



The Mebane City Council held its regular monthly meeting at 6:00 p.m., Monday, October 5, 2020. Due to public health concerns related to COVID-19, the meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

Council Present via Zoom:

Mayor Ed Hooks
Mayor Pro-Tem Jill Auditori
Councilmember Tim Bradley
Councilmember Patty Philipps
Councilmember Everette Greene
Councilmember Sean Ewing

City Staff Present at City Hall:

Assistant City Manager Chris Rollins
City Attorney Lawson Brown
City Clerk Stephanie Shaw
IT Director Kirk Montgomery

City Staff Present via Zoom:

City Manager David Cheek
Finance Director Jeanne Tate
Recreation and Parks Director Aaron Davis

Mayor Hooks called the virtual meeting to order and Mr. Bradley gave the invocation.

Mayor Hooks announced that the Public Hearing for *Item 4- Quasi-Judicial BOA Special Use- Elementary/Secondary School- Bradford Academy Christian Academy* was requested per the applicant to be continued again until the November 2, 2020 meeting. Ms. Auditori made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bradley, to continue the public hearing until the November 2, 2020 meeting. Per a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

During the Public Comment Period, Tommy Jones, 307 E. Dogwood Drive, Mebane, said the reason for his joining tonight's meeting was to continue the discussion regarding the forming of a minority based advisory committee to the City Council. He expressed his desire that such a committee would be formed and that it would serve as a voice of those whose perception is that they are voiceless. He stated he has been able to obtain various support from members of the NAACP and church organizations. He feels this committee should be specific to Mebane and its surrounding areas.

Also, during the Public Comment Period, Clerk Shaw read aloud the following two (2) emails.

To the great city of Mebane,

I'm writing this note on behalf of the Minority Advisory Committee, in solidarity with their objectives and to ensure that additional support of this committee is witnessed and heard.

During such uncertain and otherwise fragile times in our country, as it relates to solidarity, as it relates to justice, fairness and humanity, as Americans, I believe cities like ours have not just the guile to attack such issues head on and to discover plans to ensure that no American feels voiceless, or under represented here in our city, but we have the talent to ensure such issues are stomped out in our community, our neighborhoods and our city.

It's such a pleasure living here, let's make way for the less represented, by ensuring that the Minority Advisory Committee, has a seat at the table here in Mebane.

A concerned Mebanite.

*Cheers,
Karema McGhee*

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to let you know I am support of the Minority Advisory Committee. My parents moved to the area in 2007 from living most of their lives in Person County. I have decided, along with some

of college friends, to make Mebane NC my home. My viewpoint is that this committee together would ensure the fight to address race discrimination and racial tensions in our county. I feel this committee would be necessary for all members of our community, especially for the youth. The teachings and activities proposed by this committee would ensure that all are exposed to diverse culture. Not only does diversity better prepare the next generation for success in the workforce, it sponsors individual and family growth. This will solidify that our next generation are equipped to handle the world.

Thanks,
Tauheedah White, Licensed Clinician

Mayor Hooks gave an overview of the Consent Agenda:

- a. Approval of Minutes –
 - i. September 14, 2020 – Virtual Regular Meeting
 - ii. September 16, 2020- Continued Public Hearing
- b. NC Franchise Ordinance with Public Service Company of North Carolina (PSNC)
- c. Final Plat- Cambridge Park Townhomes

