

Town of Mount Olive
March 4, 2024
Regular Board Meeting
Minutes

Mayor Jerome Newton called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. Those in attendance per roll call were Mayor Pro-Tempore Barbara Kornegay, Commissioner Delreese Simmons, Commissioner Danny Keel, Commissioner Tommy Brown, Commissioner Vicky Darden, Town Attorney Carroll Turner Town Manager Jammie Royall and Town Clerk/Administrative Assistant Sherry Davis.

Mayor Jerome Newton delivered our invocation and Commissioner Tommy Brown lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Jerome Newton read the Conflict of Interest Statement; there were no conflicts.

Mayor Jerome Newton requested a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Tommy Brown made the motion to accept the agenda. Commissioner Vicky Darden seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Jerome Newton requested a motion to approve the February 5, 2024 Regular Board meeting minutes. Mayor Pro-Tempore Barbara Kornegay made the motion. Commissioner Danny Keel seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Jerome Newton then opened the public forum. Ms. Annette Kirby asked to please keep her address and phone number private. She stated as a group and committee we recognize your hard work. She thanked Mayor Jerome Newton for his efforts stating she sees him around town. She recognizes the recent efforts of town employees and board members to focus on the moratorium and reaching out to DEQ. Also for improving budgets and accountability, obtaining education and seeking opportunities to provide effective leadership, website communication and transparency. She thanked employees for their resourcefulness and multitasking abilities. Lastly she thanked everyone who is stepping up and working together for progress. She said she had concerns regarding Action Memo Item 03-18. Her three minute time limit was reached and Mayor Newton thanked her for attending.

Mr. John Hart of 208 East Nelson Street, Mount Olive, NC 28365, 919-288-9829. He advised he was here to represent his sister. She allowed the town to place a sidewalk on her property and now the area floods when it rains due to the slope of the sidewalk.

Mrs. Amberley Davis of 900 Norwood Ezzell Road, Mount Olive, NC 28365, 919-330-3458. She stated she is a manager at Southern Bank and Trust Company and a member of the Mount Olive Exchange Club. She commented that April is child abuse prevention month and they are accepting donations for their teddy bear fund which provides comfort to children in abuse situations. They will also participate in the North Carolina Pickle Festival, Fourth of July program at Westbrook Park, field of heroes and student of the month from Southern Wayne High School and North Duplin High School. She encouraged everyone to please join the Mount Olive Exchange Club for our youth.

Ms. Tatetia Robinson of 734 South Breazeale Avenue, Mount Olive, NC 28365. She advised that she actually lives off Breazeale Avenue and keeps getting everyone else's packages. She lives alone and it is very hard for people to find her house. She asked if the town would mind naming the street, requesting if it is named to please pave it for safety reasons. She had to flag down 911 several times when her mother was living.

Mrs. Belinda Parent of 155 Briarbed Lane, Mount Olive, NC 28365, 919-222-2608. She wanted to inform everyone about the Field of Heroes. It will be held on May 17 through May 27, 2024 beside Robert's Machine Shop. She has flags you can purchase to honor your hero. The Boys and Girls Scouts will guard them. It is a Memorial Day Dedication Ceremony. The price is forty dollars if purchased from the Mount Olive Exchange Club and forty two dollars if purchased online. She is requesting sponsorships at any level and each will receive a banner. She encouraged everyone to go to their Face Book Page and invite your friends and share with everyone you know. The event starts on May 17, 2024 at 3:00 P.M. and they need volunteers to help. On May 27, 2024 everyone will be called up to receive their flags.

Commissioner Delreese Simmons of 600 Oliver Street, Mount Olive, NC 28365, 919-394-4482. He wanted to discuss current ongoing issues in his district. He know a woman named Joyce who has been unable to live in her house for three years due to water inside. The ditch behind her house has not been cleaned for thirty years. We seem to be more focused on downtown than the residents. Mold kills people especially the elderly. It is time we focus more on the flooding and the residence instead of the moratorium. He has spoken with Town Manager Jammie Royall and even has the support of some people he does not always agree with.

Mayor Jerome Newton thanked everyone for their comments and closed the public forum.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed - 03-17 - Consider Lifting Stay on Condemnation of James Dove House at 107 North Chestnut Street. He turned this item over to Town Attorney Carroll Turner. Town Attorney Carroll Turner stated in January 2022 the owner of house was served by certified mail signed for on February 7, 2022 an order to demolish the property. The owner Mr. James Dove had ten days to appeal and failed to do so. The issue is his house is an historic structure. However at some point and time something must be done. Mr. Dove has done little to nothing since the previous board issued a stay. Town Attorney Carroll Turner advised he attempted to serve Mr. Dove by certified and regular mail, He sent the correspondence to two or three different addresses. The one sent by regular mail was the only one not returned so he can only assume that Mr. Dove received the notification to appear here this evening. Town Attorney Carroll Turner asked if Mr. James Dove was present. Mayor Jerome Newton

stated that he was present. He thanked Mr. Dove for attending. Mr. James Dove of 107 North Chestnut Street, Mount Olive, NC 28365, 919-223-4755. He commented that he does not recall receiving any certified letters. He said his son was four months old when they moved into this house and he would love to see his son living there someday. Mr. Dove had planned to complete the work but has dealt with severe health problems over the years and has been physically unable. He requested this board please give him until August 1, 2024 and revisit this item. Mr. Dove's son asked to speak. He explained that he grew up in this house and plans to move back in there one day. His dad spent several weeks in the Intensive Care Unit. He finds this whole situation so aggravating and told the board to do what they have got to do.

