



Town of HOLLY RIDGE

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HOLLY RIDGE TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING August 13th, 2024 6:30 P.M.

Mayor Jeff Wenzel called the Regular Meeting of the Holly Ridge Town Council to order at 6:32 p.m. at the Holly Ridge Town Hall. Council members present were Councilman Hines, Mayor Pro-Tem Patti, Councilman Parnian, and Councilman Misciagno. Also, present were Town Manager, Heather Reynolds, Deputy Clerk, Tracy Martin, and Police Chief Sorg.

Invocation and Pledge

Chaplain Jim Bowen gave the Invocation and Mayor Wenzel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of Agenda

Manager Reynolds said we need to remove Item 11 Town Attorney comments due to Attorney Lee's absence from the meeting.

A motion was made by *Councilman Misciagno* and seconded by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* to adopt the agenda as amended. *All Agreed.*

Persons Wishing to Address the Council

Public Hearings

Discussion and Possible Approval of a Zoning Map Amendment submitted by Christopher Snyder located on US Highway 17 and identified as PIN # 424701088418 (Map# 734-1) to Rezone from R-15 to Light Industrial Consisting of Approximately 3.74 acres.

Code Administrator, Greg Lawrence said what we have is a rezone request. The property is located on Highway 17. The subject parcel is currently vacant and undeveloped and found within the R-15 Zoning District. The property is comprised of 3.74 acres, the request is to rezone the parcel to Light Industrial. Adjoining the subject parcels to the North is property zoned as Light Industrial, which is currently undeveloped. Properties located South and East of the subject parcel are currently zoned as Commercial. West of the subject parcel is property belonging to Camp Lejeune and currently zoned as Open Area/Recreation District (OAR).

The Holly Ridge Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the Future Land Use Map, designates this parcel as Medium Density Residential.

The purpose of this district is to stabilize established and planned single-family residential neighborhoods by providing a place for low density stick-built and modular homes use, and to be protected from undesirable future development and residential developments. The minimum lot area within the R-15 District must be at least 15,000 square feet. Minimum setback requirements for the R-15 District are 25 feet for the front yard and 12 feet for side yards and 25 feet for rear yards.

The purpose of the Light Industrial District is to provide locations for light industrial and/or manufacturing, processing and assembly uses and to protect adjacent rural/residential areas from such land uses. The minimum lot area within the light industrial must be at least 4,500 square feet. The minimum setback requirements for the light industrial district are 20 feet for the front yard and 10 feet for side yards and 10 feet for rear yards. Whenever an industrial lot which abuts a residential district is developed, there shall be (15) foot rear yard and where a lot abuts upon the side of lot zoned residential, there shall be a side yard of not less than (10) feet in width. Building Height limit is 75 feet.

The surrounding parcels are largely vacant and largely vacant and undeveloped except for the adjoining property located South of the subject parcel, where a landscaping supply establishment is currently operating on this parcel. Across Highway 17 is property currently owned by Camp Lejeune and adjoins their operable landing strip.

During the July 16th, 2024, Planning Board Meeting, the Board unanimously recommended approval of the map amendment as presented and provided the Consistency Statement.

Councilman Parnian asked if we could ask the property owner what his intentions are? Mr. Lawrence said no, with a general rezone, we must consider all these that are allowed.

Manager Reynolds said it is also illegal, if you rezone something based on a specific use that is considered contract rezoning.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti asked if there is any capacity for a commercial buffer zone? Mr. Lawrence asked if we have a planned unit development.

Councilman Hines said the Town is trying to keep Highway 50 and Highway 17 corridor for commercial for commercial businesses.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti asked Manager Reynolds her opinion on this. Manager Reynolds said she does not have an opinion but there is a lot of cross over between the two districts. There is no real way to put parameters around that light industrial or commercial.

