**Town of Walden**

Meeting Minutes

June 9, 2020

**CALL TO ORDER OF A PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCE 2020-333, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTIONS OF THE WALDEN ZONING REGULATIONS**

Mayor Trohanis called to order a public hearing on Ordinance 2020-333. Town Attorney Sam Elliott reviewed the proposed changes which would clean up a few issues including one that added another level of review by the Regional Planning Agency. Attorney Elliott asked if anyone in the audience had any comments regarding the changes. No one was present in support or opposition of the zoning changes.

The public hearing adjourned.

**CALL TO ORDER OF A PUBLIC HEARING ON A REQUEST FROM WDEF-TV, INC. FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AT 220 HAMPTON ROAD**

Mayor Trohanis called to order a public hearing on a conditional use permit request by WDEF-TV. Phillip Cox, General Manager at WDEF, addressed the board on behalf of the station. Mr. Cox explained that tower modifications are required in order for WDEF transmissions to continue. He further explained that this is a federally mandated project. The tower modifications include a height increase from 305 feet to 353 feet.

Vice Mayor Lee Davis asked for clarification on the project’s description of an “interim antenna.” Rick McClain, Chief Engineer for WDEF-TV, explained that, because of the Coronavirus pandemic, the station would be unable to meet the deadline of July 2nd to install a permanent antenna on the taller (600+ feet) tower. Thus, the need to initially install a temporary, shorter antenna. Once the pandemic ends, the interim antenna will remain on the shorter tower as a back-up, and the permanent antenna will be installed on the taller tower – without changing the height.

Attorney Elliott asked how long the towers have been at the Hampton Road location. Engineer McClain stated that the smaller tower was built in 1954, but destroyed in the 2011 tornadoes. It was rebuilt to exceed specifications shortly thereafter. The taller tower was built in 1966, and will be updated to the “G” specifications in the near future. When asked for audience comments or questions, one person stated that the landscaping around the towers looked nice.

Attorney Elliott offered the board an opportunity to amend the agenda in order to vote immediately on acceptance or rejection of the conditional use permit request. He further stated that the review criteria for this request is in the Walden Municipal Code, Section 20-405. Attorney Elliott recommended acceptance of the amendment as all ordinance specifications have been met.

VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AS REQUESTED BY WDEF-TV AT 220 HAMPTON ROAD, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

The public hearing adjourned.

**CALL TO ORDER OF THE REGULAR MEETING**

Mayor Trohanis called the regular monthly meeting of the Town of Walden to order immediately following the public hearings.

**ROLL CALL**

Fern Lockhart called the roll and noted the presence of Mayor William Trohanis, Vice Mayor Lee Davis, Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie and Town Attorney Sam Elliott. The following interested persons were present: Linda Collins, Joanne Denise, Joe Durek, Joe Robbins, Rick McClain, Dawson Wheeler, Tony Wheeler, David Garvey, and Susan Snow.

**APPROVAL OR CORRECTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 11, 2020 AS SUBMITTED, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR**

Mayor Trohanis welcomed everyone to the first in-person meeting since March, 2020. He noted that last month’s meeting was held via the Zoom online platform. CDC, state, and county guidelines regarding the Coronavirus are still being followed. Everyone present at the meeting is wearing a mask, and the Pumpkin Patch Playground and Pavilion remained closed until further notice. Mayor Trohanis further thanked Town Recorder, Fern Lockhart, for her work in keeping Town Hall functioning for the past 90 days.

**ROADS REPORT**

Mayor Trohanis reported that paving and striping are completed on Ivory Avenue. This concludes the Walden paving and striping projects for this fiscal year.

**POLICE REPORT**

Deputy Gregg Carson reported five traffic stops, six arrests (three misdemeanors, three felonies), 35 calls for service – at least 30 of these were for parking issues at the “No Parking” zone at the falls – nine calls for support, and 84 business checks. There were no accidents reported in the Town of Walden.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

The financial report is attached hereto as an exhibit of these minutes. It was noted that the State of Tennessee may collect $197 million less than usual in taxes due to the pandemic.

