

**River Bend Town Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 20, 2023
Town Hall
7:00 p.m.**

Present Council Members: Mayor John Kirkland
James Castranova
Brian Leonard
Barbara Maurer
Buddy Sheffield
Jeff Weaver

Town Manager: Delane Jackson
Finance Director: Mandy Gilbert
Town Clerk: Kristie Nobles
Town Attorney: Dave Baxter

Members of the Public Present: 32

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kirkland called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 20, 2023, at the River Bend Town Hall with a quorum present.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

Vote – Addition to Agenda – Councilwoman Maurer motioned to amend item 8B by adding CAC appointment of Pat Lineback and move CAC Median Presentation to item 8C. The motion carried unanimously.

Vote – Deletion to Agenda – Councilwoman Maurer motioned to remove item 13 from the agenda. The motion passed with four ayes and one nay with Councilman Castranova voting nay.

The Mayor stated that item 13 is regarding the Animal Ordinance and Councilwoman Maurer stated she felt this topic should be discussed at a future meeting when the Council has more time to discuss it. Councilman Castranova stated that the item was to discuss as a preliminary matter and that there is a resident that will speak, that is being threatened with fines that would accumulate. He stated that he would like to discuss the topic and to make a motion to stay any fines of this ordinance until there is an opportunity to discuss the ordinance. He stated that it would not be fair to the resident if the Council passes an exemption to the ordinance after he has been fined. Councilman Leonard stated that the resident can still speak, but this is very early in the stage of how the Council works this process. He stated that the Council has never and he believes never should have any stays for any ordinances because it sets a bad precedent. Councilman Castranova stated he disagreed.

VOTE – Approval of Agenda

Councilwoman Maurer motioned to accept the agenda as amended. The motion passed with four ayes and one nay with Councilman Castranova voting nay.

ADDRESSES THE COUNCIL

Linda Klopff – Red Caboose Library – expressed concern for Town funding of the Red Caboose Library (see attached)

Brett Beddow – stated that he had been notified that he was in violation of the town ordinance for having chickens. He asked the Council to consider allowing chickens.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Mayor presented the Council with the Consent Agenda. Councilman Castranova stated that he would like to remove and discuss the minutes from the March 9, 2023 Work Session. Councilman Leonard **moved to approve the Consent Agenda as amended**. The motion carried unanimously. Within this motion, the following items were approved:

- A. Approve:
Minutes of the March 16, 2023 Regular Council Meeting

Councilman Castranova stated that under the “Discussion - Remove Councilman Castranova’s Liaison Responsibilities” in the minutes, it states that “Councilman Leonard asked Councilman Castranova if he has met with any developers. Councilman Castranova stated that he has met with one developer and that it is perfectly legal.” Councilman Castranova stated that he did not say that and that sentence is completely embellished. Councilman Castranova stated that he said “Yes and that is all he said”. Councilman Castranova stated that the reason he responded yes is because Jay Ammon, the developer who is proposing to rezone the 20 acres behind the Howell Center, approached him about this project and never informed him what he wanted to speak to him about. He stated he would of never agreed to meet with Mr. Ammon or any developer to discuss anything because he believes that gives the appearance of impropriety. Councilman Castranova stated that even though it is legal he never stated that at that meeting. He stated that not knowing what Mr. Ammon wanted to discuss with him or his plan and sitting down with Ellis Development is a lot different and he resents trying to tie those together. Councilman Leonard stated that it was his understanding that Councilman Castranova has met with Mr. Ammon on more than one occasion and discussed that and even supported his proposal. Councilman Castranova stated that the information Councilman Leonard stated was not correct. Councilman Weaver asked if there was a way to hear what was specifically said at the meeting and the Town Manager stated that every meeting is recorded. He stated that the Council has a few options, they can table these minutes until the next meeting and the Town Clerk can listen to the audio and get an exact transcript or the Council can amend the minutes to remove the language “it is perfectly legal” and add that Councilman Castranova stated “yes”, if the Council agrees to that. Councilman Leonard stated that if the minutes are amended, then his statement after Councilman Castranova statement would need to be amended. Councilman Leonard stated that he is not in favor of amending the minutes this evening. Councilman Castranova stated that he did not say “it is illegal to meet with Ellis, that it gives the appearance of impropriety and probably violates the Town’s ethics code.” Councilman Leonard stated that Councilman Castranova is entitled to his opinion. Councilwoman Maurer asked the Town Attorney to clarify if it was legal to meet with a developer and she feels it is a part of their due diligence to meet with someone who asks to meet with the Council. The Town Attorney stated that it is legal to meet with developers as long as they do not violate the Open Meeting Laws and there is a whole host of situations on which you would meet with a developer. He stated that local government officials meet with developers and a lot of the time the atmosphere is very complementary and they work together with elected officials to develop an area and sometimes it is not. Councilman Leonard stated that it does not violate the Town’s code of ethics as far as he understands. The Town Attorney stated that as long as there is no determination as to what this Council would do until they have heard the facts, held the public hearings and things like that, he does not believe it does. Councilman Leonard stated that someone who has made up their mind prior to that, might be an ethical violation. Councilman Weaver stated that the question at hand is the minutes.

