

**TOWN OF RICHLANDS**  
**NORTH CAROLINA**

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The Richlands Board of Aldermen met in Regular Session on Tuesday, September 10, 2013, at 6:00 pm in the Board Room at the Richlands Town Hall. Present for the meeting were:

Mayor McKinley D. Smith, Sr.  
Alderman Kent Painter  
Alderman Rob Willems

Alderman Kandy Koonce  
Alderman Paul Conner  
Alderman Tom Brown

Also present were:

Gregg Whitehead, Town Administrator  
Ron Lindig, Chief of Police  
Keith Fountain, Town Attorney  
Amanda Hickey, Daily News

Doreen Putney, Town Clerk  
Johnathan Jarman, Public Works Director  
Trevor Normile, Duplin Times

There were seven citizens present.

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:**

Mayor McKinley Smith called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Alderman Tom Brown

**INVOCATION:** Mayor McKinley Smith

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**

Gregg Whitehead, Town Administrator, presented the agenda to the Board.

A **motion** was made by Alderman Kandy Koonce, seconded by Alderman Tom Brown to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion was unanimously carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES (August 13, 2013 and Special Call Meeting August 22, 2013):**

A **motion** was made by Alderman Paul Conner, seconded by Alderman Rob Willems to approve the Regular Board meeting minutes of August 13, 2013 and the Special Call Meeting Minutes of August 22, 2013. The motion was unanimously carried.

**PUBLIC ART PROJECT FOR VENTERS PARK (Wishing Tree):**

Town Administrator, Gregg Whitehead, presented to the Board a potential public art project for Venters Park that was conceived by the Revitalize Richlands Commission. Mr. Whitehead

introduced Mr. Stephen Zawistowski, a local artist with Metal Designs, Inc. to the Board. Mr. Zawistowski stated that he was contacted by the Revitalize Richlands Commission about the idea and presented the Board with a drawing design of a steel wishing tree. The tree is slated to stand about 9 feet tall and approx. 8 feet in width, made out of steel and will be rooted in the ground. The idea is to bring positive reflection, symbolize growth and represents a town where dreams can grow. Persons can place their wishes, dreams and prayers on pieces of cloth that will be provided and place them on the tree. The approximate cost of the tree is estimated between \$7,000 to \$10,000.

After further discussion, a **motion** was made by Alderman Paul Conner, seconded by Alderman Rob Willems to commission local artist, Stephen Zawistowski of Metal Designs, Inc., solicit community assistance with funding and to take the rest of the costs out of fund balance for the wishing tree. The motion was unanimously carried.

### **PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD APPOINTMENTS:**

Mr. Whitehead reported to the Board that Planning Board & Board of Adjustment member, Jeremy Bright, is no longer eligible to serve on either Board due to his change of residence being outside of the town limits and ETJ. It is requested of the Board to review the Citizens Participation Applications provided and appoint a member to fill Mr. Bright's vacancy which is set to expire June 2014. The Board also is requested to appoint an alternate member to the Board of Adjustment to replace the expiring term of Ms. Jennifer Roby.

Mr. Whitehead provided to the Board Citizen Participation Applications (CAP) of citizens who have expressed desire to serve on both Boards. The applicants were Mr. Jason Pittman, Mr. John Tripp, and Mr. Evan Jarman.

After a brief discussion, a **motion** was made by Alderman Paul Conner, seconded by Alderman Kent Painter to appoint Jason Pittman to fill the vacant seat on the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment with his term expiring June 14, 2014 and to appoint Mr. Evan Jarman as an alternate to the Board of Adjustment for a three year term, expiring September 14, 2016. The motion was unanimously carried.

### **SCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARING (ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT-MEDICAL CLINICS):**

Mr. Whitehead reported to the Board that Jacksonville Children's Clinic would like to open a medical clinic at 107 S. Wilmington St., formally Carol Monroe Salon. This property is zoned C-1 and our current zoning ordinance does not allow for a medical office to be in C-1. In order to make a zoning text amendment to allow medical clinics in C-1, a public hearing must be scheduled and held.

After a brief discussion a **motion** was made by Alderman Tom Brown, seconded by Alderman Kent Painter to schedule a public hearing during the next regular Board of Alderman Meeting on October 08, 2013 at 6:00 pm regarding the zoning text amendment submitted for a medical clinic in zone C-1. The motion was unanimously carried.

