

**Town of Washington Park
Municipal Building
March 11, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**

United Bank	General Fund	\$ 545,347.40
United Bank	Capital Reserve Fund/Truck Account	82,100.00
United Bank	Capital Reserve CD	78,836.07
United Bank	Powell Bill Checking	48,141.96
United Bank	Powell Bill/Saving CD	67,517.28
United Bank	American Rescue Plan Act Account	<u>137,738.58</u>
	Total	\$ 959,681.29

Present: Thomas Richter, Mayor, Jeff Peacock, Mayor pro tem, Lee Bowen, Commissioner, Wade Dale, Commissioner, Vail Rumley, Commissioner

Absent: Belinda Cowell, Commissioner

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

Public Input

Jerry Vick and Peter Farrell inquired as to the status of the ARP funds. See ARPA Funds update under Old Business. Also discussed potential RCCP projects.

Larry and Cheryl McDowell commented on the lack of communication/notification with regard to cutting down the trees on Isabella. Request for Board to increase communication with citizens. Commissioner Rumley noted she plans to work with Clerk Alligood to improve webpage and Town communication.

Isabel Farrell asked about the Townscape Committee and mentioned a possible grant to assist with the purchase of trees for the community. The Mayor indicated the Board would need to discuss reinstating the Townscape Ordinance at the next meeting.

Neil Kirven asked about the status of road work. See Commissioner Bowen's update under Commissioner's Reports.

Mindy Carr asked if lawncare companies were aware they are not allowed to put debris in ditches.

Minutes and Financial Report

The February financial report was approved upon motion by Commissioner Dale. Seconded by Commissioner Bowen. Passed by all. The February 5, 2024, minutes were approved upon motion by Mayor pro tem Peacock. Seconded by Commissioner Rumley. Passed by all.

Old Business

Contractor vs. Resident Debris Pick-up: Per Town ordinance, contractors should remove debris they generate; however, concessions have been made in the past. The Board decided to direct Public Works Supervisor Askew to not pick up contract generated debris. They would like to prepare door hangers to leave residents noting why the debris is not picked up. The Mayor, Mayor pro tem Peacock, and Clerk Alligood will work to draft language for door hangers.

Drainage North side of Isabella Ave East end: No report.

Eastern Washington Park town limit: Closed Session. §143-318.11(a)(1) and (5)

Parking vehicles in the Town's rights-of-way: The Mid-East Commission (MEC) provided a proposed contract to review the specific issue of parking vehicles in the Town's rights-of-way for \$900. They also provided a proposed contract to review all ordinances in their entirety and to update the zoning map for \$7,500. Commissioner Bowen made a motion to accept the proposal of \$7,500 for the MEC to review all of the Town's ordinances. Seconded by Commissioner Rumley. Passed by all.

Multi-family occupancies of residences: see above

320 Isabella Avenue: Clerk Alligood read an update from McGregor Bell, which included architectural plans for renovations. The update referenced part of the demolished section was beyond the setback on the right side and that would also be the case with the plans for replacement. Discussion was held regarding the Town's ordinance language (Section 4.4) that reads a non-conforming structure may not be altered to increase its non-conformity but would have to be in compliance with setback limits.

Tree cut on College Avenue: Clerk Alligood reported the tree has been ordered; Stuart Dudley anticipates delivery in three (3) weeks.

Resilient Coastal Communities Program: Clerk Alligood reported the Phase 2 open house is scheduled for March 20, 2024 and the next CAT meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 10 at 10 a.m.

ARPA fund: One of the authorized expenditure categories for the ARP funding is revenue replacement. The funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and expended by December 31, 2026. With revenue replacement, a municipality can utilize ARP funds for related expenses that incurred after March 3, 2021. Adoption of a budget appropriation for reimbursement will obligate and expend funds at same time. Clerk Alligood noted she plans to bring a grant project ordinance at the April meeting for the Board's consideration and adoption. This will comply with both the December 31, 2024 and 2026 deadlines. The funding will then be available to spend on a project for the local community.

New Business

FY25 Budget Request from Beaufort County: Clerk Alligood notified the Board of the request received from Beaufort County for consideration of monies for recreational activities. Commissioner Dale made a motion to request \$15,000 from the Beaufort County Board of Commissioners, \$10,000 for the tennis court work and \$5,000 for the park/playground areas. Seconded by Commissioner Bowen. Approved by all.

Public Input Procedure: Clerk Alligood discussed the importance of pro-actively establishing a procedure for the Town's Public Input session. Samples from Belhaven, Washington, and Greenville were reviewed and used to develop a proposed procedure for Washington Park. The Mayor, Mayor pro tem and Clerk Alligood were asked to finalize the wording and submit to the Board for review and final approval. Commissioner Bowen made a motion to approve establishing a Public Input procedure, based on final review and approval of wording by the Board, to be implemented at the April meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Dale. Approved by all.

Proposed Washington Park Public Input Procedure:

Citizens are invited to participate in the Public Input portion of the meeting. Citizens should sign-up upon arrival at the Board meeting to be recognized to speak. A total of 30 minutes is allocated with each individual being allowed 3 minutes to speak. Groups are encouraged to designate a spokesperson. If time remains after all persons who signed-up have spoken, individuals who did not sign-up will have an opportunity to speak until the allocated 30 minutes expires. The Town Council typically will not take any action on items mentioned during public comment, but will reserve the right to take action at the following Town Council Meeting.

Commissioners' Reports

Commissioner Dale: It is time to replace the mulch in the playground. It will cost approximately \$2,000 for 35 yards of sterilized mulch. Commissioner Bowen made a motion to purchase new pine bark mulch. Seconded by Mayor pro tem Peacock. Approved by all. Commissioner Dale also reported the new tennis net will cost approximately \$300. Upcoming events include the Rotary 5K on March 16, and the Methodist Church Easter egg hunt at the playground on March 23 (Washington Park host - Summer Howdy).

Commissioner Rumley: Working to schedule a neighborhood community watch meeting

Mayor pro tem Peacock: No report

Commissioner Bowen: Bids are back out for quotes on road work; anticipate receiving bids in next couple of weeks. Spoke with owners of property at 120 River Road regarding the ditch beside the property; consider installing a flapper valve at this location. Also need to look at portion of ditch on Bank Street near River Road as well as ditch in front of Betty Bonner's house. Discussion regarding use of geocell type material for possible erosion control.

Commissioner Cowell: Absent

Clerk's Report

Clerk Alligood reported: deposits received last month totaled \$16,889.96 (ad valorem \$2,855.51; local option sales tax \$13,957.03; solid waste disposal tax \$77.42). Clerk Alligood reminded the Board of the Ethics training; a link for the training was sent via email from the NCLM; sold one tennis key; had more pickleball keys made; prepared zoning letters: generator at 211 College Avenue and home addition at 206 Riverside Drive; Town offices will be closed on Monday, April 1 for the Easter holiday; will not have any impact on trash collection

Mayor pro tem Peacock made a motion to go into closed session [§143-318.11(a)(1), (5), and (6)]. Seconded by Commissioner Bowen; passed by all.

Mayor pro tem Peacock made a motion to come out of closed session. Seconded by Commissioner Bowen; passed by all.

The Board explored filling the vacant Public Works position.

The next regular meeting will be Monday, April 8, 2024, at 7:00 pm at the Municipal Building. There being no further business, Mayor Richter adjourned the meeting.

April S. Alligood, Clerk
Town of Washington Park