



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

Town Council Meeting Minutes - Draft

Town Hall
405 Martin Luther King Jr.
Boulevard
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Mayor Pam Hemminger
Mayor pro tem Karen Stegman
Council Member Jessica Anderson
Council Member Camille Berry
Council Member Tai Huynh

Council Member Paris Miller-Foushee
Council Member Michael Parker
Council Member Amy Ryan
Council Member Adam Searing

Wednesday, February 2, 2022 6:30 PM Virtual Meeting

Language Access Statement

For interpretation or translation services, call 919-969-5105.

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Para servicios de interpretación o traducción, llame al 919-969-5105.

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919-969-5105.

Virtual Meeting Notification

Town Council members will attend and participate in this meeting remotely, through internet access, and will not physically attend. The Town will not provide a physical location for viewing the meeting.

The public is invited to attend. The Town of Chapel Hill wants to know more about who participates in its programs and processes, including Town Council business meetings and work sessions. Please participate in a voluntary demographic survey <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/demosurvey> before accessing the Zoom webinar registration. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar in listen-only mode. Phone: 301-715-8592, Meeting ID: 858 0213 8008

View Council meetings live at <https://chapelhill.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx> – and on Chapel Hill Gov-TV ([townofchapelhill.org/GovTV](https://www.townofchapelhill.org/GovTV)).

OPENING

Mayor Hemminger opened the virtual work session at 6:30 p.m. and thanked those who had reached out to her during her recent bout with the COVID-19 virus. She thanked Mayor pro tem Stegman for conducting Council meetings in

her absence and requested that she lead the current one as well since she was still not fully recovered.

Mayor pro tem Stegman called the roll and the Mayor and all Council members replied that they were present. She pointed out that Item 3, regarding a coal ash site on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, had been postponed.

ROLL CALL

Present: 9 - Mayor Pam Hemminger, Mayor pro tem Karen Stegman, Council Member Jessica Anderson, Council Member Camille Berry, Council Member Paris Miller-Foushee, Council Member Tai Huynh, Council Member Michael Parker, Council Member Amy Ryan, and Council Member Adam Searing

Other Attendees

Town Manager Maurice Jones, Deputy Town Manager Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Deputy Town Manager Loryn Clark, Town Attorney Ann Anderson, Planning Director Colleen Willger, Transportation Planning Manager Bergen Watterson, Downtown Special Projects Manager Sarah Poulton, Business Management Director Amy Oland, Economic Development Specialist Laura Selmer, Deputy Town Clerk Amy Harvey, and Communications and Public Affairs Director and Town Clerk Sabrina Oliver.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

0.01 Mayor Pro Tempore Stegman Regarding Let's Talk Town and People's Academy. [\[22-0089\]](#)

Mayor pro tem Stegman explained that "Let's Talk Town" was an opportunity for community members to meet with Town staff (in-person and virtually) and provide input on how the Town should spend federal American Rescue Plan Act money. She also announced an upcoming People's Academy, and said that it would be a great opportunity for residents to learn about how the Town works. Information on both events was available on the Town's website, she said.

0.02 Mayor Pro Tempore Stegman Regarding Future Public Information Meetings. [\[22-0090\]](#)

Mayor pro tem Stegman said that a public information meeting on a proposed North Robinson Street duplex project would be held on February 7th, and a meeting on a Jay Street affordable housing project would be on February 8th. Both meetings would be virtual and they would begin at 5:15 p.m., she said. She noted that ZOOM links and additional information were available on the Town's website.

Mayor pro tem Stegman said that a Council Committee on Economic Sustainability meeting on February 4th, from 8:00-10:00 a.m., would

address updates regarding Downtown and the Rosemary Street Parking Deck.

Mayor pro tem Stegman pointed out that it was the last Council meeting before the Carolina v. Duke Basketball game. "Go Heels," she said.

0.03 Council Member Huynh Regarding Lunar New Year.

[\[22-0091\]](#)

Council Member Huynh wished a Happy Lunar New Year to all who celebrate it.

0.04 Council Member Searing Regarding Skate Park Maintenance.

[\[22-0092\]](#)

Council Member Searing thanked the Town Manager and Parks and Recreation staff for replacing lights at the Town's skate park. He said that many other park users were grateful as well.

0.05 Council Member Miller-Foushee Regarding Black History Month.

[\[22-0093\]](#)

Council Member Miller-Foushee wished all a Happy Black History Month and said that some great programming was going on throughout the community.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Provide Guidance on West Franklin Street Restriping.

