

**Town of Mineral Springs
Town Hall
3506 S. Potter Road
Town Council
Regular Meeting
January 12, 2017 ~ 7:30 PM**

Minutes

The Town Council of the Town of Mineral Springs, North Carolina, met in Regular Session at the Mineral Springs Town Hall, Mineral Springs, North Carolina, at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 12, 2017.

Present: Mayor Frederick Becker III, Mayor Pro Tem Peggy Neill, Councilwoman Valerie Coffey, Councilman Jerry Countryman, Councilwoman Janet Critz, Councilwoman Lundeen Cureton, Councilwoman Bettylyn Krafft, Town Clerk/Zoning Administrator Vicky Brooks and Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector Janet Ridings.

Absent: Attorney Bobby Griffin.

Visitors: Kendra Gangal.

With a quorum present Mayor Frederick Becker called the Regular Town Council Meeting of January 12, 2017 to order at 7:33 p.m.

1. Opening

- Councilwoman Critz delivered the invocation.
- Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Public Comments

- There were no public comments.

3. Consent Agenda

- **Councilwoman Coffey made a motion to approve the consent agenda with the corrections that have been presented.** Mayor Becker noted those were the corrections of changing the page numbers for November and December as the clerk's memo has indicated to bring everything back up-to-date. *The consent agenda contained the following:*

- A. *December 8, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes*
- B. *November 2016 Tax Collector's Report*
- C. *November 2016 Finance Report*

Councilwoman Krafft seconded the motion made by Councilwoman Coffey to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously as follows:

Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft and Neill

4. Presentation of the Fiscal Year 2015-16 Audit Report – Kendra Gangal

- Mayor Becker introduced our new municipal auditor, Kendra Gangal, as he explained Mike Burns had retired from the business of municipal audits. Mayor Becker reminded the council that they had approved a contract with Ms. Gangal last year to tackle the audit process, so he thought being a new person they had never met, it would be good for her to come and visit at least this time around. Mayor Becker stated he knew the council hadn't seen Mr. Burns for a few years. Mayor Becker directed Ms. Gangal to stand up and come to the lectern as he explained Ms. Gangal had the reports with her, which she could pass on down the table if she wanted and also give a brief overview of what she does just to refresh the council's memory. To Mayor Becker it's old hat, but the council hasn't talked about the nuts and bolts of what the purpose is for the municipal audit; in five or ten minutes Mayor Becker was sure Ms. Gangal (in layman's terms) could explain what goes on.
- Ms. Gangal commented she thought what she was going to do basically was go over what an audit really is. Mayor Becker responded "sure". Ms. Gangal stated she had the reports, but until the council really had time to sit down and look at them she didn't think – it might be better to just let them have them afterwards and if they have questions they could always call or email her. Mayor Becker replied absolutely; however Ms. Gangal wanted to handle it. Mayor Becker welcomed and thanked Ms. Gangal. Ms. Gangal thanked the council and stated she appreciated them for giving her an opportunity to do the audit this year. Ms. Gangal explained she had done some governmental auditing in the past for (she guessed) 10 to 15 years and she had gone out and started her own practice about three or four years ago and is just trying to do smaller municipalities. Ms. Gangal won't attempt to do anything like the City of Charlotte or Mecklenburg County, but anyway, Mayor Becker had asked her basically if she would just come by and kind of talk briefly about what she does for an audit and she is just going to give the council a quick overview and like she had said if the council has questions once they look at the report they can always talk about it; they can call her, email her or whatever they would like to do.
- Ms. Gangal explained these days they normally do an audit on what is called a "risk-based" approach, which means she has to come in and more or less – in this case sit down with Mayor Becker and go through everything. Ms. Gangal asked Mayor Becker to tell her about all the controls, how things work on a daily basis, how you pay your bills, how do the bills come in, how you do deposits, who can sign checks, how do you do payroll – just the whole process. In any given audit, Ms. Gangal is supposed to come in and sit down and learn how the company operates and then based on what she sees, she is supposed to sit there and look at it and think "well do I see areas of improvement or is there any area that might be a higher risk than another area" and pretty much based on what she sees in those areas tells her whether she has a higher risk in one particular area where she will spend a little more time looking at it versus maybe another one that she thought either is a really immaterial dollar amount or just something that is pretty much straight forward or that doesn't change or something that she can look at. If you've got 12 payments the same amount she is good to go (something like that). Once Ms. Gangal does that, usually her next step is to do what they call

“preliminary analytical”, she will normally compare the current year to the prior year and look for any numbers that might be very different from the prior year or anything that’s a lot larger or just an account with a large amount and then she is going to compare it to the budget. Did you go over budget anywhere or get close to the budget or anything that’s an account that might have a high balance and at that point she is going to go look and see what is in that account and if she sees some higher dollar amount of checks then she is going to ask Mayor Becker to pull that invoice and she will want to look at that invoice to see was it written timely, was it written, was it written to who it was supposed to be written to, what was it for, does it look legitimate; that’s more or less kind of how the audit functions. Ms. Gangal would say she usually spends most of her time on things like the expenditures, because that is the larger amount. If there is any risk, it’s going to be for the most part (Ms. Gangal thought in a municipality) to be there. You also have the budget that is kind of a mitigating control. Property taxes – things like that, Ms. Gangal doesn’t see a whole lot of problem; they are pretty straight forward, somebody pays their property tax bill and it gets accidentally posted to the wrong account or somebody tries to put it to somebody else’s account then the person who paid it, they are going to get a notice saying they hadn’t paid their bill and they are going to get upset and call. So, for the most part, Ms. Gangal thought people aren’t going to let that slide if they know they paid their property tax bill. So, they usually don’t have too much issue when it comes to that. It’s usually the expenditures that Ms. Gangal likes to take a lot of time and look at and she will say for this year she really did not, being a first year audit, she wasn’t sure what to expect, but when she came in and Mayor Becker sort of had a book all laid out for her with everything in it and everything was kind of organized and he more or less gave her whatever, well he had it all laid out on the back table, so she didn’t have to ask for anything and could just go through and it was easy to find what she needed. Anything Ms. Gangal choose to look at was pretty much right there before her, so she really didn’t have any issue with it. Ms. Gangal thought things were fairly clean. This is a smaller municipality, one of the issues – a lot of things people talk about is like the lack of segregation in the duties. You can’t do much about that, because you can only do what you can do with the size you are, but she really felt like that wasn’t too big of an issue, because you have three individuals that are in the office and as long as you can kind of separate and have other people reviewing things or looking over things and council gets involved, then she felt like things are fairly transparent here. Everything is put out on the web, you have some other controls in place that help mitigate this issue of a lack of duties, so Ms. Gangal really didn’t think there was too much trouble. Ms. Gangal thought Mayor Becker and she talked about a couple of things, but just to make sure if he does one thing and he is going to sign a check, like Ms. Brooks is going to look at it or somebody is going to look at it and review it and make sure before it goes out the door; you just need somebody that doesn’t write the check to look at it. Just certain things like that, but overall honestly, Ms. Gangal didn’t have any issues or anything major to report; that is basically what she does for an audit. Ms. Gangal added they just go through that and she looks for anything that might be a material problem and then more or less everything gets put together, they go through the notes and Mayor Becker looked through the report and they sent it off to the Local Government Commission (LGC) who has to give their final approval before Ms. Gangal can finalize it. Councilman Countryman asked if it was done now. Ms.

Gangal responded "it's done". Councilman Countryman asked if the town was "clean and green". Ms. Gangal responded yes, she guessed that would have been the quick answer. Mayor Becker commented the LGC approved it and approved payment. The town paid Ms. Gangal for the audit. LGC has accepted it and the financial statements that go along with the audit. We actually call those the audited financial statements. Ms. Gangal commented she just calls it the audit, cause she thinks of it as an all one in the same thing. The financials that are, she did hers front and back, she guessed it is 40/50 some pages, which to her is a lot of information and she would say if anybody has any questions we could sit down at some point and (like she said) call her or email her, she can talk about anything that they are not sure of, because there is a lot of stuff in there. Ms. Gangal supposed it all has a reason for being in there, but it can get kind of cumbersome she thought.