**CODES ENFORCEMENT**

No report.

**WRES REPORT**

No report.

**BACHMAN COUNCIL**

No report.

**PUMPKIN PATCH**

No report.

**McCOY FARM AND GARDENS**

Mickey Robbins reported that improvements at the McCoy Board are continuing through the pandemic. These improvements include a renovation of the Carriage House, a new water supply for the gardens, new wooden fencing, and stone fencing near both entrances. Mr. Robbins also reported that the McCoy Gardens received the “Tennessee Extension Master Gardner’s Search for Excellence” award.

It was noted that McCoy has received a three-year grant for a Part-Time Executive Director, and that search will begin in the near future. A job description will be available very soon.

Lastly, Mr. Robbins noted that the entrance to McCoy Farm and Gardens from Taft Highway is being widened to accommodate increased traffic for the dog park. He requested that the Town agree to provide asphalt for the new entrance when the next paving projects begin. It was verified that TDOT would need to approve any widening of the curb cut from Taft Highway.

**DOG PARK**

Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie noted positive progress on the dog park, with the fencing, irrigation and electric nearly completed. The shed is still being renovated, and a name must be determined for the park. Recognizing entries made via the Facebook page, the dog park committee has narrowed name submissions to six finalists: Pooch Patch, Puppy Patch, Dog Patch, Walden’s Ridge Bark Park, Walden Wags, and Walden Wag Park.

**LAND USE STUDY COMMITTEE**

Dawson Wheeler spoke on behalf of the committee. Three meetings have been held to date. A fourth meeting is scheduled for June 10, 2020, and the committee is requesting feedback from the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. The RFP focuses mainly on “the corridor going up Taft Highway.”

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **RESOLUTION #2020-535, AN AGREEMENT FOR AUDIT SERVICES WITH JOHNSON, MURPHEY, AND WRIGHT**

ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION # 2020-535, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

1. **FIRST READING BY CAPTION OF ORDINANCE #2020-335, ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET AND TAX RATE FOR FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2020 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2021**

VICE MAYOR DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE (BY CAPTION) ORDINANCE #2020-335, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN MCKENZIE, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

1. **REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF THE SITE PLAN FOR LOP**

Mayor Trohanis introduced Mr. John Bridger to begin the review. Mr. Bridger stated that he recently received the site plan for the LOP proposal, and his review was to determine if the plan met the 23 conditions contained in Ordinance #2019-331. Mr. Bridger further stated that a majority of these conditions will be addressed during construction. It is noted that the developer may not apply for a building permit until the site plan is approved by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Vice Mayor Davis expressed several concerns, including but not limited to: changes in the current site plan from the original plan (dumpster placement, entrance moved…), inadequate time for review of the plan, lack of submission of an agreed-upon “Open Space Protection Plan,” and failure to note where the septic field would be located. He requested a checklist detailing each change to the current site plan, and further stated that he was not prepared to consider approval of the site plan at this meeting. Alderwoman McKenzie agreed that the vote should be delayed. Town Attorney Elliott encouraged the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to outline specifically for Mr. Bridger and the developer exactly what they want to see at the August 11, 2020 meeting in terms of the Open Space Protection Plan. All requested information from Mr. Anderson should be submitted to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen no later than August 4, 2020.

1. **DISCUSSION ON 127 YARD SALE**

Mayor Trohanis opened the discussion by verifying that the yard sale on Highway 127 is currently still scheduled to occur from August 6 through August 9. Mayor Trohanis noted that it is within the Board of Mayor and Aldermen’s discretion whether or not to allow the yard sale to occur inside the town limits, or to restrict the number of vendors. Town Recorder Lockhart confirmed that, in 2019, a $50 fee was charged for space “rental” for each vendor, plus an additional $150 for extra police presence, for a total of $200 permit fee per vendor. Alderwoman McKenzie asked if the Town of Signal Mountain had made a determination of how they would manage the yard sale, and Mayor Trohanis responded that they had not. Town Recorder Lockhart reminded the board that the yard sale is a very large annual fundraiser for the Bachman Community Center.

