

**TOWN OF WINFALL
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
May 8, 2023, 6:00 pm.
WINFALL TOWN HALL, WINFALL, NC 27985**

The regular monthly meeting of the Winfall Town Council was called to order by Mayor Pro-Tem Preston White at 6:00 pm. Mayor Pro-Tem Preston White made a motion adjourn the Town Council Meeting for April 10, 2023, and was seconded by Councilwoman Valery McDonald and so carried.

The regular monthly meeting of the Winfall Town Council was called to order by Mayor Fred Yates at 6:05 p.m. Invocation was given by Councilman Preston White, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Fred Yates.

Those in attendance were Mayor Fred Yates, Mayor Pro-Tem Preston White, Councilwoman Valery McDonald, Councilwoman Carol Cooper, Councilman Christopher Richardson, Attorney Crowe, Valerie Jackson, Town Clerk. Debbie Parker (ARP) was absent.

Citizen's attending was Robert Valentine, Lucretia Washington, Ellis Washington, Ronald Smirlock, Art & Linda Stewart, Debra Long, Jeremi Holley, Johvahnice Winslow, Joyce Lee, Quentin Jackson, Ms. Felton, Mr. Cooper.

Mayor Fred Yates asked if it was a conflict of Interest. None was declared. A motion was made by Councilman Preston White and was seconded by Councilwoman Valery McDonald and so carried.

Approval of the Agenda: A motion was made to approve the Agenda for May 8, 2023, meeting by Councilman Preston White and seconded by Councilwoman Valery McDonald with the correction of closing out the previous meeting and so carried.

Approval of the minutes. Councilwoman Valery McDonald -I would like that if we could get Mrs. Brenda's letter that she read last month. I would like to add it to the minutes. I know that the letter is not in the minutes. I figure if she could just give us a copy of her letter, that way we would have it in the minutes. Thank you. Councilwoman Carol Cooper- We're not supposed to discuss it until after you vote right. Councilman Preston White-responded "yes". Councilman Preston White responded, I seconded. Councilwoman Carol Cooper, ask, if you have a motion, and somebody seconded. Councilman Preston White replied, yes. Councilwoman Carol Cooper replied, ok, I have a thing. This is not accurate. Mrs. Brenda did not quit at this meeting, she might have quit a second or third time, but she quit on April 6th. (Valerie) She also quit at the meeting. Councilwoman Carol Cooper responded she was not personnel manager at the meeting. She was not a representative or personnel manager at the meeting because she had already quit on April 6th. After much discussion a motion was made to approve the Minutes for April 10, 2023, with the corrections (removing the summary of Brenda Dillard letter regarding the ethics and unprofessionalism of Councilwoman Carol Cooper and requesting the original letter from Brenda Dillard to be attached. The correction of Power Bill, to **Powell Bill**, the removal of Brenda Dillard as Personnel Manager on April 10, 2023, minutes. Meeting as is by Councilwoman Carol Cooper and seconded by Councilman Preston White and so carried.

Corrections: Councilwoman Cooper questioned about the Conflict of Interest was not in the recording. **No one responded to the conflict of interest on April 10, 2023, meeting.** Additionally, she did not motion that the agenda be accepted in the last meeting. *After re-listening to the audio recording, (no facial video) evidently Valery McDonald made the motion to accept the agenda, seconded by Councilwoman Carol Cooper and so carried. According to the recording one motion and one (woman) seconded. Mayor Pro Temp White states that there are a lot of changes going on and he will do the best he can to try to iron some things out if they continue to communicate, they will be able to accomplish those things.*

Financial Report:

The accountant Richard Arnold reported there were changes to the Financials and as follows: was amended to General Fund Revenues to increase Town Tags \$150.00; decrease in vehicle tax refunds 150.00, increase public announcement \$ 900.00, decrease admin training \$ 900.00 Roads & Ground Expenditures: decrease in outside labor \$2,150, increase Building Repairs & Maintenance. \$2,150, Sewer: Maintenance & Repairs increase 1,000, telephone increase \$ 1,300, Sewer Treatment decrease \$ 2,300. Councilman Preston White made a motion to approve the *Financial Report* with changes and was seconded by Councilwoman Valery McDonald and after discussion so carried.

