MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE NEWTON CITY COUNCIL
October 3, 2017 – 7 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Newton City Council was held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, October 3, 2017 at Newton City Hall.

PRESENT:  Mayor Anne P. Stedman, Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver, and Council Members Jerry Hodge, Wes Weaver, Jody Dixon, Tom Rowe and Robert C. Abernethy Jr.

STAFF:  City Manager Todd Clark, City Clerk Amy S. Falowski, City Attorney John Cilley, City Department Heads and members of the management team

ITEM 1:  CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Anne P. Stedman welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

ITEM 2:  OPENING Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Council Member Jerry Hodge and Boy Scout Troop 903 provided the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 3:  APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion duly made by Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver, seconded by Council Member Jerry Hodge, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the Regular Minutes of the September 19, 2017 City Council meeting be – APPROVED

ITEM 4:  CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Upon motion duly made by Council Member Jerry Hodge, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the Consent Agenda be – APPROVED

A.  Sewer Adjustments

B.  Consideration of Commission/Committee Membership Appointments
    Elliot L. Alderman to Appearance Commission
    David Hayes to Appearance Commission

C.  Resolution Promotion Public Power Week – October 1-7, 2017

(Ordinances, Resolutions and Proclamations are hereby referenced and on file in the Office of the City Clerk)

ITEM 5:  COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: PEOPLE WHO WISH TO COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS ARE ASKED TO SIGN IN WITH THE CITY CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING.

Mayor Anne P. Stedman asked if anyone present would like to make comment concerning non-agenda items.

Assistant City Manager Sean Hovis presented the Planning Department and Planning Director Randy Williams with the Marvin Collins Planning Award. Mayor Stedman thanked Mr. Williams for all his and the department’s hard work.
Mr. Ed Sain commended Intern Jaylen Johnson, from Discovery High School, on the great job that he has been doing.

**ITEM 6: New Business**

A. Consideration of Lease of Property Located at 201 West 4th Street to Carolina West

Assistant City Manager Sean Hovis stated that the City of Newton was contacted by Carolina West and asked to enter into a lease agreement for space on the city’s water tank located at 201 West 4th Street. Carolina West conducted a structural analysis of the tank which shows the tank is capable of withstanding additional equipment. Mr. Hovis stated Carolina West is offering to pay the City of Newton $2,000.00 a month and is requesting to renew the lease agreement for up to 180 months. Each initial lease is for 60 months with up to two renewals with the City of Newton being guaranteed 120 months. Mr. Hovis said Carolina West is offering a 10 percent escalation rate every five years.

Mr. Hovis ask that City Council agree to the terms of the lease with Carolina West allowing the City Manager to sign the contract after language within the contract is agreed upon.

Council Member Wes Weaver asked how this contract will affect relationships with the other cellular carriers located on the tower. Mr. Hovis said it shouldn’t affect them at all. Mr. Weaver asked how much space is available for others. Mr. Hovis said that a structural analysis will have to be done. Council Member Robert Abernethy asked if the contract is consistent with AT&T. Mr. Hovis said the terms are consistent but the amount of the contract is not. Mr. Weaver said that he doesn’t think we can offer this to Carolina West for less than AT&T pays. Mr. Hovis said this is their offer based on the amount of equipment and the fact that they are much smaller than AT&T. Mr. Abernethy stated that it could affect where the city stands in the future with other companies leasing space, and that the contract is public record so all companies can see the rates. He stated that he has been at the front of the push for revenue, and that is the other side of this for him. Mr. Weaver said if we consider $2,000 a month versus $3,300 a month, the city risks losing $3,300 per month. He said that the city needs to be consistent and not ruin relationships. Council Member Jerry Hodge asked if there are alternative spaces. Mr. Hovis said the company approached the city with this request of location. Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver stated that he hates to give up the opportunity for revenue. Council Member Jody Dixon agreed. Mr. Dixon asked how long the other cellular companies have been leasing space on the tower. City Manager Clark said that it has been close to ten years. Mr. Hodges stated that he would like to see more research done and to receive more information. He said just because a price is offered doesn’t mean the city has to accept, and he would decline at this point.

Motion was made by Council Member Wes Weaver to deny this contract with Carolina West with an invitation to renegotiate. Council Member Jerry Hodge seconded the motion.

Council Members Wes Weaver, Tom Rowe, Robert C. Abernethy and Jerry Hodge voted in favor of the motion. Council Member Jody Dixon and Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver voted against. Motion PASSED that the city Deny Contract with Carolina West and Offer an Invitation to Renegotiate.

**ITEM 7: City Manager’s Report**

**Meetings & Events**

- October 7th Folk Art Festival, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- October 20th – 7th Annual Chili Cook-off at Fire Department Headquarters, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- October 26th Business Appreciation Event, Old Post Office Playhouse, 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
- October 28th Halloween Spooktacular, downtown, 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Newton 101 Information

- Session 5 (Oct. 5): Finance, Human Resources and Information Systems at the Historic Newton Depot. Participants will learn about the inner workings of municipal government finance, personnel, and information systems.
- Session 6 (Oct. 12): Newton Parks and Recreation and Planning at the Newton Recreation Center. Participants will learn about the many activities and resources offered at the Newton Recreation Department. This session also will explore the Planning Department and economic development projects.
- Session 7 (Oct. 19): Graduation at Newton City Hall. Participants will enjoy a brief social event, followed by a question-and-answer session with the Mayor, City Council, City Manager and Department Heads. Each participant will receive a certificate of completion at the final session.

ITEM 8: Questions and Comments from Mayor and Council

Mayor Stedman asked if there were any questions or comments from City Council.

Council Member Jody stated that the Branding and Marketing Initiative is moving along. He stated that the Depot had an event at Murray’s Mill last weekend and that a Fall Festival event is planned. Mr. Dixon also stated that the Auditorium will have a Foothills Folk Art Festival Preview on Friday night, and also mentioned the new floors that have been installed there.

Council Member Jerry Hodge stated that there is an article in the Charlotte Business Journal for September 29th titled “Newton Readies for Growth”. He stated the article features Mayor Stedman and that there is also an article about Catawba Farms. He thanked them for their investment and vision.

ITEM 9: Closed Session – Per North Carolina General Statutes 143-318.11(a)(3), 143-318.11(a)(4) and 143-318.11(a)(5)

Upon motion duly made by Council Member Wes Weaver, seconded by Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr., it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That City Council enter CLOSED SESSION per General Statutes 143-318.11(a)(3), 143-318.11(a)(4) and 143-318.11(a)(5)

Motion was then made by Council Member Wes Weaver to return to open session, seconded by Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr. All Ayes.

ITEM 10: Adjournment

Upon motion duly made by Council Member Wes Weaver, seconded by Council Member Jody Dixon, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the Meeting be – ADJOURNED

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Anne P. Stedman, Mayor

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Amy S. Falowski, City Clerk