VICE MAYOR DAVIS MOVED TO ALLOW A DECISION ON HOW TO MANAGE THE YARD SALE TO BE LEFT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE MAYOR DUE TO THE COVID PANDEMIC, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN MCKENZIE, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

1. **SET DATE FOR A SPECIAL CALLED MEETING FOR A PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING OF BUDGET ORDINANCE #2020-335**

Mayor Trohanis introduced possible dates for the meeting, which included June 26, June 29, or June 30, 2020. Vice Mayor Lee Davis stated that he could not attend any of those dates due to other obligations, but conceded that he had no issues with the budget. Vice Mayor Davis asked that Mayor Trohanis and Alderwoman McKenzie agree upon the best date for them.

The special called meeting is set for June 26, 2020, at 9:00 AM.

1. **ANY OTHER NEW BUSINESS**

Mayor Trohanis asked his wife to stand and read from a plaque on a painting displayed in the board room. The mayor then asked if the McCoy Board would like to display the painting at the McCoy Farm and Gardens. A representative for the board expressed appreciation for the offer, and noted that they would discuss it at their next meeting.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. **FINAL READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2020-333, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 10.03, PUBLIC HEARING ON AMENDMENTS AND SECTION 10.04, ACTION OF THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN IN THE TOWN OF WALDEN ZONING REGULATIONS**

VICE MAYOR DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE #2020-333, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 10.03, PUBLIC HEARING ON AMENDMENTS AND SECTION 10.04, ACTION OF THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN IN THE TOWN OF WALDEN ZONING REGULATIONS, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN MCKENZIE, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

1. **RESOLUTION #2020-534, APPLICATION FOR STATE OF TENNESSEE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT GRANT**

Town Recorder Lockhart noted that the funding for the State of Tennessee Support Grant may not actually materialize, but the application still must be submitted if the Town of Walden hopes to receive any possible funding. Further, the Board must consider how they would spend the $77,000 if they were to receive it. Engineer Mac McCarley has suggested several possible projects for which the funds could be used, including wooden bridge, culvert, and sinkhole repair.

1. **ANY OTHER UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Town Attorney Elliott seeks further consideration and feedback regarding the draft ordinance for changes to the sign ordinance. Attorney Elliott further requested consideration of including the sign ordinance within the zoning ordinance in order for variance applications to be accepted regarding signage. requested that the board review the proposed ordinance and communicate any comments directly to him.

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS**

Mr. David Garvey asked for clarification on the $57,000 loss-to-date within the budget. Town Recorder Lockhart noted that this is the amount the Town’s expenditures have exceeded the Town’s revenue to date. Recorder Lockhart further noted that the fiscal year ends on June 30, and final revenues would depend on tax distribution from the state. Money has not yet been received from the state for the months of May or June. Mr. Garvey also asked if the budget had been approved as a “break-even” budget, and Recorder Lockhart responded that monies were scheduled to be allocated from fund balance in order to pay for paving and striping. Finally, Mr. Garvey inquired as to how much the Town’s budget was “off” when comparing revenue to expenses. Alderwoman McKenzie confirms that the Town is currently better off than expected.

Mr. Garvey also inquired as to the amount currently held in the Town’s reserves. Town Recorder Lockhart noted an uncommitted balance of $2,361,969. An additional $1.5 million has been committed to savings. Recorder Lockhart confirmed that the Town of Walden could operate for two fiscal years with zero income from the State of Tennessee.

The meeting adjourned by motion.

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Respectfully submitted:

Fern Lockhart, Recorder

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Approved:

William Trohanis, Mayor