Old Business:

- A. Policies Approval: Tabled. Councilwoman Cooper (*Oh Shew*) stated she left the items home. She questioned whether she sent them to Mrs. Jackson. Mrs. Jackson said she did not send them to her.

New Business:

- A. Budget (Proposal) Tabled -*Councilwoman Carol Cooper ask CPA Richard Arnold who had been paying the police phone bill all this year? Not the whole year. Richard, contingency fund.*

Who's been paying it because it has not been coming out of their budget. He responded, just shut it down, Councilwoman Cooper this week. Just curious. Councilman Christopher, ask who has that phone? Councilwoman Cooper, it's locked up in the police room, I guess, it's just been sitting lonely, wasting the taxpayer's money. Cooper murmuring off. Mayor Yates, Budget Proposal, bank signatures authorization. Councilwoman Cooper said she don't want to be added, she was quitting as Finance Officer. I don't want to be the finance officer anymore. You can add somebody else as (32:28). Councilwoman Carol Cooper responded you need to figure out how you going to add someone else as finance officer. It should not be so difficult to whoever the next finance officer is. I'm not going to be the finance officer anymore, I'm tired of playing games. After discussion Councilwoman Carol Cooper responded that we must send the proposed budget to the state. The Budget Proposal was tabled (according to Mayor Yates) however, the preliminary budget had to go to the State this week (32:58). The accountant and Council responded that they had a Budget meeting last week. They discussed that they pretty much had a layout. (34:59).

Councilwoman Carol Cooper wanted to make a motion that in the new budget year that we contract with the fire department and allow them to handle their own budget. We give the fire department a \$45,000 contract fee and they handle their own money, and that the Town of Winfall just contract with them. They are a separate entity and we just contract with them for \$45000.00 year, and Councilwoman Valery McDonald responded, "we discussed this last year, March of last year, we just never made a motion. We need to make a motion before the end of the year. Councilwoman Carol Cooper said she wanted to make a motion that it be in effect July 1st. and Councilwoman Valery McDonald seconded the motion. Councilman Christopher Richardson responded that he had a question, he wanted to know what the pros was and what was the con. Councilwoman Cooper is the pro is that they handle their own funds, (there was conversation in the background that could not be understood. The town can't hold over money, and they would be allowed to. The accountant Richard Arnold had more discussions because he reminded them the town still had to subsidize half the grant. Councilwoman Cooper, we're just to pay them a fee. *She responded, to the CPA, when you come on council than you can get involved in making decisions. Councilman Preston White wanted to know why the CPA was asking the questions regarding the funding, (cannot be understood because councilwoman Carol Cooper was talking over him) With the discussion from the CPA, about the funding, Councilwoman Carol Cooper stated, one thing is the town has had 3 bad audits in a row, that means we are not doing something right with our money. Councilman Richardson ask do we do the same with the police, or roads and grounds. Comments from Chief, regarding nothing else to change, Councilwoman Carol Cooper said the fire department would just be allowed to do what they want with their money. After much discussions, Councilwoman Cooper made a motion to contract with the Fire Department, and they handle their own budget (\$45,000) and the Town just contract with them (in effect July 1st). Councilwoman McDonald seconded. A discussion was held, and Mayor Pro Temp White suggested tabling it for further information (43:20). Councilman Preston White made a motion that the finance report go as is and to table the fire department concern until next meeting. Councilman Christopher Richardson seconded, and so carried (45).*

B. PNC Bank Signature Authorization for Finance Officer: Councilwoman Carol Cooper stated she quit, resigned as Finance Officer.