- Mayor Becker noted there was one report he thought (Ms. Gangal and he joked about) to this day he has been doing this for 18 years and the one report, the way things are accrued they are just different from anything else and he still doesn't understand how it works, but it just has to do with the way things are accrued with certain GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) and GASB (Government Accounting Standard Board) accounting practices. Ms. Gangal commented there are (in the report) a couple different sets of financials, one set is mostly per your budget, almost a cash basis and then they also went back and changed, this is what GASB 34, which is a long time ago, but they changed it so they also want governments to include in their financials a set of books like on an accrual basis like a normal for-profit company would have just so for comparison purposes you can kind of see. You still need your budget-to-actual to operate off of, but the full set of accrual statements, like fixed assets and stuff like that, that you don't normally see on the budget-to-actual and so that's probably what Mayor Becker is talking about. We have these two sets and then you have this where you reconcile between the two what makes up the differences; it's usually some receivables and payables, if you had loan notes payable, those are on the full set of books that are not on the budget-to-actual. Just things like that, but you always have to lay it out to show where the differences are and the fixed assets are usually the biggest one.
- Mayor Becker asked if the council had any questions for Ms. Gangal. Mayor Becker commented he means when they get through the report, he hasn't seen a bound copy, but it's a pretty standardized format, the statements and the exhibits and the supplemental information is pretty much etched in stone for the municipal audit. Mayor Becker guessed, again it's GASB-approved things and it looks a lot like what the council got from Mike Burns last year. Ms. Gangal responded it's going to be the same thing, the LGC puts out their sample of reports each year depending on whether it is a city or what it is and they want you to follow that same structure, so everything gives you all the financials first, then you have some separate fund financials, if you have different funds, which Mineral Springs has just the capital projects and the general fund, but some people will have four or five, six, eight, ten different, so you can see things separately. The first financials are combined with everything and then you have separate ones, then you have all the notes to the financial statements, which describe and talk about all of this and then you've got some supplementary information in the back, which it kind of all supports. You can almost start at the back for the detail and work your way forward for what the totals are in the front. This is a standard format that they all

use. Ms. Gangal has not done any governmental auditing in any other state, but she thought North Carolina is pretty tight on how they control things and what the LGC does is a really good job of trying to keep up with everyone; they want to make sure that no municipality falls into a problem of any sort (moneywise), but Ms. Gangal thought they are pretty strict about it, but they give you all the information you need to kind of do it and do the report the way they want it.

- Mayor Becker thanked Ms. Gangal for coming and giving the explanation. Mayor Becker thought it was time for a refresher for everybody on why we do this every year and what it entails. Ms. Gangal responded she was going to say she was out today and really wasn't sure exactly what all she needed to have prepared, so she kind of talked briefly about an audit and again if there is anything the council wants to talk about they can always sit down and go over it in detail; some of it they probably don't really care and need to know, but she means if they want to they are welcome to, she will be glad to come by.
- Mayor Becker noted Ms. Gangal had the audit reports and she could leave them with Ms. Ridings and people could pick them up; give them a chance to go over it. Mayor Becker stated he appreciated Ms. Gangal taking the time to come make the presentation; we may make her do it next year, but it doesn't have to happen, it depends on what the board wants. Ms. Gangal responded she was going to say if they wanted to get them ahead of time where council has a little bit of time to look at it, she didn't really think about that and it wasn't really talked about, but they could do that and then she could one evening if they've got specific questions or she could give a little bit of an idea of how to read it or what to look at, they could do that too. Ms. Gangal stated she would leave business cards also.

5. **Review and Discussion on the Changes to the Proposed Nuisance Ordinance and Consideration of Calling for a Public Hearing**

- Mayor Becker explained he thought the council was at maybe their longest discussion, which will be the latest updates and next steps on the nuisance ordinance. Mayor Becker referred it to Ms. Brooks since she has sort of been the point person on it, so he would turn it over to her on just how she wanted to bring this forth. Mayor Becker noted he thought the council would see that the changes they discussed last month are implemented in the language they were getting.
- Ms. Brooks asked the council if they were satisfied with the changes they had requested and if they read over them. Ms. Brooks referred to Councilwoman Krafft and asked since she wasn't here last month if she had questions or comments about it. Councilwoman Krafft responded no, she was good. Ms. Brooks asked the council how they wanted to proceed. Do they want to adopt a policy to go along with the ordinance that states how we will receive complaints? Is everybody sure that they want the complaints in writing, in person, on the phone, email or by petition? Would they not want to make it stricter and at least have everything in writing as opposed to random phone calls? Mayor Becker commented he would stick his neck out only because Ms. Brooks (he said he doesn't like to give too much opinion) and he discussed and she drafted a little one-page policy on how to initiate or how public should initiate a complaint and it got him thinking. Mayor Becker and Ms. Brooks talked about how the person would communicate with the code enforcer officer, which would be (at this point) probably N•Focus (they are not here). Even if we had on the website and in the newsletter the fact that "if you have a complaint call this number in Kannapolis to file your complaint" people are

going to (if they drive by and see their neighbors junk pile) call the town hall, that's just human nature and we began to say there is still a gap we are not filling. The chain of reporting. Ms. Brooks, as the town clerk, is fine to be the town clerk in terms of a paper trail of public documents, she doesn't want to wear that hat of code enforcement, but if a phone call comes to her and she says you need to call John Ganus at N•Focus and there is no paper trail she doesn't have a record. Is it really a valid complaint? Ms. Brooks doesn't want to be the filter. The way the ordinance is generally written, every complaint would be investigated; it just seems that having one point of contact might be valid and if somebody calls "please send or drop off a written complaint at the town hall". That way there is a file that has been started. Ms. Brooks can then scan and email that to Mr. Ganus. Mayor Becker is really worried about just complaints getting lost if we don't have a pretty specific procedure for getting them into the system. Mayor Becker stated he didn't know, he was just throwing that open to the council. How do we not have so much... and again we were concerned about anonymous versus signing your name and there were concerns there and somebody could still send an anonymous written thing. That's always been an option that Ms. Brooks has used in zoning complaints, of course she does process those. Councilwoman Critz explained she was confused by what Mayor Becker was saying. Even if someone came here, called here, why couldn't Ms. Brooks just give them the information to forward it onto N•Focus? Mayor Becker responded by asking where is the file in the town hall of what the list of pending nuisances is? We don't know, these are questions we need.... Ms. Brooks responded "good question". Mayor Becker asked how they are tracking. Councilwoman Critz stated she sort of assumed that on some kind of schedule they would report to us and asked if that was what everyone else was thinking. Councilwoman Neill responded she thought they should. Mayor Becker replied they will certainly be billing us on a regular basis. Councilwoman Krafft shared that she thought if they are billing us they would have some kind of documentation of a paper trail, but as far as somebody calling into the town hall to say "I have this issue with you know blah, blah, blah", she could see it going two ways: playing the devil's advocate here, she would think that it would be yes, you give them the phone number to call N•Focus, but maybe you have a log where you therefore would be able to see if there is a pattern that, you know, Jane Doe down here has a trash dump and five people have complained about it. Okay – Councilwoman Krafft didn't think that the general public would write a letter to somebody to complain, she thought they were more apt to call then they would be to do anything else, although she didn't think it should be Ms. Brooks' responsibility to tell everybody on the telephone or talk to each person, but she thought they are going to reach her and Councilwoman Krafft thought she would just have a log – date, blah, blah, blah, this is the complaint; just write down a description of that and that's it, then tell them you need to call blah, blah, blah and if they do and we see it on the radar that's great, but if you see five or six of them and no one has actually gone to N•Focus then it would send up a red flag to say we probably have an issue down at Jane Doe's house and we need to do something and the town can call and say "hey, N•Focus, please address this, we have had five complaints". Councilwoman Krafft stated she didn't know, like she said she was playing the devil's advocate here, in a way, because you have got to look at it from different people's perspective and educational level, communication level, not everybody's savvy enough to sit down and write or has time. Councilwoman Neill stated she

