

The Smithfield Town Council met in regular session on Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Smithfield Town Hall, Mayor M. Andy Moore presided.

Councilmen Present:

Roger Wood, Mayor Pro-Tem
Marlon Lee, District 1
Sloan Stevens, District 2
Travis Scott, District 3
Dr. David Barbour, District 4
John Dunn, At-Large
Stephen Rabil, At-Large

Councilmen Absent

Administrative Staff Present

Michael Scott, Town Manager
Ted Credle, Public Utilities Director
Jeremey Daughtry, Fire Chief
Lawrence Davis, Public Works Director
Andrew Harris, Finance Director
Pete Hedrick, Chief of Police
Gary Johnson, Parks & Rec Director
Shannan Parrish, Town Clerk
Stephen Wensman, Planning Director

Also Present

Robert Spence, Jr., Town Attorney

Administrative Staff Absent

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Moore called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Councilman Barbour followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Mayor Pro-Tem Wood made a motion, seconded by Councilman Dunn, to approve the agenda as submitted Unanimously approved.

Prior to the presentations, Mayor Moore recognized and welcomed new Downtown Smithfield Development Corporation Director Heidi Gilmond to the Town.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Proclamation: Recognizing July as Parks and Recreation Month in the Town of Smithfield

Mayor Moore read the following proclamation and presented it to Parks and Recreation Director Gary Johnson.

**PROCLAMATION
Designating July as Park and Recreation Month
In the Town of Smithfield**

WHEREAS parks and recreation is an integral part of communities throughout this country, including in the Town of Smithfield; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation promotes health and wellness, improving the physical and mental health of people who live near parks; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation promotes time spent in nature, which positively impacts mental health by increasing cognitive performance and well-being, and alleviating illnesses such as depression, attention deficit disorders, and Alzheimer's; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation encourages physical activities by providing space for popular sports, hiking trails, swimming pools and many other activities designed to promote active lifestyles; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation is a leading provider of healthy meals, nutrition services and education; and

WHEREAS park and recreation programming and education activities, such as out- of-school time programming, youth sports and environmental education, are critical to childhood development; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation increases a community's economic prosperity through increased property values, expansion of the local tax base, increased tourism, the attraction and retention of businesses, and crime reduction; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation is fundamental to the environmental well-being of our community; and

WHEREAS parks and recreation is essential and adaptable infrastructure that makes our communities resilient in the face of natural disasters and climate change; and

WHEREAS our parks and natural recreation areas ensure the ecological beauty of our community and provide a place for children and adults to connect with nature and recreate outdoors; and

WHEREAS the U.S. House of Representatives has designated July as Parks and Recreation Month; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Smithfield recognizes the benefits derived from parks and recreation resources.

NOW THEREFORE, I, M. Andy Moore, Mayor of the Town of Smithfield, along with the members of the Town Council, do hereby proclaim July as Park and Recreation Month in the Town of Smithfield.

2. Update on Downtown Transportation Study

Planning Director Stephen Wensman provided an update on the Downtown Transportation Study to the Council. The study, led by VHB and initiated by a federal grant, focused on traffic flow, parking, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and urban design improvements. The study area covered the municipal service district from the river to Highway 301. Key themes included using transportation infrastructure to boost economic development, enhancing pedestrian and bicycle experiences, promoting a vibrant downtown, and limiting urban sprawl. The study also included demographic analysis, parking utilization data, vehicle crash history, and proposed infrastructure improvements. Notably, the study recorded varying traffic and speed patterns, highlighting issues like speeding on certain streets and areas with frequent pedestrian activities.

The study found that while speeds in Town were generally close to posted limits, some areas showed higher speeds, especially in certain directions. Pedestrian activity was low, with the most activity around Second and Third Streets.