C. Debbie Parker (ARP Update) Absent. Councilmembers had a copy of the update in their packet. (46:00) – Councilwoman Cooper stated that it had already been approved (according to Debbie Jean Whedbee) even though the Council did not know what they were doing. It has been already submitted, but discussions were still held regarding the ARP Report. According to Councilwoman Cooper they change the reporting method. Valery McDonald said they should have 3 bids. She can't get 3 bids, Mayor Yates maybe requests a waiver. Councilwoman Valery who is I'm making the waiver too. Do she need to contacting Pam Hurdle for support (48:30 -52:00). That's what she will do.

Administration: Zoning Board – Councilwoman Cooper stated that she was resigning from the Board as of (tonight). (56:39). She stated that the Mobile Homes Planning Board met and requested that the Town rezoned it as R2. Which she states with is the proper zoning. It was questioned by Council that it had to go to the Rezoning Committee (58:00) Councilwoman I resigning as zoning as zoning administrator.

Sewer: Just finish.

D. POLICE – Mayor Yates inquired about the Sheriff Department. Councilwoman Cooper stated she put it in the upcoming budget for 2 police officers for the town. She also stated that a Finance Officer needs to be appointed during the meeting so they would not be in violation. Mrs. Rountree said it has to be a employee or council and Debra Jean knows it can't be her.

E. Finance Officer: None. Finance Officer Carol Cooper quit prior to finance officer report.

Other Information: Councilwoman Carol Cooper made the accusations that maybe the fire department did not want they funds in with the town of Winfall because there was a time when the town didn't make two truck payments and then she went on to question different people regarding it.

Departments:

- A. **Roads & Grounds: (1:00:00)** – Councilwoman McDonald said it was reported that there is a big hole in front of the Water Department (on Creek Drive) that needs to be fixed. DOT. It was stated that the potholes needed to be fixed. Haven't been able to get Mr. Belch out to fix them. (Mayor Pro Temp white) - Hired out personal contracts to cut down the grass. The price will probably double while trying to keep up with the grass. More discussion and information were provided regarding the current ground issues. He questioned should they look for another company to assist with cutting grass. He noted that the bill would go up. After much discussion, one company for resident lawn and one company for roads and grounds. Councilman Preston made a motion to hire two companies to cut the grass and was seconded by Councilman Christopher Richardson, and so carried.
- B. **Sewer/Recreation/Sercap: Councilwoman and Christopher talked to Sercap. They were to get back with Ms. Valerie.**

TOURISM – Mayor Pro Temp White stated that the Town of Hertford asked the Town to pay \$500.00 for the fireworks for July 2nd. Motion was made by Valery McDonald and was seconded by Councilman Preston White and so carried.

Public Safety:

- C. **Fire: No Updates**

Committee Report:

Personnel Manager Report: Mayor Pro-Tem White read the personnel Managers report, reporting that grass cutting is here, and Roads and Grounds maintenance are in full force trying to cut the grass and keeping the paper and debris picked up on the streets of the Town.

Attorney: (1:10:40) – Raleigh needed information regarding crime against the Town of Winfall. Raleigh wanted to know if they wanted to waive the Restitution for crimes in the Town. It was motioned by no facial recognition and seconded by Councilman Preston White to request the money and so carried.

Mayor Yates read a notification from Councilwoman Carol Cooper, quitting all her positions in the Town as well as resigning from the Town Council. (1:11:59), May 8, 2023. Mayor Yates ask for a motioned to approve Councilwoman Carol Cooper resigning. Councilwoman Valery McDonald made and was seconded by Councilman Richardson and so carried. The Motion was carried. Yates stated they needed to look for another Council Person. It was also stated that the Town needed to look for another Finance Officer. (1:15:23). Councilman Christopher Richardson stated he would be the Finance Officer. Mayor Yates motioned Councilman Christopher Richardson to fill the position as Finance Officer and was seconded by Councilwoman Valery McDonald and so carried.

It was stated that someone was needed to fill the position of Zoning Administration (1:18:11). Councilwoman Cooper suggested Lewis Smith. It was asked if someone would check with him.

Someone was needed to handle the Fire Department. Councilman Christopher Richardson stated that he would take it. It was motioned and the motion was carried. (1:19:45) Councilwoman Valery McDonald that Councilman Christopher Richardson would take on the fire department and seconded by Councilman Preston White and so carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (1:20:17)

Debra Long: Make sure all positions have been filled, motioned, and carried out.

