

**TOWN OF TRYON**  
**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**TOWN HALL – MCCOWN ROOM**  
**DECEMBER 20, 2022 7:00 PM**

Present: Mayor J. Alan Peoples  
Commissioners: Bill Crowell, Bill Ingham  
Mayor Pro Tem Chrelle Booker  
Absent: Crys Armbrust

Staff Present: Zach Ollis, Town Manager  
Josh Walton, Fire Chief  
Randall Hodge, Police Chief  
William Morgan, Town Attorney  
Susan Bell, Town Clerk  
Tim Daniels, Planning Director  
Travis Aldred, Harmon Field Supervisor

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Peoples called the meeting to order and asked for a moment of silence. Mayor Pro Tem Booker led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AGENDA ADOPTION**

Mayor Peoples asked for additions, deletions or corrections. He added item 8a. Funding for Potential Visitor’s Center. Strike 9a. Commissioner Ingham so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTION**

Mayor Peoples asked for additions, deletions or corrections. Being none, he entertained a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda, which includes the Board Minutes and the Financial Report for month ending November 30, 2022. Commissioner Ingham so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

**APPOINTMENT(S) TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Town Manager Ollis reported you have an appointment to the Tourism Board. John Vining has applied for the position. Commissioner Crowell made a motion to appoint John Vining to the Tourism Board. The motion carried unanimously.

**DESIGNATE OUR VOTING DELEGATE**

Town Manager Ollis reported the Board needs to designate a voting delegate for the League of Municipalities. Mayor Pro Tem Booker was not sure if she could make it, so Mayor Peoples said he would like to attend. Both can attend. Commissioner Ingham made a motion to appoint Mayor Peoples as the voting delegate. The motion carried unanimously.

**BUDGET AMENDMENT**

Town Manager Ollis reported the budget amendment is to cover the truck purchase that was approved last year FY22 and was not received until this year FY23. Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adopt

Budget Amendment No. 2 for \$62,155. Commissioner Crowell so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

### **MINIMUM HOUSING**

Planning Director Daniels reported the Cleveland properties the two on the end are slated for the Fire Department burn in late February. The house on Peake Street across from Roseland, the inspection was completed and the hearing will be set for January, around the 15<sup>th</sup>. The one on Canady Lane was burnt down on November 16<sup>th</sup> and he is arranging for cleanup. Mayor Pro Tem asked about the hearing process. Daniels reported once he does the inspection, a hearing is scheduled. He sends out letters to the owner and the owner comes in and declares if he is going to make repairs. We can knock it down if the repairs are more than 50% of the value of the building. Based on that, the repairs are going to cost more than the 50% of the value. He will have the hearing. Commissioner Crowell asked if the town is reimbursed for this. Daniels reported he places a lien on the property.

### **FUNDING FOR POTENTIAL VISITOR'S CENTER**

Town Manager Ollis asked who was going to speak for the Visitor's Center? Dick Callaway, President of the Visitor's Center. You have their comments in the packet. Everyone is familiar with John Varner's re-development of his building on Maple Street (old Owen's building). The Visitor's Center has been there for eight years. They will have to move upstairs in the building. This will give them better accessibility and visibility. Because of dealing with some issues, they were closed for 30 days. He expects the numbers to increase. The bad news is, their rent will triple. They are hoping the Town will double the supplement to \$1,000. The rent will increase to \$2,000. They feel they can increase their contributions. He has a goal personally to get to the point that they don't ask the town for anything. They do appreciate what the town has done for them. They feel they can make the best use of the space. They have had a lot of comments about a restroom.

Mayor Peoples asked if they had applied for anything from the Polk County Community Foundation. Mr. Callaway responded yes. Wanda May asked for the build outs, lighting, shelving and exhibit pieces. She is talking to carpenters to figure out the display shelving. The "Tales of Tryon" is one of their biggest successes. They are well received. They may need to pay honorariums. They really don't have a line item for operations. They will need proper storage of paper and artifacts. Mr. Callaway has talked with Dean Trakas about advising them of the build outs.

Joy Soderquist responded people over 45 want the brochures. The younger people want to look at information on their phones. They rotate the displays to keep them fresh. Mr. Callaway is encouraged by the responses from younger people. They are going to stay involved in grants. Had a very good meeting with Noah and Sara Bell at the Foundation. He feels it will go smoothly. They will be judiciously in how they ask. They need paid staff, but the Foundation will not pay for that. Joy is in charge of the docents. They need more.

Commissioner Crowell asked if he could expand on restrooms. Mr. Callaway responded they have restrooms that everyone can use. Mayor Pro Tem Booker responded she doesn't see signs for public restrooms anywhere. She has been in places where they have signs that say no public restrooms. She doesn't think we can squeeze the entire amount. Mr. Callaway responded they are not advertising public restrooms. Their docents are mainly women and they have mentioned their concerns about

safety. He feels they will feel safer in the new location. They do appreciate the Town's help. Booker suggested designated parking for the docents. Commissioner Crowell responded last month we were discussing getting the business owners from parking on the street. Mr. Callaway is very thankful for the help Chrelle gave while on the board and would love to have her back.