Vote – March 9, 2023 Work Session Minutes – Councilman Sheffield motioned to table the minutes until the next work session. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Castranova stated that the letter to the Citizens of River Bend that was included in the March 9, 2023 minutes contains numerous untrue statements and are defamatory. That the untrue statements were known to be untrue when the statements were made. He stated an example was "Councilman Castranova has been cautioned in the past about his personal attacks against members of this body." He stated he was never cautioned in the past about personal attacks and he has never made any personal attacks. He stated those statements are untrue and the Council knew they were untrue, he is requesting the defamatory letter be removed permanently. The Town Attorney stated that effectively the matter has been tabled and the Council can take those comments under advisement and that it can be considered when the matter is taken up at the work session.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

The Manager stated that the new Public Works building project is moving as scheduled. He stated that the skeleton of the storage shelter had been installed and 25% of the roof has been installed and construction on the main building will begin soon. He stated that the project is on time and on budget.

The Manager stated that the Budget Workshops will begin on Tuesday, May 2, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. at Town Hall with the next meeting on Thursday, May 4, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. .

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

CAC – Councilwoman Maurer

Councilwoman Maurer presented the following report.

The CAC met for a Special Meeting on April 19, 2023. The board members voted unanimously to recommend that Pat Lineback be appointed to the CAC. The Beautification awards for April were awarded to yards located at 105 Commander Court and 208 Shoreline Drive. You can find the entire list of nominees in the weekly River Bend E-News. Nominations for the May award will begin on May 1st. You can obtain nomination forms from the town website, a QR code that will be printed in upcoming announcements, or by email, cac.riverbend@gmail.com. The Plantation Drive median project has started. A presentation will be made tonight by chairperson, Brenda Hall. Other plans and programs will be presented at later dates. There currently are three vacancies on the Community Appearance Commission. This is an active group. Members may work on one or all of the projects. If you are interested, contact Chairwoman Brenda Hall or me to find out more about joining the board or volunteering for a project. The next meeting is scheduled for July 19, 2023 at 4 pm in the Municipal Building.

Vote – CAC Appointment – Councilwoman Maurer motioned to appoint Pat Lineback to the Community Appearance Commission for a term beginning April 20, 2023 and expiring June 30, 2024. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilwoman Maurer introduced Brenda Hall from the Town of River Bend's Community Appearance Commission (CAC) and she gave a presentation on a study that Tom Glasgow of the Craven County Cooperative Extension, completed on the Plantation Drive Median. Her presentation included several pictures of trees in the median that were damaged, diseased or otherwise suffering. She stated that upon approval from the Council the CAC would consult with experts to develop options that would include road safety, better utilization of median space, landscape replacement recommendations, and a priority list, She also stated that the estimated costs based on the recommendations could be spread out over multiple budget cycles if needed. She accepted questions from the Council. Councilman Leonard asked if the presentations could be available to the public and the Town Manager stated that Mrs. Hall's PowerPoint is on the website and Mr. Glasgow's presentation had technical difficulties. Councilman Leonard stated that the Council has received many emails with false information and he stated the residents can