[\[22-0083\]](#)

Mayor pro tem Stegman said that 16 people had been hit by cars in Chapel Hill during the last year even though they had been within street crosswalks. Some of those accidents had been very serious, even fatal, and the Council had been discussing how to prioritize safety for all, not just for cars, she said.

Special Projects Manager Sarah Poulton gave a PowerPoint follow-up to a January 5, 2022, staff presentation on decisions the Town needed to make before the NC Department of Transportation's (NC-DOT) resurfaced Franklin Street in summer 2022. While that resurfacing was underway, there would be an opportunity for NC-DOT to repaint the street in a way that would meet community needs and desires, she said.

Ms. Poulton pointed out that the resurfacing project could allow the Town to try something different for Franklin Street without making permanent changes. Doing so would not affect the future design of the street or the Town's ability to take control of it in the future, she said.

Transportation Planning Manager Bergen Watterson discussed re-striping options that could be a temporary measure until the Town's longer-term

goals and vision for Franklin Street were determined. She asked the Council to decide whether it wanted NC-DOT to paint traffic-running (TR) or curb-running (CR) bike lanes when it resurfaced the road. She explained that TR lanes typically ran between parked cars and moving vehicles while CR lanes typically ran between the curb and parked cars.

Ms. Watterson noted that funding had been secured for either option. She said that any change would be just paint and could be changed if not satisfactory. NC-DOT had already approved TR lanes, and CR lanes would require additional design, she said. She explained that CR lanes would significantly decrease on-street parking and could lead to bike/vehicle conflicts at driveways and intersections. She said that the unofficial consensus at a January 2022 Council work session had been to proceed with CR bike lanes.

Scott Sallade, a transportation design engineer with Randy Kemp Associates, described typical movements that vehicles make when coming out of driveways onto a road with traffic. Because a driver's sight is more restricted with CR lanes, on-street parking would need to be moved away from those driveways, which would mean eliminating some parking spaces on Franklin Street, he said.

Ms. Watterson asked the Council to choose an option, noting that approved plans needed to be sent to NC-DOT by March 2022. Staff would continue to explore the idea of transferring maintenance of Franklin Street from NC-DOT to the Town and would design a robust public process for the future design of Franklin Street, she said.

In response to questions from Council about sight-line requirements, Mr. Sallade said that none had been set in stone. He was recommending 50-foot sight distances at Downtown intersections based on ASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) standards, he said.

Council Member Ryan suggested looking at NACTO (National Association of City Transportation Officials) guidelines as well. She said that having huge sight lines on Franklin Street would not make anything safer. She believed that CR lanes could be justified based on NACTO standards, which would not require eliminating most of the parking, she said.

Council Member Anderson confirmed with Ms. Watterson that having a CR lane would be safer if on-street parking were removed. However, having a very wide road with no parking on it could lead to cars driving faster, Council Member Anderson said.

The Council confirmed with Ms. Watterson that the primary challenges with CR lanes were: the need to eliminate parking on Franklin Street to create sight triangles, and the possibility of bike/auto conflicts at

driveways. Council Member Miller-Foushee and Ms. Watterson discussed using cautionary signs and road markings to guide drivers.

Some Council Members noted the danger of cyclists having to cross the road from a CR lane in order to take a left-hand turn. Council Member Searing, a cyclist, said, that there was no safe way to do that without special signals, regardless of the type of bike lane.

The Council asked about installing vertical barriers between bike and traffic lanes, and both Ms. Watterson and Mr. Sallade both replied that NC-DOT had not been amenable to that idea in the past. However, Ms. Watterson agreed to raise it with them again, since knowing that the Town would be taking over the road might make a difference.

Mayor Hemminger pointed out that some of the driveways along Franklin Street were not used to any great extent. In response to the discussion about whether or not NC-DOT would agree to barriers, she noted that the Town could put those in itself when it took over the road. Having the road already painted for CR lanes would be an advantage, she said.

Mayor pro tem Stegman proposed that the Town think about re-striping as a pilot that could be changed if not adequate. She commented on how changes to the downtown that had been made in response to COVID-19 had been very popular. She recommended continuing to push for what would make the area more welcoming to bikes and pedestrians.

Seven Council Members expressed support for CR bike lanes. Council Member Parker said he was still undecided but that CR lanes would not be his preferred option unless NC-DOT agreed to vertical barriers. Council Member Anderson expressed concerns about safety and the effect on Downtown businesses if on-street parking were eliminated. Until barriers could be installed, she would support TR bike lanes as an interim measure, she said.

