

TOWN OF STOKESDALE
Regular Town Council Meeting

8325 Angel Pardue Road
Stokesdale, NC 27357
August 10, 2017

The Regular Town Council Meeting of the Stokesdale Town Council was held on Thursday, August 10, 2017, at the Stokesdale Town Hall on 8325 Angel Pardue Road in Stokesdale, North Carolina.

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Mayor Randy Braswell; Mayor Pro Tem William N. (Bill) Jones; Frank Bruno; Vicki White-Lawrence; Tim Jones.

OTHERS PRESENT INCLUDED: Katy Gregg, Town Attorney; Kim Hemric, Town Administrator; Diana Marcus, Deputy Clerk; Philip Pulliam, Budget Officer; Steve Mann, Northwest Observer.

CALL COUNCIL MEETING TO ORDER: Mayor Braswell called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

INVOCATION: Given by Reverend Alan Mears from Bethel United Methodist Church.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Recited by Council members and citizens in attendance.

REVIEW AND ADOPT AGENDA: Tim Jones wanted to add an item to the agenda. He wanted to add a vote for the Citizens Academy/Open House that is scheduled to be held on August 24th, 2017. If he is not able to add an item to the agenda, he would like someone to provide him with the statutory reference for that.

Katy Gregg advised that it is not good to add items to the agenda. It is not statutory. It is case law. There is a case law that just came out of the Court of Appeals that says that adding things to the agenda the night of (a meeting) has the possible consequences of preventing individuals who have due process from getting due process. Not every single item will have that consequence, however, it is bad policy to add items because it defeats the purpose of having a published agenda. A published agenda is for the purpose of giving the public notice of what is going to be on that agenda and what's going to be talked about. So, if someone wants to come (to the meeting) and be heard on something (a published agenda item), they can. If something is added to the agenda that night (of the meeting) after the agenda has been published and that particular item is something that she wants to be heard as a town member on, that opportunity has been taken away from her, because that agenda item was not published. So, again, it is not statutory. It is bad policy that is discouraged by case law.

Kim Hemric said that Citizens Academy/Open House was discussed and voted on at the Wednesday, August 2nd, 4:00pm, Town Council Business Meeting. Tim Jones said \$100.00 in funding was voted on at that meeting. Kim Hemric said, as well as the date, time, staff involvement, and advertising.

Tim Jones asked Katy Gregg the following: Bad policy case law is the only reference you can give me? I'll do further research on my own. Katy Gregg advised she was happy to get Tim Jones the case. But, she's telling him, it's not statutory.

Tim Jones said that he was withdrawing his request.

Vicki White-Lawrence made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried with a 5 to 0 vote.

READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE FOLLOWING: July 13, 2017 Regular Town Council Meeting; July 19, 2017 Town Council Business Meeting; July 26, 2017 Town Council Business Meeting; August 2, 2017 Town Council Business Meeting: Bill Jones made a motion to approve the minutes for the following meetings: July 13, 2017 Regular Town Council Meeting; July 19, 2017 Town Council Business Meeting; July 26, 2017 Town Council Business Meeting; August 2, 2017 Town Council Business Meeting. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. Mayor Braswell, Bill Jones, Frank Bruno, and Vicki White-Lawrence voted aye. Tim Jones voted nay. The motion carried with a 4 to 1 vote.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR AND/OR COMMENTS ABOUT THE PROPOSED WATER AUTHORITY:

Patrick Sullivan, 8303 Trottington Road, Stokesdale, made the following comments: Thank you for the opportunity to address this body tonight. Thanks to Jimmy Landreth and Tim Jones for their efforts to clean up around 8011 Dorsett Downs Drive this week. Thanks to the Ordinance Review committee for their hard work on re-writing the existing Nuisance Ordinance. For the record, I support the re-writing of Ordinance 67 to provide a clear path to file and confirm a nuisance complaint, and to provide the property owner with sufficient time to rectify the nuisance. I also understand that an ordinance of this nature must respect the rights of each individual property owner. That said, an ordinance of this nature should protect the rights of ALL property owners, not just the person or business that may be in violation of this type of ordinance, and I am here tonight to simply ask for your help as a citizen of Stokesdale. While some of you have openly and privately stated your concerns about legal action against the town if the existing ordinance was enforced, failure to enforce the current ordinance or a revised version of the ordinance also holds a high degree of risk for the town. In the situation of 8011 Dorsett Downs Drive, there is public knowledge that there is an open swimming pool that is easily accessed. Combined with the failure to remedy this situation, it poses risks for the town if a person, a pet or a trespasser were injured or worse by entering this property. Trees have been falling and continue to fall over onto other neighbor's property, posing a real threat and risk to life and personal property. You should also know that the homeowners in Dorsett Downs, myself included, are VERY, VERY concerned about the negative impact this structure at 8011 Dorsett Downs Drive has had and will likely continue to have on our property values in its current state. This is a very real quantifiable concern, one I believe the town should be aware of. I also understand an ordinance of this nature cannot and should not be about a single property; that it must be broad enough to address as many possible scenarios without creating unfair hardship, as the mind can think of. That is what the ordinance review committee is chartered with and they are working hard to accomplish this outcome. I would ask that you consider holding a Public Hearing on the revised Nuisance Ordinance before it is voted on by Council. As a resident of Dorsett Downs, I also know the property at 8011 Dorsett Downs Drive is the current focus of this nuisance ordinance debate for many people and we need you as the leaders of this town to do your job and enforce the existing or soon to be re-written and adopted nuisance ordinance. Trust me, if this was across the street from your house, I believe the sense of urgency to rectify this matter would be greatly accelerated. As a resident of Dorsett Downs and a citizen of the Town of Stokesdale, I am prepared to take whatever action is required – as long as it is NOT illegal, immoral or unethical – to hold you and the home owner of 8011 Dorsett Downs Drive accountable to improve and maintain the property in a manner that is safe, tidy, and in keeping with the rest of the neighborhood. Please help us reach that objective. Thank you for your time and thank you for your service to the community.

