



**TOWN OF GRANITE QUARRY
BOARD OF ALDERMEN
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
Thursday, January 26, 2023
9:00 a.m.**

Present: Mayor Brittany Barnhardt, Mayor Pro Tem John Linker, Alderman Jim Costantino, Alderman Doug Shelton, Alderman Jeff Cannon

Staff: Town Manager Larry Smith, Town Clerk Aubrey Smith

Call to Order: Mayor Barnhardt called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

1. Discussion

Setting Goals/Transformational Projects

Mayor Barnhardt challenged the Board to think about how projects could fit into the newly adopted Strategic Goals and opened the floor for discussion. The Board reviewed last year's list of brainstormed projects. Several of the projects are being addressed by Stewart, Inc. who was contracted to work on transformational projects for the town. In addition, the Kerns Street sidewalk project is being completed using TAP Funding that was awarded to the town last night.

There was discussion on the desire for a mural and the necessity to make sure it complied with ordinances. Board members voiced agreement with Manager Smith's idea to bring up the desire for regulations addressing murals at the joint Planning Board and Board of Aldermen UDO work session. Mayor Barnhardt mentioned that she had discussed with Chairman Greg Edds an opportunity to partner with Rowan County Tourism and the County to create wayfinding signs and possibly the industrial park sign. There was Board consensus to take advantage of this opportunity. Mayor Barnhardt will continue to follow up with Chairman Edds. Alderman Shelton will be available to assist if needed.

The Board discussed the Legion Building's future use. Alderman Cannon mentioned a potential opportunity for American Legion partnership to preserve historical items in the building. Mayor Barnhardt summarized that there was Board consensus to improve the building and interest in preserving historical items. She mentioned a personal desire to see an additional shelter added near the Legion Building to lease separately.

Mayor Barnhardt stated a desire to take into consideration the need for fire department staffing while developing the upcoming budget. Board members agreed with the importance of maintaining a first-class fire department and an overall high level of service.

Alderman Shelton asked if there were any items on the current project tracking sheet that would carry over to the new fiscal year. Manager Smith stated there would be and that typically the Board would not be recreating a whole new set of goals each year. Mayor Barnhardt mentioned a need to consider the 52 Bypass that is listed on the TIP for 2035 and whether there was an opportunity for legislative funding for a feasibility study.

There was discussion on the necessity of future planning and the cost associated with the projects and level of service the Board desired. Mayor Pro Tem Linker stated that resources would be the biggest limiting factor to getting everything done. He stated he would like, after the strategic planning and discussion of projects, to ask staff what resources would be required to accomplish each so then the Board could zero in on what is realistic. Mayor Barnhardt stated a desire for Manager Smith to get creative when creating the accessory budget sheet and include the need for additional staff so the Board could choose which items to fund.

There was discussion regarding whether Board members should sit in on meetings with consultants and whether to have Board members attend committee meetings. It was proposed that holding joint meetings with each of the boards and committees could be a solution to help the Board be more engaged in the process and help committees feel heard. Mayor Barnhardt proposed that a committee member from each advisory board and committee present to the Board of Aldermen as there was a need or request, at least quarterly. There was Board consensus to have committee members make those reports during the regular Board meetings. Mayor Barnhardt asked for a Board consensus for staff to set a schedule and develop a proposal for how often committee members would be reporting to the Board.

Mayor Barnhardt called for a short recess at 10:34 a.m.

Mayor Barnhardt called the meeting back into session at 10:45 a.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Linker asked Alderman Cannon his thoughts on the previous conversation. Alderman Cannon pointed out the need to remember when comparing our town to other towns, that we don't have the same number of staff. He cautioned the Board to take into consideration the amount of work staff would be taking on to achieve some of the desired outcomes and fulfill Board requests. Mayor Barnhardt stated that the town has very dedicated professional staff who are committed to the town's vision. She voiced a need to find a way to make the goals realistic. Mayor Barnhardt pointed out that town staff received no calls or emails concerning taxes being raised last year and that, even though a pay study was completed recently, there is a continual need to update.

Alderman Costantino stated that the Board needs to pay the price to grow or stay the same. Mayor Barnhardt echoed the sentiment that the Town needed to move forward. Alderman Cannon asked if the town could grow with the current number of staff and Mayor Barnhardt responded that no, more staff would have to be added. Manager Smith provided some background on turnover before he started with the town and stated that the town is providing the same level of service as the nearest town in our peer group with a fraction of the budget and staff. Mayor Pro Tem Linker asked that Manager Smith let the Board know what resources were needed including staff. Mayor Barnhardt stated she would like to see an aggressive list even if there is a lot on the list the Board will have to say no to.

Mayor Barnhardt brought up the idea of a four-day workweek and asked Manager Smith to consider