For public engagement, the consultants held tabling events, conducted an online survey, and used social media and stakeholder interviews. Survey results highlighted concerns about insufficient sidewalks, narrow vehicle lanes, and speeding. Desired improvements included safer street crossings, more downtown attractions, better biking and walking accommodations, and enhanced speed control.

Next steps in the study included stakeholder interviews, developing draft alternatives, conducting traffic modeling, and projecting future traffic volumes and parking demands, with public feedback to be gathered in October.

Councilman Scott inquired about a request for one-way traffic in certain areas. Stephen Wensman confirmed that the study would address this, specifically looking at one-way alternatives on Third Street and possibly other changes. Mayor Andy Moore added that both Second and Third Streets would be examined.

Councilman Barbour inquired about the anticipated timeline for a study. Stephen Wensman explained that alternatives were to be presented in October, with the year-long study concluding near the end of the year, having started in the spring.

Questions arose regarding the timing of certain activities, such as the sheriff's department's move-out date and why data collection occurred on a Tuesday rather than busier days like Monday or Friday. Mr. Wensman suggested that the former director of the DSDC likely recommended Tuesday as it was considered the busiest day for commerce.

Mayor Moore asked about the number of cars, referencing slide 23, and requested further details. He also pointed out inconsistencies in the data periods used for crash statistics between slides, noting that while a 10-year period (2013-2022) was used for total crashes (514 incidents), the statewide crash rate was based on a 4-year period (2018-2022). Mr. Wensman acknowledged this and suggested it might be due to the availability of data.

PUBLIC HEARING: None

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

- Reggie Barnes appealed to the council for assistance with his new construction project on Martin Street in East Smithfield. He presented visual aids, showing that the original survey required the street to be built in the right of way, but the Town had not constructed it. As a result, Mr. Barnes was advised that he must build the road within the public right of way, incurring significant costs. He requested that the Town consider concessions, such as helping to clear trees in the area where the road needs to be extended.
- Elizabeth Temple addressed the Council to emphasize the importance of preserving trees, particularly in the historic districts of Smithfield. She advocated for the protection of trees, especially Bradford Pear trees in South Smithfield, arguing that they provided shade and contributed to the Town's beauty and environmental health.
- Virtus Richardson, Past Commander of the Disabled American Veterans Johnston County Chapter 44, requested an update on the status of funds they requested for repairs to their building. Town Manager Michael Scott responded that while no money was directly allocated to the DAV, funds were allocated to Parks and Recreation for the highest priority issues raised. Parks and Recreation would manage the process and work with the DAV on any necessary repairs.
- Rick Buckner of 106 Cobblestone Court reiterated his concerns about high-density developments, stating that packing large numbers of people into small areas could harm the community. He highlighted issues such as crime, traffic, and the impact on schools.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Mayor Pro-Tem Wood made a motion, seconded by Councilman Dunn, to approve the following items as listed on the Consent Agenda:

1. Minutes
 - a. May 1, 2024 – Recessed Meeting
 - b. May 7, 2024 – Regular Meeting
 - c. May 7, 2024 – Closed Session
 - d. May 13, 2024 – Recessed Meeting
 - e. May 21, 2024 – Regular Meeting
 - f. June 4, 2024 – Regular Meeting
 - g. June 4, 2024 – Closed Session
 - h. June 18, 2024 – Regular Session

2. Special Event: Evening Markets – Approval was granted to allow the Downtown Smithfield Development Corporation to hold and events in the 100 block of South Third Street on the following Friday Nights: July 26th, August 9th and 23rd. These events were previously approved as Saturday night events, but the organizers would like to hold the events on Friday nights instead

3. Special Event: Fall Carnival – Approval was granted to Inner Shows, Inc. to hold a carnival at the Carolina Premium Outlets from September 12 until September 29, 2024. The request included amplified sound and food available for sale.

4. Approval was granted to promote a Police Sergeant to the rank of Police Lieutenant of the Criminal Investigations Division.

5. Approval was granted to promote a Police Sergeant to the rank of Police Lieutenant of the Special Operations Division.

