

**Minutes of Council Meeting  
Tuesday, March 3, 2009**

**Present:** Van A. Stickles, Mayor  
Barbara Butler, Council Member  
James V. Fogle, Council Member  
Harold Void, Council Member  
Larry McDowell, General Manager, Ellore Water System  
John D. Singh, Town Administrator

**I. Call to Order**

Mayor Van Stickles called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

**II. Opening Prayer**

Councilman Barbara Butler provided the invocation.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

Councilman Jimmy Fogle made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 3, 2009 meeting as written. Councilman Harold Void seconded. All were in favor.

**IV. Special Guest OR Public Request or Comment**

There were no special guests or public requests.

**V. Water Commission Report**

Ellore Water Commission General Manager presented the monthly report to the council and the minutes of the Water Commission's February 10, 2009 meeting.

He said the system completed 47 work orders and billed 642 customers during February.

The system billed 352 customers on behalf of the town for household trash services. The estimated water loss was 14%, showing no change from January.

There were no violations for the water or wastewater facilities from the Department of Health and Environmental Control.

General Manager McDowell also reported that the Ellore Water Commission will hold their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 10, 2009 at 6:00pm at the Ellore Water System.

## **VI. Police Report**

There was no police report.

## **VII. Administrator Report**

Administrator John Singh turned reminded attendees that Trash to Treasures will be held on March 7 beginning at 8:00am and will include a town-wide yard sale and special sales by the downtown stores as well as sidewalk vendors on Cleveland Street. From 3:00-5:00pm on the same day, the town will hold its third annual Cooking on Cleveland competition on downtown Cleveland Street. Admission is free and attendees will vote with cash donations that will benefit the Museum.

Ten people are signed up already to compete including the Police Department, the Lions Club, the Museum, the Water System, Council Member Barbara Butler, Casual Habits, Flavor Masters Catering, the Fire Department, the Mentor Book Club, and the Old Mil House Gift Shoppe. The Ellore Garden Club will also be serving free beverages.

Administrator Singh also addressed concerns about possible legislative cuts to the Aid to Subdivisions program, which benefits counties and municipalities. Singh estimated that the Town of Ellore will lost approximately \$50,000. The Town's total budget is approximately \$400,000 annually so Singh cautioned that there will have to be significant cuts to services and departments in the town. He noted that he will begin offering recommendations for cuts in the April council meeting.

Singh encouraged residents to contact legislative representatives to express concerns about the proposed cuts in the Aid to Subdivisions funding. The funding cut has been approved by the House Ways and Means Committee, which includes Representative Harry Ott and Representative Gilda Cobb-Hunter, and will soon be considered by the legislature as a whole. Both Ott and Cobb-Hunter have stated publicly that they are opposed to the cuts.

Singh also noted that Aid to Subdivisions has already been cut by 10% and is already affecting the Town's budget. He noted that the options to set off those cuts include cutting services and/or raising taxes. There are currently millage caps in place that limit property tax increases, but those may be overridden through emergency action.

Councilman Void asked what kind of cuts would be made. Singh added that the Police Department is non-negotiable and will not be affected by the cuts in order to ensure that the Town continues to have adequate police coverage. Possible non-essential services may be cut, particularly in the Streets and Parks Department. Singh noted that another possibility is to cut administrative services, but cautioned council members about the need for staff to address the increasing regulations approved by the legislature with regards to audits, accounting, and court administration.

He added that recreation and cultural enhancement projects typically are the first cuts made. Mayor Stickle noted that the Town will have to work hard to maintain a level of services for residents through a combination of revenue increases and budget cuts.

Singh reminded everyone that the Ellore Trials has been scheduled for March 21 at the Ellore Training Center. He noted that ticket sales have been brisk this year and added that the event is a benefit to the Town as it brings people into the community's businesses, grocery store, and gas stations.

Singh also briefly discussed the Ellore Boys and Girls Club, noting that the Town is working with Orangeburg County to install heating and air conditioning in the Ellore Gym for the Club. He thanked the Ellore Boys and Girls Club Board for their work in securing the project. The Town currently pays the utility bills for the Club but will place a utility billing cap in place so that the Club will be responsible for the increased billing amount.

The final item addressed was the new accounting system. Singh noted that the business licenses have been loaded into the new system and renewals sent out for the 2009 business license renewals. Singh added that the new financial reports are not yet available but that records are available for review at the town hall to anyone who is interested. General accounting information and records are available, but personnel records are confidential and will not be released. Under the Freedom of Information Act, salaries do not have to be released unless they exceed \$50,000, and the Town does not have any employees who meet that limit.

## **VIII. Old Business**

Singh presented the council with Ordinance 01-02-03-09: Recodification of General and Permanent Ordinances for the Town of Elloree. The ordinance will serve as the preface for all of the town's new ordinances, which will be broken down into eleven sections. Councilman Fogle made a motion to approve the second reading of the ordinance and was seconded by Councilman Butler. All were in favor and second reading passed.

Singh also presented Ordinance 11-1-02-03-09: Code of Ordinances for the Town of Elloree Regulations Related to Temporary Structures, Specifically the Use of Portable Containers. This ordinance will put regulations in place for the placement and usage of portable storage containers, including portable on-demand (POD) containers, shipping containers, constructions containers, and tractor trailer containers. Councilman Butler made a motion to approve the second reading of the ordinance and was seconded by Councilman Void. Second reading was approved. A public hearing will be held on March 24 at 5:30pm, and the final reading of the ordinance will be held at the April council meeting on April 7, 2009.

The Mayor asked council to consider possible changes to the Item 4 (G) section of the ordinance with regards to inventory storage for businesses and commercial goods. Councilman Butler moved to amend the ordinance and was seconded by Councilman Void. The amended reading of the ordinance was approved.

## **IX. New Business**

Mayor Stickles presented a Proclamation recognizing the Silver Star Families of America, an organization that works to provide banners and flags for families of wounded and ill service members to fly in recognition. It is the organization's hope that the banners will serve as a reminder of the sacrifices made by the members of the armed forces for the Town and our country. Councilman Butler made a motion to accept the proclamation and was seconded by Council Void. All were in favor.

The next item of new business addressed was an Emergency Ordinance to ban burning within the town limits. Administrator Singh noted that there have been several fires of concern outside of town limits recently and that the Town needs to consider creating a burn program. Fire Chief Craig Hill has stated that he supports

a ban within the town limits because of the population density. The emergency ordinance will remain in effect for up to 60 days.

Councilman Void made a motion not to approve the emergency ordinance but did not receive a second to the motion. Councilman Fogle made a motion to approve the emergency ordinance and was seconded by Councilman Butler. During the discussion that followed, Administrator Singh discussed the possible legal and liability concerns of allowing burning within the town limits. All were in favor and the emergency ordinance was passed. It will remain in effect for 60 days.

Mayor Stickles announced that a meeting will be held on March 10 at 6:00pm at the Town Hall to plan the Ellore Fall Fest, scheduled for October 17, 2009.

Councilman Butler reminded citizens that South Carolina Bank and Trust is participating in the Souper Bowl of Caring, which collects money for area civic projects. This year the proceeds will benefit the Boys and Girls Club of Ellore.

**X. Executive Session\*\*\***

There was no executive session.

**XI. Adjournment**

Councilman Fogle made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Void seconded the motion, and all were in favor. Mayor Van Stickles adjourned the meeting at 6:14pm.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Chasity Sanders Canaday, Town Clerk/Treasurer

