MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE NEWTON CITY COUNCIL
November 15, 2016 – 7 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Newton City Council was held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at Newton City Hall.

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

ABSENT: Council Members Wes Weaver 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 Jody Dixon provided the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 3: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

That the Regular Minutes of the November 1, 2016 City Council meeting be – APPROVED

ITEM 4: CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

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

That the Consent Agenda be – APPROVED

A. Tax Releases

B. Sewer Adjustments

C. Consideration of Grant Project Ordinance to Recognize Building Reuse Grant Funds

(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.

John Sigmon stated that he owns a golf cart that he would like to have permitted, but it has four rows and the ordinance states that golf carts must only have three. Mr. Sigmon asked if he could receive a waiver or exemption from City Council, and have his golf cart permitted.
Mayor Stedman asked if the golf cart passed all other safety inspections. Mr. Sigmon said that it did. Mayor Stedman stated that the City Council would not take action at this meeting, but would take Mr. Sigmon’s request in to consideration. Council Member Jerry Hodge asked Mr. Sigmon if the golf cart was compliant in all other areas. Mr. Sigmon said that it is.

Jennifer Stiver, Business Advisory Committee Chair spoke briefly about commercial development and the possibility of future purchase of property on the Hwy 16 bypass. Ms. Stiver stated that the city could then control how the corridor is developed. She stated that if it is mixed use then multiple businesses would increase the tax base. Mayor Stedman stated that the Business Advisory Committee is committed to increasing business opportunities, and thanked Ms. Stiver for her comments.

ITEM 6: Presentation – Parks and Recreation

Assistant Manager Sean Hovis made a presentation to City Council concerning Parks and Recreation.

He talked about the disc golf course that is being built at Jacob Fork Park, and estimates for a new soccer field. He said that with lights, fencing and irrigation the city had received an estimate for $350,000 for the new field. Mr. Hovis stated that he believes this is high and is looking for other estimates at this time.

Mayor Stedman asked about baseball fields and lights. Mr. Hovis stated that it is up to Council, but that there is lots of potential for soccer, lacrosse and football as well. Council Member Robert C. Abernethy stated that he coaches soccer and that there are two seasons for the sport. Parks and Recreation Director Sandra Waters stated that soccer is being played on baseball fields right now.

Mr. Hovis stated that other projects would be brought to Council, but the disc golf course could be finished for around $34,000. Mr. Abernethy asked how much interest is in the Sue Jones account. Finance Director Serina Hinson stated that she needs to double check, but she believes there is about $31,227. Mr. Abernethy stated that would only leave around $3,000 to complete the disc golf course. Council Member Jody Dixon asked if the city could light Jacob Fork Park and put several soccer fields and lights all at once. Mr. Abernethy said yes, that it depends on the money that it would save per fixture. Mr. Abernethy asked if there is leased to own lighting. Ms. Waters stated there is and Mr. Abernethy said that could be something to look into. Council Member Jerry Hodge asked if there is lighting that could rotate from one field to another. Ms. Waters said no, she didn’t think so. Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver stated that it would only take a couple of months to finish the disc golf course, and asked if Council should use the interest for that. Mr. Abernethy stated that the Council needs to start acting, and it’s right here in front of us. Mr. Abernethy asked if the Recreation Dept. has knocked on doors for donations. Carol Stiles said that she has and that she has received more than one donation from some people and companies.

Council Member Jody Dixon made a motion that the interest from the Sue Jones Estate be used to finish the Disc Golf Course. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver. All Ayes.

ITEM 7: New Business

A. Consideration of

1. Resolution to Proceed on Behalf of the City by Filing an Application Regarding the Financing of Vehicles, Equipment and Infrastructure to the North Carolina Local Government Commission (LGC)
2. Resolution Calling for a Public Hearing

Finance Director Serina Hinson stated the City of Newton wishes to finance the acquisition of certain infrastructure improvements, more specifically the Westside Drive Wastewater Rehabilitation Project. She stated that this project was not initially included as part of the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 budget; however, it is included on the 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan in future years. Due to the emergency nature of the project, Council approved to move forward with this project on July 12, 2016. Ms. Hinson stated that the estimated cost of the infrastructure improvements is $1,100,000 from the
Ms. Hinson stated that the Finance Department will be soliciting quotes from various financial institutions to borrow the funds, and will provide a recommendation to City Council on awarding the financing on December 6, 2016. A public hearing will also be held on this same date.

Ms. Hinson stated that in addition to this financing, the City will be completing another financing for vehicles and equipment which are part of the 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan and Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget. She explained that a recommendation will be provided to Council to award the financing on December 6, 2016. Ms. Hinson stated this financing will not require a public hearing nor will it require Local Government Commission (LGC) approval.

Ms. Hinson stated recommended that City Council:

1) Adopt the attached resolution authorizing the City Manager and Finance Director to act on behalf of the City and to authorize the filing of an application with the North Carolina Local Government Commission, and

2) Adopt the attached resolution calling for a public hearing on December 6, 2016.

Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr. asked if these vehicles are the same ones that were approved earlier. Ms. Hinson stated that they are except for an excavator that is needed more, and actually costs less.

Council Member Tom Rowe asked if the repaving is part of the project. Ms. Hinson stated that it is. Mr. Abernethy asked if the city looked for grants, Mr. Wentz stated that unless the project is underway in spring, probably won’t be eligible for grants.

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

That a resolution authorizing the City Manager and Finance Director to act on behalf of the City and to authorize the filing of an application with the North Carolina Local Government Commission be – ADOPTED

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

That a resolution calling for a public hearing on December 6, 2016 be – ADOPTED.

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

ITEM 8: City Manager’s Report

Meetings & Events

- November 26th – Small Business Saturday, Downtown Newton
- November 27th – Light up the Town, 5:00 p.m.
- December 5th and 6th Newton Pedestrian Plan Meetings, 4:30-6:00 p.m., Newton City Hall
- December 6th – Senior Citizen Christmas Luncheon provided by Newton PD, 11:30 a.m., Lower level Newton Recreation Center
- December 8th – Catawba Valley Furniture Academy Ribbon Cutting, 973 Locust Street, 10:00 a.m.

City of Newton Projects

- Pedestrian Plan Project Survey - There is a link on the city’s website about the plan and has a link to a survey
ITEM 9:  **Questions and Comments from Mayor and Council**

Mayor Anne P. Stedman asked if any Council Members would like to make any comments.

Mayor Stedman gave a brief report on the DNDA including upcoming events such as “Light up the Town” and a training session for DNDA Board Members. She talked about the Folk Art festival and its success and things that can be improved on for next year. Mayor Stedman also mentioned the success of “Spooktacular”.

ITEM 10:  **Closed Session to Consult with City Attorney – G.S. 143-318-11(a)(3)**

Upon motion duly made by Council Member Jody Dixon, 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)

Council Member Robert C. Abernethy, Jr. made the motion to go back into open session, which was seconded by Council Member Jerry Hodge. All Ayes.

ITEM 11:  **Adjournment**

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

That the Meeting be – ADJORNED

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Anne P. Stedman, Mayor

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Amy S. Falowski, City Clerk