Janet Brown, 8000 Dorsett Downs Drive, Stokesdale, said we are required to improve the appearance of our subdivision. We work hard to keep up our homes and our properties. These homes, such as the one that Patrick Sullivan is talking about, decreases the value of our properties. It also is what I would classify as a detractive nuisance. It's one that, as he mentioned, can attract children and can attract a certain kind of unsavory characters. We had a home across from our house that was in foreclosure and we saw at times people going in there. They would back their trucks in so you couldn't see their license plates. They were around there after dark and things like that. We were calling the sheriff. They break in. They use the place. They steal things. And you have that in your neighborhood. You draw that when you have these kinds of houses that are unattended, unoccupied, and uncared for. This has gone on for many, many, many years, and I think it's time for something to happen. I'm saying to you when you're thinking about this and when you're talking about enforcing an ordinance, please don't worry about whether you're going to be sued from this side or that. That's what I call ping-pong thinking; you're going back and forth. You fail, then, to focus on the real issue at hand. Please focus on the issue and look at enforcing the ordinance, so you're fair to everyone on both sides. We really would appreciate your help.

Joe Thacker, 7936 Lester Road, Stokesdale, said I also want to talk to you about the Ordinance Review Committee, but in a little different light. I am a member of that committee and I've been attending the meetings on a regular basis, except for the last two. About two or three weeks ago, I can't remember the exact date, I attended one of the Ordinance Review Committee Meetings, and there were two Council members at that meeting. I'm deeply concerned about that, because when this committee was first formed a few months back, I had a discussion with the attorney about having any Council members on this committee. And as I understand it, as I remember correctly, she said it would be all right as long as they were there in a capacity to answer questions and provide any information that might be viable to the ongoing discussion. But to me, what's been happening lately is that the two members from Council that were there that day were pretty active in talking and trying to influence the discussion. And, I feel that is completely wrong. Committees are supposed to be made up of individuals of the Town that represents the residents of the Town. And, for Council members to come and inject what they feel like needs to be done I think is wrong, because they have a chance to hear everything and ask questions when that item is voted on. So, I'm deeply concerned about this. I don't know exactly what to do about it. I just want to let everybody know that this does go on. If anybody wants to ask me about anything, go ahead. I'll answer any questions before I sit down. Thank you.

Dave Brown, 8014 Dorsett Downs Drive, Stokesdale, said I'm also a resident of Dorsett Downs and I live right across the street from that monstrosity. I've heard tonight and a couple of other nights ago that the Town Council was concerned about some kind of legal issue, and they weren't going to pursue the ordinance we have on record. I don't have a clue what those legal issues are, but, at some point in time I'd like to know, so I can understand that part. I want to add that the swimming pool that is full of water, and it's been full of water going on for four years now, is a mosquito infestation. I cannot be out or even let my dogs out on my front yard because the mosquitos are so bad you get eaten up in five minutes. Something really needs to be done about that. They can carry disease as well. I just wanted to point that out. Thank you.

Robert Elliot, Guilford County Sheriff's Department, 7506 Summerfield Road, Summerfield, said he'll give a quick briefing here and a slight discussion on what they're speaking about also. First of all, going back since 2016, our crime in District 1 was down 12 percent. District 1 goes from 29 in Brown Summit over to 421 to the far east side of the city. So far, this year, we're 7 percent down, so we're having a pretty good

year. We have a very low crime rate in Stokesdale. Our issue is what we call Part 1 crimes, which are violent crimes or thefts. These are a couple of subcategories. The most recent things we've had are a couple of thefts. We've had some wheels stolen. Some change was stolen from the car wash. We had a breaking and entering on Stokesdale Street. Each of those that I just described that have warrants will be taken out soon so that arrests can be made on those cases. The one thing that I did want to talk about were the recent motor vehicle break-ins that we've had on Haw River Road. We had over about 5 to 10 people call in to report that somebody either rummaged through their car or had actually stolen something from their car. I wanted to come by and point this out to you, because I know that the Northwest Observer did an article and I had some people ask me some questions. This happened over one evening, and generally, those things happened between 2:00am and 5:00am in the morning. In response to that, we are shifting some patrol officers to this side of the county. The problem is when I shift cars this way, then I have a whole bunch of stuff happen in Brown Summit and causes it to seesaw. So, what I try to do is ask for extra man power and have them concentrate on specific hours, so we are aware of what's going on. Forsythe County had 23 break-ins within just a day or two of ours just across the line, so we know there's a lot going on in that area. We ask the citizens to call if they see anything suspicious like people walking in the middle of the night. The reason they do it in the middle of the night is because they don't get caught or seen a lot of times. It's also hard for us in patrol cars when we respond and have them not see us. We try to come into the neighborhood and try to find the address where the suspicious person is, but you've got to have your headlights on. When you have your headlights on, they're suspicious and see you coming, so it's sort of a double edge sword. But, what we're trying to do is work the moving traffic, because they're not walking from Winston-Salem or Forsythe County to break into these cars. So, we're trying to work the neighborhoods looking for them out there between 2:00am and 5:00am. If they're not delivering newspapers we're trying to look at them hard and figure out if they belong there. Again, we ask that you call us if you see suspicious activity. That's where we are, and going back 45 days, that's all the crime we've had in Stokesdale, so, I'm proud of the low level of crime you've had. It says a lot about the protection of the town and also the people in the town. I've been in this district for 14 months now, and, historically, when we start having crime like this, it's not out of Stokesdale, it's coming to Stokesdale from somewhere else. We try to check down the line of Forsythe County if we can and work that area which has been rather successful. As far as Dorsett Downs, I've been reading the same thing that everyone else in the room has about the problems up there. I'm just asking the citizens to call if they see anybody there. People back in so you can't see their tag and that's suspicious activity and we respond to that kind of stuff. If it's nothing else and they belong there, we'll come out and you'll know at the end of it that they belong there. You can ask to remain anonymous or you can ask to have an officer call you afterwards and remain anonymous with the person that we deal with. I wouldn't want to have people telling me that the person across the street called. We wouldn't do that unless it's an unusual circumstance. So, again, two things; call us if you see suspicious activity. And, the second thing is lock your car doors. What's amazing to me is the number of guns, computers, and things that people say are priceless that are in unlocked cars. We rarely have windows broken, because it makes noise. But, they'll go through 20 or 30 cars in the neighborhood that are all unlocked. So, we ask again, for the good of the neighborhood, that you lock your guns up and lock your car doors and take out anything that you don't want stolen. That's the advice from the Sheriff's Department.

