

**MINUTES**  
**CHERAW TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**JULY 13, 2020**  
**5:30 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor Andy Ingram, Councilmembers: Robby Bennett, Jim Crawford, Cheryl Melton, Billy Wallace, Jr. and Richard White.

**ABSENT:** Councilwoman Jacqueline Ellerbe-Shannon.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mike Smith, Town Administrator; Clementine Ellis, Clerk-Treasurer, Police Chief Keith Thomas, J.T. Flemming, Felecia McCall, Steevenson Pierre, Jonathan Robinson, Delphenia Rollins, Valarie Freeman, Trinity Odom, PFC Demetrius Rivers, Bahaddur Al Bey, Diane Gordon Hanks, Pastor Samuel Richardson, Irene Cole, Mimi Knight, Ronnie Knight, Joyce Hickey, Brenda Odoms, Christy Kennedy, Lauren Odoms, Lori Von Canon, Ken Von Canon, Helen Palmer, Jill Wentz, J.D Wentz, Rennay Johnson, Harvey Johnson, Jimmy Thompson, Jean Page Watson, Ashley Davis and Brenda Gilmore Ratliff.

1. The invocation was offered by **Pastor Donnie Driggers** and the pledge was made to the American Flag.
2. Mayor Ingram introduced for council's consideration the minutes of the **June 9<sup>th</sup>** Council Meeting. A motion was made by **Councilwoman Melton** to approve the **June 9<sup>th</sup>** minutes. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote.
3. Mayor Ingram introduced for council's consideration the minutes of the **June 23<sup>rd</sup>** Council Meeting. A motion was made by **Councilwoman Melton** to approve the **June 23<sup>rd</sup>** minutes. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote
4. The **June 2020 Financial Report** was submitted for council's consideration. A motion was made by **Councilman Crawford** to approve the **June Financial Report**. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace**. The motion passed by unanimous vote.
4. Mayor Ingram recognized **Police Chief Keith Thomas** for the swearing in of Police Officers. Chief Thomas recognized **Valarie Freeman, Trinity Odom, Dylan Price, Tyler Knight and Demetrius Rivers** and The Oath of Office was given.
5. Mayor Ingram recognized **Mrs. Felicia McCall- 101 Market Street**. Mrs. McCall stated her family has lived in Cheraw over 160 years and eleven generations. Her family operates three businesses in the city limits of Cheraw. She was raised, educated and graduated from Cheraw High School. Afterwards she attended Mortuary College and returned to Cheraw to run her family businesses and to raise a family with her husband. She stated she says this with clarity that like most of you, my family has been invested in Cheraw for over a century. Mrs. McCall stated:

"The leadership, marketing and branding of Cheraw has not always been inclusive of the African American population who built, lived, worked, and made history in Cheraw. I say this with no hesitation because of my family's history, my life experiences living

here, many of my friend's life experiences in Cheraw and might I add my devotion to the research I have done over the years.

African American history, culture and preservation have never been at the forefront in Cheraw. From the Revolutionary War to the Civil War or should I say "the Confederate War or the War Between the States" as the town refers to the war in brochures and on the website. The context of our collective local history oftentimes has left out the narrative of the enslaved population, rescinded laws during Reconstruction, segregation, and the Civil Rights movement. It is because of these huge omissions that I wrote African Americans of Chesterfield County with the first chapter dedicated to Cheraw in 2008, opened an African American museum in Cheraw in 2010 and published African American Historical Sites in Cheraw brochure in 2012. I would like to remind you the data from the 2010 census reflects Cheraw's African American make up 58% of the population.

Moving forward to the present, 2020 has been a challenging year thus far and our country is grappling with some serious issues when it comes to race, injustices, and equality. I would like to address one issue that needs to be reevaluated and that is the branding of the Town of Cheraw. Most municipalities do a self-assessment on ways to improve the marketing and branding of their city. I noticed earlier this year that The Town of Cheraw recently updated the town's website and on the home page in red and white scrolled across the center of the website is The prettiest Town in Dixie. Here is an example; we have John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie our famous native jazz musician who is know all over the world with the banner Prettiest Town of Dixie scrolled across his photo, and home of the SC Jazz Festival. Council do you see terrible optics of this and the message it sends out? I along with many other local citizens find this motto insensitive and antiquated and it needs to be revised. Has the town assessed what the word Dixie means in the past and present? The word "Dixie is derived from a surveyor by the name of Jeremiah Dixon. He was one of the surveyors of the Mason-Dixon Line, that defined the border between Maryland and Pennsylvania, separating free and slave states. The word Dixie is also used to refer to states that composed of the Confederate States of America. The word Dixie is also associated with those traditions and legacies of the Confederate and antebellum era. We all are familiar with the song I Wish I was in Dixie a popular 19<sup>th</sup> century blackface minstrel song and the Dixiecrats, a segregationist political party in the South. I can go on and on with the negative connotation associated with this outdated word. Are you aware, Dixie has been barred as a term of endearment in the naming of schools, university traditions, formerly segregated Little League baseball organizations and other venues in past decades? There is a certain set of cultural assumptions, mind-sets and traditions associated with this word and therefore I am asking you to consider a new motto/slogan for The Town of Cheraw.