6. Approval was granted to promote a Master Police Officer to the rank of Police Sergeant.

7. Approval was granted to promote a Sanitation Worker to the position of Facility Maintenance Worker.

8. Approval was granted of an Interlocal Agreement with Johnston County for Fire Services.

9. Board Reappointment
 - a. Connie Barbour was reappointed to serve a second term on the Library Board of Trustees.

10. New Hire Report

Recently Hired	Department	Budget Line	Rate of Pay
Electric Line Technician (2)	PU – Electric	31-72-7230-5100-0200	\$23.42/hr. (\$48,713.60/yr.)
Firefighter II	Fire	10-20-5300-5100-0200	\$20.55/hr. (\$44,881.20/yr.)
Meter Technician	PU-Customer Service	31-72-7230-5100-0200	\$19.08/hr. (\$39,686.40/yr.)
Part-Time Athletic Staff (3)	P&R – Recreation	10-60-6200-5100-0210	\$10.00/hr.
Part-Time SRAC General Staff(2)	P&R – Aquatics	10-60-6220-5100-0210	\$12.00/hr.
Part-Time SRAC Instructor	P&R – Aquatics	10-60-6220-5100-0230	\$13.00/hr.
Part-Time SRAC Instructor	P&R – Aquatics	10-60-6220-5100-0230	\$15.00/hr.
Part-Time SRAC Instructor	P&R – Aquatics	10-60-6220-5100-0230	\$16.00/hr.
Police Sergeant	Police	10-20-5100-5100-0200	\$31.07/hr. (\$69,472.52/yr.)
Pump Station Mechanic	PU – Water/Sewer	30-71-7220-5100-0200	\$19.59/hr. (\$40,747.20/yr.)
Utility Line Mechanic (2)	PU – Water/Sewer	30-71-7220-5100-0200	\$17.37/hr. (\$36,129.60/yr.)
Zoning/Code Enforce. Officer	Planning	10-10-4900-5100-0200	\$25.00/hr. (\$52,000.00/yr.)

Current Vacancies	Department	Budget Line
Equipment Operator	PU – Streets	10-30-5600-5100-0200
Facility Maintenance Specialist	PW – Appearance	10-60-5500-5100-0200
Human Resources Director	General Government	10-10-4000-5100-0200
		30-71-7220-5100-0200
		31-72-7230-5100-0200
Meter Reader	PU – Customer Service	31-72-7230-5100-0200
Police Officers	Police	10-20-5100-5100-0200
Sanitation Worker	PW – Sanitation	10-40-5800-5100-0200

BUSINESS ITEMS:

1. Conditional Zoning Request – Buffalo Road (CZ-23-01)

Planning Director Stephen Wensman discussed a conditional rezoning request for 138.63 acres of land on Buffalo Road. The rezoning, initially heard at the January 2024 meeting, now proposed a reduction in the number of single-family lots from 220 to 170, increasing the minimum lot size and side yard setbacks. The development, now with 1.23 units per acre density, included amenities such as a pavilion shelter, bocce ball court, dog park, and walking trail. The community would be maintenance-free, with the HOA managing individual lots. Architectural standards were outlined, including features like hardy board siding, decorative windows, and asphalt shingle roofs.

Mr. Wensman highlighted several conditions for approval, such as enhanced landscaping, street lighting, a connection to the Buffalo Creek Greenway, and a parkland dedication. He also noted the proposal to maintain standard curbs instead of valley curbs and the inclusion of a 31-foot-wide trail. Staff recommended these conditions be considered for approval. Mr. Wensman stated the developer had an updated plan he wished to share.

Sagan Lampi explained that her family has owned the property in question for three generations. She initially envisioned the site as affordable housing for new homebuyers, young families, and retirees. However, after considering the Town's feedback, she adjusted her proposal to balance the Town's desire for more space with her goal of affordability.

