

**The Village of Simpson
Regular Council Meeting
January 14, 2019
7:00 P.M.**

The Village of Simpson held a Regular Council Meeting at 7:00 P.M. in the Village Hall, 2768 Thompson Street, Simpson, NC.

WELCOME

Mayor Richard Zeck welcomed everyone.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Richard Zeck called the meeting to order

ROLL CALL

Elaine Martin, Village Clerk conducted the Roll Call.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard Zeck, Mayor
Brenda Hawkins, Mayor Pro-Tem
Dianne Thomas, Councilwoman
Mary Moye, Councilwoman

OTHERS PRESENT

Elaine Martin, Village Clerk
Susan Ellsworth, Finance Officer
Citizens, Present

QUORUM PRESENT

Elaine Martin, Village Clerk stated to the Board a quorum was present.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Councilwoman Dianne Thomas provided prayer.
Mayor Richard Zeck provided pledge.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND DECEMBER MINUTES

Mayor Richard Zeck asked the council if they had anything to add to the agenda.
Councilwoman Dianne Thomas made the motion to approve the agenda.
Councilwoman Mary Moye seconded the motion. All voted "Aye", the motion was carried.
Councilwoman Brenda Hawkins made the motion to approve the December 17, 2018 minutes.
Councilwoman Dianne Thomas seconded the motion. All voted "Aye", the motion was carried.

PUBLIC ADDRESSES TO THE COUNCIL:

Mayor Richard Zeck asked if there were any public comments.

- Dewey Dunn (2861 Ruth Evans Drive, Grimesland, N.C. 27837) spoke briefly about being interested in possible member on the Planning Board from the ETJ.
- Joel Harris (379 River Birch Drive, Greenville, N.C. 27858) spoke briefly about being interested in possible member on the Planning Board from the ETJ.
- Lynn Pischke (2860 Sherwin Downs Drive, Grimesland, N.C. 27837) spoke briefly about being interested in possible member on the planning Board from the ETJ.

- Emily Corbett (638 Simpson Street, Simpson) spoke briefly about how excited she was to hear all these people that want to be on in the Planning Board from ETJ. She is also excited to see on the agenda, the revamping of the Planning Board with term limits and how to select of new members. She also addressed the council on how important it is for the board to select term limits for the planning board.
- Hugh Mills (433 Mills Street, Simpson) mentioned that there weren't any existing planning board members present. Do they not have an interest in what direct our town should be headed? The responsibility for that lies directly with the council. They appoint the people. They plan the agenda for this town .and they need to do a lot better job than they have been doing. The Planning Board is a "Joke". I had the chairman of the Planning Board tell me she had a life time appointment. We need to take Simpson in a new direction. Maybe we need to just start over and get a new Planning Board because the existing one is a joke. He happened to be at the planning board meeting the Monday night, no it was at 10 o'clock in the morning. Because the chairman told him she could set the time agenda anytime she wanted. Because nobody on the planning board didn't have a job. That's some direction to be taking Simpson, nobody's got a job. We need to put term limits on, revamp and start over, because they have lead Simpson in the wrong direction for a long time.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

- Councilwoman Brenda Hawkins thanked everyone for their comments. She presented a flyer on Growing Readers at Home. She suggested taking part in the community and offered suggestions. Thanked everyone for their support in the years she had been on the council and have a blessed year.
- Councilwoman Dianne Thomas thanked everyone for coming and wished everyone a happy New Year. She was glad that Hugh Mills brought it to her attention that it is the council that does the picking for the Planning Board. I plan to keep my eyes open and would like to be very helpful with our Planning Board and going in the right direction for this town. Thank you for coming out tonight and be blessed.
- Councilwoman Mary Moyer wished everyone a Happy New Year. She also stated "it is just a blessing to be in the community and help serve the community. If you have any questions or want any kind of information don't hesitate to come to us or come down to the town hall and we can help see what they can do to help make things better for you."

ATTORNEY COMMENTS

Attorney Keen Lassiter was not present. He was attending the Winterville council meeting.

SPECIAL GUEST-Melinda Sampson-ENC Stop Human Trafficking Now: Melinda Sampson stated she was here on behalf of the Pitt County Coalition against Human Trafficking. She stated they made it an effort to get to every municipality in Pitt County this month, and to get the councils and mayors to Proclaim January 2019 as Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Month. And as of tonight we have been successful. She thanked the mayor and council for proclaiming January 2019 as Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Month. North Carolina ranks eighth in the nation. Just because state number fifty has less cases reported doesn't mean they don't have more Human Trafficking. It just means not that many have been reported. Number eight just means how well we as a community and a state raise awareness about Human Trafficking and get victims rescued and hopefully prevent it. The average age of a person first being targeted for sex trafficking is between age eleven and fourteen years old. Human Trafficking is compelling somebody to work or performing a commercial sex act through force or persuasion, unless they are under the age of eighteen. In which case, if they are performing a commercial sex act they are automatic a victim of Human Trafficking. Therefore force or persuasion may not be proven. The average ages between eleven and fourteen years old are children being victimized and are typically enter the sex trade at that age. Traffickers typically recruit at schools, youth hang outs and the internet. If you haven't got your children on board with internet safety or internet rules you should. In efforts to bring awareness for Human Trafficking this month, the Pitt County Coalition has a documentary screening called "Be the one" at Pitt Community College, it is completely free. This documentary highlights how community members can make a difference by being cognitive of your neighbors, what is happening in your neighborhood and what's happening with the people around you. Human

Trafficking is very much a hidden crime. You wouldn't know what is happening if you didn't know what you're looking for. In fact the National Center for Missing and Explored Children former President said "If you did not find Human Trafficking in your community then you are simply not looking for it". That couldn't be true. Other events are:

- Human Trafficking 101 is held quarterly at the Sheppard Memorial Library January 24 @ 6pm.
- Protection and Prevention held January 15th from 6-8pm. at the Farmville Middle School.