Mayor Braswell said he certainly appreciates the hard work that the Guilford County Sheriff's Department does. We pray for you guys every month, because we know what you guys are up against. Stokesdale is a tight community with a strong community watch and I think that's the reason the crime rate is going down. We look after each other the best we can. I try to say it every month. If you don't call, they can't come. If you see something, you have to call them. Lock it or lose it. There's some signs around town. If

you don't lock your car doors, I guarantee you it's going to be broken into. Keep your bushes trimmed down low. And, we thank you guys.

Discussion took place between Captain Elliot and some of the audience regarding suspicious activity and calling 911.

Tim Venerable, 8700 South Point Drive, Stokesdale, said I would like to know if you know if there is any one you can contact about that house, because I've been over there and shown interest in purchasing it. But, when you look online on google, it shows all the way down to \$20,000.00 up to \$60,000.00, if comes up for sale. When I went over there, I didn't know who to get in touch with. And, I didn't feel safe going around it, because I knew eyes were on it. You really can't see around the house, but that draws people in. I'm also that type of person in our neighborhood when somebody needs to pick up that deer or somebody needs to pick up that skunk, I'm the person that does it. But, I was told not to mow the grass. I would like to know if there's anyone who could quickly report if the house is for sale or if the house is not for sale. If the taxes are paid or if the taxes are not paid. Patrick Sullivan said I can answer all those questions for you after the meeting. Tim Venerable said okay. I actually bought the property behind it at one time and the building there. The house was beautiful and it can be that again, and I know these residents would really love to see it back the way it was when it first was built. That's all I have to say. I would like to know about it, because I've shown a lot of interest in purchasing it.

Cathy Roberts, 5903 Billet Road, Oak Ridge, said I'm here for the Dorsett Downs people, because my parents built a house in Dorsett Downs several years back, and my mom is still there and that house there is a real mess. I know my mom has had numerous conversations with the health department and with other people. They've been out there, and they said it's a public health nuisance and they throw little somethings over the fence into the pool for the mosquitoes. There are snakes there. There have been coyotes in there. And, they've said it's a public health issue and I know there's somebody on Council that lives in the neighborhood and sees that house on a daily basis. I read about people coming up there in the community that are the shady kind of people we were talking about that don't need to be around there that may be up to no good. Not anybody that's interested in purchasing it, but somebody who is thinking here's an empty place, let's go check this out. I worry about my mom being up there and other neighbors. And, we know other people in that neighborhood as well that couldn't be here tonight are concerned. I would just like to ask you all to enforce the ordinance and whatever you need to do to take care of that for them for the sake of their health and a potential fire hazard. Who knows what could happen there with it being vacant and being such a mess. It's like it's got a big sign, I'm vacant, come invade my house. It's a hazard any way you look at it. Thank you.

Mayor Braswell invited people to speak about the proposed regional water authority and feasibility study and provide their input. No one made comments on this subject.

Mayor Braswell understands the residents of Dorsett Down's concerns. I read the article in the Northwest Observer and told Katy Gregg to read it. I believe it was accurate from what I saw in the article. When I first saw the ordinance and read through it, I saw three issues, deficiencies with that ordinance that jumped right out at me. The length of time that was given to the property owner to clean it up and who was going to actually do the enforcement. When you read that ordinance, it's not clear as to who's going to enforce it. It almost looked like it was up to the Clerk when I first read it. So, we got the Town Attorney to read it, and she agrees there are some deficiencies in the ordinance. Just to go out here and pull the trigger, I felt like we may be overstepping our bounds as a town and I understand whoever said we're

using the ping-pong effect, I've got that. It hasn't been a ping-pong effect to me. I just want to make sure that our ordinance is very clear and is very legal, so when we pull the trigger, it happens.