Mayor Jerome Newton asked what kind of extension Mr. Dove was requesting. Mr. Dove responded that he is requesting an extension of August 1, 2024 but he needs to know what the board wants done to the house. Mayor Jerome Newton wanted to clarify if Mr. Dove was stating he would be starting the work on August 1, 2024 or have it completed. Mr. Dove responded that he plans to have the work completed by August 1, 2024. He lives there and is constantly received offers from people wanting to buy the property. Commissioner Delreese Simmons explained to Mr. Dove if the repairs are not substantially completed by August 1, 2024 the house will be torn down. Commissioner Danny Keel asked if there was power on at the property. Mr. Dove replied no, the power was turned off about a year ago when he was in the Intensive Care Unit. Commissioner Danny Keel commented that he was the building inspector for nine years and dealt with this property at that time. It was a problem then and he agrees with Commissioner Delreese Simmons.

Town Attorney Carroll Turner said to Mr. Dove, you asked what we wanted done to the property. Mr. Dove wanted to know if they were talking about cosmetic repairs. Town Attorney Carroll Turner said there is rotted wood throughout. Mayor Jerome Newton stated that is the end of the discussion. At this time we need to take a vote. Commissioner Danny Keel requested to hear from Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill first. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill explained the main issue is the leaking roof and asked if that had been repaired. Mr. Dove answered yes this has been repaired. Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill said he agrees with the six month extension request but he will need a contractors report within sixty days. Mayor Jerome Newton advised the town have Mr. Dove to present his plan of action and if it is not completed by the deadline there will be no more leniency. Town Attorney Carroll Turner suggesting giving Mr. Dove until August 5, 2024 which is the first Monday and the night of our meeting.

Code Enforcement Officer Justin Hill informed everyone that a search warrant for the property was obtained in 2022. He, Town Manager Jammie Royall and Fire Chief Greg Wiggins went inside the house. He said one of the outside walls was deteriorating and bee were living there. Town Attorney requested Mr. Dove provide him with a valid mailing address. Mayor Jerome Newton reminded Town Attorney Carroll Turner to be cordial and stated we are not going that route. Commissioner Delreese Simmons and Commissioner Danny Keel would like to look at the property, they asked to be contacted for a walk through. Mayor Jerome Newton asked Town Attorney Carroll Turner if there was any need to take action tonight. Town Attorney Carroll Turner responded no.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed Action- Memo -03-18 – Consider Approval of Recommendation of Engineering Services Qualifications for the Drinking Water Improvements Funding in the amount of \$1,000,000.00 be awarded to McGill Associates, PA. Mayor Pro-Tempore stated we went through the proper process and procedures. Commissioner Tommy Brown commented he agrees with Mayor Pro-Tempore Barbara Kornegay. Commissioner Danny Keel said he is impressed with McGill Associates, P.A.

Mayor Jerome Newton requested a motion to approve Action Memo – 03-18. Commissioner Tommy Brown made the motion to approve. Mayor Pro-Tempore Barbara Kornegay seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Jerome Newton then discussed Action-Memo 03-19 - Consider Approval of Sale of Old DMV Building Located at 110 North Chestnut Street to Mary Miller in the amount of \$67,068.35. Town Attorney Carroll Turner advised the initial offer was made by Mary Miller in the amount of thirty thousand dollars. There were numerous bidders, three, two and then one. He is asking the board to confirm the sale so we can proceed. He stated in order to be completely transparent the property will now be surveyed, the plans are to put in two apartments. Ms. Miller is very well versed, she restored the gray house on the corner. Town Attorney Carroll Turner said by law there will have to be parking associated with property. Town Manager Jammie Royall is aware and they have discussed approving the first row of parking. Ms. Miller would allow the town to use the spaces during special events. The spaces that were discussed are seldom used. The town's code also requires parking. If this is approved we will proceed. We got considerably more than we thought.

The Town Manager's Report was presented as follows:

- He stated this will be a report only. If anyone has questions please submit them to the Town Clerk Sherry Davis
- He said this is easier because we could get into a lot of discussions.
- He reminded everyone that he is available for appointments on Thursdays.
- He discussed the meeting with North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Water Resources regarding the Special Order of Consent and the Moratorium.
- He gave an update on the sign machine and the lighting and security cameras.
- He notified everyone that Contracts I and II have been turned over to our attorney and we are not allowed to discuss with the public.
- He advised we are still working on several grant projects.
- He informed everyone a copy of this report can be found on our website.