On the Town of Cheraw website History page, it is mentioned several times about the Confederate War, not the Civil War. There again the mind-set and traditions associated with this type of wording. There can be no change and progress when we have a motto that harkens back to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century era and way of thinking. I have pride in my rich heritage just as all of you however the heritage of many of my ancestors and other local citizens was not the same experience as most of yours. The quote from one of General Sherman soldiers'..."a pleasant town and an old one with the southern aristocratic bearing" was not pleasant for the natives of this land and may African Americans.

I am requesting that the Town of Cheraw change the current moto and shift to a moto that represents Cheraw, South Carolina and all her citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. I am requesting that you respond to my request in writing on how you will address this sensitive branding and marking issue. I thank you for your time and in closing leave you with a quote by the great orator and abolitionist Frederick Douglass, "Man's greatness consists in his ability to do and the proper application of his power to do things needed to be done. This is a great opportunity for the leadership of the Town of Cheraw to properly apply your powers to 'things needed to be done.'

**For Council Action:**

**A. Second Reading of Ordinances:**

Mayor Ingram introduced for council's consideration second and final reading of **Ordinance 2021-01. An Ordinance to Repeal and Replace Chapter 21, Zoning Regulations (The Cheraw Zoning Ordinance) of the Town of Cheraw.** Mike stated this does not change any regulations but simply puts in new text within the zoning ordinance. A motion was made by **Councilwoman Melton** to approve second and final reading of **Ordinance 2021-01.** The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote.

- B. Mayor Ingram introduced for council's consideration second and final reading of **Ordinance 2021-2 An Ordinance to Accepting Property Formerly Known as the Kimbrell's Furniture Store.** Mayor Ingram stated this pertains to the property showroom facing market and also another building fronting Second Street that was used for warehouse storage. A motion was made by **Councilwoman Melton** to approve second and final reading of **Ordinance 2021-02.** The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote.

**6. Resolutions:**

Mayor Ingram introduced for council's consideration **Resolution 01-2021. A Resolution Recommending Individuals Wear Face Coverings in Public Buildings and Retail and Food Service Establishments.** Mayor Ingram noted this is a concern to eliminate the virus or prevent from spreading out further. All local businesses will apply this mask covering up. A motion to adopt was made by Councilwoman Melton. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote.

7. Mayor Ingram called council's attention to a request from Police Chief concerning the purchase of police vehicles. Chief Thomas stated during budget process he requested replacement of vehicles for Admin and Detectives that had 100,000 miles on them. Chief Thomas stated he received an email from the Fleet Sales Manager at Dodge dealership stating the cut-off date for orders is August 6th. After that the dealership will not be able to take orders until October and there is most likely going to be a price increase. The salesman anticipates a price increase of **\$2,000 - \$4,000.** Chief Thomas stated he is asking council to give him permission to order vehicles. The vehicles would not arrive until October. Mayor Ingram stated the 2020-2021 budget was with an understanding of a moratorium on capital for 90 days. He referred this request to the Finance Committee for further study and a recommendation to be brought back to Council. **Councilwoman Melton** asked Chief Thomas if the Department was fully staffed and Chief Thomas stated yes, but, Lt. Drake was on leave due to a stroke and he is short one on the road. **Councilwoman Melton** also asked what will be done with the

other police cars behind the station. Chief Thomas stated the cars belong to officers that live outside the designated radius for take home vehicles. There are a few cars that are parked out at businesses like Wal-Mart and downtown as a deterrent for crime. These have been taken off the line for maintenance issues.

9. **For Council Information:**

10. **Citizen Comments:**


**Bahadur Al Bey** – Mr. Al Bey stated he didn't get put on the agenda but he is addressing the confederate monument here. He stated not only will the Prettiest Town in Dixie but also the Confederate Monument has to go. He also stated he will be sitting down with Mike Smith to talk and address the confederacy. He also stated he is in the process of starting police oversight committee in Cheraw so they can make sure things are done like they are supposed to. He also noted the Police Department got seven new cars. Mr. Al Bey stated he wants justice and justice for his father. He stated he has worked for and with the Town. He loves all. He does not look at color but see people as human beings.

**Jonathan Robinson** - Mr. Robinson asked who is who is on Finance Committee and Mayor Ingram stated that information would be given to him.