thought it should be in writing. Councilwoman Critz asked if Attorney Griffin didn't say something to the effect that if it was really important they needed to take that time and the town didn't need to be in position of actually walking people through the process, but just giving them the knowledge and they need to do it. It was something to that effect, Councilwoman Critz stated she was paraphrasing and asked if that was what the council remembered him saying in a nutshell. Mayor Becker responded there was something like that. Part of it was the concern about if somebody emails; they are not anonymous and they may not know that. Ms. Brooks replied "yes, we keep getting hung up on that". Mayor Becker continued that Attorney Griffin said "well, but that's just the way government is, we could tell them 100 times, but...". Councilwoman Critz asked if we didn't say we could let them know that in the newsletter when we send general information. Mayor Becker responded we could but not everybody is going to read that and they are not going to remember. Councilwoman Critz replied "but at some point we are going to have to let go of that, at some point we are going to have to say we have done our due diligence, we have served the community". Councilwoman Neill stated "with the ordinance". Councilwoman Critz continued we served the community, we have provided the information, we've provided the format and at some point we have to take our hands off; we can't babysit the community. Councilwoman Krafft replied "no, but have you provided the service if you, I mean, you've provided the opportunity for the service, but have you provided the service if you don't address it when they call". Councilwoman Critz replied "she would be addressing it; she would be forwarding them to the appropriate spot". Mayor Becker asked if Councilwoman Critz was saying it's okay if they call Ms. Brooks. Councilwoman Neill responded she's handling it, she's just delegating it. Councilwoman Coffey stated "give them the information to call". Mayor Becker added "tell them to call Mr. Ganus, here's the number". Councilwoman Critz responded she needs to be able to say... Mayor Becker continued or Ms. Ridings would be, we would have to establish though somebody responsible in the town hall he thought. Councilwoman Critz responded Ms. Ridings or Ms. Brooks, either one, whoever the person got, even Mayor Becker. There needs to be a standard comment and just say "we are not equipped, responsible"; however they want to put it. Councilwoman Coffey suggested or just say N•Focus is. Councilwoman Critz responded this is where you need to call, because they are the ones that are responsible to follow through. Councilwoman Neill added we have contracted with this company to handle this complaint. Councilwoman Critz stated there needs to be something you all say that's the same thing that forwards them there to let them know you are not the appropriate person and therefore you don't get dumped on. Mayor Becker explained that he agreed with Councilwoman Krafft, it would be nice if you didn't force everybody to write a college level essay (that may be asking...), but on the other hand you lose your standardization a little bit as people are just talking. Councilwoman Critz responded if they call N•Focus, N•Focus is prepared to tell them what they need. Mayor Becker noted that's what they do if it's a nuisance. Councilwoman Krafft thought that if you presented it more as a different department, they are part of you, because the way she has heard it is that we have contracted, we've done our due diligence, we are putting you off on this place. Mayor Becker asked "so, call our code enforcement department". Councilwoman Krafft responded that doesn't make her feel as an individual that "you've taken care of me in the town", it makes her feel like you've pushed me off to somebody else,

but if you said “this is who takes care of our complaints, Jane whoever at N•Focus”, because otherwise she felt like you’ve just pushed her away, you didn’t handle her issue at all. Councilwoman Critz suggested if you said something to the effect that “in order to fully address these issues we have contracted with N•Focus, their number is blah, blah, blah, please feel free to call them, they work for the town and are prepared to handle these issues for our community”. Therefore you have not been brushed off, but you’ve told them you have contracted someone that could do the job, which is what we have done and the reason we have steered away from this all the time is not because we didn’t have issues, but because we didn’t have someone to actually enforce it. Mayor Becker commented we didn’t have anything to enforce. Councilwoman Critz explained that she didn’t want Ms. Brooks, Ms. Ridings or anyone else (Mayor Becker) to feel like they have a level of responsibility here, but she agreed with Councilwoman Krafft, she wants the person to feel like they are being forwarded not being brushed off; they are being forwarded to a legitimate problem-solver. Councilwoman Coffey stated that was what N•Focus is. Councilwoman Krafft responded they are a department. Mayor Becker commented if it comes in in writing it could just be scanned, it will be opened here and scanned and emailed to them. That’s the best way, that makes Mayor Becker happy because you’ve got a folder, but it won’t all come in that way. Councilwoman Krafft thought a phone log of some sort was needed; it just has a date and what the complaint was and that’s it, it doesn’t have to be..... Ms. Brooks asked if what they were supposed to be doing is saying “okay, this is who you need to call”, that’s not us getting into a conversation with them about what their complaint is, because you are taking up..... Councilwoman Krafft responded they have already told you... Ms. Brooks continued staff time, not necessarily, they could say they have a complaint. Councilwoman Neill commented she thought that’s part of the service that N•Focus is providing that we should expect, they have the means to take it from there; she didn’t think Ms. Brooks needs to get any other information. Councilwoman Coffey thought if we put it in the newsletter/online that N•Focus is the place for all complaints to go to then if a call comes in here then you simply forward them to N•Focus; that’s what we need to do, it needs to be hands off otherwise and the reason is we don’t want to get in the mix, they [staff] don’t need to be in the mix, N•Focus needs to, they are going to be paid to handle and that’s what we need to do. Councilwoman Neill added their information will be in the newsletter; call them directly.

- Councilwoman Critz thought we should establish quarterly, bi-yearly or something, a report, probably quarterly report from them to us. Councilwoman Coffey commented you could probably get a monthly report from them without a problem. Ms. Brooks commented however the bill comes in she would think. Councilwoman Coffey thought you wouldn’t want anything to sit out there quarterly. Councilwoman Critz thought in the newsletter people of the community... Councilwoman Neill thought it would be a monthly report. Mayor Becker stated that it occurred to him that the public records aspect isn’t a problem being offsite, because when Centralina did our zoning we didn’t have zoning records here; they were at Ms. Bennett’s. Ms. Brooks and he (Ms. Brooks was becoming the Zoning Administrator – sort of easing into it) remember it being a little annoying sometimes, we wished we had that file here and we didn’t, but it didn’t matter; the public records were being kept and Ms. Bennett was fully aware that if somebody requested a copy of a zoning permit that she would furnish it. Councilwoman Critz

stated that she agreed with Councilwoman Krafft, she thought in the newsletter when the write-up about N•Focus is done, the community needs to understand they are contracted directly with the town in order to provide a service that we could not provide in the past and to do a quality job and that this is being done (we researched it) to provide the community with the best possible solutions. Therefore, they do feel like that are not being passed off, but this is someone who is working in conjunction with the town to help us do something we can't do ourselves. Ms. Brooks responded okay. Councilwoman Critz explained that she thought that could be said where the community feels like they are not just being blown off. Ms. Brooks commented that she did see a problem, because we have the nuisance ordinance and we have the zoning ordinance, so there are complaints that come in that are zoning based, which we can't push off to N•Focus. Councilwoman Critz asked if they would understand how if they got one of these that it needs to get back to you. Ms. Brooks responded she was sure we could make them understand that. Councilwoman Krafft responded that was another reason why she says when John Smith calls you and says "I have a complaint". Ms. Brooks replied "then you ask simply". Councilwoman Krafft continued simply what is the complaint. Ms. Brooks responded simply, that would be simple; sometimes you are on the phone for 30 to 45 minutes, because of a simple problem. Councilwoman Krafft responded which is unfortunately or fortunately (however you want to look at it) part of the customer service part of being a town. Ms. Brooks responded everyone should be able to get that service, but if there's so many people tied up... Councilwoman Krafft stated that's what you do, that's what we are here for it to... Councilwoman Krafft explained that since she has taken this position she spent a lot of time listening to people and their opinions and their issues, that's what you do, that's why we're here. Ms. Brooks responded that she understood what Councilwoman Krafft was saying, but asked that she please understand that we have people who come in this office who should be serviced when they walk in this door, but if she is on the phone with somebody for 30 to 45 minutes over a simple complaint that's where she has a problem. Councilwoman Coffey offered that Ms. Brooks shouldn't even be handling... We are going to have to find a way to cut it down, it has to be if it's a zoning issue and they relay that then Ms. Brooks can take that call, that's her area, but if it's truly the ordinance and N•Focus then Ms. Brooks needs to pass – just give them the information and not engage them. Councilwoman Krafft responded she should be able to ask them. Mayor Becker commented hopefully Ms. Brooks can gracefully get them off the phone in less than 30 minutes if it is clearly a nuisance ordinance complaint. Ms. Brooks is laughing cause it is sometimes hard to do that. Councilwoman Krafft replied "oh, you don't have to tell me, I spent 45 minutes today listening to somebody today about run off from a subdivision". Mayor Becker responded there you go. Councilwoman Krafft commented she didn't have 45 minutes to give.

