



BROOKS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

August 21, 2023

Mayor Langford called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.; Council Member Scott Israel led the Invocation; Mayor Langford led the Pledge.

Council Member present: Ted Britt
 Brian Davis
 Scott Israel
 Todd Speer

Council Member absent: Kay Brumbelow

The proposed Agenda for Monday, August 21, 2023, was emailed to the Mayor and Council Members for review before tonight's meeting. Mayor Langford asked for a motion to approve the agenda; Council Member Scott Israel made a Motion to approve the agenda as presented; Council Member Ted Britt seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The draft Minutes for Monday, July 17, 2023, were emailed to the Mayor and Council Members for review before tonight's meeting. Mayor Langford asked for a motion to approve the minutes; Council Member Todd Speer made a Motion to approve the minutes as presented; Council Member Scott Israel seconded the motion, and Council Member Ted Britt abstained. The vote was unanimous in favor.

The draft Executive Session Minutes for Monday, July 17, 2023, were emailed to the Mayor and Council Members for review before tonight's meeting. Mayor Langford asked for a motion to approve the Executive Session minutes; Council Member Brian Davis made a Motion to approve the minutes as presented; Council Member Scott Israel seconded the motion, and Council Member Ted Britt abstained. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Public Hearing

L. Spohr presented the 5-Year Tax History and the PT-32 Computation of Millage Rate Rollback and Percentage Increase in Property Taxes for 2023 and stated that due to increased home values, the value of one mill increased from \$46,605 to \$51,044, an increase of \$4,438 or 9.03%. If the current millage rate of 1.207 is approved, it would generate Property Tax revenue of \$61,610 for 2023, an increase of \$5,360 versus 2022. Two previous Public Hearings were held to answer questions and hear public comments: Monday, August 14, 2023, 6:30 p.m. and today, Monday, August 21, 2023, 4:30 p.m.

Mayor Langford opened the Public Hearing at 6:38 p.m. M. Ungaro asked that each resident state their name and address.

Don Britt, 1040 Highway 85 Connector, asked if his taxes were going up.

Philip Bradley, 130 Brooks Rd, wanted it on record that the 5-Year Tax History had an error in the Net Taxes \$ Increase column for 2022 and that an error of punctuation was made on the Net Taxes \$ increase for 2023. L. Spohr responded that she would investigate the calculation for the Net Taxes \$ Increase for the year 2022 and would correct it if necessary and stated that the information on the 2022 Net Taxes \$ Increase does not affect the 2023 Net Taxes \$ Increase nor the request to maintain the millage at 1.207 mills. The punctuation correction would be made immediately following the meeting; the \$5.360 would be corrected to \$5,360.

Melissa Murphy, 994 Highway 85 Connector, voiced that M. Ungaro, the Town Manager, was not doing his job and complained about his dog being at Town Hall.

Mayor Langford told M. Murphy that the Public Hearing is solely for discussing the proposed tax increase and millage rate and if she would like to express her concerns to do so towards the end of the meeting during the “Any Other Business” agenda item.

Mayor Langford asked if there were any other public questions or comments, and with none, Mayor Langford closed the Public Hearing at 6:48 p.m.

Mayor Langford asked for a motion to approve the current 1.207 millage rate; Council Member Brian Davis made a Motion to approve the current 1.207 millage rate; Council Member Todd Speer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Committee Reports:

Mayor’s Report: Mayor Langford reported he spent the month responding to questions and comments regarding the proposed tax increase and millage rate.

Planning and Zoning:

In response to recent noise complaints, M. Ungaro reported the Town’s ordinance states quiet hours for the Town are between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

Recreation:

D. Holliman was not present; M. Ungaro reported on his behalf that EMC is in the process of boring under the creek and burying all the lines underground, and the transformer will be closer to the parking lot; all of this will be at no cost to BAR.

Library: K. Bradley reported that the library is stable and continues de-accessing books. K. Bradley requested the approval to de-access 276 books with copyright dates ranging from 1931 to 2005, valued at \$486.08. Mayor Langford asked for a motion to approve the deaccession of the 276 library books. Council Member Scott Israel made a Motion to approve the deaccession of 276 books, and Council Member Ted Britt seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Town Clerk Report: L. Spohr reported three new trash customers signed up in July and reminded everyone in attendance that, effective October 1, 2023, trash rates will increase by 4.9%.