**J.T. Flemming** – Mr. Flemming stated he came before Council last month asking for Town Council and Mayor to reach out to the citizens with some type of statement to let them know they are supporting them. He stated one month since that time and he has not heard anything from Council or Mayor. He stated he is not talking about individually but as a collective group. Since then a noose was hung in one of the local industries here in Cheraw. Again they did not hear from Town Council or Mayor stating they do not support that. Mr. Flemming thanked Chief Thomas and the Police Department for helping with the protest that went so peacefully. He stated people need to hear from elected officials and haven't heard anything. There was also a double homicide with a child being shot and Mr. Flemming stated the citizens have not heard from Mayor. Mr. Flemming noted he heard what Chief Thomas indicated the Mayor said but would like to hear from the Mayor. Mr. Flemming stated there is racial tension boiling in Cheraw and if the leadership doesn't step up its going to cause a problem and this is the last thing we need in our town. It is already boiling over in the country and we don't want that in Cheraw. Mr. Flemming asked Mayor and Council on behalf the citizens and himself to please release a statement or go live and let the people know they have your support

11. There being no further business a motion was made by **Councilwoman Melton** to adjourn. The motion was seconded by **Councilman** and passed by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at **6:05 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

  
Clementine A. Ellis  
Clerk-Treasurer

**MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL CHERAW TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**JULY 28, 2020**  
**5:30 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor Andy Ingram, Councilmembers: Robby Bennett, Jim Crawford, Cherryl Melton, and Richard White

**ABSENT:** Councilwoman Jacqueline Ellerbe-Shannon and Billy Wallace, Jr.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mike Smith, Town Administrator, Clementine A. Ellis, Clerk-Treasurer, Rob Wolfe, Brian Rogers

1. The invocation was offered by Michael D. Smith and the pledge was made to the American flag.

2. **For Council Action**

Mayor Ingram called on **Councilman Jim Crawford**, Chair of the Finance Committee for several recommendations.

**Councilman Crawford** stated the Finance Committee met on Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup> with Town Administrator Mike Smith, Clerk-Treasurer Tina Ellis and Police Chief Keith Thomas to discuss a request the Police Chief made at the July 14<sup>th</sup> council meeting to purchase vehicles before August 6<sup>th</sup> in order to avoid an increase in the cost of the vehicles. After some discussion the Finance Committee feels there is sufficient funding available to lift the moratorium on the purchase of the vehicles not only for the police department but the other departments as well. In the form of a motion **Councilman Crawford stated** the Finance Committee is recommending the Town allow vehicles approved for capital purchase be ordered so to avoid future price increases. The vehicles most likely will not be delivered for some time even if ordered before August 6<sup>th</sup> due to the pandemic. This recommendation just applies to vehicles and the moratorium is still in place for other capital purchases. **Councilwoman Melton** seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

**Councilman Crawford** stated the Finance Committee met on July 20<sup>th</sup> with Town Administrator Mike Smith to review proposals from five engineering firms for the purposes of providing engineering services associated with the Town's recent loan approval from the State's Revolving Fund (SRF) loan program. The Town had previously been using Davis and Floyd for the engineering but when the Town was given an opportunity to have the interest rate reduced from 1.8% to 1% the Town was required to go through a procurement process for engineering services. As a result the Town advertised in the South Carolina Business Opportunity Publication and received five proposals from:

**Davis and Floyd  
Rogers and Callcott  
Thomas & Hutton  
Eastern Engineering  
Hanna Engineering**

The Finance Committee feels all five engineering firms are qualified to undertake the engineering but after a review of the proposals the Committee feels Davis and Floyd have the best knowledge of the Town's water and sewer system since they already provide the engineering on a daily basis and it is in the best interests of the Town to continue using them. **Councilman Crawford** in the form of a motion stated The Finance Committee is recommending Davis and Floyd be selected to provide the engineering services needed to undertake the improvements that are being funded by the SRF program. Total loan is approximately six million dollars. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Bennett** and passed by unanimous vote.

**Councilman Crawford** stated the Finance Committee met on July 20<sup>th</sup> with Town Administrator Mike Smith to discuss a request from the proposed hotel developer to consider sharing in the cost needed to develop a voluntary cleanup contract for the hotel site. Closing on the hotel properties is expected later on this week and the VCC is expected to cost between **\$25,000 - \$30,000** and the **Councilman Crawford** stated he and **Councilman Bennett** in the form of a motion stated the Finance Committee feels this project has been delayed long enough and is recommending the Town pay **50%** of the costs for the **Voluntary Cleanup Contract** in order to get this project moving along. **Councilman Crawford** stated that he and **Councilman Bennett** are members of The Finance Committee and investors and therefore need to recuse themselves. Thus this does not come as a motion from the Finance Committee. Smith stated closing of property will take place tomorrow and he feels we need to move forward with the project. A motion was made by **Councilman White** to pay **50%** of the costs for the Voluntary Cleanup Contract. The motion was seconded by **Councilwoman Melton** and passed by unanimous vote.

There being no further business a motion was made by **Councilwoman Melton** to adjourn. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Crawford** and passed by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned **5:38 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Clementine A. Ellis  
Clerk-Treasurer

