

**TOWN OF HUNTERSVILLE
REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING
MINUTES**

**August 15, 2011
6:30 p.m. – Town Hall**

The Regular Meeting of the Huntersville Board of Commissioners was held at the Huntersville Town Hall at 6:30 p.m. on August 15, 2011.

GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Jill Swain; Commissioners Charles Jeter, Ron Julian, and Sarah McAulay. Commissioner Danae Caulfield was not present.

Mayor Swain called for a moment of silence.

Mayor Swain led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS/STAFF QUESTIONS

Mayor Swain

- I was going to in my report give a discussion about the International Wheelchair Championship that happened here this past week. Actually the German women came a week early. I will let you do that when we get to public comments, but I do want to say this.....I am wowed by the community outpouring of assistance that happened with this event. I have to say when Josh Brock got the call from Travis that they needed gym space, Josh worked his back end off to find gym space, so did Cornelius Parks & Recreation. When Mr. Bryant came to a Fall into Huntersville committee meeting, which is a subcommittee of Huntersville Connection and talked to the people there, the word went out. Dee Jetton at Huntersville Family Fitness & Aquatics helped get buses for transportation. She helped get donated food for Saturday's lunches. I saw pizzas coming in from everywhere. And she helped deliver them as well. I believe there were massage therapists that volunteered their time. Our Parks & Rec people were there day in and day out. But then probably one of the most poignant moments to me, it was Thursday morning and there was a game between the German and Japanese men at Lake Norman Charter Middle School. There were four high school students sitting in the bleachers. They were just in awe and said to me Mrs. Swain, we didn't know about this. And I said well, it was kind of last minute and we were all getting the word out and we are doing the best we can. And they started on their cell phones. They did a Facebook invite to all of their friends to come to the 8 p.m. Australian/USA game. I'm thinking there are only going to be a few kids. There was like 1/3 of the bleachers were filled with Lake Norman Charter High School kids. Their faces were painted red, white and blue. They carried flags. They had red, white and blue shirts on. They had lights that were just red around them. And in the game they were going – USA, USA. But the best part of it was after the game when the Americans won, the Lake Norman Charter School kids poured out of the bleachers and went onto the floor and shook hands with all of the athletes and then suddenly that crowd gravitated to underneath a basket where the athletes were in front, the kids were in back, and they took a picture. And then I am thinking, what about the Australians, they lost. They were in a circle doing their huddle afterwards and here come Lake Norman Charter School girls, which made the Australian men very happy from what I understand, and they put their arms around them and they were part of the huddle. Our

community benefited from this. Our kids benefited from this and although it was almost a last minute effort, we didn't have as much time as we could have, we have so much potential to do so much more. I want you to have the opportunity to talk in just a minute and elaborate on all of this, but I will tell you I have not seen such incredible athletes before in my life and it was an honor for me to have you here and it was an honor for me to participate, so thank you for that.

- I don't have an MTC report at this time or ASC or Management Team, but I did want to give a report because I think this is very important right now, especially for our citizens and especially in light of everything that happened in the last several weeks about the debt ceiling. Because of the recent debt ceiling discussion and the corresponding reduction in the bond rating for the United States by Standard & Poor's, I wanted to make it a point to address the Huntersville situation publicly for all of our citizens. On July 29 of this year the Town of Huntersville received correspondence from Moody's that 162 local governments in 31 states that were rated AAA, as we are, were currently under review for possible downgrade due to the recent rating action on the United States government. It is important for our citizens to know that the Town of Huntersville was not impacted by this action. I've asked our Management Team and our Finance Director and have been assured that we are optimistic that we are going to maintain our AAA rating for the following reasons: we borrow money for capital projects, not operating expenses; our debt position remains manageable given our conservative debt policies and credit goes to the Board on that; we maintain a favorable financial performance; we have ample reserve levels; we have proactive management; and we have a diverse and growing property tax base. I also wanted to say as part of my report that we are purposely and aggressively looking for additional economic development opportunities with the assistance of Jerry Broadway with LNEDC and our lobbyist George Harris. In fact, over the last three weeks we've not only hosted one international corporate prospect, but on Friday we received notice that we have a second international prospect visit forthcoming. And I'm honored to say that the Chinese Forbes magazine recently called to interview Greg Ferguson and myself using Huntersville as an example of our economic stability and foresight and ability to attract international corporate entities. It's important for me as a Mayor to reassure our citizens that our town is in good financial position, but I also want to reiterate to our citizens that our staff is constantly looking forward and analyzing the what if situations in preparation for financial surprises. I'd like our citizens to be very proud of the fact that we are part of a community that looks forward, is progressive and still maintains a secure AAA bond rating.