Katy Gregg said, well I just want to say it's being worked on. I know you guys feel helpless. I know you guys feel like right now no one is hearing you. I promise you that these people are hearing you. The Ordinance Review Committee can tell you that you're being heard. We are working on it. But, as the mayor said, there are some deficiencies with the current ordinance that we have. One of the things like he said is who is going to enforce it. When I say enforce it, I mean who is going to be the person that goes out and looks at that particular building and looks at that particular property and says, yes, this is a nuisance based on this ordinance. In Dorsett Downs that may be very clear. But, take it out of perspective of Dorsett Downs and put it in perspective of any property in Stokesdale. We have to have someone who is capable, who knows about the building codes, who knows about electrical stuff, who knows about all of these different things that are going to make this particular property fit into what this ordinance says is a nuisance or not. The reason that's important is because what if that person has no clue what they're doing. Take me for example. If you send me out to a house and ask me does this house comply with the building code, I have no clue. So, if I make that determination without any knowledge, without any experience, without any training, and I say, yes, it is, and that causes you to have to go to a great expense of fixing this issue that technically is not an issue, if I'm wrong, then that is potential liability for Town. What if we evade that nuisance because you don't fix it and we tear the house down? That is a huge possible consequence for the Town. So, we have to figure out who is going to enforce it. Not only that, there's no appeal process. What if I come to you and I say, without any training and experience, your house is a nuisance and you need to fix it right now because I said so, and you've got 15 days to fix it, and you don't want to fix it. You think I'm wrong. The current ordinance has no recourse for you. So, with the current ordinance, if you don't fix it in 15 days, I can abate it and go to the court and ask them to tear your house down, when you don't even think that it's a nuisance. Now, again, take Dorsett Downs out of it, because I know that that is glaring. Think of it as a property owner, if they were in your position. This Ordinance Review Committee is trying really, really hard. They are working really hard and they're doing a good job, because they do hear you. Council has allowed me to come to one of those meetings. I've rewritten the ordinance. They looked at it, they tweaked it, and we're working together to try to get this done. I promise, we do hear you. We really are trying. I am here to protect the Town. That is what my job has to be, and if I advise them that enforcing this ordinance could cause significant harm to the Town, then they do have an obligation in their official capacities to listen to me and not go against what I said knowing there's a significant legal consequence.

Eileen Thiery, 8101 Meadow Springs Place, Stokesdale, said I'm on the Ordinance Review Committee. You brought up an issue we've been having. I think it's up to the Town to determine who's going to enforce this. We've been going back and forth. Who's going to enforce this? Steve Mann's (Northwest Observer) been at some of our meetings, and he's heard us. Is it going to be Guilford County? Is it going to be the Health Department? Is it going to be the Town? We have to have something. We'd like to put it in the ordinance to say this is the specific authority that's going to enforce it. So, I would imagine that we're going to have to wait for that to go before Town Council to make that decision. I think as citizens, we can't appoint anybody. Am I right? Katy Gregg said, I agree. Eileen Thiery said, yes, it is a very tough situation, because I think what we're trying to do is take care of your problem, and I sympathize with you, because I've seen it. The other thing is we have to be considerate of how we write it, so that we're not making it something that would threaten people that might have a small thing out of place. As a citizen, I have tried to contact the property owner. The hard thing is that it's not in foreclosure, and you really can't do too much unless it goes into foreclosure. You could try to reach the gentleman and see if he wants to sell it,

or maybe a realtor can contact him and see if he wants to sell it, because it's senseless for him to hold onto it.

Patrick Sullivan suggested Town Council think about contracting with Guilford County for enforcement services.

Mayor Braswell asked James Greene, Chairman of the Ordinance Review Committee, to comment.

James Greene, 7765 Pilot View Drive, Stokesdale, said he will comment since everyone is talking about the Ordinance Review Committee. We are working hard. We are made up of different people. That means we don't agree on everything, but we try to iron things out. I'll give you my schedule. This is not the schedule of the committee, but I'm trying hard to get this thing completed in time to get it on the agenda for the next Council meeting. I don't know if that will happen, but let me say this, we cannot be pressured. I understand the problem. I sympathize with the problem. But, the ordinance that we write needs to be right. If we allow ourselves to be pressured and turn something out that is half-hearted, then it can have an effect on the Town for many years. So, we are trying hard. And, as soon as we can get something completed, it will go in front of the Council. And, I do want to be sure that there is something in there. And, thanks to Katy Gregg, the things that she wrote are really good, and I think we're going to honor most of that, as far as what is done when a complaint comes in. And, as you know, Stokesdale does not charge taxes. We don't have a person to do this and that and everything else. So, it has to be fit into the scope of what we have available to us. But, I think our ordinance will be drawn out to the point that if a complaint comes in, I believe it's going to say that, ultimately, the Town Clerk will be responsible to make sure it's enforced. But, the Deputy Clerk will probably be doing the leg work and sending out a letter saying this is wrong and you must do something about it. And if, in so many days it comes back and nothing is done, it goes somewhere else. But, we're trying to work something out so that with the people we have, it can be addressed. When you're dealing with the Town, at the very best, it's going to take a long time. If you call the mayor or anyone with the Town and issue a complaint, plan on it being a long time, because it is a long process to go through this thing. And then, what hurts the worst, is when everything is completed, the most you have is someone not fixing it and then putting a lien against the property. So, it's not a perfect procedure by any means, but I don't know any other procedure it can be. I sent the mayor an email this afternoon making suggestions of what I feel needs to be done as this has gone on for so long. But, I think that, ultimately, someone has to take over and get this property in, at least, a presentable fashion. Maybe mow the grass or pick up anything or jerk any board off the wall that may fall on someone's head or drain that pool. So, we're trying hard to get this done.

