

**Town of Washington Park
Municipal Building
November 8, 2021
7:00 p.m.**

United Bank	General Fund	\$ 247,598.50
United Bank	Capital Reserve Fund/Truck Fund	82,100.00
United Bank	Powell Bill Checking	13,384.00
United Bank	Powell Bill/Saving CD	65,270.85
United Bank	Capital Reserve Fund/CD	76,256.81
United Bank	American Rescue Plan Act Fund	<u>68,228.17</u>
Total		\$ 552,827.33

Present

Thomas B. Richter, Mayor
Jeff Peacock, Mayor pro tem
Lee Bowen, Commissioner
Belinda Cowell, Commissioner
Wade Dale, Commissioner
Patrick Nash, Commissioner

Absent

none

Mayor Richter called the meeting to order. Commissioner Nash made a motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Dale. Passed by all.

Mayor Richter called upon Kim Warren for public input. She said that she was there to ask about the Maple Branch cleanout and observe the meeting. Clerk Dale reported that she had spoken with Nathaniel Woolard of the Beaufort County Soil and Water District. He had suggested that the clerk call Brian Alligood, the County Manager. Mr. Alligood said that something had come up about approved contractors at the Beaufort County Commissioners' meeting and that the County Commissioners had not voted to approve the selected contractor. He was hopeful that the issue would be resolved at the next County Commissioners' meeting. Ms. Warren thanked Clerk Dale for the information.

The financial report and the minutes were approved with upon motion by Commissioner Cowell. Seconded by Commissioner Bowen. Passed by all.

Old Business

320 Isabella Avenue: Clerk Dale said that she had left a message for the Town Attorney, Amanda Sasnett, requesting an update on the title search for this property. She had not heard from the Town Attorney prior to the meeting.

North side of Isabella Ave East end: Sorrell Surveying has not surveyed the ditch area as of today.

Maple Branch cleanout: see above.

Eastern Washington Park town boundary: Commissioner Bowen said that he had had a very cordial conversation with Robert Whitley, the representative for the River City Christian Church. He also reported that Sorrell Surveying is continuing work on a survey of the property along with historical data to present to the Town.

Utility lines underground on Isabella: The clerk said that she had spoken at length with a representative of Washington Electric Utilities. He said that it would be over \$500,000 to put the power lines on Isabella underground. He also expressed caution about the potential flooding in the Isabella median if the lines went underground. The Board was satisfied that this was not a practical idea and voted by acclamation to drop the item from future agendas.

400 block College/Fairview Avenues: no update.

Reports

Commissioner Dale – reported that the CycleNC had 1200 bikers sign up for the weekend rides which went through Washington Park; that Habitat for Humanity had a 5K run with very limited turnout; and that Peter Farrell of 132 Isabella had requested permission to have a fire in a firepit with bricks underneath on the western waterfront Park area. Commissioner Dale said that permission had been given for that firepit.

Commissioner Nash – reported that the Town's 2014 Altec DC610 wood chipper had been stolen between 3:00 pm on 10/29/21 and 6:30 am on 11/1/2021. A Sheriff's report was filed for the theft. The clerk has reported the theft to the insurance company.

Mayor pro tem Peacock – no report.

Commissioner Bowen – reported that the resident at 301 River Road had asked permission to pour a concrete driveway and that he had given instructions to the resident regarding sloping and cautioned the resident about the pipe under the edge of Pine Street. Commissioner Bowen also said that he had spoken with the resident at 530 Isabella regarding the Town maintaining the ditch behind the property. Clerk Dale said that she would ask Mr. Woolard, Public Works Supervisor, and report back to Commissioner Bowen. Commissioner Bowen reported that the men had repaired a drain line at 116 Isabella in the Town's right-of-way.

Commissioner Cowell – read a letter from Mr. and Mrs. Peter Farrell of 132 Isabella Avenue regarding their concern about trimming and removing trees in Washington Park. Commissioner Cowell also reported that a dead tree had been removed in the median of the 200 block of College Avenue by Dudley Landscaping for \$750.

New Business

Clerk Dale reviewed the current Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance language and the suggestion by the Community Rating System's auditor that the specified one-foot freeboard be added to the "freeboard" definition in the definitions section of the FDPO. This one-foot height is mentioned later in the FDPO, but the exact dimension was missing in the definition of "freeboard". Mayor pro tem Peacock made a motion to add the "one-foot height" for freeboard to the Definitions section of the Washington Park Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. Seconded by Commissioner Dale. Discussion followed. Passed by all.

Clerk's Report

The clerk reported that the City of Washington Fire and EMS contract for \$43,199.00 had been paid; that ad valorem taxes received were \$12,400.91; that local option sales tax received was \$14,003.42; and that she had done a street light audit in conjunction with the City of Washington Electric personnel. The Town has 41 street lights and they will be changed to LED and there will be a monthly charge of \$13/light. The clerk explained that the auditor had found two areas of "significant deficiencies": One was the segregation of duties and the clerk asked that the Board implement a procedure to train and provide assistance to the clerk for reconciling monthly funds. The Board approved the procedure by acclamation. The other deficiency was the clerk had been maintaining the general ledger for the Powell Bill funds on a modified accrual basis instead of a cash basis of accounting. The clerk will implement the procedure immediately. Clerk Dale said that she had a request from the residents at 101 Edgewater to install a mailbox on the street. She asked the Board to verify that no mailbox should be placed in the Town's right-of-way and that it should be consistent with Post Office restrictions. The Board agreed by acclamation. The clerk also reported that the Powell Bill administrators had sent a letter to the Town saying that there was no excess accumulation of Powell Bill funds.

Kim Warren asked about commercial vehicles parking on Town property. Commissioner Bowen explained that the Planning Board was looking into language for an ordinance to restrict commercial vehicle parking in the Town's rights-of-way. She also asked if the Town Clerk would look at the overgrowth of vines on the house at 602 Small Street as well as the sailboat that is on River Road behind the 200 block of College Avenue. The clerk will check out the areas and send communications as needed. Mayor Richter thanked Ms. Warren for coming to the meeting.

Mayor pro tem Peacock made a motion to go into closed session for a personnel issue. Seconded by Commissioner Nash. Passed by all. Clerk Dale and Commissioner Dale excused themselves from the closed session.

Mayor pro tem Peacock made a motion to come out of closed session. Seconded by Commissioner Nash. Passed by all.

Mayor pro tem Peacock made motion to give the three full-time employees each a 5% merit award. Seconded by Commissioner Nash. Passed by all with Commissioner Dale abstaining from the vote.

Mayor Richter led a discussion about replacing the current dump truck with a stake body truck with a low floor and a dump body. Discussion followed. Commissioner Bowen, Mayor pro tem Peacock and Public Works Supervisor Woolard will do the research for further discussion.

Commissioner Bowen began a discussion of the poorly handled "burn" by the Bunyan Fire Department. He said that there were burning embers and debris as far away from the burn at 512 River Road as 116 Spruce Street. Only adjoining property owners had been advised by the Bunyan Fire Department and many residents were concerned that there was an actual fire, not a "learning experience." Discussion followed. No action was taken as there is a low probability of it happening again.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Mayor Richter.

The next regular meeting will be Monday, December 6, at 7:00 pm at the Municipal Building.

Denise D. Dale
Clerk, Town of Washington Park