This item was received as presented.

2. American Rescue Plan Update.

[\[22-0084\]](#)

Ms. Poulton said that final guidelines for using federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds had been published and that the Town would be asking the public to provide ideas on how to spend that money. The next step would be to obtain specific project ideas from community partners, she said.

Ms. Poulton discussed "Let's Talk Town", which was a process for soliciting ideas from the community. She said that the 233 residents who had responded to a recent survey had ranked premium pay for essential workers, support for public health, and addressing the economic impacts of COVID-19 as the most important uses for ARPA funding. Respondents

also had made suggestions for affordable housing and infrastructure upgrades, and had proposed ideas for numerous projects, she said.

Director of Business Management Amy Oland provided information on allowable ARPA expenditures and discussed the relationship between those and the priorities that residents had expressed in the ARPA survey. She pointed out that funding for public health was meant to support a broad range of services and programs related to COVID-19.

Ms. Oland explained that the standard ARPA allowance for revenue loss was \$10 million and could be used for loss of growth that would have been seen if not for the pandemic. The money could be spent on any government service that the Town traditionally provided, she said.

Ms. Oland proposed a process through which staff would collect applications for funding and review those for equity and eligibility. She said that staff would then pass those applications on to a community team that would prioritize them. Both processes would direct as much funding as possible to those who were under-served and those who had been most affected by the pandemic, she said.

Ms. Oland proposed a six-week application period, beginning on February 7, 2022. She said that applications would be assessed in March and April and a list of recommended projects would be presented to the Council in May. The goal was to have an approved list by the end of June and have the project begin in summer-fall 2022, she said.

Council Member Parker recommended having some type of Town prioritization in addition to what ARPA allowed, rather than merely reacting to what was proposed.

Town Manager Maurice Jones replied that staff had been somewhat hesitant to create priorities without first hearing the Council's reaction to the public feedback. He asked if it would be helpful for staff to work with the Council on creating guidelines once the community engagement process had been completed.

Council Members Ryan and Anderson said they wanted the Council to be more involved in the process and to provide input regarding guidelines. Council Member Parker suggested that staff create draft guidelines that the Council could discuss, and Ms. Poulton replied that staff had already done so based on previous discussions with Council. Those guidelines were ready to go once staff received the Council's current additional thoughts, she said.

Several Council Members recommended looking beyond Town advisory board members for people to sit on the review committee. Town boards had not historically reflected under-served communities and/or minority

populations, they pointed out.

Some Council Members cautioned about potential conflicts of interest, or creating that perception, and Ms. Poulton replied that having a scoring matrix with clear criteria would help avoid such issues. The Council clarified with her that a community review committee would review community-based projects and a staff team would review Town projects.

The Council suggested having a process that would encourage stakeholders to collaborate and present their projects together. Giving small amounts to many different groups would be a missed opportunity, some said, and several emphasized their desire to see transformative, high-impact projects.

Mayor Hemminger said that the Town needed to take care of things that would cost more down the line if ignored, but she hoped to see transformative projects that would bring people together. She mentioned the possibility of pooling Town and County resources.

The Council confirmed with Ms. Oland that the total award was \$10.688M and that the Town had the flexibility to use \$10 million of that for anything it could legally carry out as a local government in North Carolina. Approximately \$650,000 had been allocated to the economic impact category, Ms. Oland said, and Council Member Parker confirmed with Ms. Poulton that staff was proposing \$500,000, or more, for projects that community members would request and the Town would execute.

The Council discussed the importance of directing funds toward people who had been most injured by COVID-19. Mayor pro tem Stegman stressed that helping those who had been most impacted should remain the guiding principle, even though the \$10 million could be spent in other ways as well. Council Member Miller-Foushee recommended acknowledging Town employees who had been on the front lines every day during the pandemic with some monetary reward.

Mayor pro tem Stegman said that guidelines would be helpful but cautioned against making the process so structured that some ideas were ruled out. She pointed out that some non-profits had limited capacity and said that the Council might need to adjust its expectations about what was feasible.

Council Member Berry proposed that the Town offer to assist applicants with completing applications.

This item was received as presented.

3. Discuss Redevelopment Options for the Police Station Property [\[22-0085\]](#)

at 828 Martin Luther King Jr., Boulevard.

This item was deferred to the March 2, 2022 meeting.

This item was received as presented.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.