

# TOWN OF BETHANIA COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2020

On March 12, 2020, the Board of Commissioners meeting for the Town of Bethania was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Mayor Brent S. Rockett. In attendance at the Alpha Chapel, 5385 Ham Horton Lane, were Mayor Brent S. Rockett, Mayor Pro Tem Michelle Leonard and Commissioners Tom Beroth and John Rogers. Commissioner Randy Rogers was absent.

Commissioner John Rogers the invocation; Mayor Rockett led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** Mayor Rockett asked for a motion to adopt the Agenda of the March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. Commissioner Beroth made a motion to adopt the Agenda. Motion passed unanimously (Attachment A).

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Mayor Rockett referred to the Litter Sweep scheduled for Saturday, April 4 at 9:00 AM. Commissioner Leonard added that the focus will be on the two roads coming into Bethania; she hopes to schedule a litter sweep four times a year.

Visitor Services Manager, Michele Williams, added that she ordered a banner “*Litter Sweep Saturday at 9:00 AM, Volunteers Needed*” which can be attached to the Visitor Center sign the week prior to a litter sweep.

Commissioner Leonard added that the BHA is hosting an Oyster Roast later that same day (April 4) with Curtis Smalling (Audubon wildlife biologist) as the tentative speaker. The program will start at 2:00 PM and all proceeds will go back into the Schoolhouse.

Mayor Rockett attended a DOT meeting earlier today focusing on access to the MST as it relates to the new beltway. (Mike Leonard participated via telephone.) There was also discussion regarding designating Bethania trails and the LongCreek proposed trails as part of the MST.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mayor Rockett asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2020 Board Meeting. Commissioner Leonard made a motion to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously. The Board signed the minutes.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS:** Town Accountant, Rebecca Keith, presented the financial reports as of February 29, 2020 (Attachment B), noting fund and bank balances. We are on track with income (76%) and expenditures (45%). The net income YTD is \$69,497. There were no questions. Commissioner Beroth thanked Ms. Keith.

**VISITOR CENTER UPDATE:** Visitor Services Manager, Michele Williams, was recently contacted by Bethania Moravian Church asking if the Town has any plans for a June anniversary event. The consensus among the Commissioners was not to plan an event.

Regarding the Black Walnut Festival, 60% of the vendor spaces are reserved at this time. Since Muddy Creek Café is not providing the food this year, she has contacted six food trucks, and received responses from three. Discussion followed about the proposed contract with the band Raincheck.

Upcoming events include a Hiking Group on March 27, Creek Week on March 28, Litter Sweep on April 4, and a talk for Forsyth Genealogy on April 7. Preservation month events include a Gravestone Cleaning Talk and God’s Acre Tour on May 9 from 1:00 to 2:00 (former Mayor Deborah Thompson has agreed to give the tour), and a Talk and Walk about wild edible plants in Bethania on May 16 beginning at 10:00 AM.

Lastly, Dr. Williams polled the Commissioners about keeping the Visitor Center open in light of the current concerns regarding Covid-19. Discussion followed, with the consensus being that it would be ignorant to keep the Visitor Center open in light of the current situation. Commissioners Leonard and John Rogers will meet tomorrow for formulate a plan.

**PTRC UPDATE:** This agenda item postponed to April Board meeting due to Commissioner Randy Rogers absence.

**ADMINISTRATIVE:** Town Clerk, Karen Keller, presented the February Traffic Report. A total of 11 tickets were written, with 11 of those being speeding tickets. The average MPH over was 20.91. There were also numerous security and neighborhood patrols.

She updated the Commissioners on the Bethania Road closure. Mayor Rockett talked with Pat Ivey (NCDOT District Engineer); he indicated they hoped to begin the repair work by the end of March.

Ms. Keller asked the Commissioners if they would like to schedule a Budget Working Session for the 2020-2021 budget; discussion followed with the Commissioners agreeing to meet for a Budget Working Session on Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 9:30 AM.

This shall service as notice of the Special Board Meeting, Budget Working Session on Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 9:30 AM.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Ginny Rutter expressed concern about older bridges on the trail as well as trail maintenance. Commissioner Beroth recently inspected the bridges; he feels they are safe at this time, but also realizes they need to be replaced. Chuck Rutter added that the Orchard Trail needs maintenance; Commissioner Beroth will take his chainsaw up there and clean it up. Commissioner Beroth added that he mowed the fields today.

Mayor Rockett stated that going forward, he would like to use Powell funds for greenway (trail) maintenance.

Discussion followed about the closure of Bethania Road. Mayor Rockett will contact Pat Ivey tomorrow and ask for more barricades, as vehicles seem to be driving around the road closed signs. Ginny Rutter volunteered to post the closure of Bethania Road on the NextDoor app.

Bethania resident Daniel Hamel talked about artifacts he found in the waterways near the Black Walnut Bottoms trail and in the Muddy Creek on the south side of Highway 67/Reynolda Road. He feels the area should be designated as a protected site as well as a Native American settlement. Commissioner Leonard explained that some of this property is state land and already protected. She cautioned him that removing archaeological artifacts can compromise the property.

Town Accountant, Rebecca Keith, thanked the Mayor, Commissioners and staff for the flower arrangement she received while recovering from a recent heart attack. Commissioner John Rogers also thanked the Mayor, Commissioners and staff for the flowers sent to his fathers (former Commissioner Jerry Rogers) funeral.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Commissioner Beroth made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

**Respectfully submitted for approval, the Minutes of the Board of Commissioners Meeting of March 12, 2020, consisting of three pages.**

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**Submitted by Karen Keller  
Town Clerk**

**APPROVED BY:**

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**Brent S. Rockett  
Mayor, Town of Bethania**

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**Michelle Leonard  
Mayor, Pro Tem**

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**Randy J. Rogers (Absent)**

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**John Rogers**

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**Tom Beroth  
Finance Officer**