Commissioner Julian said out of all that the union of Huntersville is strong, the EDC is bringing business constantly, our debt is low. Is that what I just heard?

Mayor Swain said you heard that.

Commissioner Jeter

- I'm going to yield back to the Mayor to give a report on the LNTC meeting, as I was on vacation.

Commissioner McAulay said it was a good meeting. Mayor McCrory was, as always, very informative and had a lot of good suggestions about funding and staying on target. The LNTC was already doing some of the things that he recommended, but it served as a good reminder and opportunity to share ideas.

Mayor Swain said I will say that also not only the very fact that the LNTC exists was something that Mayor McCrory said was very important especially now with the way the federal situation is looking, but also the Red Line Task Force, so when the federal transit entities look at this area they see five communities working together on transit. There were a couple of times that he would say well you should be doing this and many of us were at the edge of our chair wanting to say we already are.

Greg Ferguson, Town Manager, said I think one of the key points he made that's probably good for us is to keep communicating the vision. I think the example he used is the transit vote occurred and they thought that they had the momentum to build the entire system and then a few years later there was a recall vote essentially on that very idea, which again was successful but I think his point was don't forget to keep communicating the vision and show people what the vision is so that they can see it and it's not just words.

Commissioner Julian

- The next meeting of the EDC is August 18. The news is already out there that the ABB tower did cap out.
- The next Chamber board meeting is September 26. I will be attending. There were several items that Bill had sent an update on. First was the Chamber has hired Brett Zabek as Executive Vice President and COO. Brett's primary role will be strengthening our businesses and membership base and development. The Chamber is reaching out to some other chambers out in Denver as partnering and exchanging ideas.
- The Huntersville Connection for all our businesses is tomorrow at Midas Springs. We've been having 50 or so businesses attend. I hope that any of the commissioners can attend and anyone out there that would like to go. It's great for the Huntersville businesses.

Commissioner McAulay

- The next meeting of the MPO is on September 21.
- The last meeting of Visit Lake Norman was July 18. It will not meet until September 18. I have not had any word about if the Executive Committee has worked on an interlocal agreement or not.

PUBLIC COMMENTS, REQUESTS, OR PRESENTATIONS

Travis Dancy, Visit Lake Norman, we just wanted to take some time here and recap the success of the International Tournament of Champions, which was a wheelchair basketball event which the towns of Cornelius and Huntersville hosted. I'm going to introduce the mastermind and creator of the event here shortly. As Mayor Swain alluded to, for the last two weeks we basically hosted 12 different national teams from 7 different countries. Over 250 athletes made the travel in. I spent much of my time shuttling some of the athletes to and from the hotels and gyms, and I think I heard about five different languages spoke. It was a treat. And really on behalf of Visit Lake Norman it's probably without a doubt the biggest event in terms of international exposure and visitor spending we've ever been a part of and ever secured. Obviously, with the event being an international event and such magnitude, it took a community-wide effort to pull this off and not to go through the list, she mentioned a lot of folks, but we would be remiss not to mention Michael's staff, Huntersville Parks & Rec, Josh Brock specifically.....Ben, they did a tremendous job and again as she mentioned we only had about 3-1/2 months to plan this thing. I think the first phone call I got from Dick was back in April saying are you guys interested in hosting, can you get me gym space, can we get the towns behind. We got the Parks & Rec departments engaged and got a variety of other people engaged and the rest is history and I'd say

within a quick turnaround of under 4 months, I'd say a job well done by the community. I'm just honored to be a part of it and it was a pleasure working with you, Dick. I'll let you hear from the mastermind and man in charge, President of the National Wheelchair Basketball Association and event organizer, Mr. Dick Bryant.