get the right information on the Town's website. The Mayor and the Council praised Mrs. Hall for the presentation. Councilwoman Maurer stated that she had distributed the official CAC recommendation to the Council. (see attached)

PARKS & RECREATION – COUNCILMAN WEAVER

Parks & Recreation

Councilman Weaver stated that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board met on April 5th and the main two topics are to be discussed later tonight.

Organic Garden

Councilman Weaver stated that the Organic Garden has a workday scheduled for Saturday April 22nd at 9:00 a.m. He stated that the garden is preparing for the spring and summer vegetables.

Red Caboose Library (RCL)

Councilman Weaver stated that the library met on April 13th and the library is hosting a Murder Mystery Night Fundraiser on May 20th at 6:00 p.m. He stated that the Book / Tech Mobile would be at the Municipal Building on Friday May 19th, at 2:00 p.m. through 5:00 p.m.

Discussion – Building Use Policy Amendment

Councilman Weaver stated that the amended Building Use Policy is included in the agenda package. Councilman Leonard asked if there are public dumpsters for those who are using the building or would they need to dispose of their own trash and the Town Manager stated they would need to dispose of their own trash.

Vote – Building Use Policy Amendment – Councilman Weaver motioned to approve the Building Use Policy as amended. The motion carried unanimously. (see attached)

Discussion – Funding for 4th of July Celebration

Councilman Weaver stated that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board had requested funding for the July 4th Celebration. Councilman Sheffield stated that he felt the agenda presented would be an all-day event and it would be a long event ending at 9:15 p.m. Councilman Weaver stated that he would like to have the fireworks celebration. He stated he feels that it is the duty of the Council, to set the advisory boards up for success. He feels this is a large event to plan on such a short notice. He also stated that he felt that with it currently being budget season that this event would do well next year, with an entire year to plan. The Mayor agreed. Councilman Castranova stated that he felt this sounds like the Council is trying to micromanage the advisory board, and from what he understood from the Town Manager is that the Council appropriates a budget and it is up to the advisory board on how they spend it. He stated that the Town has an advisory board to make those decisions and the Council appropriates the money and that is the separation of the powers, as he understands it. Councilman Weaver stated that the Parks and Recreation is an advisory board. Councilman Castranova stated that he understood the motion to state how the advisory board can spend the money, and Councilman Weaver restated the motion. The Town Manager stated that at last year's budget session the \$4,100 was budgeted for this year's July 4th Celebration that is what the Council approved.

Vote – Funding for 4th of July Celebration – Councilman Weaver motioned to limit July 4th Celebration to the traditional activities with a budget of \$4,100. The motion passed with four ayes and one nay with Councilman Castranova voting nay.

FINANCE – COUNCILMAN LEONARD

Financial Report – Finance Director, Mandy Gilbert, presented to the Council the financial statement for the month of March. She stated the total of the Town's Cash and Investments as of 23 Work Sess

March 31, 2023, were \$4,074,513 and Ad valorem tax collections for FY22-23 were \$718,430 and Vehicle Ad valorem tax collections were \$65,668.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND WATERWAYS – COUNCILMAN LEONARD

Councilman Leonard presented the following report:

Chairman Ackiss opened the EWAB meeting Monday April 3rd 2023 at 7 PM in the small conference room in the municipal building. There was a quorum. There were no visitors. The minutes from February 6th, 2023, were approved. Councilman Leonard gave a council updated. Old business: Canal bulkhead inspections will start on Wednesday 19 April 2024. New Business: Questions about mosquito control, Councilman Leonard will check with the manager. Some discussion about storm water swales being inspected and cleaned as needed. Volunteer hours: 10. Next meeting will be on May 1st 2023 at 7 PM in the small conference room in the municipal building. Chairman Ackiss adjourned the meeting at 7:34 PM.