Mayor Braswell introduced the Ordinance Review Committee members that were sitting in the audience. Mayor Braswell said I go every now and then to just stay caught up and make sure I was communicating correctly with Ms. Gregg. The Council did authorize three hours of legal services for Ms. Gregg to attend the Ordinance Review Committee. James Green said we used her two hours for the meeting and saved one hour, because she needs to go over this when we complete it. Mayor Braswell said the Council will approve more time, but we said just shoot for three hours and see how much we can get done.

Mayor Braswell asked Katy Gregg, can you explain to us, we have an interlocal agreement with Guilford County that enforces our Development Ordinance? So, if someone is not in compliance with a condition of a building permit or whatever, Kim Hemric, Town Clerk, Administrator, she calls Guilford County and notifies their enforcement officers. So, if somebody agreed to build a berm in a new subdivision and that developer doesn't build that berm, then they are our enforcement officer for that under that interlocal

agreement? Environmental Health will come out into the county and enforce these health issues. I kind of feel like it's their baby (responsibility), because it looks like a health issue to me. Katy Gregg said they feel that it's your baby (responsibility), because it looks like a nuisance issue to them. There is a statute that says because you are an incorporated municipality, Guilford County doesn't enforce your ordinances. Your ordinances are your responsibility, unless there is a specific agreement with Guilford County that says we will enforce this and we will do that. That can be done. But, you've got to get the county on board and on the phone. Guilford County does have a nuisance ordinance, but they're not going to come in and enforce their ordinance, because you have your own ordinance, because you are a municipality. So, that's why we have this back and forth with Guilford County. They're not going to enforce Stokesdale's nuisance ordinance, because of Stokesdale being a municipality. So, it's totally possible, just like we have for the sheriff, just like we have for animal control, just like we have for fire inspection, just like planning services. You can do an interlocal agreement for them to come and enforce your nuisance ordinance, if you get them on board.

James Greene, 7765 Pilot View Drive, Stokesdale, said we had a question come up in the Ordinance Review Committee about enforcement and I called and talked to a lady at Environmental Health. Her name is Renee Read, and she told me it has nothing to do with ordinances. If there is a violation in Guilford County's Health Department rules, it doesn't matter if it's in Greensboro, Oak Ridge, Summerfield, or Stokesdale. It doesn't matter. She said we will investigate it and we will enforce it. It has nothing to do with their ordinances.

Katy Gregg said that's the Environmental Health Department. And, they've come out and done what they're going to do, but nobody's going to go farther than that. If they say throwing mosquito bombs over the fence is all we're going to do to fix it, that's the end of the road. Some discussion took place.

Bill Jones thinks the confusion is that we really have two separate issues. One is a public health issue and the other is an ordinance that wasn't written properly. He explained that he has served on the Ordinance Review Committee and Public Safety Committee. There's nothing wrong with a Council member serving on a committee contrary with what Mr. Thacker thinks. It's not a judicial process. I had asked the previous town attorney, Mr. Trevorrow, and was informed that there was no problem with that. I'm still a citizen and have the right to provide input and I defend my right to be there.

Tim Jones said I've been on the Ordinance Review Committee for many, many years, longer than I can remember. And, during that time a Council member or two Council members have always been on that committee. It's been the Town's practice to have one or two Council members on those committees, like the Future Land Use Plan, I think had Council members that were on that committee. So, it's not like we have just started changing the manner in which the Town has operated. But, I certainly hear Mr. Thacker and I respect his opinion.

Katy Gregg said I think that the conversation that we had was that you can't have a quorum. You can't have more than two Council members come in together at the same time condoning business, because then you have an open meetings issue. So, I don't think there's anything wrong with you all meeting on the Council, but you've got to look and make sure that you don't have a third Town Council member there that's giving input, that's making a quorum.

Patrick Sullivan 8303 Trottington Road, Stokesdale, said there are three paths. Environmental Health advised they're not doing anything other than mosquito bombing and that's it. Then there's Building and

Safety Inspection that came out and said there was a problem with the railing falling off the porch. The third avenue would be the Guilford County Nuisance Ordinance, which they won't enforce in Stokesdale, because Stokesdale has their own nuisance ordinance.

Dave Brown, 8014 Dorsett Downs Drive, Stokesdale, said I'm here tonight for one main reason and that is to address this issue in Dorsett Downs. Why it's frustrating to me is it's been four years. Someone should have been addressing that ordinance three and a half years ago. We wouldn't be sitting here talking about this right now if that had been done. No disrespect to the Town Council or the Ordinance Review Committee, but this is something that is really urgent. There are many of us in Dorsett Downs. It's affecting the value of my home which is a major financial investment for me and my family. So, I really expect the Town Council, if we really do have an ordinance, let's get that ordinance enforced as quickly as possible. Let's put this on fast track. We've been waiting four years. Thank you.

An unidentified women who did not give or name or address said they mowed yesterday, most of it except the part of the property that abuts her property. I live behind that house, and they mowed part of it, but not all of it. There's still weeds and stuff. What happens in the next three weeks from now? Who's going to cut that grass? It's going to keep growing and it's like a hay field there now. Who's going to take care of it until they get around to passing an ordinance or finally getting ahold of Mr. Taylor who won't come to the phone and refuses the letters sent to him? So, I don't know what the future is. The pool has never been used during the 15 years I have lived there. It was taken care of when there were people there before. I've been complaining to the health department for more than four years. I've kept a record for the last four years.

