

TOWN OF STOKESDALE
PO BOX 465
STOKESDALE, NORTH CAROLINA

A Special Meeting of the Stokesdale Town Council was held in the Town Hall at 8416 US Highway 158 on Wednesday, April 9, 2008.

Mayor Randle L. Jones called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM. The following members of Council were present: Mayor Randle L. Jones Mayor Pro Tem Mickie Halbrook, Cheryl Steele, James Attaway, and Norman Cook.

Others present included: William B. Trevorrow, Town Attorney and Carolyn Joyner, Town Clerk/Finance Officer.

Mayor Jones noted that the purpose of the meeting was to interview applicants for the Planning Board. He said that it was a public meeting but it deals with a personnel matter and some questions have been asked as to whether an executive session would be appropriate. Mr. Trevorrow indicated that if there are personnel items such as backgrounds to be discussed, then it would be appropriate to hold an executive session. It is Council's decision and a motion should be made and voted on to go into executive session.

Mayor Jones said that applicants would be interviewed one at a time.

EILEEN THIERY was the first applicant. Mayor Jones noted that the Planning Board serves as an advisory board to the Council and they make decisions on some matters. There is a training requirement for the position. Certain laws apply to this area of government and there is some liability and risk if people do not follow policies. He asked Ms. Thiery what was her motivation to apply and what could she contribute to the Town if she was elected to serve. Ms. Thiery responded that she felt it was an exciting time in the Town of Stokesdale with development on the horizon and the Town having many decisions to make. She said that she would be open and would try to do what was best for all parties involved. She would make educated decisions on facts and not emotions. She said that she would bring experience and a love of the Town. She has been visiting Stokesdale for over ten years and retired here about two years ago.

Mayor Jones asked for her strongest point. Ms. Thiery said that she felt that her background of investigative research and her logic to look at something for what it is and try to make a good decision. She has taken one course that Trevor gave and would learn from the Planning Board members. She said that she has done instruction and management in a previous position. You must look at things objectively.

Mayor Jones said that sometimes you have to apply the law and sometimes the law is not what you think it should be and may be applied differently from what you believe it should be. He asked how she would apply the law in those situations. Ms. Thiery replied that she was learning and has been learning how things are done. If she does not understand the law she would ask for an interpretation of the law.

Mayor Jones asked "What do you feel is your weakest point?" She responded by saying it was probably not knowing the lay of the land and some of the properties. She said that her town in New York was different and they did not have streams and hills. She said that she would like some courses to help her understand some of the differences.

Mr. Attaway asked about her experience. Ms. Thiery said that she has experience as a tax assessor and education was a part of her experience and she included it in her resume. She read site plans and made site visits and took measurements and met with the public when they had grievances. She also did research for her supervisor who had to be in court on some cases.

Mr. Attaway asked why she should be picked over other applicants. Ms. Thiery said that it would be based

on her willingness and her zest for the Town, and her eagerness to learn but she would not put herself over anyone else. She said that she hoped that she has what Council wants and she would not answer the question.

Mayor Jones asked what she would like Council to know about her. Ms. Thiery said that she had been married for 46 years and has two children. She said that he son and daughter-in-law had lucrative jobs but did not care about salary cuts and bought a house here. Her husband worked for Grumman Aerospace Corporation and was responsible for the lunar module and the F-14 project. She was happy to be in Stokesdale and feels that it is her hometown.

Mayor Jones said that interviews will be held tonight and a second round of interviews may be necessary and she would be notified. Council will make a public decision. He thanked her for her willingness to serve.