Donnie Adams of Adams and Hodges Engineers explained that the presentation would focus on the changes made to the proposal, noting that most points had already been covered by Mr. Wensman. He highlighted that they successfully increased lot sizes by over 30%, as requested, which reduced the density, resulting in the loss of 52 lots and bringing the density down to 1.23 units per acre. Mr. Adams also addressed concerns about stormwater management, a recurring topic in previous meetings. He introduced Eva King, a professional engineer and stormwater expert from his firm, to provide additional insights on the stormwater issues.

Eva King shared that she visited the site on July 1st and met with Mr. Bruton, who expressed concerns about potential flooding from the project. Ms. King explained that the area behind Bruton's property was relatively flat but slopes away from his land. She assured him that both the State of North Carolina and Town of Smithfield regulations require maintaining existing drainage patterns. The project plans included two large stormwater ponds designed to exceed the required standards for stormwater management. She emphasized that the development would capture and treat all water on-site, ensuring proper drainage and routing of water downstream.

Mayor Moore asked if there were any question from the Council.

Councilman Scott questioned how the proposed project would address the potential for flooding in the existing neighborhood. Eva King explained that while the current neighborhood already had standing water, which was observed during her visit, the new development would not exacerbate the problem. She emphasized that the stormwater generated by the project would be routed away from adjacent neighborhoods into two large ponds, where it would be detained and released safely.

Donnie Adams added that the development would include a 10-foot buffer adjacent to Bradford Park, ensuring that none of the water from the new development would flow toward the existing neighborhood. He clarified that while they could not address the existing water issues in Bradford Park, they would ensure that the new project would not worsen the situation, with water being directed downhill away from the neighborhood.

Councilman Scott expressed concern about conflicting descriptions of the land as both flat and sloping. Adams clarified that the development would be graded to direct water downhill, below the grade of Parkway Drive, ensuring proper stormwater management.

Councilman Barbour and Councilman Scott questioned the impact of the flat land on drainage and the long-term maintenance of the stormwater system. Ms. King and the development team assured that the stormwater ponds would be designed to state and local standards, with ongoing maintenance responsibilities placed on the homeowner's association. They emphasized that the Town would have the right to inspect and enforce maintenance to ensure the ponds function properly over time.

Councilman Barbour raised concerns about the phasing of the construction and the potential impact on the surrounding neighborhood, particularly regarding drainage and flooding. He questioned whether the project could be designed to address any issues that might arise during construction, especially if building began near the cul-de-sac. The discussion highlighted the possibility of including provisions in the HOA responsibilities to address any negative effects on the adjacent neighborhood.

Mr. Adams responded that the development would likely be completed in one phase, with all infrastructure, including roads, water, sewer, and stormwater ponds, being installed before any homes were built. Councilman Scott and other council members expressed concerns about ensuring that the development would not exacerbate existing flooding issues in the area, emphasizing the need for detailed engineering plans and oversight.

Stephen Wensman explained that the Council could require the construction plans to be presented during the final plat or preliminary plat approval process, allowing the Town Engineer to review and ensure compliance with drainage and stormwater management standards. This would provide an additional layer of oversight and assurance that the project would not negatively impact the existing neighborhood. Mr. Adams indicated that he was open to this approach, and the discussion concluded with the possibility of bringing the engineered plans back to the Council for further review before final approval.

Councilman Scott expressed concerns about the smaller lot sizes in the proposed development, noting that they were still smaller than he preferred, especially compared to the existing 10,000 square foot lots in the adjacent neighborhood. He inquired about the developer's plans to preserve natural trees, particularly in a 10-foot buffer area around the cul-de-sac. Mr. Adams confirmed that their intention was to preserve as many trees as possible within this buffer, though there might be a need to remove some for grading purposes, with replanting done if necessary.

Councilman Barbour and Mayor Moore also raised concerns about drainage, the use of valley curbs, and ensuring that the development would not negatively impact the surrounding area. The discussion touched on the importance of trust between the Council and developers, with a focus on ensuring that any stormwater issues are properly addressed through engineering and oversight.