- Ms. Brooks asked if the council had an issue with zoning remaining the same, they have to present a written complaint; that is the way it always has been. All of the council responded no. Councilwoman Critz noted there has to be a polite efficient way to do this. Councilwoman Coffey added and just simply put, we don't need to have a long explanation, we just need to say "N•Focus and the number is". Ms. Brooks responded yes, but we also don't want to be rude, so we... Councilwoman Coffey agreed not being rude, it's the tone and all of that, you just lay it out there. You've got 2,700 households here, is that correct. Mayor Becker clarified it was

2,700 people, 1,100 households. Councilwoman Coffey asked if they could imagine having 2,700 calls come in in a month's time. You have to get out of the business of being a phone manager; it's not what you want to be (neither Ms. Brooks nor Ms. Ridings), so if it's something that pertains to the duties that you have here they need to handle it and if it really needs to go to another area they need to send it there. Councilwoman Critz shared that she served on the North Carolina Board of Home Schooling for three years from 1992 to 1995 and had several issues that she found herself totally absorbed. There was one day she took 121 phone calls in a 24 hour period thanks to call waiting in her personal home. That is just one example of many that Councilwoman Critz wouldn't bother and bore the council with, but the point being is that she was incapable of doing her job, because she was inundated with phone calls, so there has got to be a way that you can do this politely and efficiently, because you can't afford to be hindered from doing your appropriate job. There has got to be a way; it may be trial and error, but Councilwoman Critz thought we should certainly strive for it. Mayor Becker referred to Councilman Countryman and commented that he had almost like a "Eureka" moment. Councilman Countryman responded he wouldn't say it is a simple solution, but he didn't think it was nearly as complex as they were trying to make it. Ms. Brooks commented probably not. Councilman Countryman suggested when they get ready to bring this to the public; he thought they need to have a written policy at the procedure. Policies and procedures and communicate those to the public at the time we present the Nuisance Ordinance program. This is how we actuate the process and tell them that up front. Convey to them that we are here to support their efforts and so is this organization; it's a team concept that we are working together, but in order to facilitate a complaint this is what you have to do. Those are the policies and procedures, those need to be in place prior to presenting the actual ordinance itself and it should be presented together and then we will be done with it. Ms. Brooks responded okay and asked when the council wanted to present this to the public/when they wanted to adopt this. Mayor Becker added "or at least have the public hearing". Councilwoman Critz responded she thought they should have it next month, she didn't see any reason to keep deliberating. Ms. Brooks responded if we have the public hearing next month we could do a newsletter and it would have to go out next week or so. Councilwoman Critz asked if Ms. Brooks wanted to do it in March to give her more time for the newsletter. Ms. Brooks responded okay, so it would go out next week... it would describe that we were having the public hearing and what we were having it on. Ms. Brooks guessed after that public hearing they would have to follow up with another newsletter that would explain the procedure and the policy, etc. to them, because beforehand we won't have a policy that has been adopted, so we can't tell them in the newsletter that goes out next week what the policy is. Councilwoman Critz asked if it had to be a newsletter next week or could it just be a notification of a public hearing and what it's for. Mayor Becker responded that their original goal was to try and really communicate what we were doing, but way above and beyond what a normal public hearing... Councilman Countryman commented he didn't think they should take it to the public until they've got their ducks in a row. Councilwoman Neill agreed and stated she didn't think they were ready. Councilwoman Critz responded she wanted to. Councilman Countryman responded until they have the policy; somebody needs to write the policy and the council needs to review it. Councilwoman Critz responded they just did that, all the

things they approved and all the changes they have approved, so they should be all content with the policy. Mayor Becker explained that was the ordinance, but there is no policy yet. Councilwoman Coffey stated no policy. Councilwoman Krafft commented this is the ordinance, not the policy. Councilwoman Critz explained she was saying that they "said" a policy. Ms. Brooks commented they just discussed the policy of how they want it to be; the policy can be a one page... Councilwoman Coffey offered what Ms. Brooks is really saying is she has to formulate this policy, put it in writing and bring it back to the council. Councilman Countryman replied "exactly". Councilwoman Coffey continued that it had to come back before the council. Ms. Brooks commented the council had to approve the policy, but she was just saying it is probably a one page document, because there is not a lot that will go into the policy, because there is so much in the ordinance and we are just basically (in the policy) saying "okay, this is how you can do it, in person, by email, petition and how, you could call the town hall, you could call the town hall or you can call N•Focus". Councilman Countryman commented he sees it happening no sooner than March. Mayor Becker offered that Ms. Brooks could begin work on the newsletter. Councilwoman Critz asked why the council can't approve the policy tonight. Councilwoman Coffey responded that they didn't have one; Ms. Brooks has to write it. Councilwoman Critz stated that she realized that, but why can't they approve what they just orally agreed on – does it have to be in writing to; we can't approve it oral? Ms. Brooks responded Councilwoman Critz was outnumbered. Mayor Becker commented they could do whatever they wanted, but it is always better if you have a piece of paper, if they have a written document. Ms. Brooks agreed. Councilwoman Critz stated legally it was her understanding they could orally approve. Mayor Becker responded they can. Ms. Brooks agreed they could. Mayor Becker stated it's not always a good idea. Councilwoman Critz commented they could agree upon something orally that could be put in writing and since it's that simple, she didn't understand where it was going to get complicated. Ms. Brooks passed around a draft of a policy she described as the "short end of a policy". Mayor Becker commented it was the short end of the policy, but it might be a little more fleshed out, but still one page; "it's not rocket science". Ms. Brooks responded no and she thought that's all that really needs to be in a policy. Councilwoman Critz agreed; more is not always better, often it's just more and this [draft] seemed sufficient to her. Ms. Brooks offered that a policy can be changed anytime the council wanted. Mayor Becker added "fairly easily". Ms. Brooks could just flesh that [draft policy] out, say complaints in writing will be forwarded immediately and received by the town hall will be forwarded to N•Focus. Councilwoman Coffey stated she didn't want this to appear to be rushed, she wanted the newsletter or however it was determined it was going out that there is enough time. Councilwoman Coffey didn't see having this happen in three or four weeks and everybody should have gotten the information and half the people didn't get it. Councilwoman Critz commented they won't get any information in this newsletter; they will just get the notification to come for the public hearing. Ms. Brooks commented her hope was... Mayor Becker explained the hope was to have everything. Ms. Brooks continued the hope is the newsletter will give them information. Mayor Becker stated the newsletter is meant to be FAQ's, a very informative thing Ms. Brooks wanted to do. Councilwoman Neill responded "we have to do that". Councilwoman Critz asked before the public hearing. Ms. Brooks responded "before the public hearing". Councilwoman Neill agreed. Mayor Becker

explained this is not a zoning public hearing; this is more like we are really trying to communicate to the public. Councilwoman Critz stated that she was off base there. Mayor Becker reminded the council that it was not a required public hearing; it's something we are trying to do to really get everybody on the same page and understand what we are doing. Councilwoman Critz commented to go with Councilwoman Coffey's suggestion. Councilman Countryman referred to Ms. Brooks and commented he thought that policy needed to be adjusted in a way that takes the responsibility off of her, because he didn't think that most people would understand that she was not the administrator. Mayor Becker commented there is a different administrator for this one. Councilman Countryman thought it needs to be communicated at the lowest level, so that everybody understands that this organization is going to be the organization handling all nuisance complaints and they are the one that anyone will be dealing with, not here and the procedure by which that takes place, be it a phone call or a letter or whatever. Ms. Brooks responded she thought if she talked to N•Focus a little bit more to find out how they do it, what their procedures are, because they work with other towns and if she can get more of a feel for how they do it that would probably help to write the policy too. Councilman Countryman responded conveniently possible to talk with them and then have back for the council next month a rough draft policy and letter. Ms. Brooks responded she thought so, yes. Mayor Becker thought Ms. Brooks could start her newsletter work now, because the ordinance and the aspect is sort of now agreed on, so she can have her little article explaining what's in and get a head start on that, so as soon as the policy is approved the newsletter is ready to go out; it gives them a couple of weeks to digest it before the March meeting. That might be a perfect timeline. Ms. Brooks asked the council if they wanted her to write the newsletter articles and let them read them before. Councilwoman Critz responded that would be good. Councilman Countryman responded fabulous. Mayor Becker responded that would be good. Ms. Brooks commented the council could say "yes, I like this article or no", at the next meeting. Mayor Becker stated all he could say is he hopes that we are acting as if we are going to have 50 nuisance complaints a month and it would just be so wonderful if we had two or three or less. Ms. Brooks stated it would be great. Mayor Becker continued there is no telling what is going to happen; it really could be two or three a month if that and that would be nice. Ms. Brooks responded she has the nightmare that everybody is going to be calling. Mayor Becker commented it is scary. Councilwoman Krafft commented she thought you would get more in the very beginning right when it first comes out, but then it will... Ms. Brooks responded no. Mayor Becker responded let's hope. Ms. Brooks added "because it is going to cost money". Councilwoman Neill asked if they had decided on how they are going to handle a call. Mayor Becker responded Ms. Brooks is going to call. Ms. Brooks responded she was going to talk some more with N•Focus. Mayor Becker asked if the consensus was that we're going to do what they said "they call here, we are going to forward them". Councilwoman Critz responded if you give us a draft of the policy then they will either say that's great or they will tweak it and deal with it and refine it. Mayor Becker responded that will be easy; just one page. Ms. Brooks asked if this will just be on next month's meeting – does the council want to wait until then to call the public hearing for March. Mayor Becker responded for the following month – yes, we've got nothing else, there is no budget hearing (that doesn't happen until May). Councilwoman Critz asked if the council should technically approve the ordinance

to go along with the changes or do they want to wait and do that along with the policy. Mayor Becker responded they certainly are not going to adopt it, so... Ms. Brooks responded she thought they were fine. Mayor Becker commented they will just continue to move forward and their target now is March; Ms. Brooks will have the policy and she and N•Focus will work out how we can make this happen. Does that make sense? We are getting more input in March. March is our target and Mayor Becker thought it will work well at that point.