Mr. Bradley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Greene, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Per a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Brown presented an item for discussion regarding Council Meeting Protocol and Procedure. He stated that this item was precipitated by the University of North Carolina School of Government's recommendation that the Council adopt a written policy on procedures of public hearings and in part was generated by the remote meetings statute that Mebane had been observing. He said there has been great virtual/remote meeting success due to the diligent work of IT Director Kirk Montgomery, Assistant City Manager Chris Rollins and City Clerk Stephanie Shaw. Mr. Brown continued, saying that Council is very familiar with the traditional in-person Council meetings procedures and to date, Council has had very little involvement with the electronic participation option which has been an option in the statutes for quite some time. As earlier mentioned, there has been good success, both with Council and staff, of the remote meetings that was recently authorized by the passed statute but is only applicable during a General Assembly or Governor declared State of Emergency. Mr. Brown opened up the discussion with Council and how they would like to move forward. He stated that according to the virtual meeting requirements, the meetings have been live streamed via YouTube. He said the question that staff has of Council in terms of writing a policy, is whether Council would like to continue live streaming the Council meetings once meetings go back to in-person or when conducting meetings in the electronic participation option. Mr. Brown said the second question for Council is when meeting in a traditional in-person meeting and a quorum is present, does Council want to allow the citizens and applicants to be able to participate electronically i.e. "Conference telephone, conference video (such as Zoom) or other electronic means".

Ms. Auditori stated she has wanted Council's traditional meetings to be live streamed for many years, so to the first question, yes live streamed meetings should still be available. She said with respect to the second question, it is a little more complicated. She said having participated in other meetings that are live with the ability to have people participate remotely and she is unsure about that process. She said it might be a better approach to continue with how Mebane has been allowing public participation, by having those that wish to speak or share comments to do so by emailing comments in to be read aloud by the clerk or by requesting a link to register to speak.

Mr. Bradley agreed that meetings should continue to be live streamed. As for the second question, he asked if Mr. Brown was referring to traditional in-person meetings without restricted or limited

attendance, if yes, then he thinks meeting in-person is by far the best practice. If not and meetings are a scenario of Council and staff meeting in the Council Chambers and public attendance being restricted or limited, then certainly participation via Zoom should be allowed, but when the meetings go back to “as we were” meeting in-person, video conferencing via Zoom could get confusing.

Ms. Philipps said she also agrees that the live streaming should continue. She stated she would like to begin meeting again in-person because she feels being in the same room allows for better conversation. She continued by saying that it is really important to her that people who want to speak to the Council have an opportunity to feel safe when doing so. She does not think it is ideal to have people join in electronically. She said over the years she can not recall many times when there has been more than 10 people from the public in attendance at the meetings. She would like to see more participation. She also said she would like for people to be able to attend electronically but preferably in-person if staff could make that safely possible.

Mr. Ewing said he is fully supportive of continuing the live streaming of the meetings. He said he is also supportive of allowing folks to participate electronically as some people are not physically able to come in-person. He would like to see as many avenues available as possible to allow for the public to participate in voicing their opinion to the Council.

Mayor Hooks asked how many people can the City accommodate in-person at City Hall. Mr. Rollins said that the State Guidelines allow for government agencies to have more than 25 people at a gathering such as a meeting but staff feels keeping it at 25 would be best; with Council and senior staff included that would allow for approximately 11 people from the public to be in the Council Chambers. He said one option would be to have 11 in the Council Chambers and if there were more people wishing to attend, they could view the meeting in an overflow area at City Hall and come in and out of the meeting as needed. Mr. Rollins also mentioned phone conferencing as an option for people that have internet issues. Council expressed concern with the current audio-visual equipment being used and discussed the possible need to of upgrade.

After considerable discussion among Council and staff, Council requested that Mr. Brown draft a resolution and policy with a couple different options for consideration at next month’s meeting.

Mr. Davis presented a request for approval of an agreement to allow the State to use the Mebane Arts and Community Center (MACC) as an Evacuee Shelter. Mr. Davis explained that he was contacted by the State after the most recent NC hurricane. This shelter would be completely managed both financially and in terms of staffing by the North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM). In order for the City of Mebane to give permission to NCEM, an agreement must be signed. This agreement will give NCEM the ability to bring in the necessary equipment to house a certain number of evacuees at the MACC safely. COVID-19 has forced NCEM to look for larger venues that adhere to social distance guidelines, but also for more locations that are able to help evacuees state-wide when there is a time of need.