A motion was made by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* and seconded by *Councilman Parnian* to go into Public Hearing. *All Agreed.*

A motion was made by *Councilman Hines* and seconded by *Councilman Parnian* to return to Regular Session. *All Agreed.*

Councilman Misciagno asked Manager Reynolds if the Holly Ridge associate and others are tied to Holly Ridge at all. Manager Reynolds said no.

A motion was made by *Councilman Hines* and seconded by *Councilman Misciagno* to approve a zoning map amendment submitted by Christopher Snyder to rezone 3.74 acres from R-15 to Light Industrial on Highway 17. *All Agreed.*

Town Manager Report

Manager Reynolds said next Monday the Geotech company will be in town pulling core samples of the streets. We are on schedule to release an RFP request for proposal in November with the deadlines coming in around November and then construction to begin in March of next year. This is when the temperatures rise to the level that the Department of Transportation accepts for paving. Manager Reynolds said the upcoming project does not include the Neighborhood of Holly Ridge.

Manager Reynolds said when we looked at this prior to last year when the housing authority, the streets were at a level that they could be safe if they were sealed with slurry seal. Manager Reynolds said that will not have to be reevaluated. Withersravenel has broken that into two projects due to the cost.

Councilman Hines asked if we know what Jacksonville is doing with their project? Councilman Hines said they are going to be doing a study on this, so they will know what it is going to take and what to do. Councilman Hines said it would be a good idea to follow up with Jacksonville. Manager Reynolds said she will reach out to Anthony Prince, who is the head over that. Mr. Prince works with us on the Jacksonville Urban Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said just to clarify, the budget amount from this year's budget does not include the Neighborhoods of Holly Ridge. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said Smith Street was included in the budget, but that may be a way to mitigate this extra cost if we do not pave Smith Street.

Manager Reynolds said we took the streets over in Sages Ridge a year ago and we required the developer to put a seal coating on the asphalt before we took over the streets.

Mayor Wenzel and Manager Reynolds attended the Onslow County Economic Development Strategic Plan meeting. They went through seven firm's consultants to select down to three options. It is a committee of all municipalities, county commissioners, business owners and

economic development. Manager Reynolds said later in the month they will be conducting interviews for the three consultants that made it to the final round and select from there.

Manager Reynolds said there are a lot of strategic plans going on right now at the county level. There is the economic development strategic plan, Onslow County strategic plan and Emergency Services EMS strategic plan.

Councilman Hines asked if it is Onslow County, why would Holly Ridge not be included in that because it sounds like they were just doing the unincorporated areas. Manager Reynolds said we have oversight through our ordinances, and they would not regulate that.

Manager Reynolds said kickball is off to a great start and there are over sixty participants. This is the Town's first kickball league, and we have six teams including a house team that is a combination of SoCo and town employees. Games are on Wednesdays at the park from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

Manager Reynolds said Town Managers will be touring next month, monthly meetings of each council to present the garbage and recycling joint RFP. They have already met with possible contractors. Everyone that has GFL is at the same point of almost wanting to tell GFL do not to submit because we are at the point where it is very frustrating. The hope is that all four towns come together and doing the RFP is that we will get a better price overall by combining, we will get a better level of service and hopefully one of the smaller companies, because of having such a large contract we will be able to make capital investments into their businesses to purchase additional trucks so they have the means to service a contract like that.

Manager Reynolds said they will all attend each other's meetings and some of those meetings will be work sessions. Manager Reynolds said we are looking into increasing recycling every week.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti asked if there is any discussion about what the trucks are doing to our streets. Manager Reynolds said there is. GFL says a lot of times it is the mechanical arms that are causing the leaks. By the time GFL get the cleaners out to clean the streets it has already penetrated. The hydraulic fluid will break down the asphalt a lot quicker. Manager Reynolds said we are getting ready to spend over two million dollars on our streets, and we have a trash company that is not responsive to our complaints.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti asked if litigation is possible. Manager Reynolds said yes there is. Manager Reynolds said Deputy Clerk, Tracy sat in yesterday in a meeting with all the managers and it sounds like we hope to have the RFP out by October of this year.