6. **Discussion and Consideration of a Town Sponsored Clean-Up**

- It was noted the council had an update from Mr. Hudson [RCS Garbage Service] in front of them and Mayor Becker explained the long story short is it's a cost "plus" basis. The town would pay what his tipping fees are and there is no ceiling on what the cost could be and we have no way of guessing how much trash is going to be out there. It could be a little trash and we could get money back or we could pay \$10,000 to \$12,000 for it. Councilwoman Critz commented she thought as she was reading over these, probably the thought happened because they are back-to-back – nuisance ordinance and consideration for the clean-up. Is there any way in the public hearing and in the newsletter that we could somehow acquire information from the community as to how many people would actually like this or think it is a good idea or what the need actually is before we move forward with a choice over this. Councilwoman Neill replied well that could be in the newsletter when Ms. Brooks sends out the newsletter. Ms. Brooks asked how they would get the feedback. Mayor Becker asked how they would know that it's relevant. Councilwoman Neill asked how do you get the feedback. Mayor Becker responded people will call and say "yeah, I want you to do that clean-up". There is almost, based on responses to surveys that you're..... Councilwoman Critz commented "but we are not doing the clean-up". Mayor Becker responded no, we are doing... Councilwoman Critz stated "so it's going to have to be very specific that they know that this is just a pick-up or clean-up that they do themselves". Mayor Becker asked what Councilwoman Critz meant. Ms. Brooks responded she means that they have to put their trash at the curb. Councilwoman Critz responded the town is not going through and cleaning up everybody's yards. Mayor Becker asked "they don't expect that, do they?" Councilwoman Critz replied well you don't know, that's her point. Ms. Brooks commented that better be a really good article in the newsletter. Councilwoman Coffey added "all articles will be required to be at curbside by 7:00 a.m.", so that in itself is self-explanatory and that's the way we would put it out there, that they would know that it would have to be at curbside. Mayor Becker commented \$5,000 worth of trash, at what the tipping fees are, he didn't remember the amount, if it's \$40 a ton maybe, that's only 120 tons, that's a few pieces of furniture and you've got 1,000 pounds of stuff out there. Mayor Becker thinks that's a reasonable number, he is trying to be as, he is guessing, what can you do, but he [Mr. Hudson] has done this for a living, so he has some "back of a napkin idea", maybe, but it scares Mayor Becker. Councilman Countryman responded yeah, it's a blank check. Mayor Becker agreed and stated he can just see waking up that morning driving down Potter Road and just seeing piles of it and saying "we have to do a tax increase". Councilwoman Coffey asked if this was a real consideration, is this something we want; from the surveys, that it would be a great thing, this is what people are looking to do – clean up the town. We have heard it for years. Do we do something or do we just back up and sit on

our hands. Councilwoman Critz replied when people talk about cleaning up in the town, they wanted us to take care of all of the stuff downtown as if we could take charge of someone else's property. Councilwoman Critz stated she didn't think they really wanted to clean-up their stuff and have it on the curb. Councilwoman Neill responded "exactly". Mayor Becker stated they would participate if we offered it he was sure; he thought he was going to get his money's worth, he has a long driveway, but he could load up his truck. Councilwoman Neill asked what they were talking about. Councilwoman Coffey commented she thought it was a great service; she personally would not use it, but she thought it would be great for the town's people. It would be something, it's an olive branch, we are trying to bring something to you that may be helpful in making our town look better; it's part of beautification. Councilwoman Critz responded but literally every single person that she has ever spoke to that refers to town clean-up is talking about downtown; every constituent that has every brought that up. Councilwoman Coffey asked about people in neighborhoods that have trash piled, that are burning garbage, mattresses – it is horrible. Councilwoman Critz asked if Councilwoman Coffey thought a once a year thing was going to stop that. Councilwoman Coffey responded she didn't think she said that, but she thought it would be a help although she wouldn't use it. Councilwoman Neill commented we don't provide trash pick-up, but this is something extra that we could do for the town. Councilman Countryman responded extra for the town, if it wasn't a blank check. Councilwoman Coffey noted it's the town paying for themselves; we are not doing anything – their tax dollars. Mayor Becker questioned if they [taxpayers] were happy that this is what we are using tax money for and how do you know the first time if we are ever going to do it again; you don't know, it could cost \$8,600 almost on the nail, it could cost \$50,000. There could be like, he could just have that morning drive seeing those mountains of trash. Councilwoman Neill responded it is scary. Councilwoman Coffey responded she had a recommendation – that item #6 be deleted even from conversation; there is no sense in the council having this conversation. Councilwoman Critz responded it might be a great idea. Councilwoman Coffey responded too much said already, she says "let it go, let it die, it's over and it's not necessary, it's not what the people want, we are not pushing personal agendas". Councilwoman Critz responded "no, no, I know that". Councilwoman Coffey explained she is so far off the road in the backwoods, she wouldn't use it anyway, she has a four-yard dumpster that is picked up from her house every other week, so she pays already and that will not discontinue. Councilwoman Critz responded she didn't think it was a bad idea and she thought what Councilwoman Coffey was saying is very legitimate, but what she was thinking here is - why don't we let this nuisance ordinance ride for about a year and it may take care of some of that. Councilwoman Coffey responded "that's wonderful". Mayor Becker responded that is a possibility. Councilwoman Critz stated it may take care of some of those piles that are concerns and think about having a town sponsored clean-up. Mayor Becker commented probably Ms. Brooks and he, because they have been living this for several months – both of these processes. Ms. Brooks is visualizing the phone ringing about 50 to 60 times a day on the nuisance complaints and he is visualizing tons of trash, maybe they are too close to it and need some other voices of sanity from the council, maybe it's not that bad. Ms. Brooks explained even Mr. Hudson said "you know when they have these things, they just call up their neighbor over in Wesley Chapel or here

and say they are picking up dump, bring your garbage”, so your mounds of garbage could literally be mounds of garbage. Mayor Becker responded the dream of his could really become a reality. Councilwoman Neill agreed this should be gone. Mayor Becker responded “for a town that didn’t want to provide services like this, we maybe, caution is the rule of the day for now”. Councilwoman Critz stated she was with Councilwoman Coffey. Councilwoman Neill said she was too – let’s see how the ordinance works. Mayor Becker asked if that was the consensus, he guessed they need to vote if they are not going to do it, we just move forward.

- **Councilwoman Coffey made a motion to end the discussion on item #6 on the agenda and not have any further discussion and Councilman Countryman seconded. The motion passed unanimously as follows:**

Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft and Neill

Nays: None

7. Discussion of Non-Profit Funding

- Mayor Becker noted that the non-profits have been riding on the agenda for a while; he printed out a new one for the council so they have their idea of where we are most interested in talking about this initially. Mayor Becker asked Councilwoman Coffey if that was correct; this is the one that she sort of brought to the council’s attention. Councilwoman Coffey agreed that she was and believed that so many things are coming before us, it’s getting to be personal and we don’t even want that in our town. The thing that we need to be cognitive of is providing for the citizens of Mineral Springs and we have projects, such as the community center, that need to be started and finished; we haven’t done that. We don’t have anything on the table for that and Councilwoman Coffey believed that we would benefit the members of the Mineral Springs community by moving forward and completing some of the projects that are going to benefit our constituents and get out of the business of giving to anyone. Let’s refer those people to agencies that can help them, let’s write them a check if we so deem it necessary, but we need to get out of the business of funding. Councilwoman Coffey shared a “case and point” on CATA – she has three grandsons that came out of there doing very well, but you know it costs the families for them to be there, you don’t go there for free and they have a boat load of fundraisers over there. People do that very well; yes, there is still a need and in Councilwoman Coffey’s opinion this should have never come before the town. Mayor Becker mentioned CATA wasn’t before the council; he gave it to the council as a personal memo. Councilwoman Coffey responded please forgive me, it says to “Mineral Springs Town Council from Rick Becker”, therefore it is still before her. Mayor Becker noted it’s an FYI to the council personally; that was him saying CATA and Union Academy asked us two months ago and came before the council and council said no and that’s what he said in that memo he thought. Mayor Becker added that he would give it to his council personally, but was not going to ask the town to give the money; he just wanted to clarify that. Councilwoman Coffey apologized and thanked Mayor Becker for the clarity, but she had seen quite enough already. These things become personal and then people are looking at our town with sour faces and Councilwoman Coffey doesn’t want that. Councilwoman Coffey doesn’t want people looking at the council with sour faces; “let’s all just be happy, let’s do for constituents that we serve, let’s see about doing a great job for them and then if money flows in ways