BOBBY RICHARDSON: Mayor Jones said that Planning Board members make certain decisions and they must follow the laws. Mandatory training is being provided so that the members so that they know the laws and policies and an attorney is accessible. He asked Mr. Richardson why he wanted to serve and what could he contribute to the Town of Stokesdale by serving on the Board. Mr. Richardson responded by saying that he is a professional volunteer. He said that he has no personal agenda so he can provide fairness to the people of the Town. Mayor Jones noted that he had served in the position before and he asked what were his strongest points then and would they be the same now. Mr. Richardson said that he has knowledge of the job. He said that the authority of the Board has changed since he was on the Board. He presented the idea of giving the Board additional authority to the Council and he felt that the change has been good. He felt that it stopped the repetitive wasting of Council's time but he has not served since that change occurred. Mayor Jones said that sometimes you have to apply the law even if it is not what you think the law is or what you think it should be. He asked how he would deal with this. Mr. Richardson replied that you have to apply the law regardless of your feeling or disagreement with it. It is not a choice. Mayor Jones asked what his weakest point might be. Mr. Richardson said that he did not have a weak point. Mr. Cook asked what was he referring to when he said that the job had changed. Mr. Richardson said that the Planning Board had no authority and only made recommendations to Council. After he presented the idea to Council for a change that would give the Board some approval authority, he did not meet with the Board again. He was serving on Council when the change was made. He said that Council was repeating the cases and the applicants had to repeat the same things for Council. The Planning Board makes the decisions on site plans and subdivisions and makes recommendations to Council on rezonings. Ms. Steele asked if he served as Chairman. Mr. Richardson responded that he had served as vice chairman and chairman while he was on the Board. Mayor Jones asked what he would like for Council to know or take into consideration about his application. Mr. Richardson said that he is retired and has time to serve and he is available if he is needed.

Because three applicants were not able to come for an interview, there was a delay in the interviews. Mayor Jones said that Ms. Gauldin, Ms. Lemmons, and Mr. Wurz had conflicts and could not come. He suggested that Council could set another time to interview those candidates and give everyone the opportunity to be heard. Ms. Steel asked if others could be added to those interviews. Mayor Jones said that there was a deadline for submitting applications and that should remain firm. Ms. Halbhook asked if Mr. Spruill had been appointed to a three-year term. Mayor Jones said that he was appointed to one of the expiring terms.

JAYCEE SPRUILL: Mayor Jones said that the Planning Board makes some decisions and makes advisory recommendations to Council. They deal with planning and zoning issues and training is now required since there are additional duties for the Board and so that the Board understands legal issues that are involved with the Board. He asked Mr. Spruill why he wanted to serve and what can he contribute to the Board. Mr. Spruill said that he wants to serve and feels that he knows what is legal and what is not legal. He wants to do what he can for the Town of Stokesdale and make good choices. Mayor Jones asked what his strongest points would be that he could bring to the Planning Board. Mr. Spruill said that he knows a lot about buildings and what the laws are for the buildings. He said he was learning more about watersheds.

Mayor Jones said that sometimes the law is not the way you thought and you may have to apply it although you think that it is different. He asked how he would deal with those situations. Mr. Spruill said that a lot of time people do not know the law and they want to do what they want and get away with it. You have to ask someone who knows the law and make your decision on it. You have to follow the law.

Mayor Jones asked what were his weakest points. Mr. Spruill said that he has a weakness for kids and old people and he goes out of his way to help them. He does not see a weakness regarding the Board. He has served on the Board and the others on the Board have made the right decisions. Although the Board makes a decision, the people have to deal with environmental and other issues. If the Board makes a bad decision then you have to deal with it.

Mayor Jones said that sometimes the Board makes a vote and everyone thinks it is "A" and you may think it is "B" and the law says it is "B". Are you strong enough to vote for B? Mr. Spruill said that he was and if he makes a mistake he will admit it.

Mr. Attaway asked if he brings any knowledge from his employment that would help him on the Board. Mr. Spruill replied that he had worked for Yellow Freight System in transportation. He also worked for the Greensboro Fire Department and was one of the first of 28 minority firemen that were hired for the department. He went to college for electrical engineering and worked with electronics.

He said that he would study his packet of materials and would look up issues that he did not know about. He would like to come to Council meetings.

Mayor Jones asked what he would like for Council to know about his candidacy and his willingness to serve so that Council can make a decision in the selection process. Mr. Spruill said that he has already learned a lot since attending the meetings and has found that there are things that the Town cannot do.

Mayor Jones explained the decision making process and thanked him for coming.

There was another delay in the interviews. The Clerk noted that Ms. Gauldin has an illness in her family and has withdrawn her application. Ms. Lemons and Mr. Wurz have expressed an interest in rescheduling an interview. Council discussed possible dates to hold the interviews.

MAHALIA MCGEE: Mayor Jones asked why she wanted to serve and what could she contribute to the Town. Ms. McGee said that Stokesdale is her Town since she lived in the heart of the Town for a number of years. She was concerned for the future of the Town and the direction that we are taking and she would like to be a part of looking very carefully at what is being done and how it will affect future generations who want to call this home.