Councilman Hines asked if there is a way a bond could be placed on the new company in case they damage to our streets. Manager Reynolds said she is not sure, but she will investigate this and report back.

Manager Reynolds said Holly Ridge was awarded the money for the RCCP grant. Manager Reynolds said we were awarded the Greenway projects, so the funds will be used for a feasibility study and anything that is left over will go towards engineering and design.

Manager Reynolds said the emergency operations center was not awarded but they did give us some other avenues where we could apply for more funding.

Manager Reynolds said the last thing is the EMS services strategic plan. Manager Reynolds, Mayor Wenzel and Fire Chief Brandon Longo met with the counties consultant and went through all our concerns. Mayor Wenzel, Fire Chief Longo and Manager Reynolds met with the counties consultant and went through all our concerns. It has been an ongoing issue with response times and the county is aware. A meeting was scheduled with Manager Smitherman, and he was going to get back with us about an immediate fix. Manager Reynolds said he is aware that Holly Ridge is taking money from our budget to go towards a service that they should be offering.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said he is tired of the county blowing smoke. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti emailed all the council and county commissioners, and Mayor Pro-Tem Patti received responses back and he thought they were going to man the ambulance for twelve-hour shifts. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said that is what he was told and apparently that was smoke. Manager Reynolds said she was there last week, and it was not maned. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said Chief Longo fought hard to get that ambulance parked at Holly Ridge Volunteer Fire Department. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said when he talked to Norman Bryson in December, he said they were working on it, we have nineteen people in the pipeline, and it should be rectified by the spring. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti asked the audience to put pressure on the county as well because this is extremely scary.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said he is livid because he and his family were in a situation awhile ago where he put his child in the car and left because he did not trust an ambulance coming.

Manager Reynolds said our fire and rescue went through an approval board on the state level to have in-house fire medics. The Town has allotted almost \$300,000.00 to the fire and rescue to employ twenty-four hours, seven days a week coverage for a fire medic as a stop gap until the county can figure out what is going on. Manager Reynolds said Chairman Foster was glad to hear this because not only is Holly Ridge asking for help, but Holly Ridge has also put money where their mouth is, and we are looking at solutions.

Councilman Hines said the downside to this is we still must wait for an ambulance, and even though the ambulance is over there, the county will not let our people drive it. Manager Reynolds said the fire medic is equipped with the cardiac unit.

Manager Reynolds said Fire Chief Longo is hoping to start interviewing and hiring people for the medic position by the end of the year. Manager Reynolds said we got approved at the state level but there is one more approval that must happen.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said Fire Chief Longo is going through a lot with this. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said people are stopping at the fire station and asking for medical help which is a burden on him and his staff. This is not what they are supposed to do. People see the ambulance at the fire station, and they assume they can transport whoever needs care to a place and they cannot. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti asked if we could get a map of the businesses in the Industrial Park. Manager Reynolds said we are working on a master map for Phase I and Phase II, and Phase III, existing with the companies and the number of jobs to the Department of Transportation.

Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the Following Minutes
- July 9th, 2024, Regular Meeting
 - July 31st, 2024, Special Meeting
- B. Department Head Reports
- Finance Department
 - Fire Department
 - Police Department
 - Planning & Zoning Inspections Report
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Grants Report
- C. Committee Reports
- Planning Board
 - Board of Adjustment
 - ONWASA
 - Busy Bee Committee

A motion was made by ***Councilman Hines*** and seconded by ***Councilman Misciagno*** to approve the Consent Agenda. ***All Agreed.***

Old Business

Discussion and Possible Approval of Officially Forming a Branding & Marketing Committee and a Political Connections committee and to Establish the Membership and Authorize the Town Manager to Advertise the Creation of Committees and Accept Applications from the Public.

