

# VARNVILLE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

April 9, 2012 @ 7:00 PM

(I)

## **Call to Order**

Officials present were Mayor Nathaniel “Nat” A. Shaffer, Mayor Pro-Tem Lloyd “Tootie” Griffith, Jr., Councilmen Ralph Smith, H. Alexander Campbell, Adam Major, and Ronald Williams, Police Chief Tyrone Smith, Fire Chief Dobie Hiers, Public Works Director, Robert “Bobby” Edwards, Town Attorney, Kevin Brown, and Secretary to the Mayor and Council, Amy Roberts. Absent was Councilman Henry Tuten.

Among the general population in attendance were Brenda Willis, Billy Henderson, Don DeLoach, Thelma Smith, Mary Elizabeth Johns (Hampton County Guardian), Becky Shaffer, Parker Shaffer, Banks Shaffer, NellieBeth Shaffer, and Kelly Brown.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Shaffer. The invocation was given by Mayor Pro-Tem Griffith and the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Mayor Shaffer presented the minutes from the council meeting held on March 12, 2012 for approval. Mayor Pro-Tem Griffith made a motion that the minutes be accepted for approval and Councilman Campbell seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

(II)

## **Introduction and/or requests of visitors**

None

(III)

## **Financial report**

Mayor Shaffer presented the financial report in the absence of a town clerk. In March 2012, Water Works had an income of \$77,974.70 and expenditures of \$50,755.62 with a net gain of \$27,219.08. In the General Fund there was an income of \$37,435.26 and expenditures of \$129,985.52 with a deficit of \$92,550.26. Mayor Shaffer explained that several important deductions had not been taken from Water Works and placed in the General Fund, hence the deficit. Once the transfer is made, the General Fund will be back to normal. The largest expense for March was a \$35,000 note to the general obligation bond at BB&T. Mayor Shaffer reported that during a recent employee audit with the SC Municipal Insurance Trust (SCMIT) and the SC Municipal Insurance Risk & Financial Fund (SCMIRFF), several employees were realigned which produced a refund of approximately \$3800.00. Those funds were deposited to the town’s reserve fund. Mayor Shaffer assured the council that all bills have been paid and cash flow is good.

(IV)

**Unfinished Business**

None

(V)

**Reports of Department Heads and Committees**

**Police Department:** Police Chief Tyrone Smith informed the council that the Varnville Police Department in conjunction with the Hampton County Sherriff's Office and the U.S. Marshall's Task Force assisted in the arrest of Travis McNair on March 30, 2012 in Ohio.

Chief Smith also stated that he and Renee Bennett will be attending a Municipal Court Administration Association Seminar in Columbia, SC on April 12, 2012.

Mayor Pro-Tem Griffith commended the Varnville Police Department and thanked Chief Smith for a job well done.

**Fire Department:** Fire Chief Dobie Hiers reported 8 calls in town and 10 calls outside the town limits during March 2012.

**Department of Public Works:** Director of Public Works, Bobby Edwards, reported that the town's sanitary survey has been completed but the results have not been received yet.

**Clerk Treasurer's Office:** Nothing to report

**Mayor's Office:** Mayor Shaffer announced that Varnville Town Hall will be closing at 12:00 PM on April 18, 2012 due to an Employee Handbook Policy & Procedure Training Seminar. He invited all council members to attend. Since safety/risk procedures will be discussed, the town will receive credit with SCMIRFF resulting in lower insurance premiums.

Mayor Shaffer reported that The Great American Clean-Up will take place on Thursday, April 19, 2012. Clean-up efforts will be provided by the Magnolia Club and possibly the American Legion. The Palmetto Pride Grant mandates that the clean-up must take place to upgrade the Blue Star Memorial Park.

The Town of Varnville received an invitation to an event honoring the Palmetto Boys State delegates at the American Legion Hut on Thursday, April 12, 2012 at 6:00 PM. Mayor Shaffer asked if any members of council would like to attend and Mayor Pro-Tem Griffith accepted the invitation.

(VI)

**New Business**

The Honorable Ralph Smith, The Honorable Ronald Williams, and the Honorable Henry Tuten were re-elected on April 3, 2012 to continue serving on the Varnville Town Council. The Honorable Nathaniel “Nat” A. Shaffer was also re-elected as mayor, with no opposition. The Oath of Office ceremony took place with Mayor Shaffer swearing in Councilman Smith and Councilman Williams. Councilman Tuten was absent and will be sworn in at the May council meeting. Town Attorney, Kevin Brown, swore in Mayor Shaffer.

Councilman Major made a motion to table the election for Mayor Pro-Tem until the May council meeting when all council members are present. Mayor Pro-Tem Griffith seconded the motion. All council members were in favor.

Mayor Shaffer informed the council that state statute mandates that someone hold the office of town clerk. He stated that he asked Renee Bennett if she would temporarily hold the office to attest resolutions and ordinances but have no financial authority and Mrs. Bennett agreed to the additional responsibility. Mayor Pro-Tem Griffith made a motion to temporarily appoint Mrs. Bennett as town clerk. Councilman Campbell seconded the motion. All council members were in favor.

Mayor Shaffer announced the hiring of Henry Stevens as Public Works Technician. Several interviews were conducted by the mayor, Councilman Major, and Councilman Tuten and all agreed that Mr. Stevens was the proper choice. Mayor Shaffer stated that Mr. Stevens comes with a long work history having worked at Gooding Supply for 20+ years. Mayor Pro-Tem Griffith made a motion to approve the hiring of Mr. Stevens. Councilman Campbell seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

Mayor Shaffer read Resolution No. 2012-02 – Promoting Risk Safety Measures. Mayor Pro-Tem Griffith made a motion to adopt the resolution and Councilman Smith seconded the motion. All members were in favor. Each member of council then signed the resolution. Mayor Shaffer stated that by adopting the resolution, the town saved \$500 to \$1,000 in insurance premiums.

Mayor Shaffer read the Fair Housing Resolution. Mayor Pro-Tem Griffith made a motion to adopt the resolution and Councilman Major seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

(VII)

**Old Business**

None

(VIII)

**Council members' concerns/comments**

Councilman Smith thanked the citizens of Varnville for re-electing him to town council and he hopes to continue to push Varnville forward. Councilman Smith suggested that we should have events twice a year to boost the morale of the employees, if it was the council's pleasure.

Councilman Williams stated that he is looking forward to continuing to work with the council and recommended the council schedule a budget workshop soon.

Mayor Pro-Tem Griffith thanked all of the voters who came to the polls on April 3, 2012 and recommended that signs be posted next time an election is held. He congratulated all the candidates who were re-elected. Mayor Pro-Tem Griffith suggested that the council go on an out-of-town retreat to get ahead of the budget.

Councilman Campbell expressed congratulations to the re-elected officials and said he was looking forward to continuing to work with each of them.

Councilman Major congratulated the three councilmen who were re-elected.

Mayor Shaffer agreed that a budget workshop should be scheduled soon. The mayor also stated that he will call a special council meeting (when Town Attorney, Kevin Brown and Town Auditor, Bill Hancock are present) in regards to the rural water authority taking over in October. Kevin Brown reported that Bill Hancock will give a presentation about the transition on April 24, 2012 to the Town of Varnville in the morning and the Town of Hampton in the afternoon. Mayor Shaffer stated that he has had a tremendous year and looks forward to four more years as the mayor of Varnville. He said that he is thrilled all three incumbents were re-elected to the council.

(IX)

**Adjournment**

Mayor Shaffer called for a motion to adjourn at 7:51 PM. Mayor Pro-Tem Griffith made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Smith seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Roberts  
Secretary to Mayor and Council