that we never dreamed of then we can give to organizations". Councilwoman Coffey believed that is where the town needs to be, but that is her personally. Councilwoman Critz responded she will be the first to disagree in part; she was not going to disagree in whole, because she thought Councilwoman Coffey has a valid point and she thinks it's one we always tried to adhere to, which is why we don't say yes to all of them. We are very concentrated and committed to the fact that these organizations do bless and serve our community and Councilwoman Critz has repeatedly had people express gratitude for the fact the town supports. We are not in the business of funding or paying salaries or any of that; these are token gifts that are given in a hope that it will make their jobs easier as they serve our community; that we know they do. For example: Council on Aging – there's dozens of people within our community; Turning Point – we can only guesstimate, because of privacy laws, but they're here. There are these things that Councilwoman Critz would hate to see us stop funding, because we know that they benefit our constituents in a big way and many of our constituents who have been benefitted by them realize that we give back to them are grateful that we do so. Having said that, Councilwoman Critz doesn't think we should ever stop using the fact that it serves our community directly as that measuring stick. Councilwoman Coffey responded that's not her measuring stick, her measuring stick is that we don't give to anyone, so that's not the measuring stick that she is using. The measuring stick that Councilwoman Coffey is using is that we use the funds that are in this town for the projects that we haven't been able to do; "let's finish what we've got on our plate and then look back". Councilwoman Critz mentioned we bought this land and did this town hall and we never stopped giving. Councilwoman Coffey responded we never got that building next door finished or started. Councilwoman Critz replied she didn't think it is because of what we are giving. Councilwoman Coffey responded "well every little bit helps". Councilwoman Critz explained she was not saying it doesn't, but she also thinks there is a principle in giving and it's not just a personal opinion, there is an economic principle in municipalities giving back to non-profits that work within. Councilwoman Coffey mentioned quite a few don't give anything. Councilwoman Critz responded quite a few don't, but more do and if you look at the Institute of Government and some of these, they caution you to give with standards and regulations and caution and not to give frivolously, but more communities, more municipalities give than don't and this is a statistical fact in the State of North Carolina. Councilwoman Coffey stated she had said her piece and she is done. Councilwoman Critz responded she was just saying this is where she stands and why and we've done many fiscal projects and completed the greenway, the park, bought this land, the town hall here and still remained active in giving and she would really like to not see us stop.

- Mayor Becker commented he wasn't going to talk yet, but he was in the middle between Councilwoman Coffey and Councilwoman Critz. From a budget point of view, from a finance point of view he thought that the amount of money we spend at 3% of the budget (3.5/3.8%) wasn't holding us up on the community center. Right now there are a couple of things: one is just a plan for it; second is what are we going to replace the storage space with. Once we turn that into a community center, then everything we've got stored in there (Christmas lights, festival supplies), we need a building for that now, so we do need more; that's the reason we have not done it, it's not because we are out of money. Councilwoman Coffey

responded you could buy a building and store your things. Mayor Becker commented he can get a building for \$12,000. Councilwoman Coffey responded you wouldn't have any problem having a storage facility for \$12,400. Councilwoman Neill explained she wanted to say one thing, she has thought about this a lot, we have had months to think about this and Councilwoman Coffey has raised some very good points, but for her what it comes down to for her that these non-profits provide a level of service that we cannot provide and nor are we required to, we are not required to do that, but this is what a community does. We don't have to raise taxes, we don't have a budget shortfall and Councilwoman Neill doesn't see that we need to really discuss who and who gets a contribution; we need to look at who gets it and at what level. There are some that we can possibly discard or decrease, but if it's all or nothing – Councilwoman Neill can't go along with nothing.

- Mayor Becker explained the one thing that concerned him financially and he believed it concerned Councilwoman Coffey a little bit, but he senses this and it started last year and it's a scary thought. Mayor Becker put in his memo; the schools could become a bottomless pit. It was seen with Western Union, there were huge changes in their attendance, they came, they were really desperate at that school with bringing in 300 more kids – boom - like that. The town gave them \$2,000 and what do they do the next year, but come back with a letter saying “well, thank you for your money and will you give us more this year”. Mayor Becker thought that was a little bit scary. Then we have the band boosters and Mayor Becker realized that we are dealing with a high school, you've got the band boosters and you've got the ROTC boosters and you've got the regular boosters and you've got the PTO and it could suddenly become.... Councilwoman Neill responded that's where she would start with the schools; no more school funding. Mayor Becker responded or it has to be \$1,000 per school period, so Western Union/Parkwood, you guys work it out, we can't give to every cause; that is an open ended thing, sort of like the open ended garbage pickup. Mayor Becker could see Parkwood High School and Middle School becoming, once the word gets out, they would all look at us, so that's something Mayor Becker thought if we're going to continue in any form, that's an area of extreme caution. Not that we don't care about our schools and we love our kids and our taxes pay a lot of money toward that, but we certainly have to be very aware of the potential for out-of-control demands on our taxpayer money from the schools. It's just human nature and that's one that Mayor Becker would, even though he doesn't advocate either cutting everybody off, urge caution on how the schools are dealt with if we are dealing with them anymore. Councilwoman Critz mentioned if you look at the chart, we never gave to schools until recently. Mayor Becker responded it just started. Councilwoman Critz stated she thought they have always discussed, when someone comes, the amount of benefit they are providing within the community and service and she thought they could look at the school that way, but Attorney Griffin has done two things that she can recall and she is going to say this on the record and leave it open ended for him to correct her. Councilwoman Critz has had personal and public, private and public conversations about giving. Attorney Griffin very much advocates cautious giving, at which he and Councilwoman Critz have never agreed, she thought she was more accepting and open minded than he is, but they never have actually come to an impasse, but he made a comment when the council first started funding schools – Councilwoman

Critz commented she was going to paraphrase and would stand corrected if she was wrong, but the comment was along the lines of “if you start filling in the gaps with the schools specifically, then the people who are supposed to fill in those gaps will not have the incentive nor the reason to do so”, so we could actually be doing the schools an injustice. That is not true with these other organizations or at least Attorney Griffin nor anyone else has brought that out in the open. Attorney Griffin has always expressed to Councilwoman Critz and she has always understood our giving to these other organizations as in no way, shape or form funding any particular need that they have, but merely giving them additional monies and funds to make their jobs easier and they are not relying on our giving. Our giving is an asset to them for sure, whereas the schools appear to be relying on it, so Councilwoman Critz does see the school funding in a different light than the other funding. Councilwoman Critz stated she was with Councilwoman Coffey on that and she was glad, at first she wasn't, she will be really honest, at first she thought “oh, I don't want to go there, because I am a giver by nature”, but then as she sat down and looked at it she thought “well gosh maybe it is time that we sit down and reevaluate, so she is appreciative to Councilwoman Coffey for bringing this to the council's attentions, but she is also with Councilwoman Neill in that she really can't do an all or nothing, she really feels like she has to stay in the realm of giving with guidelines and priorities for sure. Councilwoman Critz stated she can't say anything more without belaboring the issue.