Councilman Parnian said a couple of months ago, we agreed to proceed to phase I of the two committees. Councilman Parnian did phase I deliverable and sent it to the members of the Town Council. The main step in the next phase is to get membership. Councilman Parnian has received feedback and when we started the concept, all of those are going to

be incorporated into what we need to do to go forward. The idea pushing the phase one deliverable was the two committees to start with. Phase one delivery is comprehensive. Councilman Parnian has asked Manager Reynolds to advertise.

Councilman Parnian said one committee is a political advocacy, political connection. The marketing branding committee workgroup is to create collateral and based on history and time and where we are going. Councilman Parnian said the next step is to get three people from the committee and the Town Council and we will interview the members of the committee based on criteria in your packet.

Councilman Hines thanked Councilman Parnian for all his hard work on this project and he knows Councilman Parnian would like something done immediately, but there are a few concerns. Councilman Hines said we have not budgeted anything for this project. Councilman Parnian wants to hire a staff member, and they would need travel money. Councilman Hines said at the last meeting there was talk about developing tourism and at the last meeting, people were not interested in making Holly Ridge a tourist destination. Councilman Hines said he does not know how important it is to try and develop tourism to this area as it is to work on other areas. Councilman Hines suggested having a workshop or something and investigate this before we start making decisions.

Councilman Parnian said phase II is more definitions. Councilman Parnian said as far as the budget for marketing and brand development, there were four-line ideas that we were going to combine to create a possible position. All of this is going to be combined by this work team for doing the next phase. Councilman Parnian said as far as travel, which is far away. Councilman Parnian said we are not at a point where this needs to be a no go.

Councilman Hines said he is not saying to stop, we need to pause because we have a lot of other issues. Councilman Hines said for example we have no idea what is going to happen with the housing authority.

Councilman Parnian said let's go forward and get the members of the public that have experience plus guidance.

Councilman Misciagno said he hears both sides but there is also the Master Park Plan that we need to talk about. Councilman Misciagno said he is okay with phase I but the deliverables for any cost that are associated is not going to be this year.

Manager Reynolds said she thinks Councilman Parnian is asking for the makeup of the committees and who from the Town Council is going to be the liaison on the committees.

Councilman Parnian recommends two people from Town Council and Councilman Parnian would like to be involved because he would like to run this as a project. Councilman Parnian said he would like three people from the community with the experience based on the qualifications would be good.

A motion was made by **Councilman Misciagno** and seconded by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** to approve forming a Branding & Marketing Committee and a Policial connections committee and to Establish the Membership and Authorize the Town Manager to Advertise the Creation of Committees and Accept Applications from the Public and to appoint three people from the public and two people from the Town Council. **All Agreed.**

New Business

Discussion and Possible Approval of an Offer of \$150,000.00 to Purchase Lot 16 in Phase II of Camp Davis Industrial Park consisting of 2 Acres by Joseph and Andrew Roberts

Manager Reynolds said Spruill Thompson is here for this item. Joseph and Andrew Roberts presented an offer of \$150,000.00 to the Town for the purchase of Lot 16 in the Industrial Park. The parcel consists of approximately 2 acres. The offer has come in at \$75,000.00 per acres. Currently we are selling parcels at \$100,000.00 per acre, which is what the market demands.

Manager Reynolds and Mr. Thompson have both communicated to the potential buyer that it was below our asking price. Manager Reynolds said accepting this offer would result in a \$50,000.00 loss to the Town on our projected lot sales.

Councilman Hines asked if the potential buyer had put an offer to purchase before the price was raised. Mr. Thompson said no, he did not hear from this purchaser until the middle of June. The price had been established at this level for some time. Mr. Thompson said the market value is \$100,000.00 per acre and the potential buyer did not want to hear it.

A motion was made by **Councilman Parnian** and seconded by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** to decline an offer of \$150,000.00 from Joseph Roberts and Andrew Roberts for the purchase of lot 16 in phase II of the Industrial Park consisting of two acres. **All Agreed.**

Consideration of a Proposal from WithersRavenel to Prepare a Master Park Plan for the Holly Ridge Municipal Park in the Amount of \$49,500.00.