Fred Brown, 8000 Dorsett Downs Drive, Stokesdale, said this really bothers me. Who's going to be responsible if some little kid fell into that pool and drowned?

Katy Gregg said, I understand that. I do. And, I agree with you that it is a problem. I agree with every single one of you that it is a problem that needs to be addressed as soon as possible. I have been trying very hard since December of last year to get something working. I get it. Whoever said government does not work quickly, you hit it on the head. Unfortunately, when your working with the government, you've got to go through the proper channels. Because, if you don't, you also run the risk of cutting off someone's due process, cutting off someone's property rights. I understand that none of that is more important than a life. I get that. Please do not misunderstand me. I have rewritten an ordinance. It's there and these wonderful people are looking at it (Ordinance Review Committee).

Eileen Thiery, 8101 Meadow Springs Place, Stokesdale, said being on the committee, we also do have to be careful of our wording. It's not like we're dilly-dallying. We're meeting once a week and driving ourselves. We're trying to make sure that what we give back to Katy Gregg to look at isn't something that is going against the grain of the law. So, that's hard.

Tim Venerable, 8700 South Point Drive, Stokesdale, wanted to know if there is a process that they could go through if the community were to go over there and secure the pool and drain it and also clean up the property. There are foreclosures in his neighborhood, but he cleaned them up and that kept people from coming in. It also kept rats and dogs away. Can the property owner come back and sue? Katy Gregg isn't sure. She's not suggesting they drain the pool on behalf of the Town. There is the issue of trespassing.

Mayor Braswell said one thing that really concerns me is that this is a very, very old community. We're talking about a community that is over 200 years old. Stokesdale is an antique community, so if you start riding through Town, I told Katy, anybody could be riding through Town. They could be coming from New Jersey and see that house right there and she could have a complaint and the Town all of a sudden becomes a contractor cleaning up all these old buildings around Town. So, some of granny's property she left to grandchildren and children, they can't afford to tear them down, they cannot afford to repair them. So, we're kind of in an odd situation here. I understand that community (Dorsett Downs). I was concerned what I saw. What are the covenants for this Homeowners Association? That's the power right there. I have that much experience with some covenants. I understand there are covenants for that community. You need a Homeowners Association tonight and get busy exercising those covenants, because if it is spelled out in those covenants about that homeowner's, covenants are very, very powerful and that could happen pretty quick. Patrick Sullivan said he is working on enforcing the covenants.

Report from Guilford County Sheriff's Department: The Guilford County Sheriff's report was given by Captain Robert Elliot from the Guilford County Sheriff's Department earlier in the meeting.

Finance Report – July, 2017: Philip Pulliam, Budget Officer, provided details about the General Fund, Water Enterprise, and Water-Sewer Financial Reports for July, 2017. (Please see the Financial Reports, which are available at Town Hall, for details).

PUBLIC HEARING: Text Amendment Case #17-06-STPL-03040: A proposed amendment to revise Section 5-13.3(H), Private Lane Design Criteria of the Stokesdale Development Ordinance: Mayor Braswell opened the public hearing.

Katy Gregg advised that the Ordinance Review Committee met and reviewed the Private Land Design Standards for the ordinance. They made some additions and changes, which was sent to the Stokesdale Planning Board for a recommendation to Town Council. She explained that Oliver Bass reviewed it and is okay with the changes and she reviewed it and is okay with the changes. The Planning Board recommended approval of the text amendments to Town Council.

James Greene, 7765 Pilot View Drive, Stokesdale, said I am Chairman of the Ordinance Review Committee. This was started prior to me being the chairman. I was the one who did the research that resulted in the rewriting. All we really did was try to make some things specific rather than open to interpretation. That's the main reason they made the changes.

The changes that were made were reviewed and discussed.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to close the public hearing. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried with a 5 to 0 vote.

Some discussion took place about the cost to advertise public hearings.

Frank Bruno made a motion to approve text amendment case #17-06-STPL-03040 Private Lane Design Standards with the amendments that have been added to the Private Lane Standard document based on that it is consistent with the Town's vision to preserve, maintain, and enhance the rural character, natural habitat, and beauty, and provide reasonable connectivity for very low density residential parcels to the

road network. Mayor Braswell seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried with a 5 to 0 vote.

Consider Request for Municipal Concurrence with Speed Limit Changes: This is for four ordinances that were drafted by the Town Attorney.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to approve Ordinance Number 102 An Ordinance to Regulate the Speed Limit with the Town of Stokesdale. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried with a 5 to 0 vote. Ordinance Number 102 is hereby incorporated and made a part of the minutes of the meeting.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to approve Ordinance Number 103 An Ordinance to Regulate the Speed Limit with the Town of Stokesdale. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried with a 5 to 0 vote. Ordinance Number 103 is hereby incorporated and made a part of the minutes of the meeting.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to approve Ordinance Number 104 An Ordinance to Regulate the Speed Limit with the Town of Stokesdale. Frank Bruno seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried with a 5 to 0 vote. Ordinance Number 104 is hereby incorporated and made a part of the minutes of the meeting.

Mayor Braswell made a motion to approve Ordinance Number 105 An Ordinance to Regulate the Speed Limit with the Town of Stokesdale. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried with a 5 to 0 vote. Ordinance Number 105 is hereby incorporated and made a part of the minutes of the meeting.

Revision to Regular Town Council Meeting Agenda Item Cut-off Date: Bill Jones advised that right now the cut-off date is Monday at 2:00pm, ten days before the Regular Town Council Meeting, and he would like to discuss changing that. Discussion took place about changing the cut-off to Thursday at 9:00am the week before the Regular Town Council Meeting.