Dick Bryant said it's my pleasure to be here. Mayor, I really appreciate all that you have done for us the last couple of months since I met you. I met some fabulous people here in Huntersville. Obviously, when we first came to the area I met Travis from Visit Lake Norman and he led the charge for me, introduced me to Josh through the Huntersville Parks & Rec. I tried to do this in another area not too far from here and lost about 6-1/2 months in that I couldn't find one gym that was available in the high schools. I did find a college that was willing to utilize the gyms, but they weren't air-conditioned, so that was not going to work in the summer months. I was at a point where I was ready to cancel the event and a gentleman that I have worked with on several occasions with other events, I called him up and said I need some help. He made a phone call and I got a phone call from Travis and all I can say is that Huntersville came to the rescue. I had four gyms in a matter of 48 hours. And then Josh reached out to find some other gyms in the Cornelius area and so it was quite a relief for me within a matter of days to know that I had what I needed. It wasn't that I needed hotel rooms, those can be gotten anywhere. What I needed was the gym space and the community behind me. From the moment I got the gyms and met Travis and Josh, I knew right then that I was in very good hands. As Travis mentioned, we had about 250 athletes and staff that came here from 7 different countries. The competition level was the top four countries in both the men and women's division. That type of competition is only put together at the Paralympic.....world championships, so this was a friendly championship so to speak. I called it the Tournament of Champions. It's the first one that we've done. The NWBA has not done any international tournaments. We do have a national tournament that we conduct every year with about 88 teams and about 1,100 of our athletes in two men's divisions....women and juniors is split into three age groups. The opportunity to bring them here was exciting for me because I had talked to coaches and being a former player, coach and so forth I know that practice time is very important and a lot of times they go and spend 10 days and may only get an hour a day. The opportunity to have several hours and sometimes two practice sessions a day was very inviting to the group to come. The German women came a week early. They had two practice sessions a day. They went shopping, they went to Carowinds, they got rained on. It seemed like we hadn't had any rain in two months but it seemed like every time somebody came in from the airport either coming or going, we had rain. But we worked through all that. I have to say Dee was very instrumental in getting some of the key things that I needed. The two things that I thought would be the hardest things to have in a tournament is obviously table workers that keep score and clocks. We had some wonderful young men from this area who are going off to college that came in and did a fantastic job. They all loved the competition because they were basketball players themselves and understand the game and recognized the skill level of these players. The second thing was transportation. It was a task. I ended up having to actually pay some drivers because during the week people are working and I knew that. We took the task on. I just have to tell you that the accessibility of a bus with a lift is not a hard thing, but the accessibility of carrying more than two or three people is the difficulty. We used vans, cars, cargo vans to haul chairs. But we got through it. We only made one big boo-boo and we left Canada sitting back and they had a game. I got a text from the coach and he said we're here. We looked at the schedule and seen that somehow or another we overlooked them. But we got them there. The game was actually about 5 minutes late getting started and we worked it all out. It was a great effort on their part as well. They had one vehicle. They piled five guys who are their starters in it, left their everyday chairs back at the hotel. Their playing chairs were at the gym, so the coach ran in and got their chairs and they were ready to get started, but we delayed the game until we got the other team there since it was our fault. Obviously 3-1/2 months is not the time that you need to put together something like this and I'm amazed that we