Manager Reynolds said during budget discussions, there was some conversation about a splash pad and other improvements to the park. Prior to building the splash pad or any other structure, a plan needs to be put in place. Manager Reynolds said she knows there was interest among the Town Council members to have a plan on how to implement that portion of the Master Park Plan that was developed in 2021 and adopted. That plan was an overall plan for all the park facilities, all the park properties that the Town owns.

Manager Reynolds said this Master Park Plan, which is very confusing, is specific to the municipal part. They would look at the layout, they would go through the community engagement piece, surveys, all the things that happened with the overall Master Park Plan to create a Master Park Plan whether it is municipal park only.

Manager Reynolds said we received an offer from WithersRavenel in the amount of \$49,500.00. This project would include the plan, but also the work that would lead up to the final product. Manager Reynolds said she feels like the proposal from WithersRavenel, while it is high, there is substantial value to this project being completed by WithersRavenel. We have worked with them on other projects, and they are involved in our street process. They also did the Master Park Plan in 2021. They are familiar with our facilities and our vision.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said they are also involved in our grant writing, so they could slide in and focus on certain things.

Parks and Recreation Director, Audrey Madia said her key piece is that it would make us more competitive when going towards LWCF and Partf grant.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said it is one of our objectives to move forward with the Master Park Plan and our strategic vision. We have an opportunity to set up the pins and then pick off the pins one by one in time. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said he is a firm believer in showing taxpayers something tangible.

Manager Reynolds said it is important to note also that while new facilities have not been added yet, the Town has worked to accomplish a lot of the initial deliverables out of the Master Park Plan, which were to address the fence at the baseball field. It was a residential fence, and we replaced it with a commercial fence and there have been upgrades to the dugouts.

Manager Reynolds said with Ms. Madia's okay on this, there is \$240,000.00 budgeted in Capital improvement's line item under Parks and Recreation. We could take it from this line item and when an additional project such as the lights that were awarded a grant, we could do a budget amendment later.

Councilman Misciagno asked how long the Master Park Plan is good for. Manager Reynolds said she thinks five years. In the proposal there was a section about portable cost where they would estimate what they feel the cost to the Town would be. Based on the draft Master Plan the consultant shall prepare a budgetary level of opinion of portable construction cost. The anticipated cost will be based on the design, the consultants past projects experience and industry standards. The opinion of probable cost will be used to assist the client and the consultant in discussions of phasing options.

Councilman Hines said we are going to put money into the ballfield to benefit a small group of people. Councilman Hines said he would rather build a building that would benefit every age group. Councilman Hines would like to see this building placed behind the community center because they could tie into each other.

A motion was made by **Councilman Parnian** and seconded by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** to approve a Proposal from WithersRavenel to prepare a Master Plan for the Holly Ridge Municipal Park in the amount of \$49,500.00 from line item 10-620-96-0. **All Agreed.**

Town Council Comments

Councilman Parnian thanked everyone for coming to the meeting tonight and the public comments we receive are greatly appreciated. Councilman Parnian said we look forward to having more people come to the meetings and express their comments and concerns.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and he thanked everyone for all the questions, texts and facebook messages. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti thanked Manager Reynolds and staff for all they did to prepare for tropical storm Debby. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti thanked Fire Chief Longo for the ambulance issue. Chief Longo is very emotional about this, and he is dealing with a lot of issues that he should not be.