## **ADMINISTRATOR NOTES AND UPDATES:**

The Town Administrator, Gregg Whitehead, presented a copy of notes and updates to the Board which is incorporated by reference and hereby made part of these minutes. He also reported on the following:

- This coming Thursday, September 12, 2013 the STMS meeting will kick-off at 6:00 pm.
- Mr. Whitehead will be out of the office September 23 & 26, 2013, to attend the ICMA Conference.
- Town Clerk, Doreen Putney, is now a Certified Municipal Clerk (NCCMC) in the state of North Carolina. She is continuing to work on her international certification and should be completed within the next year.
- The 2013 Sidewalk project is almost completed. Cleanup and grass seeding needs to be finished. The next step is to contact DOT and look into putting a useful crosswalk across Franck Street by the old post office.

## **POLICE REPORT:**

Chief Ron Lindig provided a copy of the Activity Report for the month of August 2013 to the Board, and a memorandum of upcoming events which is incorporated by reference and hereby made a part of these minutes. He also reported on the following:

- Provided the Board with “Policy and Procedures” for the Bicycle Patrol.
- Bike Patrol has been out on the streets. We have assigned three officers for this duty.
- October 31, 2013 will have extra patrol out for Trick or Treating between the hours of 6-8 pm.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

### **Susan Spencer & Kim Holley (with Community Ministry Association):**

Requested of the Board to allow a community fall festival on Halloween in the downtown area. Ms. Spencer stated that this is the 4<sup>th</sup> year they have had a fall festival on Halloween and each year it has grown significantly. This would be an enjoyable safe environment for children and will provide games, bounce houses, trunk to trunk trick or treat, and many other activities for children and families. They are requesting to have it in the downtown area and possibly blocking the street off from Foy to Hargett along Wilmington Street from 6-8 pm.

The Board expressed concerns with traffic issues in blocking the streets and suggested to utilize the parking lot by the Fire Department and Venters Park. Mr. Whitehead will inquire with the Fire Department on the use of the parking lot.

After further discussion, a **motion** was made the Alderman Tom Brown, seconded by Alderman Kandy Koonce to allow the use of Venters Park for the Community Fall Festival to be held on Halloween. The motion was unanimously carried.

### **Mr. Dustin Lacey (Resident):** Mr. Lacey expressed the following concerns:

- Would like to see a possible bicycle path around town so that children and families can ride their bicycles safely as well as the police department who now has a bike patrol.

- An abundance of rental properties and foreclosure properties in the Trifield Estates area are not being maintained properly. Some of the back yards of these properties have grass/weeds as high as 3-4 feet.
- In prior years the town has edged the streets. Stated that the streets have not been edged yet this year inquired to the reasons why.
- Concerns with properties having multiple abandoned vehicles in yards. This is unsightly and could potentially lower property values.

**BOARD MEMBER CONCERNS:**

**Alderman Tom Brown:**

- Expressed his concern with the increase of 6ft or higher privacy fences going up. The gaps between each neighbor's fence is not being maintained. The increase of these privacy fences going up is becoming unsightly in the town. Alderman Brown would like to look into addressing this issue to better regulate these types of fences.
- With regards to the high grass/weeds that Mr. Lacey mentioned, our Public Works Director mails out certified letters to property owners constantly. We have recently reduced the time period for notification, but maybe we can look into this for a way to change these ordinances to help with this situation. This is draining the town's resources with mailing these certified letters and also then going out and contracting to have the property cleaned up and not being reimbursed. Mr. Whitehead stated that General Statutes has recently given us authorization to put a lien on properties of repeat offenders.
- With regards to edging the streets, our Public Works Department has two employees that handle everything in the town. The town has grown significantly and with over 20 miles of streets to edge (both sides of the street), along with keeping up with mowing, trash, bulk items, yard waste, and the many other duties that they do daily, it has become increasingly difficult to keep up. We are looking into hiring one, possible two employees next fiscal year to assist with the increasing demands on this department.

**PERSONNEL:**       None

**CLOSED SESSION:**       None

**ADJOURN:**

With no further business, a **motion** was made by Alderman Paul Conner, seconded by Alderman Kandy Koonce to adjourn the meeting at 6:54 pm. The motion was unanimously carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Attest:  
Doreen Putney, Town Clerk

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Mayor McKinley D. Smith, Sr.