Mayor Jones asked what would be her strongest point that she would bring to the Board if selected. Ms. McGee responded that her longevity here and a very open mind and her knowledge of the ordinance and the rules and regulations of the Town.

Mayor Jones said that sometimes in serving on a Board, you are required to carry out the law and sometimes it is different than what you think it is or should be. Mayor Jones asked how would she handle this if the situation arose. Ms. McGee replied that you must follow the law.

Mayor Jones said that in doing so, if everyone else is voting "A" and you believe that the law says you are required to vote "B" even though it may be an unpopular stance and asked how she would handle that situation. Ms. McGee said that she would vote by the laws and many times in other situations, she has been the only one to vote no. She said that she was not concerned about the popular vote.

Ms. Steele asked about the residency requirement since Ms. McGee's application says that she owns property here but does not live in Town. Mayor Jones said there has not been a ruling and that the interview can be conducted and the Town Attorney can address the question if it becomes an issue. Ms.

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McGee said that the Ordinance, Section 9 – 2 B, does not say that a Board member has to live in the Town. She said that she attended the training session and that Mr. Nuttall said that you do not have to be a resident to serve on the Board and State law does not say that you have to be a resident either.

Mayor Jones asked what she would like for Council to know about her or take into consideration when making a selection.

Ms. McGee said that she grew up in the edge of Rockingham County and the Town was not incorporated at that time so Stokesdale was home. She has a deep emotional feeling about Stokesdale. She has the opportunity to talk with people who did not grow up here and when she asks why they chose to come here, they answer because of the rural nature. She has 21 years of experience in County government with Emergency Services and knows a lot of people. She worked on Project 2015 as a delegate for Stokesdale.

Mayor Jones made a motion to schedule a second round of interviews and to schedule them on Thursday, April 17 at 6:30 and to notify Ms. Lemmons and Mr. Wurz. Ms. Halbrook seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion was approved.

KAYE KING: Mayor Jones asked why did she want to serve and what could she contribute if she is chosen to serve. Ms. King said that she feels that Stokesdale is a charming and old-fashioned town that has a lot to offer its citizens. Any town that is going to survive needs people to live, work, and shop there and she would like to be a part of the growth. Changes are required but it takes research and planning. She said she was interested and has time to devote to the position. She is open minded about growth and policies and development and she would like to be a part of the decision making. When asked what her strongest point was, she replied that she felt that her willingness and time to do what is necessary such as research and to go to classes would be her strongest point.

Mayor Jones said that sometimes the law is not what you think that it is and you are asked to apply the law and it is different from what you think it should be. Mayor Jones asked how would she deal with the situation. Ms. King said that she would go by the law.

Mayor Jones also asked if everyone else is voting “A” and you think the law is “B” how she would deal with that. She said that she may ask opinions or advice and then make her own decision.

Mr. Attaway asked if she had previous work related experience, education experience or volunteer experience that would give her an edge over others. She said that she did not. She had taken the Sherriff’s Citizens Academy classes and is working in Criminal Justice and is active in a local Church.

She asked what she would like for Council to know about her application in making the selection. She said that she was not here or to serve on the Board for popularity. She said that she tries to be honest and fair. She said that she has lived here for ten years and would like to see a little more growth. She said that she has a 4.0 grade point average and has never missed or been tardy for a class. She said that she gives 100%.

The Clerk verified that the Board has seven members and either four or five alternates. Currently there are four alternates and seven members.

Mayor Jones made a motion to continue the special meeting to Thursday, April 17 at 6:30 and for the other applicants to be notified. Ms. Steele seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the motion carried.

Ms. Steele made a motion to recess. Mr. Attaway seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the Council was recessed at 7:39 PM.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 2008

The meeting reconvened on Thursday, April 17 at 6:35 with Mayor Randle L. Jones calling the meeting to order at 6:35 PM. The following members of Council were present: Mayor Randle L. Jones Mayor Pro Tem Mickie Halbrook, Cheryl Steele, and James Attaway. Councilman Norman Cook was absent. Carolyn Joyner, Town Clerk, was present.

