

**Town of Washington Park  
Municipal Building  
February 6, 2023  
7:00 p.m.**

United Bank	General Fund	\$ 427,092.36
United Bank	Capital Reserve Fund/Truck Fund	82,100.00
United Bank	Powell Bill Checking	36,097.04
United Bank	Powell Bill/Saving CD	65,758.45
United Bank	Capital Reserve Fund/CD	76,782.50
United Bank	American Rescue Plan Act Fund	<u>136,776.19</u>
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 824,606.54</b>

**Present**

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

**Absent**

Mayor Richter called the meeting to order. Mayor Richter asked to add a closed session for an attorney-client privileged discussion to the agenda. Commissioner Bowen made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Dale. Passed by all.

Mayor Richter called for public input. Ms. Pam Klinger of 206 River Road said that she was there to follow up on multi-family occupancies of a residence. Mayor Richter said that there was nothing new to review at this time.

Mr. Peter Farrell of 132 Isabella Avenue said that he was there to discuss the American Rescue Plan Act Fund. He was curious to know what the ARP Fund money represented. Clerk Dale explained that this was the money allocated by the US Treasury for the Town based on population for the impact of COVID on the municipalities and counties nationwide. None of the money in this account has been allocated for any projects at this time. The money must be allocated for projects by December 31, 2024 and the projects must be completed by December 31, 2026. The money is in an interest-bearing account, but is restricted by the US Treasury rules governing the spending of this money. Mr. Farrell suggested that the Town Board give the residents of Washington Park a voice in deciding how these funds will be used. Mayor Richter agreed that a public meeting was a good idea.

McGregor Bell was present to discuss the Town's demolition order of 320 Isabella Avenue. He acknowledged that he had recently received Power of Attorney from the owner of the property and was scrambling to come up with a viable plan for the property for his personal use as a second home. Mr. Bell provided the Board with a printed review of his progress to date for the house. He said that he had paid the outstanding

property taxes; that he had a visit scheduled with a structural engineer for this week to perform a structural inspection and to help determine the work needed to bring the house back to Certificate of Occupancy condition; that he had held a preliminary meeting with an architect; that he had obtained pre-approval from a lender for a \$300,000 loan; and that he was set to contact lawn services this week. Mayor Richter said that the Town is in the process of condemnation and demolition. Commissioner Bowen made a motion to defer opening the demolition bids until the next Board meeting on March 6, 2023 to give Mr. Bell time to prepare a contract with an engineer, an architect, and a contractor with firm completion dates to renovate the house. Seconded by Commissioner Nash. Passed by all.

Frances Hogan of 306 Isabella Avenue was present, along with Tricia Stowe of 304 Isabella to follow up the possible burying of the electric trunk lines on Isabella Avenue. There was no update from the City of Washington. Commissioner Cowell said that she was working on what kind of trees to plant and when to plant them.

Paul Kennedy of 122 Riverside Drive said that he was there to ask about the American Rescue Plan Act funds also.

Mayor Richter thanked all the residents for their input.

Sheriff Scott Hammond and Captain Russell Davenport were present to discuss crime in Washington Park. Sheriff Hammond said that there had been two calls in January: one a citizen assistance call and one an overdose. He said that there was an ongoing problem with Beaufort County tax records and the 911 dispatching service to pinpoint Washington Park addresses and report incidents specifically in Washington Park. Sheriff Hammond said that he would continue to work on this problem. Captain Davenport said that he would be happy to give a talk on drugs at a future Board meeting. Sheriff Hammond said that the new coordinator for CrimeStoppers is Major Hewitt. Commissioner Nash and Mayor Richter thanked them for attending the meeting.

Commissioner Nash made a motion to go into closed session for an attorney-client privileged discussion. Seconded by Commissioner Dale. Passed by all.

Commissioner Bowen made a motion to return to regular session. Seconded by Mayor pro tem Peacock. Passed by all.

The financial report and the corrected minutes were approved upon motion by Mayor pro tem Peacock. Seconded by Commissioner Bowen. Passed by all.

### **Old Business**

320 Isabella Avenue: The Town of Washington Park is in the process of demolition as outlined in the Town Ordinances. The clerk will update the Building Inspector on the extension approved by the Town Board.

North side of Isabella Ave East end: no report.

Eastern Washington Park town boundary: no update at this time.

Parking vehicles in the Town's rights-of-way: no report from the Planning Board.

Washington Park tree cut on College Avenue: no update at this time

Washington Park waterfront trees cut down: no updated information to report.

Short-term rentals: no update at this time.

Multi-family housing: no update at this time.

### **New Business**

Clerk Dale reported that Jamie Heath with MidEast Commission had filed the paperwork and application for erosion control with the Resilient Coastal Communities Program. This is a zero-match grant for potential funding for groin replacement for erosion control.

### **Reports**

Commissioner Dale – reported that the Rotary 5K and Pub Crawl will take place on March 18 in the evening; and that a wedding had been scheduled for May 6, 2023 on the waterfront.

Commissioner Nash – reported the two incidents from the Sheriff's Office. He suggested that he ask Captain Davenport to come back to the March 6 meeting for a 20-minute presentation.

Mayor pro tem Peacock – asked the Commissioners to please consider any suggestions for the FY 2023-24 budget.

Commissioner Bowen – reported that the erosion at 116 Isabella was probably a cracked pipe and that Stuart Dudley would dig it up and repair it and also put in the small driveway pipe at 505 Fairview Avenue on the Hickory Street side.

Commissioner Cowell – reported that the tree at 403 Walnut that had been removed by the homeowner was a diseased tree and therefore the Town would pay for the stump grinding. She will be contacting ReLeaf to follow up about planting more trees in Washington Park. Also, she had checked and there was a water line going to a hydrant at the corner lot on Isabella and Pine, so a tree cannot be planted at that corner.

### **Clerk's Report**

The clerk reported that \$48,891.68 in ad valorem taxes had been received; that NC local option sales tax this month was \$13,746.72; that two pickleball keys and one tennis key had been sold; that the W-2s were completed and distributed as well as the 1099s and all reports had been filed with the State and the IRS and Social Security Administration. Clerk Dale reported that the big expenses this month were: Advanced Electrical for \$3900.22 for LED lights for the tennis courts; August and September diesel and gas were \$1684.23; flood insurance was \$997.00 for the Municipal Building; and that \$1525.04 was spent on mower repairs. The clerk said that she was preparing the Beaufort County recreation budget request for fiscal year 2023-24.

The next regular meeting will be Monday, March 6, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the Municipal Building.

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

Denise D. Dale  
Clerk, Town of Washington Park