manager Jenkins asked if this was the consensus of the Council not to allow a zoning change in central business (for car lot). The Council indicated they agreed with the Mayor's opinion. The Mayor stated he had conversations with planning board members And they would not have approved this measure. Manager Jenkins thanked the Council for this clarification.

Manager Jenkins thanked Mayor Pro-Temp Danny Sparrow attending the Legislative Breakfast with him and also a meeting at the Gaston Chamber concerning the Governor's Bond Package. He stated it was very informative meeting.

Council Comments:

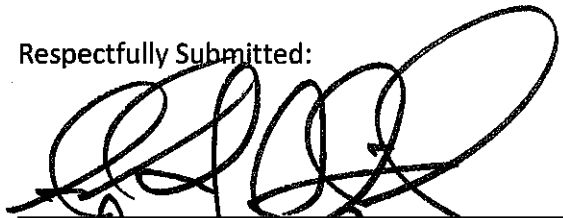
Mayor Quinley asked where we stood on the Clerk's hiring. Manager Jenkins explained he had three (3) applicants. He stated the sub-committee would make that decision. Mayor Pro-Tem Sparrow asked if I had face-to-face contact with these applicants.

Manager explained that the Town may want to strongly consider a planning director. We are the only Town in Gaston County that does not have a planning and zoning director. He explained that he would like to see our permitting fees be closer to offsetting the cost of a planning position.

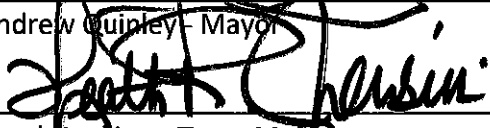
Adjournment:

Mayor Quinley asked for a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting. Council Member Hart made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Council Member Rob McMinn seconded the motion. A vote was held and the motion passed unanimously. Mayor Quinley adjourned the Regular Council Meeting at approximately 6:45 p.m.

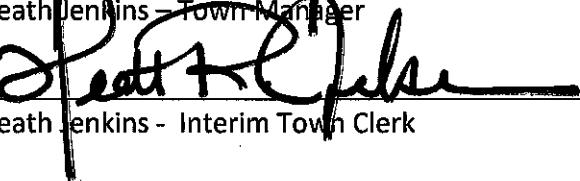
Respectfully Submitted:



Andrew Quinley - Mayor



Heath Jenkins - Town Manager



Heath Jenkins - Interim Town Clerk