The Council acknowledged that while the development might not meet all of their preferences, the developers had made efforts to address their concerns, particularly regarding architectural standards and the preservation of green space

Mayor Moore allowed for brief additional public comments, emphasizing that they should focus on new concerns rather than repeating previous points.

Rick Buckner raised a concern that the current plans seemed to extend into the area near the radio tower, which he did not recall from earlier plans. He questioned whether the development was adding 50 more houses in that area. Stephen Wensman clarified that the developers were required to provide lateral connections to undeveloped land, although the Council allowed them to disconnect from Bradford Park. He also mentioned that the large lot near the radio tower could be developed into more lots in the future.

Gene Bruton expressed concerns about water drainage issues affecting his and his neighbors' properties. He mentioned that after a recent rain, his backyard flooded, and he believed the water was coming from the direction of the proposed development. Mr. Bruton shared that he has lived in his home for 20 years and has installed sump pumps to manage the ongoing water issues. He emphasized that many of his neighbors also experience standing water in their backyards and worried that the new development could worsen the situation. He asked the Council to consider the impact on existing homes before proceeding.

Mr. Stephen Wensman clarified a point regarding the dedication of parkland. He initially reported that it was unclear whether the developers intended to donate the land, but later confirmed that they were still planning to do so. He then outlined several conditions for the development's approval, including requirements for driveway aprons, curb and gutter installations, decorative street lighting, enhanced landscaping, and the dedication of land for the Buffalo Creek Greenway.

Councilmembers discussed the importance of preserving natural buffers, particularly in areas where the development borders existing neighborhoods. Councilman Scott requested that the preservation of natural buffers, including trees, be explicitly added as a condition, with the caveat that trees could be removed if necessary for proper drainage. This suggestion was accepted, and the language was adjusted to reflect the intent to preserve natural buffers "as much as possible except when needed to address stormwater drainage."

The Council also discussed the possibility of requiring the engineered plans, including those addressing tree preservation and stormwater drainage, to come back to the Council for review before final approval, ensuring transparency and allowing residents to see the final plans. This proposal was accepted as a condition for the zoning approval.

Councilman Barbour discussed adding additional conditions to the development plan, including incorporating architectural standards into the HOA declarations and ensuring natural buffers were preserved as much as possible, except when needed for stormwater drainage. He also emphasized the need for the engineer drawings to be presented to the Council for approval, not just for review, to ensure that the plans meet their standards, particularly concerning drainage and tree preservation.

The Council also addressed the importance of maintaining a six-foot-high screening fence along the Bradford Park boundary, which had been previously agreed upon but was missing from the current plans. There was a consensus that this fence, along with preserved vegetation, would serve as a necessary buffer between the new development and the existing neighborhood.

Further discussion clarified that the development's walking trail would be public, with the HOA responsible for its maintenance. The council also reiterated their concerns about drainage and requested that detailed topographical data be included in the engineering plans to ensure proper water flow management.

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Councilman Dunn, to approve zoning map amendment, CZ-23-01, with 13 conditions of approval, finding the rezoning consistent with the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and other adopted plans, and that the amendment is reasonable and in the public interest. Councilman Barbour, Councilman Dunn, Mayor Pro-Tem Wood and Councilman Stevens voted in favor of the motion. Councilman Lee, Councilman Scott and Councilman Rabil voted against the motion. The motion passed four to three.