Councilman Misciagno thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Councilman Hines said he does not have Facebook, but there were a lot of comments about the Town Council raising the building heights and that could possibly make Holly Ridge become a tourist destination. Councilman Hines said unless we get a drastic change in Holly Ridge, we are not going to be a tourist destination. A hotel is not going to make us a tourist destination. Councilman Hines said if he had family or visitors coming in, he does not have anywhere for them to stay, so a hotel is not going to be a bad thing. Councilman Hines said as far as a small-town life, he knows what a small-town life is, he grew up here when there were no paved roads. AS the Town grew, we established paved roads. Councilman Hines said growth is going to happen here, it does not matter what we do, the Town cannot control if people sell their property. Councilman Hines said he does not want to see us get like Swansboro. Swansboro said no we do not want a Wal-Mart in town, so Wal-Mart built right outside of town and now Swansboro receives no tax revenue from them at all.

Manager Reynolds said she has an update about Sierra Global. Greg Lawrence said they are moving along. They are past the rough in inspections and will be getting their finals within a month or two.

Manager Reynolds said this is Deputy Clerk Tracy Martin's last official Town Council meeting and we are going to miss her.

Town Attorney Comments

Announcements

- Thursday, August 15th, 2024, Bee City Committee Meeting – beginning at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers
- Tuesday, August 20th, 2024, Planning Board Meeting – beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers
- Saturday, August 31st, 2024, Liberty Festival – beginning at 3:00 p.m. in the Municipal Park
- Monday, September 2nd, 2024, Town Hall Closed in Observance of Labor Day
- Thursday, September 12th, 2024, Eastern Carolina Council Executive Committee Meeting – 233 Middle Street, New Bern
- Thursday, September 12th, 2024, Jacksonville Urban Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting – beginning at 3:30 p.m. – 1300 N. Marine Blvd, Jacksonville
- Thursday, September 19th, 2024, ONWASA Board Meeting – beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Jacksonville City Hall

Mayor Wenzel stated Manager Reynolds and himself were invited by the property manager for the Evolve luxury apartments that are being built on the south side of town. Mayor Wenzel said these are nice apartments with neat amenities. They do have an estimated move in date of three families on September 6th, 2024. Each of their buildings holds twenty-four units and there will be a total of 264 units.

Mayor Wenzel said he would like to thank Deputy Clerk; Tracy and it will not be the same.

Councilman Hines said the Evolve apartments is an example of what happens in Town. They could have built those apartments and not annexed them into the Town, but they did annex into the Town. This is where it helps with the growth of the Town. This is how we get the amenities that we want.

A motion was made by **Councilman Hines** and seconded by **Councilman Parnian** to go into Closed Session. *All Agreed.*

Closed Session

Consider the Performance of a Public Official per North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11 (a) (6)

A motion was made by **Councilman Hines** and seconded by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** to return to Regular Session. *All Agreed.*

Mayor Wenzel said last month we did our performance evaluation for Manager Reynolds. The Town Council split out her compensation portion of her performance evaluation tonight. Manager Reynolds currently makes \$132,800.00 and the Town Council decided, and we will

be voting on here based upon motion is to give Manager Reynolds a 2% COLA increase and a 2% performance evaluation for a new salary of \$138,112.00.

A motion was made by ***Councilman Parnian*** and seconded by ***Councilman Misciagno*** to approve a 2% COLA and a 2% performance evaluation which brings Manager Reynolds new salary to \$138,112.00. ***All Agreed.***

Mayor Wenzel thanked Manager Reynolds for all she does, and she is the biggest asset that this Town has. Mayor Wenzel said Manager Reynolds works extremely hard and she cares about this Town. Mayor Wenzel said Manager Reynolds works more hours to the detriment of her health and family. Mayor Wenzel said he is glad to get this salary in line with the local towns around here considering Manager Reynolds had three times the experience. Each Town Council member congratulated Manager Reynolds on her job performance and the increase in her salary.

Adjournment

A motion was made by ***Councilman Hines*** and seconded by ***Councilman Misciagno*** to adjourn at 8:32 p.m. ***All Agreed.***

Attest:

Jeff Wenzel, Mayor

Tracy Martin, Deputy Clerk

These minutes were recorded and prepared by Deputy Town Clerk, Tracy Martin.

DRAFT