MAYOR REPORTS:

- Mayor Zeck spoke briefly about the update on the fire on 748 Simpson Street. The FBI was involved, it's not official but it appeared to be arson. Dogs were tracked from the back of the home closest to the antique store over to the Post Office and then the dogs lost the scent. Every resident ought to be concerned about it. The fireplace is still standing which could have fell on the house next door, let alone firemen who risk their lives, to go out there to put it out. People have asked "Why would you put it out?" That's what they do, if there is a call for a fire they are going to go put out the fire. They are going to go through the process and once the house is cleared, then they will demolish the house.
- Mayor Zeck spoke briefly about the six-month financial report. The town right now is still doing very well. We are running a surplus in part because of the savings in several line items. The town is financially secure and in a good position with a small surplus that will be spent in the spring.
- Mayor Zeck spoke briefly about the 2018 Simpson Highlights sheet that was passed out with the agenda. The best things are the things that are in the process, like the intersection on Black-Jack Simpson/McDonald Street and Tucker/Simpson road with the potential of a roundabout and the potential of sidewalks going down Black-Jack Simpson. Pitt County is doing a street survey of all the streets in Simpson. Simpson was one of the towns that were selected where they are going to do an analysis by the DOT on every road within Simpson. What is needed to bring it up to standards and what kind of money the state can help us with? The last one was done eight years ago. Obviously the roads have changed significantly in eight years.
- Mayor Zeck spoke briefly about how to bring people to the Village of Simpson. The ETJ continues to grow, but in the Village of Simpson which is based on our tax rate and what we receive as revenue to operate our town is challenging. This past year we have had four new people move to Simpson. We need to look at other creative ways on what we are doing to attract people to come live in our town. We actually have a builder who said I would be willing to build a first time homes in the community. The town has to show they actually want people to come into their community. We have thirteen abandoned homes in the community that's not really reflective of someone who is going to spend money to invest in our community to build first time homes. There are many loans available out there for first time homes. We need to attract young people. Simpson is an aging community we have a lot of older residents. If you go back to the forty and fifties, when many of the people that live in Simpson today had children, it was a vibrant town. We don't have the children anymore. We don't have young couples anymore. We need young couples to move in our town. We need more people to move into our town and bring their children. The real push for 2019 is working on a plan of, how we are going to grow and how to attract people. Look at business to come into the community. So, people driving through can stop and visit. We need to make Simpson attractive to live.
- Mayor Zeck spoke briefly about getting the walking trail at the park completed by the end of March to utilize the state's grant payment.
- Mayor Zeck spoke briefly about getting the ditches cleaned out during the winter months, because it's their slow season, we can get a great price this time of year. The three main areas that are the worse that we are looking at are Queen and Hardy, and Vineyard and Kent. Hopefully we can get started on that in the next thirty days.
- Mayor Zeck asked councilwomen Dianne Thomas to reach out to Sheriff Paula Dance and find out about getting us a speed monitor for Black-Jack-Simpson Road, in hopes of slowing down the traffic on that road.

- Mayor Zeck spoke briefly he is continuing to work with DOT about the roundabout and the sidewalk for Blackjack Simpson Road seeing what we can do to move some of these projects forward to make Simpson safer for everybody in the community.

The next council meeting will be in February 18, 2019.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

Mayor Zeck spoke briefly about the four abandoned homes up for demolitions; 748 Simpson, 2613 Hardee, 2625 Gatlin, 2678 Thompson.


Mayor Zeck spoke briefly about the Planning Board: term limits, ETJ coverage, candidate selection process and asked council members to review for February's meeting for action.

ITEMS FOR MOTION:

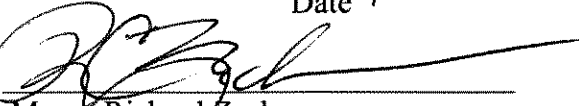
Councilwoman Brenda Hawkins made the motion to approve and proceed with demolition of approved houses and Councilwoman Dianne Thomas seconded the motion. All voted "Aye", the motion was carried.

A motion was made by councilwomen Brenda Hawkins to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by councilwomen Mary Moye All voted "Aye", the motion carried, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



~~Elaine Martin, Village Clerk~~ Susan Ellsworth

Approved On 2/18/19
Date


Mayor Richard Zeck


Mayor Pro-Tem Brenda Hawkins


Councilwoman Dianne Thomas


Councilwoman Mary Moye