Bill Jones made a motion to revise the cut-off date to be the 9:00am the Thursday before the Thursday Regular Town Council Meeting. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Stokesdale 9/11 Ceremony – Downtown Linear Park at 11:00am: Frank Bruno wanted to remind everyone that citizens are invited to attend the 9/11 Ceremony on Monday, September 11th, at 11:00am which will be held at the Linear Park where the flag pole is located in downtown Stokesdale. It's an opportunity to remember those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, and also to pay tribute to those who served in the military and lost their lives fighting for our country. The ceremony will last 30 to 45 minutes and everyone is invited.

Stokesdale Community Day Discussion – Proposed Date is Saturday, October 28, 2017: Frank Bruno contacted Mary who Jordahl who does the Stokesdale Fall Festive Craft Fair, which is scheduled on Saturday, October 21st. Therefore, he felt it best to schedule Stokesdale Community Day the following Saturday on October 28th.

Frank Bruno made a motion to use October 28th for Stokesdale Community Day at Town Hall. Mayor Braswell seconded the motion.

Mayor Braswell asked if there was money in the budget to support this. Frank Bruno advised that in the past, the only money used was for advertising. Usually, most of money is donated for the bounce house, food, and drinks. Last time about \$200.00 was spent. He likes to get as many donations as possible. If they do need money, he would like to discuss that at the September meeting. Right now, he just wanted the date approved.

All Council members voted aye and the motion carried with a 5 to 0 vote.

Consider Approval of Merit Increases for Town Staff: Mayor Braswell made a motion to approve those pay increases that were in the budget for this cycle effective next pay period for all four Town staff. Vicki White-Lawrence seconded the motion.

Mayor Braswell confirmed that Kim Hemric, Diana Marcus, Alisa Houk, and Phillip Pulliam each received a pay increase of \$1.00 per hour.

Mayor Braswell, Bill Jones, Frank Bruno, and Vicki White-Lawrence voted aye. Tim Jones voted nay. The motion carried with a 4 to 1 vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Stokesdale Water System:

Citizens' Comment Period on the Stokesdale Water System: Joe Thacker, 7936 Lester Road, Stokesdale, said I don't think the Town needs to join the Regional Water Authority. This system was already started years ago for the Town's residents. I think it's been running pretty good so far, and I think they can continue to run it without having to be tied up with an authority. Another point I wanted to make is, I've been thinking about and talked to several people about how to make this water system available to everybody, and also make everybody in this Town responsible for it. It is the Stokesdale Water System. I've paid into it ever since it was first started. And, some people thought about the lines running in front of their property, and if they ever needed to, then they would be allowed to hook onto it. The only fair way that I can think of that would make that possible would be to have a property tax and take part of the property tax and designate it for the water system. That way, everybody in Stokesdale would be responsible, and, in turn, more money would go into the water system, so it could be expanded to people that need it. Also, if these people have well problems, they might be able to negotiate hooking onto the waterline if it's in front of their house. That's all I have to say about it, and I appreciate your time.

Frank Bruno said the way the water system is set up as a separate entity, can you use a property tax to supplement the water system? Katy Gregg said my initial thought is, yes, because the purpose of a property tax is to help supplement entities of the Town. But, before I can definitively be clear on that, I would need some time to do some research.

Joe Thacker said that if you have a tax you should put it to good use and also get a return on your money by getting a portion of the Town's sales and use tax distribution money back.

Discussion took place about the appropriation of a property tax to the Water Enterprise Fund.

Mahalia McGee, 8403 Shilling Street, Stokesdale, said I did not come with a speech tonight, but I do have a question. Is the original map of where the waterlines were going to start and where it was going to be extended still around here somewhere? There was a map that showed where the original waterlines would go and then it showed where the lines actually went. And I keep seeing where people are asking for water and we're telling them that there's no line there. Does somebody have a copy of that original map?

Mayor Braswell said my answer would be yes. There would be no reason why the Town would ever throw a map away. My understanding is there was one phase and there's never been a phase 2. The only extensions of the waterline after phase 1 have been done by the developers. They have extended the waterline. Down NC Highway 68 to Kings Crossing, I believe Combs, Inc. bought and paid for a 12-inch waterline from Prince Edward Road all the way to Kings Crossing. Just come down here (Town Hall) and look for the map.

Ms. McGee said I had that map but I think it was in my garage when it went up in flames. I thought we were going to apply for another grant to extend the lines.

Mayor Braswell said we can apply for grants. We're not eligible because of our per capita income for any gift money for any of that, for low interest loans. But, there's money out there. And, we just hired a new engineering firm. We met with him yesterday, so I'm excited to see that happen, because those are some of the questions he asked. Where are your capital improvement plans? Where's the Town going from here?

Mayor Braswell went on to talk about the Timmons Group, the feasibility study for the water system, citizen input participation that is needed, an interlocal agreement that would allow Stokesdale to purchase water, where expected growth will occur, expanding the Town's water system, and the proposed Regional Water Authority.

Continued – Emergency Access Water Usage Policy: Progress is being made on the Emergency Access Water Usage Policy, but it's not finished yet. This agenda item will be continued.

Continued – Scope of Study/Feasibility Study for Proposed Regional Water Authority: New information has been received and will be added to the existing folder. This agenda item will be continued.

Mayor Braswell asked Kim Hemric to put Task Order No. 2 on the Wednesday, Town Council Business Meeting agenda.