The Mayor and Commissioner Reports were presented as follows:

Commissioner Vicky Darden:

- She thanked everyone for coming out to the annual Black History Parade and making it a success.
- She told former commissioner Reverend Dr. Dennis Draper that we are going to miss him and she thanked God for him.
- She advised everyone there was a fire at the ADLA, Inc. Cafeteria. She thanked Fire Chief Greg Wiggins and the volunteer fire fighters for a great job. Fire Chief Greg Wiggins responded they were able to contain it. He thanked the mutual aid fire and rescue and Mayor Jerome Newton. He confirmed it was an accidental fire that started under the stove vent.

Commissioner Tommy Brown:

- He appreciates everyone who spoke tonight. He has been very busy this past month with training.

Commissioner Danny Keel:

- He commented that Commissioner Vicky Darden stole his thunder. He was going to recognize Reverend Dr. Dennis Draper.
- He stated the meeting with the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Water Infrastructure covered a lot of ground and there good discussions.
- He thanked Town Clerk Sherry Davis for the great job she does.
- He thanked the Mount Olive Exchange Club for coming tonight.

Commissioner Delreese Simmons:

- He thanked Commissioner Vicky Darden for her hard work and dedication regarding hosting the annual Black History Parade. It was his first time in the parade and he ran out of candy at the Piggly Wiggly.
- He advised Mr. John Hart that he was aware of the issues with sidewalk he mentioned earlier.
- He commented the employees are doing a great job. Finance Director Jamie Butler is doing a great job and asked people to please stop bombarding her and Town Manager Jammie Royall.
- He asked town officials to please help stop people from losing their homes. Morning Drive has no drainage at all. Please help with this flooding
- He appreciates this board and thanked Town Manager Jammie Royall for getting the tree on Johnson Street taken down.

Commissioner Barbara Kornegay:

- She thanked all the Department Heads for their monthly reports. The Fire Department did a great job putting out the fire at the ADLA, Inc. Cafeteria. The Police Department had two hundred and forty seven traffic stops. Parks and Recreation has a fantastic program. Friends of the Parks is a great help and had a clean-up day on Saturday. Code Enforcement and Cemeteries is seeking funding for our historic cemetery. Mr. Dick Cobb has been volunteering for years but he is getting older and unable to do as much now.
- She appreciates the fact the Utilities Director Jeremy King was out of state and still answered her call
- She had a welcome house meeting this morning at church. On Saturday, April 13, 2024 at 9:30 A.M. they will be hosting another meeting at the Christian Life Center. Please let her know if you would like more details.
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Mayor Jerome Newton:

- He thanked everyone and commented Fire Chief Greg Wiggins for a fabulous job and mutual aid. He noticed a gas tank near the building and they did an excellent job containing it. .
- He thanked Annette Kirby for her comments. It is very encouraging.
- He encouraged everyone to contact Town Clerk Sherry Davis to make an appointment to see Town Manager Jammie Royall.
- He stated the Ordinance Workshops are every second Monday at 3:00 P.M. and invited everyone to come to these meetings.
- He wanted to let everyone know we are aware of the water leak in front of Walmart but the repair is beyond our scope and we have to hire a contractor.
- He has spoken with Town Manager Jammie Royall regarding the ditches that need to be cleaned out. Some of them are owned by the state and Town Manager Jammie Royall will contact the Department of Transportation for their assistance. This is a priority because it produces mold and mildew.

Mayor Jerome Newton asked the Reverend Dr. Dennis Draper if he would like to say something. Reverend Dr, Dennis Draper joked that his cane has saved him several times. He was brought here twenty years ago by the Bishop of the First Methodist Church. He officially retired in 2010 but he chose to stay here. His last birthday he made the decision to move up to Virginia Beach to be close to his son due to his age. He chose to make Mount Olive his home and he loves living here but it really is what it is.

Mayor Jerome Newton announced our next regular board meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 1, 2024 at 6:00 P.M. He advised this concludes our open meeting and we will be going into closed session. He asked the audience to leave at this time.

Mayor Jerome Newton then requested a motion to go into closed session PURSUANT TO NCGS SEC. 143-318.11

- (a) 3: To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged. General policy matters may not be discussed in a closed session and nothing herein shall be construed to permit a public body to close a meeting that otherwise would be open merely because an attorney employed or retained by the public body is a participant. The public body may consider and give instructions to an attorney concerning the handling or settlement of a claim, judicial action, mediation, arbitration, or administrative

procedure. If the public body has approved or considered a settlement, other than a malpractice settlement by or on behalf of a hospital, in closed session, the terms of that settlement shall be reported to the public body and entered into its minutes as soon as possible within a reasonable time after the settlement is concluded.

- (a) 6: To consider the competence, performance and/or fitness of an employee. The closed session shall be held at the board meeting room located at 114 East James Street at the conclusion of the regular meeting.

Commissioner Tommy Brown made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Delreese Simmons made a motion to go into closed session. Mayor Jerome Newton again requested a second to go into closed session. He stated there is no second therefore we can't go into closed session and are still in open session.

There being no further business Commissioner Tommy Brown made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Danny Keel seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Our next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 1, 2024 at 6:00 P.M. in the board meeting room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. J. Jerome Newton
Mayor

Sherry Davis
Administrative Assistant/Town Clerk