could. There were moments in the past week that I just had to say a little prayer and say Lord you know what my needs are tomorrow, can you meet them. And he did. One of the things that really impressed me was the Mayor was there all day. She could have easily come in and just made her little presence and said I'm glad to be here, publicity or whatever, but that wasn't the case. She came in and stayed all day and she sat up there and she watched and she was right into it. I thought that was fabulous. It's something that I think shows what the community is all about here in Huntersville. It's about being part of something. I do want to make this an annual event. Many of the countries when they left said they would like to come back. They know that the area has some good things to do. I think that's a real possibility. I think that's a great opportunity for us. I think we can involve the community in a great way. I think it can be an opportunity for our young people to see what happens when you are dealt with a deck of cards that maybe doesn't have all 52 there but you continue with life. It's quite an impression I think that they made on the young people that came. I think that we can fill the gyms up and make it a great experience for everyone. One of the things is obviously I encountered some budget problems with not being able to raise much money, so it's something that we have to look at in the future. I think it was over 900 hotel rooms. It was about what I said. I think originally it was around 750 to 800 and we went over that. There were some others that came in with family and friends. What we did was send them a list of the hotels in the area and let them pick and choose because they couldn't go to the ones we were in because they were full. We catered the food in to the athletes at the hotel. They were very receptive to that. Most of the hotels don't have food and they just opened up their arms to us and made it happen. I can't say enough about Parks & Rec here in Huntersville. Josh Brock and Ben are just two of the most fabulous guys I've ever worked with in Parks & Rec and I have worked with a lot of them. The dedication they had to making this successful is unbelievable. They got right in there and pushed chairs and the whole bit and then helped out and that was great. We are starting to think about next year. I've already gotten an e-mail from Japan from their interpreter today talking about what a great experience that they had and that they can't wait to come back next year. I know the Australians when they left.....both the Australians and Germans we took at the same time to the airport. I talked to both the coaches. They said they are ready to come back. It's an opportunity for the NWBA and the Town of Huntersville and the Lake Norman area to bring some international flavor and really do it up right the next time, but we'll see what happens. But I do want to say thanks to the Town of Huntersville for all their support, the community to making it successful, to Lake Norman Charter High School for the facilities and so forth that we were able to use and of course Visit Lake Norman did a tremendous job for us. They hung up some banners I think in the two cities for us, so we were really happy with that. Travis, I enjoyed working with you. You are quite an intelligent young man that I really enjoyed having the pleasure to be with. I hope we can come back. Obviously with Parks & Rec we hope the same. All in all it was very successful. The one thing I want to mention is that we webcast the games. We started on Wednesday. We had to add a day of competition but we did start on Wednesday. By Thursday our normal package that we use for air – for where people are hitting the site and watching the games, it was all up in two days. That's usually enough to cover our national championships. We bought a bigger package. On Friday we had over 22,000 hits people watching all over the world and I think if you guys will go back to our website and look at the webcast you will be amazed at the number of times that the Lake Norman area and Huntersville were mentioned in the broadcast. We had a local young man here that did the broadcast for us and he did a fantastic job. I don't know what the final numbers will be, but probably over that five days there were probably over 100,000 people that watched us broadcast this game from Huntersville throughout the world. Most of the countries told us that their families were watching back in the various countries once they got the link to them. We have been broadcasting that for probably the last couple of months, so a lot of people here in the States were watching as well. It wasn't just the 400 or 500 people that were there on Saturday at that gym, it was thousands of people that were watching what you guys had allowed us to put together here in the town of Huntersville.

Mayor Swain said Ben encouraged me to meet the gentleman doing the broadcasting and I had an entire quarter where I got to brag over the internet about Huntersville. Thank you for that opportunity.

Mr. Bryant said the next time we will have some of what they call bumpers which are little 15 to 20 second commercials that we can put on there that will be video that we can put up showing the different things in Huntersville and in the area that people might want to see.

Ken Holtje, 14535 Highway 73, said as a member of the town of Huntersville, I'm here tonight to thank you for the excellent job that the Town Board has done in managing our town. You hear many, many comments to the negative and perhaps not enough to the positive. But I thank you Mayor Swain, for all the reasons that you just exemplified have been able to present an extremely proactive image for our town and we appreciate that. I'm also highly respectful of the commissioners. You come here prepared to make the decisions, you've done your homework and you make good decisions. And you are probably underpaid and overworked. I think part of the reason that you make good decisions is because of the competency of the town staff. I've sat through many meetings where I have been extremely impressed with the amount of work and diligence that they put into providing you input. Thinking back just on the last meeting, what Whitney Hodges presented to you on the Pegasus Tower, what Brad Priest presented to you on the ABB lighting and Brian Richards on the signage for Bryton. This is in-depth analysis and I don't know whether it impresses you, but it certainly impresses some of us to listen to what they have to say. I'd also like to give some accolades to the Planning Board. They do a lot of behind-the-scenes work. I've attended many of their meetings. I've listened to their discussions and I think they do a lot of the pre-work for you that allows you to make a better decision. And finally I'd like to thank the Town Clerk for all of your work to transcribe the at times voluminous narrative during these Town Board meetings and I just want to let you know that we in fact go back and read it, because we like to know who said what when and then try to find out sometimes why. But I guess in conclusion, I think that the Town Board of Huntersville would make an excellent role model for our federal government and they certainly need one.