1. She asked about the proposed budget information before the fiscal year (grass cutting, 2 police officers etc..). She wanted to make sure it was accurate.
2. What's the status of the dilapidated house (Spellman's house) discussed in Council meetings.
3. She wanted to know how much money was spent on the building. Contract on the building.
4. Website information has not been updated since 2022. In a later statement, Mrs. Jackson noted that there were issues with the website, and they were looking into the matter. (The website has been updated).
5. Was Mr. Felton contacted regarding repayment requested at the last meeting for doing his own ditches. Councilwoman Cooper stated that she called the person who did the work and asked for an invoice.
6. The letter provided by Brenda Dillard is a matter of interpretation and she was not at the Council Meeting to defend herself regardless of whatever anyone else says. (Carol, I called Mr. Felton told him to bring his receipt to the office.)
7. All positions need to be filled before the end of the meeting.
8. Concerns about the heaviness in the Town Council If you going to publicize, publicize. There's a lot of pettiness. Meetings _Stewart (1:26:00)

9. She wanted to know why the Town failed 3 audits. The accountant explained the concern.

10. Motion:

Councilman Christopher Richardson made a motion to approve the minutes with all discussed changes to be applied, further whether any changes need to be applied, the official minutes will be available to upload to the Town Winfall's website after 3 business days from motion's approval and was seconded by Councilwoman Valery McDonald and so carried.

Issues:

Town Probation Status: Councilman Christopher Richardson made a motion to make available all publicly information and/ or report on the Town's probation history and status, and to publish publicly available information to the Town's website within 3 business days after the TC Council approves this motion and was seconded by Councilwoman Valery McDonald and so carried.

Town of Winfall Audit:

Councilman Christopher Richardson made a motion to make available all publicly available information and or reports(s) on the Town's Audit report status, and to publish publicly available information to the Town's website within 3 business days after the TC Council approves this motion and was seconded by Councilwoman Valery McDonald and so carried.

Budget and Year End Financial Reports:

Councilman Christopher Richardson made a motion to make available all publicly available information and or report on the Town's current Fiscal Year (FY) Budget and Previous Years (s) Financial Report to be made available for public viewing at the Town Hall bulletin boards and to publish publicly available information/reports to the Town's website within 3 business days after the TC Council approves this motion and was seconded by Councilwoman Valery McDonald and so carried.

Town Email Addresses:

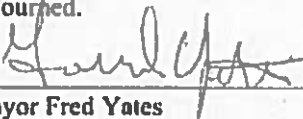
Councilman Christopher Richardson made a motion that the Town of Winfall seek multiple pricing bids for email hosting services, so every town official has and uses the approved Town's email. As part of this process, the Town of Winfall will also need to provide an email domain-the email domain is after the @ symbol in the email address (example: Mayor@TownofWinfall.org) and was seconded by Councilwoman Valery McDonald and so carried.

Once a service has been selected and after a normally testing period and cutover to the new email address, all Town employees will immediately stop using private email addresses to communicate and conduct official town of Winfall business and was seconded by Councilwoman Valery McDonald and so carried.

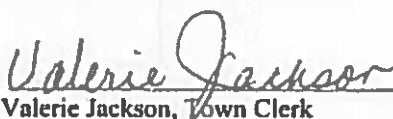
Councilman Christopher Richardson made a motion to adopt the Strategic Contingency Plan and was seconded by Councilwoman Valery McDonald so carried.

Other Information Public Comments:

At approximate 7:45 pm. Mayor Yates ask for a motion to adjourn the meeting, Carol Cooper motioned, and Councilman Preston White seconded and so carried. Carol Cooper was no longer a Councilmember. Invalid adjourned.



Mayor Fred Yates



Valerie Jackson, Town Clerk

Town Council Meetings are audio-recorded to maintain the integrity of the various discussions. The meetings minutes are just snapshots in time (recaps) of discussions. Copies of the complete recordings are available upon requests.