

The Washington City Council met in a special session on Tuesday, November 16, 2010 at 5:00pm in the City Council Chambers at the Municipal Building. Present were: Archie Jennings, Mayor; Bobby Roberson, Mayor Pro tem; Doug Mercer, Councilman; Rev. Edward Moultrie, Councilman; William Pitt, Councilman; Gil Davis, Councilman; James C. Smith, City Manager; and Cynthia Bennett, City Clerk.

Also present were: Philip Mobley, Parks and Recreation Director; Robbie Rose, Fire Chief; John Rodman, Planning Director; Mick Reed, Police Chief; Gloria Moore, Library Director; Lynn Lewis, Tourism Director; Mike Voss, of the Washington Daily News; and Delma Blinson of the Beaufort Observer.

Mayor Jennings called the meeting to order and Councilman Moultrie delivered the invocation.

DISCUSSION – HAVENS GARDENS BOAT RAMP & DOCK FACILITY

At the City Council meeting of November 8, 2010, Council requested a meeting with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission officials to discuss the boat ramp project and allow time for public input.

Attendees for this meeting included: Parks and Recreation Director, Philip Mobley; Mitch St. Clair of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commissioner; Recreation Advisory Board members; staff members from North Carolina Wildlife; and citizens of the community.

Parks and Recreation Director, Philip Mobley introduced Mitch St. Clair of the North Carolina Wildlife Commission to begin the dialogue and noted negotiations has been in the making for approximately four years for this project. Also, Mr. Mobley introduced Eric Christofferson, Chief Engineer with the Wildlife Resource Commission and Mr. Daniel Cabe, Design Team member. Mr. St. Clair noted the following as the reason he was here tonight:

1. To represent North Carolina Wildlife
2. His business is located at the back of Backwater Jack's. Mr. St. Clair stated he supports Backwater Jack's 100% and stated they need the overflow parking.

Mr. St. Clair mentioned the miscommunication between the City of Washington and the Wildlife Commission. Mr. St. Clair and Mr. Christofferson shared another option that would be more beneficial to all concerned. Mr. Christofferson noted that City Council was provided a copy of the site plan and would like to take this opportunity for Council to review and he would address any questions related to the design and/or agreement. Mr. St. Clair suggested that the Wildlife Commission has the funding available to do the work that needs to be done. Once the project has been completed, Wildlife will revert everything back to the City of Washington. Wildlife will not be in charge of anything except for writing citations for people that are (illegally) fishing. Wildlife requested the City to post a diamond Wildlife sign noting this is a partnership with the City. No funds will be generated by the use of the ramp. Also, the neighbors will be able to use parking at the discretion of the City and not Wildlife. Any parking regulations imposed at the boat ramp will be enforced by the City and not the Commission's enforcement officers. Once the improvements are made, the City will be responsible for maintaining the boat ramp after Wildlife makes the initial repairs. The agreement will contain a stipulation that the City provide free access to the boat ramp for at least 50 years (number of years agreed upon by Wildlife and City Council).

Mayor Jennings inquired about the handicapped Kayak launch. Mr. Christofferson and Mr. St. Clair stated there would be no problem adding a kayak launching facility to the boat ramp area and there would not be any restrictions with boaters being able to park there. Mr. St. Clair noted that Wildlife will come in

and renovate both piers. Mayor Jennings stated this will give us more flexibility around where we want to put the kayak launch since there would not be any restriction. Mr. Christofferson noted there would be two different things that would be looked at under those scenarios:

1. Free to their (Wildlife) contingents which will be the motor boaters.
2. A sign stating that Wildlife partnered in this project with the City. Mr. St. Clair explained the need for the sign - for motor boaters to know that the funds being used would go back for the fees they are paying.

Mayor Jennings asked if they had seen this done anywhere elsewhere and Mr. Christofferson stated they had partnered with a lot of other municipalities with similar type projects. Mayor Pro tem Roberson addressed the design aspect and was concerned about the 10 ft. parking spaces. Mr. Christofferson stated that 10 ft. is their standard all across the State. Also, he had concern about the single vehicle parking and Mr. Christofferson explained and stated they could certainly go back and take another look at where the boundaries would be under this new arrangement. Mayor Pro tem Roberson addressed the overflow trailer parking and the possible improvements. Mr. Christofferson stated the whole site will be improved? Councilman Davis expressed his concern over the drainage tile and Mr. Christofferson noted they would be looking at all issues and options once the design develops.

Mayor Jennings addressed the limited funding and Mr. Christofferson stated, as of today, if an agreement can be formalized, signed and given back to Wildlife then funding should be ok. City Attorney, Franz Holscher stated the agreement described tonight is different from what was captured in the Memorandum of Agreement presented to Council and requested a template of the one described tonight. If one could not be provided would the City need to draft one? Mr. Christofferson stated they have one which is similar to the one described tonight, it would just require some modification and it would be provided to Mr. Holscher.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Ms. Laura Scobble, co-owner of Backwater Jack's expressed her concern with discretionary ticketing. Mr. Smith inquired if the eight long spaces could be marked clearly boat trailer parking only and Ms. Scobble stated she did not have a problem with this suggestion but felt it would be more parking on the Southside where the overflow parking would be. Mr. Smith mentioned there would also be parking along Haven Street. Mayor Jennings stated we would work together on this and come up with an ordinance to facilitate the parking.

Mr. Ed Summerfield, owner of a 19' sailboat, suggested the City consider installing a sailboat launching area on the Southside of Havens Gardens and inquired if there are any plans for ramps for sailboats. Mr. Summerfield suggested most sailboats cannot launch from the existing boat ramp because their masts prevent them from going under the N.C. Highway 32 Bridge and into the Pamlico River. Mayor Jennings stated 'yes' and 'no' the yes factor is Council agrees with Mr. Summerfield but the City can only do something with City owned property. The City owns very little property on the Southside of the river. Mr. Smith noted that Wildlife is working with the County for an option on the Southside of the river. Mr. Christofferson updated Council on some of the property purchased by Wildlife on the Southside (i.e. Blounts Creek, "Cotton Patch" and Duck Creek).

Another concerned citizen mentioned that Masons Landing was a perfect example of a Wildlife ramp – how it's developed, everything is graveled, they don't have the high water issue, and everything is clearly marked. Overflow parking is a muddy mess all the time and needs to be more developed and can be much better utilized. "Cotton Patch" will take off some of the pressure. Mr.

Christofferson stated they will be contacting utilities and have better lighting. Question concerning the kayak launching, would it be possible to add a second kayak launch to the park side across the highway? Mayor Jennings suggested this was a good point and can be looked at because we are in the planning stages of remodeling Havens Gardens.

Mr. David Emerling stated he would hope that the design would also reflect best management practices relating to pervious surfaces and Stormwater Management. Also, he suggested requiring some type of Kayak/Canoe access.

Mayor Jennings commented on his appreciation from the North Carolina Wildlife Commission, Recreation Advisory Board, and the public. He felt this will prove to be a meaningful relationship.

By motion of Councilman Davis, seconded by Councilman Moultrie, Council directed staff to form an agreement with North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission and the City of Washington to reflect tonight's discussion. The agreement will reflect the Wildlife Commission will work with the City on a partnership to upgrade the facility and revert control of the site back to the City. The agreement will be approved on November 22, 2010. Motion carried.

**ADJOURN – UNTIL MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2010 AT 5:30 PM IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

By motion of Councilman Pitt, seconded by Mayor Pro tem Roberson, Council adjourned the meeting @ 5:40 pm until November 22, 2010 at 5:30 pm in the Council Chambers at the Municipal.

**Cynthia S. Bennett
City Clerk**