

### **March 12, 2021 meeting,**

The Franklin Town Council held its annual strategic planning meeting on March 12, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room. Mayor Robert S. Scott presided. Council Members Joe Collins, David Culpepper, Jack Horton, Mike Lewis, and Dinah Mashburn were present.

Staff present was Town Manager Summer Woodard, Town Clerk Travis Tallent, Town Planner Justin Setser, Accounting Technician Ali Stamey, Public Works Director Nathanael Moore, Fire Chief Ben Ormond, Police Chief Bill Harrell and Lieutenant Devin Holland.

A moment of silence was held for Vice Mayor Barbara McRae who passed away on March 2, 2021.

### **Introduction of Facilitators Russ Harris and Caroline LaFrienier**

### **Update on Town of Franklin Revenue Forecasting**

Town Manager Summer Woodard reviewed Town finances with concerns to the COVID-19 pandemic. She said the General Fund appeared to be down about \$38,500, Water and Sewer is down about \$17,813, and that Fire has no shortfall.

### **Discussion on Whitmire Property**

Council Member Collins said the property was originally purchased to be developed as a governmental complex which would contain Town Hall, Public Works, Police, and the Fire Department. He said that other decisions left that plan unrealized and now the Town still owns the vacant piece of property and needs to decide how to proceed with it.

Council Member Horton said that the purpose of the property needs to benefit the citizens of Franklin. He said setting a goal of when to decide would help move the process along.

Council Member Culpepper said that a \$14,000 survey had said the land is irreplaceable as an asset for the people and that he did not want to place a timeline on what to do.

Council Member Lewis said that so many people are just now becoming aware that the Town owns the property.

Council Member Collins reminded the board that the property could be well suited for mixed use.

Council Member Culpepper said that it was important to remember that that area of town has cultural significance and that the Nikwasi Initiative is developing a lot in that area of Town.

Mayor Scott said that before they do anything there should be a public hearing to get citizen input.

### **Discussion on Skate/Bike Park**

Council Member Culpepper said that there is a need for a skate park and/or a dirt pump track. He reminded the Council of the kids who attended the Town Council meeting previously to ask for one. He said that giving kids a place to go and enjoy their individual sport gives them a healthy outlet.

Council Member Horton said that it would be helpful to look at other parks in the region like Highlands and Waynesville and then have an idea of how to proceed.

### **March 12, 2021 meeting continued,**

Council Member Culpepper said that it may be beneficial to have discussions with the county, too.

Council Member Collins said that there very well could be a place for a skate-park on the Whitmire property as previously discussed.

### **Discussion on Lighting Plan for Commercial and Residential Development**

Town Manager Summer Woodard told the Town Council that staff could develop a lighting plan so that when requests came through from developers or residents there would be a uniform policy to refer to.

Council Member Horton said there needs to be a system in place this is fair to everyone.

Council Member Lewis said that guiding principles should include light pollution mitigation.

**Staff will have a draft plan by June 30, 2022.**

### **Discussion on Portable Sound Stage**

Council Member Collins said he thought this could benefit the Town. He said that over \$10,000 in costs would be too much but if it could be built in-house for less that it would be worth looking at.

Council Member Culpepper reminded the Town Council that the Whitmire Property is very similar to an amphitheater.

### **Discussion on Trash Pick-Up**

Lieutenant Holland said that he had been working with the DA's office to implement litter pick-up as a community service option.

Council Member Collins asked Lt. Holland to continue discussions with the DA about imposing community service on offenders but that he would like for staff to coordinate pickup.

Town Manager Summer Woodard said that even an informational flyer could be helpful.

Council Member Lewis said that working with the schools to teach the kids would help too. He said that children can be a deterrent to parents who may throw trash out a window.

### **Discussion on Labor Day Event**

The Town Council discussed the possibility of having a Labor Day event and decided to plan as time passes and the COVID-19 Pandemic hopefully subsides

### **Items from Mayor Scott and the Town Council**

Council Member Culpepper said that the water feature at Wesley's Park could provide an opportunity to work with the County and help them.

Council Member Collins said the Town needs to work with County more.

Council Member Horton said he would like to have joint meetings with the Planning Board, ABC Board, and Tourism Development Authority to talk about goals and sentiment among board members.

**March 12, 2021 meeting continued,**

Town Manager Summer Woodard said that she would work to set joint meetings with the Planning, ABC, and TDA Boards.

Council Member Lewis reminded the Board of Vice Mayor McRae's presentation on Lyman Fields. He said that he didn't think they should forget about the area moving forward.

**Adjournment**

**The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.**

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Robert S. Scott, Mayor

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Travis Tallent, Town Clerk