Mayor Peoples responded everyone wants it, but no one wants to pay for it. Mr. Callaway doesn't want to ask for help, but it is for the Town. Mayor Peoples responded he has about a hundred paintings, dating back to 1903. He has post cards that will go to the visitor's center, but he is not willing to die right now, for this to happen. Mr. Callaway feels there is a need to display local art and they plan to address that. He thanked the Board for their time.

#### **TDDA UPDATE**

TDDA Director Newman reported her update is included in your package. They are continuing to working heavily in the promotion of the organization, maintaining the economic vitality and designs that they are charged with. We had a very strong Christmas Stroll this year and coming up very quickly on Tryon Midnight.

#### **ROAD CLOSURE REQUEST FOR TRYON MIDNIGHT, DECEMBER 31**

TDDA Director Newman asked for a road closure to close Trade Street starting at 5:30 pm for setup. Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to approve the road closure request. Commissioner Ingham so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT/TOWN PROJECT PRIORITIZATION, AND CITIZEN INPUT**

Town Manager Ollis reported Randall is doing a good job, keep it up. Tim is doing a good job, keep it up, Walton doing a good job, keep it up. Glad you all are here. Travis, you work really hard, people don't see it, thank you for everything you do at Harmon Field. Staff is great. The Board is great. Thank you for everything that you have done for him and his family. Thank you to Susan. William, you are not too bad yourself. That's all he has. Everyone applauded for Town Manager Ollis.

#### **COUNCIL/MAYOR REPORT**

Commissioner Crowell thanked the staff. Enjoying working with the Police Chief and Fire Chief. He's been down at Harmon Field, looks like staff is getting back into the building. He thanked the citizens for coming and wished everyone a very Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Ingham echoed what Crowell said. He thanked the staff. He really wants to thank Zach. He has been a great Town Manager, not just a good one, but a great one. Citizens and board agreed. We will miss you, more than you will know. Thank you.

Mayor Pro Tem Booker thanked everybody that is present. She thanked the staff, police and fire department. She congratulated Zach and his family. She thanked Susan also. Happy new year. She thanked Mr. Callaway for his presentation.

Mayor Peoples told the story. This past weekend on Saturday, they held the Reindeer games for track. He dressed up as Santa Claus and the kids raised \$715 and 904 cans of food. Then, he went as Santa Claus to the place where his wife is staying now and there is a lady, he will call her Dale. He has been going there for four months and has never seen her smile. She came into the hall with her walker and

looked up at him. He spoke to her and told her Merry Christmas. She hugged him and gave him the biggest smile. Later, someone had their grandkid there and he saw her dancing with him. After that he was driving home with his Santa suit on and he heard someone yell Coach Peoples stop. He pulled over and 40 kids were going to dinner for the winter formal. He sat in the sleigh and like froze to death. He doesn't think he has had a much better day than that. Once again, "Nearly Perfect, Always Tryon". Zach thank you. May God bless you and your family.

Town Manager Ollis also wanted to thank Michelle. He knew he was going to forget somebody. Michelle has been really great. He thinks you will be happy with her. He feels she is one of the best things that has happened in a long time. Citizens agreed.

#### **CITIZEN COMMENTS & RESPONSES**

Joyce Kimpton reported she doesn't like the way this town is going. While she supports the museum, she doesn't think they need that much square feet. Every time a business closes, the town is willing to put just anything back into the location. She asked the town look into the direction they are going in. Commissioner Ingham reported the Town is busier now than it has ever been. Mayor Peoples reported the owner is paying the taxes on the building. They are not responsible for the businesses here. Mayor Pro Tem Booker responded the museum has been looking for a great location for years and this location has come available.

Wanda May, TDDA hat own, reported between Zach, the Town, their board and when they hired Michelle, they are changing their focus. It is going to be primarily economic development, business recruitment, business retention, business training and how to do proper merchandising. They are trying to move away from being so much tangled up with events. They are 130 non-profits and along with the merchants they can take on some of the responsibility. With Michelle here, she feels within the year you will see a change. Before COVID hit, they were on the verge of making it happen.

Mr. Callaway is sympathetic with what Ms. Kimpton has said. He is here representing the visitor's center as well as the museum. He feels they will attract more, because of the museum and the visitor's center. Ms. Soderquist reported she has heard people say "What a quaint little town". This is what we hear. You hear what the needs of the town are. Mayor Peoples usually passes out a box of business cards in a year. This year he has handed out two and a half boxes. He has met over 1200 new people.

#### **ADJOURN**

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Ingham so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

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J. Alan Peoples, Mayor

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Susan B. Bell, Town Clerk