PLANNING BOARD – COUNCILMAN SHEFFIELD

Councilman Sheffield presented the following report:

The regular meeting of the Planning Board was held on April 6th at 6:00pm in the Municipal building. A quorum was present. Some guests attended the meeting. Chairman Lippert invited anyone who wished to address the board to do so. No one spoke either for or against the board's only topic for the meeting, a zoning change request by Jay Ammon of Spectrum Builders for an approximately twenty acre site between the Howell Center and Riverstone. Manager Jackson made it abundantly clear that the request before the board would be the first step in many required to actually make any change to the zoning. The site is currently zoned ID, or institutional. Mr. Ammon asks that it be changed to PDRMF. Mr. Ammon, who was present, shared his preliminary plans with the board. He wants to build around 90 duplex units of about 1200 square feet each. Each unit is to be two bedroom and two bath. After many questions and much discussion the board voted to approve the zoning request and send it to the council for the next step. The meeting was adjourned. The next scheduled meeting is set for May 4th and is open to the public.

MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor presented the following report.

Government at the National, State and Local levels are now linked in a time where the nature of laws and regulations are often more complex than at any previous time in the Nation's history. Both the Federal and State agencies prepare regulations that implement new laws/acts conforming to the mandates of their "administrative procedures act." Compliance with the "law/act" can make the issuing of final rules for public guidance a more lengthy process.

The public is often not aware that the implementation of new direction given by the legislature will require one or more of the U S or State departments to issue regulations that are developed in compliance with the "administrative procedures act" before the legislative mandate can be implemented. The result is that local government cannot act as quickly as the public would prefer. Unhappy citizens may go to "social media"(SM) post that the personnel of local government are "dragging their feet" and those who read the post may accept this as truth.

The above is an example of fact misrepresented in a (SM) post, but accepted as truth. This is representative of how SM posts have impacted the operation of local governments across the nation.

Your Town Staff works very hard to comply with all Federal and State regulations and accomplish this compliance in a timely fashion. Please seek factual information rather than automatically accepting SM posting of a position that may be short of fact.

Thank you for reading and thanks for considering the intent of this article as you evaluate the accuracy of what may be posted on SM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Inga Chandler, 123 Norbury Drive, stated she had received an anonymous letter regarding the proposed re-zoning near the Howell Center. She stated that she is concerned with speeding in the area and requesting speed bumps as she is concerned for the safety of the children in the area.

Jon Hall, 105 Knotline Road, stated there is a lot of negativity that is spread on Facebook and some people have predisposed opinions made before having any facts. He stated that he felt the Council should speak about the rumors and any disinformation.

Jim Gadwell, 202 Outrigger Road, praised the Police Department. He stated that he felt zoning was in place for a reason and does not feel it should be changed. He inquired about allowing goats and pigs in Town and asked if that met the zoning requirements. He stated that if they allow changes it would open the floodgate. He stated that the Council was doing a good job at destroying the Town.

Rebekah Royston, 109 Starboard Drive, stated that she became a member of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to bring more activities to Town for children. She stated she was very disappointed in the Council's decision for the 4th of July Event. She stated she has spent a lot of time preparing for this event. She stated she felt the vote was personal and against the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

CLOSED SESSION


Councilman Sheffield moved to go into a Closed Session under NCSG §143-318.11(a)(3)(6). The motion carried unanimously. The Council entered Closed Session at 8:24 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

Councilman Sheffield moved to return to Open Session at 8:55 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT/RECESS

There being no further business, Councilman Sheffield moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.



