

TOWN OF HEMINGWAY  
COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES OF MEETING ON MARCH 10, 2022  
110 SOUTH MAIN STREET AT 6:00 P.M.

**Present:** George Sutton-Mayor Pro-Tem, Keith Baxley, Jimmy Chinnes, Pamela Matthews, Solomon Lewis, William Freeman-Town Administrator, Samantha Lewis-Town Clerk Alex Edwards, Brandon Alter-Kingstree News, Shamica Dollard, Mr. Dollard, Tony Greene, Marsha Smith-WRCOG, Marie Brown, Sabre Poston, Will and Kelly Hucks **ABSENT:** Mayor John Michael Collins-fire class and Veronica Elliott

**Public Hearing was called to order at 6:00 p.m.**

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

**Comments from Public on Applying for Needs Assessment.**

Marsha Smith from Waccamaw Regional Council of Government oversaw the public hearing. This hearing is for the Town of Hemingway to be able to apply for CDBG grants. It is a needs assessment hearing. The Town of Hemingway applied for the sewer project last year and was awarded the funds. They fund areas with low to moderate income. Mrs. Matthews stated that the roads need to be repaired. Mr. Greene asked if we are planning on putting housing in the Town. He thinks that we should allow housing in the Town of Hemingway. He stated that it will be more feasible to build in Hemingway than in the Donnelly area. Those housings are not suitable to live in. Mr. Freeman stated that the Town of Hemingway is not building a housing development. We are doing a Fair Housing Resolution that doesn't discriminate against anyone and is equal to all. Mr. Greene stated that people don't have no where to live. Mr. Freeman stated that we are not building but if any developers would like to talk with us, we will talk. He also agrees that housing is needed. Mr. Baxley stated that we need jobs in this area. Businesses need to have make a profit to sustain their business. If we don't have people, we won't have businesses. Mr. Greene stated that we can't get people to come here. We have plenty of stores, need better school system. We need to quit letting businesses go to Kingstree. Ms. Dollard stated that this is a county-wide problem. It is bigger than the Town. Mr. Greene stated that we need to beautify the Town. He feels we need to make them paint or rent the buildings on Main Street. Mr. Freeman stated that he has goals to help the Town grow. It is going to take time. Mr. Sutton stated that if we don't have the businesses, people aren't coming here. Mr. Lewis stated that the roads in the county and in Hemingway are in bad shape. They have been in bad shape for a long time. This is a county-wide matter. We need to make sure the people we put in office work for us. If they are not doing their job, they need to be voted out. Mr. Sutton stated that we don't have any political representation. All is on the other side of Kingstree. The dirt roads are the county's responsibility and Ronnie Sabb is over the paved roads. Mrs. Smith asked what else we need for the water/sewer. Mr. Freeman stated that we have lead pipes in the ground and the system is aging. Mr. Greene asked why we don't have water lines past Cooper Avenue. Mr. Freeman stated that we have a franchise area. Williamsburg County owns these areas that we do not provide water to. Mr. Freeman stated that we need storm water and recreational needs, street scapes and bathroom facilities at recreational area. Mr. Sutton stated that we need drainage around Morris Circle and South Oliver Street. The Police needs body cameras and radio upgrades. This is if we have to work an event and safety of citizens as well as our officers. Fire department needs updated equipment. SCBAs and radios. We need to rehab the fire hydrants. We need workforce development to help jobs and businesses trying to start here. Tony Greene stated that he lives on Radio Road. Radio Road and Donnelly needs water drainage and high-speed internet, law enforcement and development. Mrs. Marsha told Mr. Greene that the county is having a public hearing and he needs to attend that meeting for county needs.

**Council Meeting was called to order at 6:45 pm.**

**Approval of Minutes of Meeting:** Approval of minutes of meetings for February 10, 2022, was motioned by Mr. Lewis and it was seconded by Mr. Chinnes, and it carried unanimously.