- Mayor Becker commented it was very telling and really gratifying that we had a very successful private fundraiser that Councilwoman Cureton undertook to get money to a school and it ended up more than they necessarily asked for. Councilwoman Neill responded “that's right, thank you Councilwoman Cureton”. It goes to show it can be done. Mayor Becker explained it was a lot of work; he didn't want to think about how many people Councilwoman Cureton asked. Councilwoman Cureton commented she didn't realize that people needed money as bad as they did; a lady's child is on the band and she could not afford what the kids, there is a lot of people that are rich people who have money and these people don't have money. Take the people over here, this place, this place here that just recently moved, they have plenty of money, cause she told me they did, but she wasn't going to give to that because she does a lot. There are a lot of kids need the money for certain things, they don't have the money, parents don't have the money to give, so when Councilwoman Cureton started that and after she started doing that she found out there was so many people that didn't have it. Councilwoman Cureton means it really helped her a lot, she got money from DC, they sent her \$100 and she thought the people that gave here, Attorney Griffin gave me \$100. It really bothered Councilwoman Cureton to see that there are people who didn't have money to support their kids in school and where certain people can. When Councilwoman Cureton's kids were in school it was easy, she didn't have any problem, but a lot of parents now, they don't have, the kids are being raised by their grandparents and they don't have money to do what they are supposed to. Councilwoman Cureton enjoyed it. Mayor Becker responded it was a very successful effort. Councilwoman Cureton explained she started out with a \$1,000 and she got over \$1,100; she didn't turn the other money in, because there are two people that are going to give her money and told her to wait; one guy was in the hospital and he insisted on her not turning it is until he gave her his, so she may have \$1,200 by the time. If everyone had given Councilwoman Cureton what

they promised her she would probably have had a couple thousand dollars, cause people promised her that didn't give, but she thought the people that gave her (even the town council people gave), so she really thanked them; it was really something. Councilwoman Cureton noted she prayed about it and thanked the Lord how it came to her to do it, but there are people out there that really, really need money. Mayor Becker commented he has a little concern about the Parkwood Band and of course they have gotten their money again, so it's almost a dead issue, but it's almost like we are paying them to perform, but they are a huge part of our festival, so he feels almost like he wants to do something for them to encourage that, but Councilwoman Cureton did it and it required more individual effort, but we were still able to do that and he didn't think Mr. Wallace and Ms. Ellis cared how that money originates as long as they have it to buy uniforms and what have you. Councilwoman Cureton noted they sent her a wonderful thank you note. Mayor Becker stated we have an opening there he thinks to maybe take a little more personal approach to schools.

- Mayor Becker thought we made a mistake last year also and he didn't want to single any one non-profit out, but the Red Cross, which even though it is a national organization and they have got gazillions of dollars and all the local chapters are very autonomous and Sheila has been good at explaining how they operate, but they just asked for \$2,500 in their fundraising request this year, it had been \$1,500 for 10 years and we just gave them \$2,500 without even thinking about it and that bumped us another \$1,000; we got a little careless with just not thinking twice. Councilwoman Neill noted Council on Aging too the last two years. Mayor Becker commented they only bumped them up \$500 after many years and Turning Point they've upped, upped, upped, and upped and when they took over.... Councilwoman Critz noted they consolidated. Mayor Becker continued when they consolidated, but then again it didn't mean that their needs doubled. Councilwoman Krafft offered Turning Point had something, they had a lot of different things going on and she thought when the council gave them the money with the stipulation that we would not be doing \$2,500 again, but it was just for this one time; "we said that to them". Mayor Becker stated he thought Councilwoman Krafft was right. Councilwoman Critz commented they had a lot of startup cost as she remembered. Councilwoman Krafft commented they had some issues this year and really needed help. Mayor Becker stated he thought they have room; there is room to cut back without cutting off.
- Councilwoman Critz noted unless anyone else had more to say, she would like to make a motion. Councilwoman Critz made a motion to continue with our non-profit giving, but that we review more closely each year, that we don't make knee jerk or personal decisions and that we set some, we stick to our guidelines of prioritizing of our community involvement and benefit. [This motion was not seconded or voted on]. Mayor Becker noted that's in the form of a motion, that's fairly open ended though and asked if that's where they want to be right now. Councilwoman Neill responded she thought the council should put something in there about no longer contributing to the schools (Union County Public Schools). Councilwoman Critz questioned by beginning with eliminating. Mayor Becker replied "which will be next year for schools"; it doesn't matter they both have gotten their money – Councilwoman Cureton gave it to Parkwood and Western Union has gotten their money from us already, so they're covered for this year. Councilwoman Neill commented that needs to be clear, that needs to be really clear. Mayor Becker

replied "somebody will have to". Councilwoman Critz replied "amended, friendly amendment by Councilwoman Neill to eliminate the giving to the public schools" and that anyone was open to second the motion or to add more amendments or to not second it and let go. Mayor Becker responded they haven't heard from a couple down at the end in much detail. Councilman Countryman responded he guessed he would want to know if they were intending to fund them at their current levels or he was fine with continuing funding for certain organizations, but he thought they ought to take a look and make some adjustments to some of them that already exist; he would be comfortable renewing them at their current levels. Councilman Countryman felt very strongly about Council on Aging since he was an "old guy"; the Red Cross is important; he thought Turning Point was (there is a greater need every day for support of that organization, he thought his wife dropped clothes off there every day). Councilman Countryman continued that he thought there are organizations out there; frankly he was not sure why the council was funding the Catawba Lands Conservancy at \$2,500 and asked what was the other one that kind of tripped his trigger. Councilwoman Critz responded that one has sort of been "rubber stamped" and she didn't think the council has talked about it in a long time. Mayor Becker responded they have never increased it since '05', but they've never decreased it. Councilman Countryman asked "what do we get for that \$2,500 Mayor Becker, except a hug and squeeze each year". Mayor Becker responded it isn't so much what we get, it does that... Councilman Countryman commented he knew what they do. Mayor Becker continued ...does that benefit our immediate community in terms of water quality preservation and the Catawba Basin for example. Does that give you incremental (and as a tree hugger himself), he believes our citizens get that benefit. Mayor Becker thought that we have banners that say "Conservation by Design", so it's almost like they are our mascot. Now is a mascot worthy of a \$2,500 chunk of taxpayer money, that becomes the question. They represent what? They are the arm of what we would like to do more of in our town if we could. Councilwoman Neill shared we have more of a partnership with them. Mayor Becker responded in a sense, we haven't had them, they wrote a grant for us in whenever it was, in '07 he thought, of course that was a huge amount of service they provided to write that grant for us; we haven't had that come up since then. There has been no direct service from them, but that's what they do. Councilman Countryman is an outdoors guy, so he knows how that works, Mayor Becker said. Councilman Countryman responded he is not ~~(?)~~ that we make a contribution to them, he was just asking – does it still need to be at a \$2,500 level; it used to be fine to give them \$1,000. Mayor Becker responded for 10 years the council decided that it was worth \$2,500 and they've just sort of decided that was the level they want to leave it. Councilman Countryman asked if it is like a gold sponsorship. Mayor Becker responded it kind of is he thought. Councilman Countryman asked what recognition Mineral Springs got from them. Councilwoman Neill responded we get recognition from them, we don't know about it, when they go and make their presentations and they talk about what they are doing for the region they bring Mineral Springs into the discussion. They say "this is what Mineral Springs has done". There's our name, there's the creeks, photographs; we've seen the presentation, we are on their list. Councilman Countryman responded he was sure Mineral Springs was on their list and asked that he not be misunderstood, he was not faulting that, he was just saying that from a purely economic standpoint. Councilwoman Neill replied "but that's what we get,

we don't know that, I mean that's great". Councilman Countryman asked if it was worth \$2,500 or could we get the same notoriety for \$2,000. Mayor Becker responded he didn't know. Councilman Countryman stated he didn't either. Councilwoman Critz explained her question is, tonight can they decide if they or don't want to continue with some level of non-profit giving with and at a future date with more information provided to them they will reevaluate the amounts. Councilman Countryman commented he was all about continuing supporting organizations and he would leave it at that. Councilwoman Critz asked if the council had to decide the amount tonight. Mayor Becker responded no, they never have to, but the issue was "are we going to cut them off completely" he thought. Councilwoman Critz stated she was trying to get back to the main point. Mayor Becker asked if her motion is not to do that, but to consider reevaluating the amounts in the end. Councilwoman Critz responded she would restate her motion. Ms. Brooks offered "just let the other one die". Mayor Becker clarified to let it go, because it hadn't been seconded or anything. Councilwoman Critz stated she was going to make a new motion.

