

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE NEWTON CITY COUNCIL

November 1, 2016 – 7 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Newton City Council was held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, November 1, 2016 at Newton City Hall.

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

ABSENT: Council Member Wes Weaver

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 Tom Rowe provided the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 3: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

That the Regular Minutes of the October 18, 2016 City Council meeting be –
APPROVED

ITEM 4: 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.

Ed Sain, 806 S Main, stated that the Spooktacular event held downtown this year was great. He stated there were lines all around town, but no one was complaining. He thanked Public Works and Utilities Director Dusty Wentz, and the Police and Fire Chiefs for doing such a great job. He also said that the Gospel Music went great too and that Newton should be proud.

Mayor Stedman thanked him for his comments and stated that both events did turn out great.

Mayor Stedman asked if there was anyone else that would like to speak. No one appeared.

ITEM 4: Workshop – Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Assistant Manager Sean Hovis went over the Parks and Recreation Master Plan that was discussed at the September 6th council meeting and presented by Sarah Burrows. Mr. Hovis also gave a PowerPoint presentation showing City Council the upcoming available grants for the Parks and Recreation Department.

Mayor Stedman asked if the Parks and Recreation Master Plan needed to be approved by City Council in order to be able to apply for future grants. Parks and Recreation Director Sandra Waters stated that it

would help with the grants and it would also give goals to staff. City Manager Todd Clark stated that City Council could adopt the plan at this meeting. Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr. stated that it would help staff and that the document is flexible.

Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver made the motion to ADOPT the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Council Member Jerry Hodge seconded the motion, and it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the Parks and Recreation Master Plan be – ADOPTED.

Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver asked about grants that would help to make all parks ADA compliant and whether or not it would go along with the current Pedestrian Plan for sidewalk connectivity. Planning Director Randy Williams stated that it would. Mr. Stiver stated that he feels like signage needs to be identified, and that benches, shelters and trees have been mentioned as a need. He also mentioned a splash park, dog park, and lights at Jacob Fork Park. Mr. Stiver also asked about playground equipment and asked Ms. Waters the cost of the equipment at Northside Park. Ms. Waters stated that she would look that up and let him know.

Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr. stated that the sidewalk fits with other things. He asked who on council is the rep for the Tree Board and stated that there needs to be more shade trees and donations for memorial trees. Mr. Stiver stated that he is the representative for Tree Board and that he just needs some location ideas and that this would be good to take back to the Tree Board. Mr. Abernethy also mentioned artificial means of shade such as playground equipment (treehouse) and interactive equipment, comparable to the equipment at the Hickory Kiwanis Park.

Council Member Jerry Hodge stated that this is a tool for the city to get where it is trying to get; to grow the city and tax base and to provide more services by improving the life of kids, families and seniors. He said the splash pad, lights at the parks and pet parks were among obvious choices and also emphasized activities for Senior Citizens.

Council Member Tom Rowe stated that a splash park would be good and that the tennis courts at Broyhill Park were very nice. Ms. Waters stated that they had just been resurfaced and lined for pickle ball. Mr. Rowe then mentioned that sidewalks on E 22nd to Bassett would be good. He also mentioned parking lot paving for Northside Park before next year. Ms. Waters stated that it was in the CIP for next year.

Council Member Jody Dixon stated that he would like to see parks and hiking trails, pocket parks, dog parks and the splash pad.

Mayor Stedman stated that she would like to throw it back to staff to bring back costs of these items, grant funding and timing issues. She said she is hearing dog park, splash pad, lights, and a new park. Mr. Rowe stated that he thinks a dog park should be 2 acres instead of the recommended 1 acre.

Mayor Stedman asked Mr. Cilley if a splash pad in an existing park would qualify for the Sue Jones Estate park money. Mr. Cilley stated that it would. Mr. Cilley said anything that is new and not repaired would qualify.

Council Member Abernethy asked how much interest is in the Sue Jones account. Finance Director Serina Hinson stated \$30,000, and that none of it has been used.

Mr. Clark stated that staff would bring plans to City Council at the January and February meetings and if possible December as well. He said that then further discussion could be had at the February workshop.

Council Member Jerry Hodge stated he would like input from the Recreation Committee as well.

ITEM 5: **City Manager's Report**

- November 2nd – Ribbon Cutting at Country Corner Second Time Around, 1908 North Rankin Ave, 12:00 p.m.
- November 27th – Light up the Town, 5:00 p.m.

- Pedestrian Plan Project Survey - There is a link on the city's website about the plan and has a link to a survey

- Second workshop in November:
 - November 15th at 5:30 p.m. – Scott Millar, Economic Development
- Marketing and Branding Project

- Streetscape Engineering

- Water and Sewer Extensions

- Catawba County Strategic Plan

ITEM 6 **Questions and Comments from Mayor and Council**

Mayor Stedman asked if there was any other discussion from City Council. There was none.

ITEM 7 **Closed Session to Consult with City Attorney – G.S. 143-318-11(a)(3)**

Upon motion duly made by Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr., seconded by Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the City Council enter CLOSED SESSION per G.S. 143-318-11(a)(3)

Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver made the motion to go back into open session, which was Seconded by Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr. All Ayes.

ITEM 11: **Adjournment**

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

That the Meeting be – ADJORNED

Amy S. Falowski, City Clerk



Anne P. Stedman, Mayor