**Persons Appearing Before Council:**

None

**Old Business:** No old business was discussed.

**SC BBQ Shag Festival Request for Funds:** Kelly Hucks gave a recap of the expenses they ended with in 2020 without having the festival. There were additional expenses not expected. Fireworks and the band cost couldn't get back. They filed bankruptcy. They are asking for funds to put on the festival this year. The cost of the festival is around \$40,000 to put on. They are asking the Town for \$20,000. They are asking for the \$10,000 that they were supposed to receive in 2020 to help recuperate the cost and an additional \$10,000 for this year. Tupperware is one of the biggest sponsor but they have not heard a word from them this year. Mr. Freeman stated that they did a cost analysis with the Town of Kingstree for one of the festivals there and there is an increase in sales in the Town. They buy gas, snacks, etc. He feels that the festivals are needed. He states that we normally give \$10,000. Mr. Baxley stated we don't owe them the money from 2020. You are going to give them \$20,000 for this year's festival. He asked what happened to the money that we did give in 2020. Mrs. Lewis stated that the check was never cashed, and it was voided. Mrs. Matthews stated that she feels the Town needs the festival. Mrs. Hucks stated that they don't buy themselves new shirts, they use the old ones, no trips to the beach, etc. Mr. Sutton made the motion to give them \$20,000 and it was seconded by Mrs. Matthews and it carried 4 to 1.

**Fair Housing Resolution:** Mrs. Lewis read the Fair Housing Resolution to the council. Mr. Lewis made the motion to accept the resolution and it was seconded by Mrs. Matthews and it carried unanimously.

**Police Report:** Chief Alex stated that Officer Pope has to March 18<sup>th</sup> and he will graduate from the Academy. Chief stated that he spoke with a representative from MASC and we need to update the Standard Operating Procedures Manual. He is working in the evenings on this. We need to do a lot of revamping to the book. We are putting in for the JAG grant. If we don't have the policy book up to date, we can be denied funds. Shag Festival is coming up and he has Chief Swinton, Mrs. Judy (EMS) and the Sheriff's Office to help cover the event as well. He is working on getting a grant to update the body cameras. He stated that we need radio upgrades to be able to talk to the sheriff's office. He is going to start the hiring process again. Mr. Baxley asked him if council will be able to review the SOP Manual. Chief Alex stated that he would like to have the council's blessing on it. Mr. Freeman stated that the manual is a constant working document. Mr. Lewis stated that when he was hired, he was to build the police department and he feels that he is doing a great job. He stated that there may be some stumbling blocks but keep up the good work. Chief Alex thanked council for their patience.

**Administrator's Report:** Mr. Freeman stated that the grant that we were awarded in 2019 that was waiting on the approval will go out to bid next week. It has a 2.2% loan rate from RD. We are currently writing a SRF grant to help with the influx of pricing since 2019. We have job openings in the water/sewer department. One employee left last week. Mr. Freeman stated that he has a price for consolidating all utilities. The cost will be around \$1200 a month. This is with a saving around \$600 a month. He stated that we will budget an upgrade to phone systems and lines in next year's budget. The website should go live next week. We still have façade grants available. We are looking at the fire department cement pad to fix. Also, we are getting bids for building new council chambers. The lights on the trees were brought up. Some were concerned that it will take away from Christmas if they are up all year. Asked how much to maintain these lights and they are one and off. This is a concern that is being questioned.

Mr. Lewis made the motion to go into executive session and it was seconded by Mr. Baxley on:

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: SECTION 30-4-70 (a) (1)** DISCUSSION OF EMPLOYMENT, APPOINTMENT, COMPENSATION, PROMOTION, DEMOTION, DISCIPLINE, OR RELEASE OF AN EMPLOYEE, A STUDENT, OR A PERSON REGULATED BY A PUBLIC BODY OR THE APPOINTMENT OF A PERSON TO A PUBLIC BODY; HOWEVER, IF AN ADVERSARY HEARING INVOLVING THE EMPLOYEE OR CLIENT IS HELD, THE EMPLOYEE OR CLIENT HAS THE RIGHT TO DEMAND THAT THE HEARING BE CONDUCTED PUBLICLY. NOTHING CONTAINED IN THIS ITEM SHALL PREVENT THE PUBLIC BODY, IN ITS DISCRETION, FROM DELETING THE NAMES OF THE OTHER EMPLOYEES OR CLIENTS WHOSE RECORDS ARE SUBMITTED FOR USE AT THE HEARING. *(THE IDENTITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL OR ENTITY BEING DISCUSSED IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE DISCLOSED.)*

Mr. Lewis made the motion to come out of executive session and it was seconded by Mr. Baxley. No actions were taken in executive session.

Mr. Baxley made the motion to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Mr. Chinnes and it carried unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:42p.m.

Sincerely

Samantha Lewis  
Town Clerk