AGENDA CHANGES

Commissioner Jeter made a motion to add a closed session for consultation with the attorney at the end of the meeting. Commissioner Julian seconded motion. Motion carried with three (3) yes votes.

Commissioner Jeter made a motion to adopt the agenda, as revised. Commissioner McAulay seconded motion. Motion carried with three (3) yes votes.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

OTHER BUSINESS

Bradley Arant. Commissioner McAulay made a motion to reengage Bradley Arant for governmental affairs representation. Commissioner Jeter seconded motion.

Mayor Swain said I will say that they are the ones who generated the international visits that we've had in the last couple of weeks, so this is good.

Commissioner Jeter said I think George Harris and his group deserve some credit because you hear people say think outside the box.....they have actually worked outside the box which is something that people usually don't do. Their efforts to recognize that Washington may not be the answer to some of our ongoing solutions here in Huntersville and to actually work outside the box and bring some other avenues in, I think it's just tremendous what they have done. And I think, echoing Dr. Holtje's point, the staff under Greg's leadership deserves a lot of credit for that as well.

Motion carried with three (3) yes votes.

Letter attached hereto as Attachment No. 1.

Fall into Huntersville Contribution. Commissioner Jeter made a motion to approve \$1,000 contribution on behalf of Fall into Huntersville from hotel/motel fund balance.

Commissioner Julian seconded motion.

Motion carried with three (3) yes votes.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes – July 18 Pre-meeting. Commissioner Jeter made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 18, 2011 Pre-meeting. Commissioner Julian seconded motion. Motion carried with three (3) yes votes.

Approval of Minutes – July 18 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Jeter made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 18, 2011 Regular Town Board Meeting. Commissioner Julian seconded motion. Motion carried with three (3) yes votes.

Approval of Minutes – August 1, 2011 Pre-meeting. Commissioner Jeter made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2011 Pre-meeting. Commissioner Julian seconded motion. Motion carried with three (3) yes votes.

Approval of Minutes – August 1, 2011 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Jeter made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2011 Regular Town Board Meeting. Commissioner Julian seconded motion. Motion carried with three (3) yes votes.

Budget Amendment – Police (LNCS). Commissioner Jeter made a motion to approve budget amendment for FY 2010-2011 appropriating funds received in the amount of \$13,114.58 from Lake Norman Charter School for the months of March, April, May and June 2011 to the Police Department's budget for overtime, benefits and vehicle cost. Commissioner Julian seconded motion. Motion carried with three (3) yes votes.

Budget Amendment – Parks & Recreation. Commissioner Jeter made a motion to approve budget amendment appropriating signage and sponsorship revenue in the amount of \$537.20 to supplies for the purchase of disc golf course signs. Commissioner Julian seconded motion. Motion carried with three (3) yes votes.

Budget Amendment – Electric. Commissioner Jeter made a motion to approve budget amendment recognizing revenue from the sale of electricity and appropriate to the purchase of electricity in the amount of \$203,000. Higher than average temperatures in May and June have resulted in increased revenue and expense. Commissioner Julian seconded motion. Motion carried with three (3) yes votes.

CLOSING COMMENTS

None

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Jeter made a motion to go into closed session for consultation with attorney. Commissioner Julian seconded motion. Motion carried with three (3) yes votes.

Commissioner McAulay made a motion to come out of closed session. Commissioner Julian seconded motion. Motion carried with three (3) yes votes.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Approved this the 6th day of September, 2011.