

# TOWN OF BETHANIA COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2020

On September 10, 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 were Mayor Rockett and Commissioners Randy Rogers, Tom Beroth and John Rogers. Also present: Visitor Services Manager, Michele Williams and Town Clerk, Karen Keller. Mayor Pro Tem Michelle Leonard, Attorney Elliot Fus and Accountant Rebecca Keith were absent.

Mayor Rockett gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** Mayor Rockett asked for a motion to adopt the Agenda of the September 10<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. Commissioner Beroth made a motion to adopt the agenda. Motion passed unanimously (Attachment A).

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Mayor Rockett recently attended a town hall meeting (via Zoom) with US Congressman Patrick McHenry. A good amount of the discussion included the Forsyth County Commissioners and Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines concerns regarding the disparity of CRF distribution among North Carolina counties. Congressman McHenry is aware of the disparity, and will address it, should future funds become available.

Town Clerk, Karen Keller, updated the Commissioners on former Mayor Deborah Thompson and Bethania resident Wayne Purgason, both of whom had surgery a month ago. They are both doing rehab and progressing well.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mayor Rockett asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 13, 2020 Regular Board Meeting. Commissioner John Rogers made a motion to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously. Mayor Rockett asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 24, 2020 Special Board Meeting (Request for CRF Funds). Commissioner John Rogers made a motion to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously. The Board signed the minutes.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS:** Commissioner Beroth explained the Financial Reports as of August 31, 2020 (Attachment B), stating we stayed within budget in all categories and are on solid financial footing. Discussion followed regarding Occupancy income. Mayor Rockett thanked Commissioner Beroth.

**VISITOR CENTER UPDATE:** Visitor Services Manager Michele Williams asked the Commissioners for direction regarding Phase 2.5 and their plan to reopen the Visitor Center. She estimates no more than 4 persons would be allowed in the Visitor Center at a time, based on current protocol. She also offered that Old Salem is not reopening at this time. Commissioner John Rogers stated that he and Commissioner Leonard do not feel strongly about moving forward with reopening the Visitor Center at this time. Discussion followed, with Mayor Rockett offering that he will leave the decision to reopen the Visitor Center up to Commissioners Leonard and John Rogers.

Other items of discussion included: trimming of trees and stringing of lights (Commissioner Beroth will contact Orville Jones), recent Facebook contest *Bethania Bug Safari* with 20 participants posting over 60 photos, and the recent Podcast collaboration with Bethabara being a big hit; the most popular so far in the series. Dr. Williams also walked the trails this past weekend and noted that most all of the trail bridges have holes in them and all the trails need to be cleared of encroaching poison ivy.

She has another podcast scheduled for October – this will focus on the History of Medicine and she is also working on a photo contest in conjunction with Preservation Forsyth.

Commissioner Randy Rogers is encouraged by the current social media promotion of Bethania, the trails and the Visitor Center; he asked about peak times for visitors. Discussion followed, with Dr. Williams stating that scheduled events (BWF, tree lighting, etc.) - along with good weather - attract the most visitors.

After discussion about holding it outside, Mayor Rockett suggested at this time we proceed with holding the annual tree lighting, scheduled for Sunday, December 6, 2020.

**TRAIL VOLUNTEER WORKDAY:** Commissioner John Rogers stated that Commissioner Leonard would like to schedule a 2 day “Jamboree/Volunteer Workday” around October 10. It would either incorporate a Friday and Saturday or a Saturday and Sunday. The plan is to have a list of projects prior to the workdays, so those interested in participating can be assigned a project. Michele Williams offered that the annual *Great Waterway Cleanup* is scheduled to take place in October; that may be a good model to follow for a safe clean up event. Commissioner Beroth will order more sand rock for placement on the trails.

Mayor Rockett suggested a Friday/Saturday might be better than a Saturday/Sunday combination. Commissioner John Rogers will talk with Commissioner Leonard and make a decision. Once the dates are decided, an email blast will be sent out, along with postings on social medias asking for volunteers.

**ADMINISTRATIVE:** Town Clerk, Karen Keller stated that there were 22 total tickets written during the month of August, with 22 of those being speeding tickets. The average MPH over was 20.00. There were also numerous security checks and neighborhood patrols.

Commissioner Randy Rogers detailed a recent hit and run incident involving a parked vehicle and also stated he has noticed an increase in speeding vehicles heading out of Bethania toward Tobaccoville.

Mayor Rockett offered that due to the current pandemic, students who don’t have internet access may need to use the Wi-Fi at the Visitor Center complex, which would involve giving them the password; will keep an ear out to see if there is a need.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Commissioner Beroth made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

**Respectfully submitted for approval, the Minutes of the Board of Commissioners Meeting of September 10, 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 (Absent)  
Mayor, Pro Tem**

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**John Rogers**

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**Randy Rogers**

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**Tom Beroth  
Finance Officer**