Finance Officer's Report: L. Spohr reviewed the July financials; LOST and SPLOST are at an increase over the same time last year. LOST YTD is at an increase of 8.96% over this time. The Town received its final wire of \$16,013 for 2017 SPLOST. The 2017 SPLOST bank balance is \$425,866, which will fund some of the remaining 2017 SPLOST projects. The 2023 SPLOST revenue has not been received for July as of tonight's meeting, but we anticipate those funds by the end of the month.

Town Manager Report:

Brooks Market:

The August Market is this weekend.

Storm Water:

The creek flowing under Julia's Crossing has dried up. An investigation by the County Environmental Health Dept. revealed that this is a seasonal condition that is not out of the ordinary.

Fayette County Development Authority:

M. Ungaro met with Katie Quattlebaum (formerly director of the Southern Conservation Trust) last week to discuss a grant program that FCDA is instituting. The program allows each local government to receive funding for one project per year, up to \$300,000. The projects must encourage or promote economic development and require a 50% match. This program is being funded with the proceeds from the sale of real estate last year.

Council Member Scott Israel asked about any ideas; M. Ungaro commented that enhancing our sewer system is an option.

Liberty Tech:

The school has hired a school resource officer who recently retired from the Fayette County Sheriff's Office after 35 years of service. Sgt. Eric Henkel and M. Ungaro earlier this month to discuss potential solutions for the afternoon pick-up of students. Sgt. Henkel asked about being able to route parents through the cemetery in order to get them off of the Hwy 85 Connector. M. Ungaro was reluctant to have traffic snaking around the cemetery loop in the afternoon. Our own Wayne Couch had an idea to access the school parking lot by means of a short stretch of gravel road that the school could install. Of the 124 feet required, about 50 feet is on Town-owned land. I want the Council's opinion on whether this solution merits consideration.

M. Ungaro suggested another possibility of going through the Football field, and Council Member Scott Israel suggested that there could be a potential opportunity to create a walking trail in that vicinity.

Any Other Reports: None

Any Other Business:

M. Murphy addressed the Mayor and Council and asked why it is that M. Ungaro, the Town Manager, can have two jobs and that he is currently not doing his job, as he's not available due to having his dog in Town Hall and no one can come in because the dog jumps on them, plus he makes too much money.

Mayor Langford asked M. Murphy to write a letter to him and the Council listing her complaints and grievances, which then would be reviewed and considered. Mayor Langford stated that these types of issues are not handled in public Council meetings; they are discussed in Executive Sessions. Executive Sessions are for the purpose of discussing real estate, litigation, or employee issues. Mayor Langford offered M. Murphy his direct cell number, email address, and an in-person meeting if desired.

D. Britt asked about two projects listed on the 2017 SPLOST referendum that have not been

completed. M. Ungaro responded that those projects have not been started, and the funds from the 2017 SPLOST referendum are marked for the Brooks / 85 Connector project, also listed on the referendum for 2023 SPLOST. The 2017 SPLOST project for Friendship Church Road will not be completed as the funds will be used for the Brooks / 85 Connector intersection. D. Britt asked if there was a way for ‘no-through truck’ signs to be placed along 85 Connector; M. Ungaro said no, as the roads are not confined to just within the Town limits; the roads are part of the county and are used as through traffic from one town/city to another.

G. Stewart, 113 Church Ally, asked about the right-of-way status on Church Ally; M. Ungaro replied that it is with the Town Attorney and the Town should hear something within a week. G. Stewart also inquired about who cuts the grass near his residence, and M. Ungaro replied that Brooks Christian Church does.

M. Murphy asked if it would be possible to add a handicapped parking space downtown along 85 Connector as it is difficult for those who are handicapped to cross the street when using the only handicapped parking space in the public parking area. M. Ungaro said he would investigate it.

Mayor Langford stated that with no further business to discuss, the public portion of the meeting is closed at 7:13 p.m. to begin the Executive Session.

Adjourn: With no further business to discuss this evening and the Executive Session is closed, Mayor Langford asked for a motion to adjourn; Council Member Scott Israel offered a Motion to adjourn; Council Member Ted Britt seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lorey Spohr
Town Clerk