

**Town of Pilot Mountain  
Board of Commissioners Meeting  
Monday, June 10, 2024  
7:00 PM**

**Members Present:** Mayor Evan Cockerham, Mayor Pro-Tem Donna Kiger, Commissioner Rachel Collins, Commissioner Dwight Atkins and Commissioner Scott Needham

**Staff Present:** Town Manager, Michael Boaz and Town Clerk, Holly Utt

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**Call to order 7:00 PM**

Mayor Cockerham called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. After a moment of silence, Commissioner Atkins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Adoption of Agenda**

Commissioner Kiger made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented and it was unanimous.

**Public Hearing FY 2025 Budget**

Mayor Cockerham opened the public hearing.

Vince Hancock, 727 Westridge Drive

Good evening. I just wanted to call out a couple of items in the annual budget for your attention. The overall revenue to be generated for recreation, presumably the Armfield center, is just under a half million, \$495K, While the town's expenses for culture and recreation, again, basically the Armfield center, is almost \$750K. About quarter million that the town will receive in monthly fees, an amount that will have to come from the general fund or rather from the taxpayers. I understand that there were several much needed capital improvements done in the first year and a half, and I am appreciative, but I wonder when the Armfield will start paying for itself. I had a conversation with a member of the town administration when the proposed purchase was being discussed, and I asked if, after the initial purchase, were the fees generated by the Armfield going to pay the expenses? I was assured it would. Now, going into the third full year of the town owning and operating it, they're expected to cover only two thirds of the cost. I'd like to know where this is going. Will we be paying a large portion of the Armfield's operating cost in perpetuity? I believe there's not been sufficient transparency in this matter, and I ask in moving forward, the town provides regular updates on the cost and revenues of the center.

With no one else present to comment, Mayor Cockerham closed the public hearing.

**Public Comment**

Tracy Wilkerson, 192 Deer Trace Lane, was present to address the Board. He is a member at the Armfield Center and has been using personal trainer, Dave Amato, for about 2 and a half years. With the recent transitions from the Town there has been a bit of an impasse encountered with Dave continuing to work there. He has been tremendously valuable with personal training for his wife and

himself after previous surgeries. He would like to see them come to an agreement that would keep Dave at the center so those that are benefited by his expertise could still take advantage of that.

Barbara Wilkerson, 192 Deer Trace Lane, was present to address the Board. Mrs. Wilkerson is a member of the Armfield Center. She wanted to voice her appreciation for the small town that she moved to 30 years ago. The Armfield Center is a great resource for the town and she added that Dave Amato has been a tremendous asset to her and many more who take advantage of the facility. His clients benefit from his expertise and encouragement, he is a great asset to the town from the swim team to the personal training. She asked that the Board work with Dave and allow him to continue to work at the center.

Justin Potts was present to address the Board. He stated that he couldn't get in touch with the town manager and he doesn't know why he is banned from the civic center or why he has trespassing charges. Commissioner Atkins stated that he had got clarification from town hall and emailed him his response this afternoon. He owns a plumbing business in Pilot and the town owes him money for work that he has done at the civic center. He has people in this town asking him what is wrong with their water. He has so much money tied up in the center and he can't get a response. He asked the Board where he should turn his invoices in. Commissioner Kiger told, with Justin, with Officer Spencer present, not to come back to her house or her place of business or any property that she owns and if he does he will be arrested for trespassing. Commissioner Atkins him why he was banned from the civic center. Justin stated that he did not have a clue.

#### **Board & Committee Reports**

##### **Mount Airy Chamber of Commerce**

Tonda Phillips, the public policy committee chairperson of the Greater Mount Airy Chamber of Commerce, gave an update to the Board of things that the Chamber of Commerce has been doing to advocate for our region, to support local business and overall economic development. Earlier this year that was an advocacy conference that welcomed over 100 visitors and heard about the advocacy efforts all across the state.

##### **ABC Board**

The ABC store reported a 9% increase in April 2024 compared to April 2023. The store continues to do well with the help of Paula Jones and her staff.

#### **Unfinished Business**

##### **FY 2025 Budget Adoption**

Mr. Boaz explained that the budget was down from FY 2024, mainly because of the number of the grants that are not recurring. There is no tax increase with this budget. There will be a rate increase of water and sewer of 5% to match Mt. Airy and a rate increase in the solid waste fee to match Waste Management. Commissioner Needham made a motion to adopt the FY 2024-2025 budget as presented and it was unanimous.

##### **Personnel Policy Amendment**

Mr. Boaz made some revisions to the proposed vacation time accrual that was presented at the May meeting. He lowered the top end hours and lowered the bottom end hours. Commissioner Atkins made a motion to adopt the personnel policy amendment pertaining to vacation time accruals and it was unanimous.

### **New Business**

#### **FY2025 Fee Schedule**

Mr. Boaz stated that the water/sewer fees increased to match Mt. Airy and the solid waste fees had increased to match Waste Management. There are some slight increase in fees for membership and rentals at the Armfield Center. The water and sewer tap fees increased due to cost. Commissioner Kiger made a motion to adopt the 2025 FY fee schedule as presented and it was unanimous.