COMMITTEE AND BOARD REPORTS:

Safety Committee: Has been quiet.

Water Committee: Has been quiet.

Library Committee: Frank Bruno advised donated books were received and will be for sale within the next two months.

Property Committee: Bill Jones advised he had shown Council pictures early in the process. He plans to get an estimate from a contractor for new shelter buildings and a turnkey job. Vicki White-Lawrence said she sent emails to Coby Ellington on that and it's in the works. Bill Jones said 75 tons of sand was spread on the soccer fields at the Town Park.

Departmental and Administrative Report – Town Administrator: Kim Hemric advised that Town Hall had their fire inspection this month and anticipates a follow-up sometime after September 1st. Town Hall seems to be in 100 percent compliance at this time. Earlier this month she reached out to BB&T regarding the Town's Certificates of Deposit exploring interest rates and comparing bank CDs to investment CDs. Three CDs that matured were rolled over for the next 12 months at 0.08 percent, which is the highest among the approved lenders through the North Carolina League of Municipalities. A couple of weeks ago, she and Alisa Houk met a couple of times with Mueller System's application engineer for trouble shooting. They had the opportunity to go out in the field, which was a nice experience and helped her to connect the dots with the class she completed a couple of months ago at the C Distribution Certification School for Public Water Systems at no cost to the Town. We anticipate 540 water bills will be sent out for this month's water billing cycle. The water meters will be read on August 12th. Yesterday was the kickoff meeting for the Northwest Guilford County Regional Water System Feasibility Study. An information folder will be available for the public to review during Town Hall business hours. Five new meters were sold this month and five new applications for water service were processed this month, so ten new customers have been added to the Town's water system. The Town's average water rate for this past month was \$595.23 per day compared to \$590.53 per day for last month. The Town sold 2,463,634.29 gallons of water this past water billing cycle. There were 53 or more North Carolina 811 locates received this month, which is a five-part step to complete. Since July 3rd, the Town staff has received or made 437 telephone calls as of this morning, and the two Deputy Clerks received and responded to 1,208 emails. These are not spam or erroneous emails. These emails require action and/or a response from staff. In order for her to be aware of all that goes on at Town Hall, she is copied on all incoming and outgoing emails generated by Town staff, which is protocol and a very important and vital part of internal communication. In addition to those emails, she had an additional 483 direct emails that required action. That's approximately 280 emails per week that she manages. That doesn't cover staff time used to cover varied normal operations. She thanked Council for granting the staff raises. As supervisor, she can confirm that the staff works consistently very hard, are very trustworthy, and are vested in the Town of Stokesdale. They all bring their best to the table every single day and she considers us very fortunate and very blessed to have the team that they do. As a friendly reminder, Stokesdale is not the same town that it was ten years ago. It's not the same town it was five years ago. It's not the same town it was when she walked in the door 18 or 19 months ago. Stokesdale is growing at an unbelievable and exponential rate and should not be minimized. What we do every day has a direct impact on our citizenship. She would like to invite citizens and Town Council that may have any questions about what staff does or any concerns they may have to come see her, email her, or call her. She has an open-door policy and her email address is stokesdale@stokesdale.org and her phone number is 336-643-4011. She also wanted everyone to know about the multiple payment options that are now available. Water bills can be paid online, by telephone, in person during Town Hall business hours, and a drop-box is available outside of Town Hall, as well. Ms. Hemric thanked Council for supporting staff and for their pay raises.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR AND/OR COMMENTS ABOUT THE PROPOSED WATER AUTHORITY: No comments from the floor were made.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mayor Braswell read the announcements listed on the agenda.

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL: Frank Bruno thanked the Ordinance Review Committee for doing such a great job and for citizen participation.

Tim Jones explained that his vote against the staff pay increase wasn't personal. He has concerns about the Town's tight budget. Since he was reviewing on how he wanted to vote on this issue, he keeps thinking about the number of acquaintances he has that received pay cuts recently. It just seems fairly common out there. So, it wasn't really a personal issue directed at staff, but rather overall for the Town's financial health. He doesn't favor an ordinance type of enforcement department at Town Hall. He hopes they'll find an economic way of dealing with that. He still favors small government for Stokesdale and he still opposes a property tax for Stokesdale. He thanked everyone for sitting through the meeting all the way to the end.

Bill Jones thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting. They came and said what was on their hearts and what was important to them. He wants to assure them that they're doing the best they can do. He lives in Dorsett Downs and the property has gotten progressively worse over the last four years, but it hasn't always looked like what it looks like today. Government moves slow and in some instances, it should. Thanks again, especially to the people who stayed through the whole meeting. He appreciates it.

Vicki White-Lawrence thanked everybody for all the work that was done on the Ordinance Review Committee. She really hopes that it helps educate people about how the whole process does work, and that they get more volunteers because of it. Council consists of five representatives of the Town, but they are not the Town. The citizens of the Town are the ones who should be helping make policy. They need to hear from people like they did tonight. It is our Town and we need to decide whether we want to charge everybody for everything or whether we want to let everything be available at no cost. The Town needs to decide those things. Council needs input.

Mayor Braswell said the staff works hard. It's amazing to watch the staff grow and learn every day. I really enjoy watching the staff figure it all out. You would think a town 20 years old had it all figured out and you're learning that you're really starting to figure it out. A job well done. I would say underpaid and overworked.

ADJOURNMENT: Vicki White-Lawrence made a motion to adjourn. Mayor Braswell seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye. The meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.

Diana Marcus, Deputy Clerk

Approved:

D. Randall Braswell, Mayor