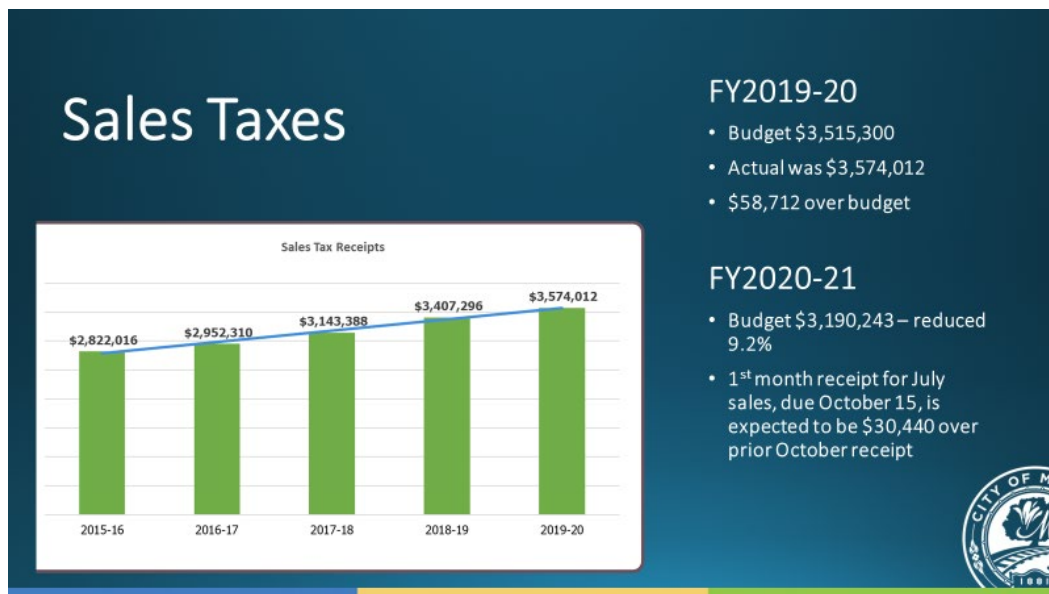
Ms. Auditori asked if the state would be providing any funds for upgrades to the MACC. Mr. Davis replied no. Mr. Cheek said the agreement reads that the City can set the price and the State would reimburse. Mr. Davis agreed. Ms. Philipps made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ewing, to approve the agreement as presented. Per a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

As an additional item, Mr. Greene stated he would like to revisit the Council recent discussion and action taken regarding City of Mebane Employee Hazard Pay. He explained that last month Council approved giving the Police and Fire employees Hazard Pay in the amount of \$1,000 each. He requested that Council consider including the Inspections Department staff and also to increase the previously approved amount of \$1,000 to \$1,500. Mr. Greene made a motion, seconded by Ms. Philipps, to increase the amount from \$1,000 to \$1,500 and to include the Inspections staff. Per a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Hooks announced that the City recently received the GFOA Certificate of Excellence. He commended Finance Director Jeanne Tate and her Finance Department staff.


Mr. Davis shared that the City of Mebane was recently declared a “Fit” City by Barbend.com. He also shared that a YouTube tutorial video was recently posted on the web featuring the Cone Health Fitness Court located at the Mebane Community Park.

Ms. Tate shared the below slides as a “sneak peek” to the FY21 Financial preview.




Sales Taxes

Past 12 months rolling average	\$ 297,834
X 12 months	3,574,012
FY21 Budget	3,190,243
Additional tax if flat but holding	385,769



Sales Taxes

Past 12 months rolling average	\$ 297,834
X 12 months	3,574,012
FY21 Budget	3,190,243
Additional tax if flat but holding	385,769



There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7:00pm.

Attest: _____
Stephanie W. Shaw, City Clerk

Ed Hooks, Mayor