- **Councilwoman Critz** made a **motion** that we continue with our non-profit funding and that we will discuss amounts at a future date and **Councilman Countryman** seconded. Mayor Becker asked if the council made the decision to cut the schools off. Councilwoman Critz responded she thought they would decide that at a future date. Mayor Becker replied okay, decide that separate also, so the motion is to continue and reevaluate the amounts. *The aforementioned motion by Councilwoman Critz passed as follows:*

Ayes: Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft and Neill

Nays: Coffey

- Mayor Becker explained they would keep it open for a while longer and he will try to answer Councilman Countryman's question with the CLC to get an idea on why they should give them \$2,500; their job is to sell it to us. Councilman Countryman asked if they would be as kind to us if we only gave them \$2,000. Councilwoman Neill agreed. Mayor Becker responded he did believe there is a cutoff, he did believe you get (no kidding), it's a gold sponsorship where you get your name in the list that's at all their events and it's on one of their story boards and you see the Town of Mineral Springs there and it kind of does... Mayor Becker didn't think you get that for \$2,000, he thought it was \$2,500, but he will double check. Councilwoman Critz commented that she thought you need to consider if you see any further need for assistance for grants for anything else that might come up that the council discussed in parks wise, because that may weigh in on what level we want to keep a partnership for now, but may not forever. That's something the council has discussed, also looking into grants to help us with the community center, because it is a historic, but they wouldn't be involved in helping us with that. Mayor Becker noted they are strictly conservation.
- Councilwoman Krafft pointed out one thing Mayor Becker brought up and asked at what point was the town going to come up with a plan to do something with that [community center]. Mayor Becker responded that's something the council can start discussing; they have talked, even at our retreat they never (as he recalled) did come up with anything for that. It was still out on the horizon; we're a little bit getting cold feet. Mayor Becker pointed out they were getting off topic a little bit,

but it's a good question. What would it be used for? What's it going to cost to run? Who's going to run it? What's the demand for this type of meeting spaces? Councilwoman Coffey responded "tremendous". Mayor Becker responded that's a good answer, he would like to know and he thought they may need to do a little bit of research on that. Councilwoman Krafft commented she thought there is a need, we all know there is a need; that's why we saved it. Mayor Becker pointed out that we saved it because it is historic and right now we have a need for storage, which is a waste of a nice building. Councilwoman Krafft responded yeah, she thought we could find other places to put "junk". Councilwoman Coffey responded people would have weddings out there, family reunions, the park is there; she can just see all kinds of revenue coming through there. Mayor Becker explained one of the reasons that he had gotten - not cold feet, but concerned - is parking, because we had expected that by now this project would develop and there would be all this on-street parking available and we have 24 parking spaces and that's it. If we did that we have a little land there that we could pave, another ADA accessible spot. Ms. Brooks asked if they were in other business. Mayor Becker responded no, cause this... Ms. Brooks commented this wasn't non-profit. Mayor Becker responded that was true, he was answering a question and suggested they wait until other business for that and then they will do it really quickly, because there is one other thing, he thought Ms. Brooks was going to mention. Ms. Brooks responded she would mention the septic when they got there. Mayor Becker commented there you go - one of the big ones; these aren't excuses, these are real problems. Mayor Becker commented they would do staff updates. Ms. Brooks commented you can't go to the bathroom; we can't get a building permit for it. Mayor Becker responded he thought we could say "why you do a community center when you can't go to the bathroom nowhere". Ms. Brooks agreed that was a major hold up. Councilwoman Coffey stated well there you go, that's valid and that's crystal clear. Councilwoman Critz asked if it was due to the diameter of the pipes that are there. Mayor Becker responded no, it's due to....he guessed they were in staff updates. Councilwoman Critz suggested they might as well officially move there.

8. **Staff Reports**

- There were no staff reports.

9. **Other Business**

- Mayor Becker asked Ms. Brooks if she could explain the septic, it's to do with the fact that we don't have access to the sewer line on Highway 75, because we don't own property out to Highway 75. Councilwoman Critz asked if we didn't have a right-of-way. Mayor Becker responded no and we can't run a 500-foot-long line across Raley Miller's property, because that's not where it is going to be when they develop. One of our things to use that properly is to have the sewer infrastructure in the street that it can go right out to and parking (on street parking) and so forth. That's been a hold up; it's been something that has bothered Mayor Becker. Councilwoman Critz asked if Mr. Raley is giving us any information, updates on anything. Councilwoman Krafft asked if we have even asked. Ms. Brooks responded no. Councilwoman Neill commented that he was busy elsewhere from what she understood. Councilwoman Critz asked if we have asked. Ms. Brooks responded no and explained that last time she was talking to Mr. Raley was when they were trying to get him to ease up on some of the easements, so that we could

put in more septic lines, so that we could make that [community center] a reality; it wasn't working out. Mayor Becker added there is another layer of ownership with Kroger now he would say, since this is still sort of a staff update, there is another possibility and it's another way to spend money on Capital; we could consider approaching them and buying additional land beyond the park for multiple things (parking, drain field), because then we could just go septic over there until the sewer is in, so additional...and we could even perhaps have some kind of another building for storage, so there are other options. Councilwoman Coffey responded there are opportunities for advancement. Mayor Becker replied "ways to spend money and ways to spend money on other than non-profits". There are ways to do it, nothing is insoluble. Councilwoman Critz asked if he is open to selling us this land. Mayor Becker responded we don't know. Ms. Brooks added that's something on our wish list. Mayor Becker explained it's kind of on our staff discussion, but we didn't know, it wasn't really ever... Ms. Brooks suggested seeing what she could get from him. Mayor Becker added that we wanted council to tell us what to do on this. We are still trying to do our leg work, our due diligence and how do we approach this. Councilwoman Krafft responded she thought that we have to start, we got the park finished, which was our next project and she thought that the one thing that has been unique about Mineral Springs is that you work on a project, you pay it off, you complete it and then you go to the next project. Mayor Becker replied "this is true". Councilwoman Krafft added that she thought at this point the park is done, the greenway is done and she didn't think we had any open project – correct? Councilwoman Coffey responded not that she was aware of. Mayor Becker commented he thought they did very well on them. Councilwoman Coffey asked if Mayor Becker had any open projects. Mayor Becker responded "we are so legal on the greenway; it's beyond belief". Councilwoman Krafft commented she thought everything was completed, so she thought that it's now time to look at the next step, the next step could be developing the community center, but there are these steps/layers before you can get to the building part that we need to start exploring and moving forward on, because we have to stay progressive on what we are doing for our community and servicing the community. Councilwoman Coffey agreed. Mayor Becker asked the council if they want to see seriously about expanding our municipal campus. Councilwoman Critz responded absolutely. Mayor Becker commented one thing you learn is you run out of land and you're in trouble and we had to keep our park really small, we are lucky we had to keep it really small because of what the cost per square foot park development turned out to be. We are lucky we only had that much space to develop, but we are going to need more parking, we are going to need more drain field, we are going to need a storage building, maybe as part of a permanent pavilion instead of that silly stage we set up, maybe under that could be storage; things we could do. Councilwoman Critz suggested that we proceed with that information, pursue him and see what... Mayor Becker stated "first step is there land available". Councilwoman Critz responded absolutely and explained she remembered when we had our open house here, she didn't know why she remembered this so clearly, but there were several journalists and Judge Tripp Helms was here and they caught him on the way out for an interview and Councilwoman Critz just happened to be standing there and he said "Mineral Springs should be the poster child for the right way to do town planning". Mayor Becker asked if that was what Judge Helms said; that was nice of him.

Councilwoman Critz added that Judge Helms said “they did not raise taxes, they did not go into debt, everyone should look at how they have done this, because they have done it the right way”. Councilwoman Critz stated that was high praise and she didn’t see any reason why we can’t move forward and do the same thing, because Councilwoman Krafft is right – we do it and we do it paid for and it doesn’t go unnoticed, it is the right way to do things; we are not putting higher taxes on our constituents, we are not putting them in debt with loans and she says “let’s move forward”. Councilwoman Neill responded that’s very motivational. Mayor Becker replied “let’s at least ask”. Councilwoman Krafft commented it doesn’t hurt anything to start the process and we know the process is not going to happen overnight. It’s going to take time, lots of time and lots of due diligence. Councilwoman Neill agreed we should get started. Mayor Becker explained Ms. Brooks had been working on the septic process for months, it moves very slowly when you are dealing with these agencies, so it hasn’t been at a standstill, there has been discussion, but he thought in the past six months we haven’t had a lot to talk about it, except staff was saying “well maybe we should buy more land”. That would solve two problems, so let’s see if there is land available to buy. Councilwoman Krafft responded she didn’t think they were going to put a Kroger in anytime soon. Mayor Becker agreed and stated it’s not a market for Kroger or any store.

- Councilwoman Critz noted she heard a rumor and asked if they were in the gossip section or our other business. Mayor Becker responded he didn’t see gossip on this [agenda]. Councilwoman Critz explained that she had heard that there was an Aldi coming to Waxhaw. Mayor Becker commented he heard that rumor too. Councilwoman Krafft stated she heard that too. Ms. Brooks asked if this was other business. Mayor Becker responded that’s the other business and asked if the council was done with the other business, if they have a motion to adjourn, if any of the memos needed attention or if they were all self-explanatory. Councilwoman Critz further explained that her point was if Kroger was coming they needed to dial it up a notch. Mayor Becker responded he didn’t think they were coming.

10. **Adjournment**


- ***Councilwoman Coffey made a motion to adjourn and Councilwoman Krafft seconded. The motion passed unanimously as follows:***

Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft and Neill

Nays: None

- The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.
- The next regular meeting will be on Thursday, February 9, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. at the Mineral Springs Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted by:


Vicky A. Brooks, CMC, NCCMC, Town Clerk




Frederick Becker III, Mayor