The approved conditions are as follows:

In accordance with Article 4, Part II, the Town of Smithfield Town Council imposes the following additional conditions on this Conditional Zoning request:

1. That the future preliminary plat and development plans for the subdivision be in accordance with the approved Master Plan, R-8 Zoning District, and UDO regulations with the with the following deviations:

Standard	Proposed
Setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front Home=18' • Front Garage = 25' • Side = 6' • Rear = 12' • Cornerside = 18'

Min. Lot Size	• 5,500 sq. ft.
Lot Frontage	• 55 feet
Lateral Connection	• 20' wide trail meeting Fire Code

2. The driveway aprons to the parking lot and residential lots should conform to the town's standard details.
3. Provide concrete curb and gutter along Buffalo Road with NCDOT approval.
4. Provide decorative street lighting and street signs throughout the development.
5. Enhance the landscaping at the development entrances onto Buffalo Road
6. Dedicate the land east of the Buffalo Creek Greenway for parkland.
7. Provide aeration of the wet (stormwater) ponds to assist with mosquito control.
8. Loop the watermains with the Bradford Park neighborhood (upside to an 8" line if feasible) and provide a fire hydrant beyond the cul-de-sac on the greenway for fire protection.
9. Provide standard 6" curb and gutter throughout the development.
10. Incorporate the architectural standards presented into the homeowner's association declarations
11. Preserve the natural buffers as much as possible except when addressing stormwater drainage.
12. That engineered construction drawings be presented with the preliminary plat to address drainage and preservation of natural buffers.
13. Provide a 6' high screening fence between the proposed residential lots and the Bradford Park boundary.

2. Consideration and request for approval of the Smithfield Economic Development Strategic Plan Update

Planning Director Stephen Wensman introduced Carl Reese Economic Development Director for ElectriCities and Crystal Morphus from Creative Economic Development.

Ms. Morphus highlighted several programs supported by ElectriCities, including strategic planning, industrial site development, and retail development support. They explained that the current project is part of the economic development efforts benefiting the community and other Electric Cities members. The scope of work included reviewing existing town planning documents, developing an economic and demographic profile, and creating a SWOT analysis based on community and business surveys, as well as input sessions.

Key points from the SWOT analysis included strengths such as Smithfield's location, transportation access, vibrant downtown, and quality of life. Weaknesses identified included infrastructure challenges and a lack of shared vision, which the strategic plan aims to address. Opportunities were seen in strengthening the town's economic development program and leveraging transportation access, while threats included infrastructure issues, deteriorating commercial sites, and limited resources for economic development.

The economic and demographic profile showed that while Smithfield is growing, it is not keeping pace with the county, Research Triangle, or state. Income levels in Smithfield lag behind those in the surrounding areas, making homes less affordable despite lower home values. Manufacturing was noted as the top employer in Johnston County, with a high multiplier effect on the economy.

A business survey revealed that almost half of the respondents, primarily longtime small businesses, had growth plans, with 31% planning to expand at their current location and 16% planning to expand within Smithfield. She discussed the challenges and opportunities facing Smithfield, with a particular focus on workforce issues and the lack of affordable business expansion space. Many businesses expressed a desire for assistance in marketing and navigating regulatory processes. A community survey revealed that residents prioritize downtown development, more amenities, and business site availability.

Three main goals were recommended for the Town's economic development strategy: business development, community amenities and beautification, and infrastructure investment. Key recommendations included hiring a full-time economic development staff position, developing competitive business sites, and maintaining strong relationships with large employers. The strategy also emphasized marketing the Town's qualities, improving wayfinding, and focusing on vacant building redevelopment.

For infrastructure, Ms. Morphus suggested small area plans and ensuring utility and broadband capacity. The strategic plan outlined an implementation guide, recommending immediate investments in economic development staff and business retention efforts in the first year, followed by small area planning and policy changes to support high-traffic businesses in the downtown area in subsequent years. The speaker also acknowledged Steven Wensman's contributions to the project.

Councilman Barbour raised questions about the survey process for citizens and businesses, expressing concern over the low response rates—53 for the community survey and 32 for the business survey. He noted that these low numbers might not provide a statistically significant or accurate representation of the community's views, especially considering Smithfield's population of 11,000 and the presence of large employers like Amazon, which was not open at the time of the survey.

