

**MINUTES OF A COUNCIL RETREAT MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF TARBORO, HELD AT 8:30 A.M. ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 2014 AT THE EDGECOMBE EVENT CENTER IN TARBORO, NC**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Rick Page	Mayor
Steve Burnette	Councilman
Al Hull	Councilman
John Jenkins	Councilman
Deborah Jordan	Councilmember
Taro Knight	Councilman
Carol F. Ruffin	Councilmember
Garland Shephard	Councilman
Othar Woodard	Councilman

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

Madeleine Henley	Meeting Facilitator
M. Alan Thornton	Town Manager
Leslie Lunsford	Town Clerk
Frankie Winslow	Fire Chief
Buddy Harrison	Electric Department Director
Cheryl Gay	Recreation Department Director
Troy Lewis	Public Works Director
Damon Williams	Police Chief
Karla McCall	Finance Director
Josh Edmondson	Planning Director

M. Alan Thornton, Town Manager, gave a Retreat Overview and introduced Madeleine Henley, Walking Stick Associates, as the meeting facilitator.

**A. Meeting Rules & Objectives, Agenda Review**

Madeleine reviewed the agenda and objectives. She also asked that Council and staff establish and agree on rules for the meeting. The rules included, everyone in attendance would participate, no side conversations, no interrupting, mutual respect and everyone would strive to provide a safe environment for honest discussions.

**B. Mayor's Items**

The Mayor requested that Council refer to the Suggested Rules of Procedure for a City Council, third addition authored by A. Fleming Bell, II and provided by the UNC School of Government for future meeting procedures. Councilman Jenkins made a motion, which was seconded by Councilman Knight and passed unanimously, that Council use the above listed reference to establish meeting procedures. The Mayor also addressed concerns he had with issues that were overdue for action, including:

**Downtown Trees**

Council discussed the different options the Town had concerning the trees. After the discussion, Councilman Jenkins made a motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Jordan and passed unanimously, that Council start planning to replace the trees, include the replacement in the budget and not to spend any more money on trimming the current trees.

**Disc Golf Course**

Councilman Jenkins made a motion, which was seconded by Councilman Woodard and passed unanimously, that Council support the Disc Golf concept but recommend staff to research other areas and not involve water or wetlands and do not disturb natural habitats.

**Financing Equipment**

The Mayor suggested the possibility of paying the loans off early to avoid finance charges.

Other concerns included the improvement of maintaining Town owned property, residency requirements, work hours and off-duty employment. These items were tabled for discussion later in the meeting.

**C. Operating Principles**

**Meeting Agendas**

Council decided to approve the agenda at the beginning of each meeting with the authority to add or take away from the agenda before approving it. Council requested the agenda outline be sent by email on Tuesday, one day early from the original distribution date. Council also agreed that no action would be taken on items presented during the Requests & Petitions of Citizens segment of the meeting. Requests from citizens will be added as an agenda item for the next Council meeting.

**Constituent Work**

Council agreed, that if a Councilmember is approached by a citizen, they refer the citizen to the Town Manager or Department Head responsible for the request, staff will handle the issue the best possible way. If a citizen approaches a staff member with a request that cannot be handled, staff will refer the request to the Town Manager, which would then refer to Council if necessary.

**Communication**

Council discussed the chain of command and agreed to follow unless it was necessary to speak with a Department Head directly. In such case, Council would refrain from directing the activities of the Department Heads. The Town Manager works for the Mayor and Town Council and Department Heads work for the Town Manager.

**D. Effective Board Part 1**

All Councilmembers and staff were asked to write down their individual goals and/or reasons for serving the Town of Tarboro. All goals were shared.

**E. Effective Board Part 2**

The Mayor, Councilmembers, Town Manager and Department Heads shared mutual expectations for each other to assure a clear understanding of each others duties and expectations.

**F. Board Decision Making**

Council discussed the importance of all members supporting Council decisions even if they did not agree or vote for the decision. Councilmembers and staff agreed to make an effort to support Council decisions.

**G. Annual Budget Prep**

The Town Manager presented general information for budget preparation. Council shared items they would like to be included in the upcoming budget. Such items include tree replacement/downtown vitalization, Disc Golf, maintenance of Town owned property, equipment & facilities and waste management crews and fees. Councilman Jenkins suggested that local merchants be used as much as possible. Council also discussed the Capital Improvement budget. Council requested information about solid waste and recycling options.

**Mayor's Item**

The Mayor went back to his concerns noted earlier in the meeting.

**Residence Requirement**

Council discussed the residency requirements for Department Heads. The Mayor recommended taking the Recreation Director out of the ordinance and adding the Finance Director back. The definition of residency was debated and some Councilmembers were of the opinion that the ordinance require the Department Heads family live in Tarboro and that home ownership was also required. After a lengthy discussion from Council and staff, Councilman Knight made a motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Ruffin and passed unanimously, that Council direct staff to deliver a revised Ordinance to Council.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rick Page, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leslie M. Lunsford, Town Clerk