#### **Armfield Civic Center PARTF Renovations Project**

Mr. Boaz stated that this project is half PARTF grant funded and half from the town, \$500K each. The project would include renovation in the pool area, gym renovations including the basketball court and replace the walking track, construction of pickleball courts and cornhole area outside as well as some site amenities to go along with those additions. The best way to complete the project is through a construction manager at risk (CMAR). A CMAR is a general contractor for a project in which the price is agreed upon at the beginning of the project. If there are cost overages on the project, it is on the CMAR. The town went through the request for qualifications process and received one statement of qualifications from Hayco Construction. They have completed similar projects in the area. Commissioner Collins asked how the town went about advertising for the RFQ. Mr. Boaz stated that it was on the website. Commissioner Collins stated that with only one RFP for a CMAR, that is highly unusual. Discussion ensued about receiving more RFQ's for the project. Commissioner Atkins made a motion to table the discussion until the July meeting and it was unanimous.

#### **July Meeting Schedule**

Mr. Boaz will be out of town the week prior to the Board meeting. It was the consensus of the Board to reschedule the July meeting to the 18<sup>th</sup> at 6PM.

#### **2023 Water System Projects**

Mr. Boaz stated that we have water system improvement projects that are underway. For purposes of funding, they are divided into two separate divisions. We have asked the state to allocate part of the earmarked funds to these two divisions to cover the delta between the low bid and what was available in the budget. These two resolutions would be to accept the earmarked funds and amending the capital project ordinances to allow us to spend to do the projects. Commissioner Atkins made a motion to approve resolutions R2024-07 Acceptance of Earmark Funds for Division 1, R2024-08 Acceptance of Earmark Funds for Division 2 and it was unanimous.

#### **Temporary Social District Expansion**

Mr. Boaz stated that the food truck festival that is going to be held on June 21<sup>st</sup> will be held mostly on Marion Street but some of the vendors and entertainment will be in the parking lot of First Citizens. It is most likely that visitors will spill out onto Marion Street and they will need to temporarily expand the social district to include Marion Street between Depot Street and town hall. This would avoid the town having to apply for ABC permits. Commissioner Collins made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-1 and it was unanimous.

#### **Temporary Construction Easement Condemnation**

Mr. Boaz explained that when the collection system project was designed it included re-routing a piece of sewer line. Currently the sewer lines come down Veterans Drive and turns and goes back through the wood. It then becomes an aerial and goes back underground and runs to lift station #18. As part of the

project, that lift station will be moved and the aerial line done away with. The new sewer line would run from Key Street and then dump into the existing gravity main. In order to do this the town will need three temporary construction easements. We have two easements and on the third one, there is a snag with the property owners. We have made an offer of \$1,000 and they rejected the offer. An appraisal has been done for \$625. He has asked the Board to authorize the town attorney to start the condemnation process with a value of \$625 for the appraisal. The town will need the last temporary construction easement to move forward with the project. Commissioner Kiger made a motion to approve resolution authorizing condemnation and it was unanimous.

#### **Administrative Reports**

- Mr. Boaz will be out of town June 21<sup>st</sup> through July 8<sup>th</sup>
- Andy Goodall will be joining the team on July 1<sup>st</sup> as the Director of Planning & Community Development.

#### **Mayor and Commissioner Comments**

**Commissioner Collins** – She thanked the County for the money for the library and the community for their support in that venture.

**Commissioner Kiger** – Dino Days was well attended. It was the first time being held at the Armfield Center and there are lessons to be learned but overall it was a great event. She addressed Mr. Hancock's concern about the Armfield Center generating revenue. She noted that about 80% of the members do not live in town and the 1,500 residents in town carry the burden of the center. It was a real concern to her when the town took it over, however, the Armfield Center is a show piece for the county and it is unfortunate that we do not receive funding from the county for parks and recreation. She stated that Nancy Deaton had put together some really good programs with certified fitness instructors and has done well with risk management assessment. She addressed Mr. Dave Amato and said that it's not that the town doesn't want him to work here but they do need to not be losing money. We are not going to make money on the center but she would like to see it become revenue neutral.

**Commissioner Atkins**– He thanked Commissioner Kiger for her comments on the Armfield Center and he added that he was on the board of directors and finance board for about 15 years and it was tough and then Covid hit. When Covid hit, they lost probably 1/3 of the memberships. There was no money for maintaining the center. He is glad the town took it over and now has a parks and recreation center. He commended Mr. Boaz for getting all the grant funding for the town and all of the things that have been accomplished ahead of schedule. He thanked Commissioner Kiger for the Hometown Heroes program.

**Commissioner Needham**– He stated that the town may never "make money" off of the Armfield Center but we're going to "make money" because this is a community asset. The center is an indirect investment for the community and it is very important to help attract visitors and businesses. He understands that they need to find a way to pay for this and make it work out but we are in the "spend money" phase in order to make it a better asset to the community. He thanked Commissioner Kiger for the Hometown Heroes program. It was great to see the community come out and support the event and to see the happiness from the families for having their loved ones recognized.

**Mayor Cockerham** – He added that the Hometown Heroes event was great and it really means a lot to the community. He thanked everyone that worked behind the scenes to make it such a great event. He thanked the county for their funding match for elevator repairs at the library. He is looking forward to getting lighting at the soccer field for those late evening games. He thanked Leah Tunstall for her efforts with the Armfield Center before the town purchased it. He reminded people to come out for food truck festival on June 21<sup>st</sup> and also the Farmer's market that is held on Saturday's from 3PM-6PM, through October.

**Closed Session – Personnel**

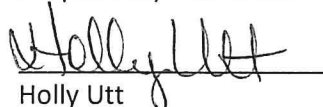
Commissioner Kiger made a motion to enter into closed session and it was unanimous.  
Commissioner Needham made a motion to come out of closed session and it was unanimous.

**Other Business** – No other business


**Adjourn**

Commissioner Needham made a motion to adjourn, and it was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted:

  
Holly Utt  
Town Clerk

Attest:

  
Evan Cockerham  
Mayor