Mayor Jones indicated that one applicant was unable to attend the meeting and Mr. Wurz has been out of Town and his flight should be returning soon. He made a motion for Council to recess until his arrival. Mr. Attaway seconded the motion. All Council members present voted aye and the motion carried. Council was recessed at 6:37 PM.

The special meeting reconvened at 9:08 pm on April 17 to interview Planning Board candidates. All Council members were present. Mayor Jones made a motion for Council to go into executive session to discuss personnel matters Mr. Attaway seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and Council recessed to an executive session.

Council reconvened in open session at 9:30 PM. Council interviewed the last candidate for the Planning Board, Robert Wurz.

ROBERT WURZ: Mayor Jones asked Mr. Wurz why he wanted to serve and what could he contribute to the Board if he was selected. Mr. Wurz responded that he wanted to serve because he wants to support Stokesdale and he wants to make sure that Stokesdale develops in a way that preserves the Vision Statement. He said that he was on the committee that put together the Vision Statement. He felt that it is important to the town and he feels that his qualifications that can help make the Vision Statement stay a reality and allow for growth and expansion of Stokesdale.

Mayor Jones asked what were his strong points. Mr. Wurz said that he is a trained facilitator and has spent 16 years facilitating not only at Ciba Geigy - Novartis - Syngenta, but with a number of public entities such as the Stokesdale Ball Club, churches, public organizations in Greensboro, and he has facilitated both Phases of the Land Use Plan. He said that he is well read and has excellent communication skills. He can keep his temper.

When Mayor Jones asked about his weak points, Mr. Wurz responded that his weak point might be using humor to break tension. It works sometimes and sometimes people do not understand and they take it the wrong way. Sometimes humor can cause a group to take a breath and then to move on and get the work done.

Mayor Jones noted that when serving on the Board, sometimes the law is different than you think that it is or should be. He asked how he would address that in serving on the Board. Mr. Wurz said that it is a part of the difficulty of serving on the Board. He noted that Mr. Trevorrow attends meetings but you need to know when to ask questions about the law. Even more important is to keep in mind which laws apply to which actions that the Planning Board is going through. As in a rezoning, certain extraneous information may be presented to you with only certain parts of the information that the law says that you must consider and take into account. There are rezonings, site plans, and others. If you make a mistake you need to own up to it.

Mayor Jones asked if the Law is "A" but the public sentiment is "B", how would he deal with the matter. Mr. Wurz said that as a Planning Board Member you have to follow the law.

Mr. Cook asked Mr. Wurz if he could be at meetings since there had been problems in getting together for the interview. Mr. Wurz said that there was one time that he could not make it and then he could not make the earlier time today. He said that during this time of year, he does travel for Syngenta a lot. Normally the rest of the year, his travel schedule is less and he has more flexibility.

Mayor Jones asked what he would like for Council to take into consideration in considering him as a candidate. Mr. Wurz said that he has the desire to serve and Council has seen his performance on the Planning Board before, he is well spoken and considers the issues at hand. He is transparent and asked questions if he has them. If he has issues he does not hide them but raises them and he felt that is good for the Board and for the Town but maybe not for him at times. He said that he thinks he understands what needs to be done by the Board and can make motions that reflect the law. He listens to all sides before making his decision.

Mayor Jones said that this concludes the interviews with the candidates and that the matter was with the Council. He also said that Council should consider the number of new members on Council and the number of senior members who would be rotating off. It is important to keep consistency and to have experience as well as new people that bring new viewpoints. It is good to have a balance.

Mayor Jones made a motion for the following individuals to serve a regular three year term: Jaycee Spruill, Bobby Richardson, Robert Wurz, and nominate Kaye King for an alternate position. Mr. Attaway seconded the motion. Council voted 4 to 1 to approve the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:	Jones	<u>Aye</u>	Halbrook	<u>Aye</u>
	Attaway	<u>Aye</u>	Steele	<u>Aye</u>
	Cook	<u>No</u>		

Mayor Jones said that it has been a hard decision for Council since there were many good candidates to choose from. There were a number of issues to take into consideration such as the balance of the Board and the experience of the Board members. He suggested having all applications made by the current applicants be retained on file for future appointments. If there is an opening, then Council could select from the applicants.

Mayor Jones made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Steele seconded the motion. All Council members voted aye and the meeting adjourned at 9:38 PM.

Carolyn L. Joyner, Town Clerk

Approved:

Randle L. Jones, Mayor