Mr. Wensman explained that the survey was distributed via the Town's website, social media, and other channels, but the responses were anonymous, making it unclear if larger businesses participated.

Councilman Barbour and others discussed the importance of considering the impact of recent developments, like Amazon's arrival, on the Town's economic landscape. They noted that as more high-paying jobs come to Smithfield, the Town's median income should rise, potentially attracting more businesses like Hobby Lobby or Target. The discussion also touched on the need for a dedicated economic development staff position to help manage and capitalize on these growth opportunities, with the possibility of sharing this role with other Town functions like downtown development.

Mayor Moore emphasized the need for Smithfield to be more aggressive in its partnership with ElectriCities, especially in discussions about economic development. He noted that while residential growth was strong, the Town must now focus on attracting commercial, industrial, and retail businesses to support the growing population. He stressed the importance of protecting and preserving property designated for business use to ensure a balanced live-work-play environment.

Councilman Stevens echoed these sentiments, highlighting that Smithfield's population has remained steady for years, but with new residential developments, the Town needed to attract businesses that follow the rooftops. He inquired about the timeline for economic growth following residential expansion, to which the Electric Cities representative responded that retail and businesses typically follow new housing developments as the market demographics change.

Mr. Reese mentioned that ElectriCities has processes and events to help communities like Smithfield promote their growth to potential businesses, emphasizing the importance of preserving commercial space to avoid becoming a solely residential, bedroom community. The mayor and council expressed their appreciation for the partnership with ElectriCities and their willingness to work closely with them to guide Smithfield's future growth.

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Wood, to adopt the update to the Economic Development Strategic Plan. Unanimously approved.

Councilmembers Comments:

- Councilman Stevens clarified that the Bradford Pear trees on South Second Street would be removed and replaced with another type of tree.
- Councilman Scott raised concerns about damage to light poles in downtown and wayfinding signs in West Smithfield. The Town Manager explained that the large traffic light posts are owned by NC DOT, and it's up to them to decide on replacements, although the Town can encourage it.
- Councilman Lee expressed concerns about safety issues in East Smithfield, noting recent incidents like power outages without police presence, 18-wheelers damaging infrastructure, and reckless driving. He highlighted the frustration of residents who felt unsafe, particularly on East Street, where elderly individuals cannot comfortably sit on their porches. He also pointed out that despite a 2020 resolution to promote diversity in the police force, the number of minority officers had decreased. Additionally, he criticized the lack of communication and support for the Juneteenth Celebration, contrasting it with the well-publicized Fourth of July event. He questioned the representation of minorities in downtown initiatives and stressed the need to address issues affecting all parts of Smithfield, not just focus on new development.
- Mayor Moore expressed his gratitude to Parks and Recreation staff and everyone involved in organizing the Fourth of July celebration, praising it as a great event. He also mentioned an upcoming event scheduled for the following Saturday, encouraging the community to come downtown and support the event.

Town Manager's Report:

Town Manager Michael Scott provided a brief update to the Council on the following items:

- The Joint meeting between the DSDC Board and the Town Council was scheduled for Thursday, July 11th at 6:30. The meeting will be held in the Fire Department Training room at 111 South 4th Street.
- The County has notified the Town that the landfill tipping fees were increasing by \$3.00/ton starting August 1, 2024. This will cause the Town's sanitation fees to increase by 34 cents per month, per customer. The recommended Fee Schedule increase will be part of the July 16th agenda.

Closed Session: Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (5)

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Wood, to go into Closed Session pursuant to the aforementioned statute. Unanimously approved at approximately 9:54 pm.

Reconvene in Open Session

Councilman Scott made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Wood, to reconvene the meeting in Open Session. Unanimously approved at approximately 10:23 pm

Adjourn

Councilman Barbour made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Wood, to adjourn the meeting until. The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:24pm.



M. Andy Moore, Mayor

ATTEST:



Shannan L. Parrish, Town Clerk