Kristie J. Nobles, CMC
Town Clerk

Revised

Dear Councilmen Maurer, Leonard, Sheffield, Castranova, and Weaver,

I received a copy of a letter that was sent to a sizable group of community members on April 12th by a previous councilman. As I reviewed it, I identified a number of things that I would like to set right as I believe you may have read that missive as well. There was more there than met the eye in my opinion.

When the Red Caboose Library (RCL) requested to join the Town of RiverBend they acted in good faith. There was no mention in that request claiming that the RCL would never, ever, request a change in its status with Parks and Rec or the Town. It should be noted that the reason it was requesting town inclusion is that the Library was displaced from its operational home by the Town of RiverBend when they tore down the building they were in. This was after 40 years of providing good service to the community. The first step in getting a true home for theLibrary was determined for it to be "a legal part of the Town". Most thought it had this status already.

The Library has persevered through many recent challenges providing improved services without charge by an all volunteer staff. This was done by renting a building through the financial support of our community. I must be very honest and state that every time I have met a new Library Patron in the last few years and explain the situation under which the RCL operates the reaction is the same. They are surprised and appalled and ask why is this?

Regarding the possibility of a satellite Library unit from the county, this is a non starter. It has been looked into in the past more than once. Satellite units are based on logistics like distance from the main branch and transportation needs, not primarily population. That is why those small towns are being served in that manner. I have been told that the county library system priority at this time is expanding it's services in the main branch. This in itself will take quite some time. Please note the the RCL has a very long mutually supportive, cordial relationship with the county system.

Each respects the value and services it brings to the community. We do not oppose them in any way, we welcome them, especially the new Book/Tech mobile!

There is no double taxation here. What RiverBend has is very much like other entities. For example when you go to a park, it may be funded by the county (Glenburnie), state (Fort Macon), or Feds (Yellowstone) or our Town, the community park spaces which include area around Town Hall and the Kayak Launch. Each may provide a different experience that you value, some of them even overlapping occasionally . Same thing with Libraries.

Please note the changes and improvements made to Library Services are not the result of actions by any councilman. They are the result of good decisions by the RCL Board and the dedication, perseverance, and plain hard work and support of its volunteers and patrons. Period.

What I do not understand is the opposition, to supporting the continuation of this beloved, long standing free service to the community, a Library; by anyone, including an ex-councilman. We are talking about is current community needs and the near future, Please, lets not go backward. We have come too far.

Sincerely and Respectfully,
Linda C. Klopff, Concerned Citizen of RiverBend

RIVER BEND RED CABOOSE LIBRARY INVENTORY

AS OF 12-31-22

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
FICTION	2,295	2,215	2,108	1,906
HISTORY	97	87	77	52
BIOGRAPHIES	79	58	50	26
AUTO BIOGRAPHIES	24	19	15	13
FOOD	37	35	27	18
GARDEN/NATURE	33	25	11	10
NEW BERN	15	13	11	10
POETRY	28	27	25	16
OLF HELP	24	22	0	0
SPIRITUALITY	22	19	0	0
HEALTH & WELLNESS	18	17	0	0
MISC NON-FICTION	14	0	0	0
CHILDREN	416	327	325	117
TWEENS	219	184	148	0
CD AUDIO BOOKS	133	118	118	114
DVDS	<u>363</u>	<u>289</u>	<u>177</u>	<u>61</u>
	3,817	3,455	3,092	2,242

INVENTORY STATISTICS DO NOT INCLUDE PAPERBACKS, MAGAZINES, PUZZLES, GAMES

Libraries From Websters Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language

1. A collection lot books, pamphlets ect. kept for reading and consultation, especially such a collection arranged to facilitate reference, as by classification and indexing.
2. A building, an apartment, or a series of apartments, or a series of apartments containing such a collection. The Library of Congress.
3. A series of books having some characteristic in common issued by the same publisher.
- 4, A collection of books for recreation or study belonging to a private individual : a doctors library.
5. A commercial establishment for selling or hiring out books -circulating library A library from which books can be taken away under certain restrictions: also lending library; distinguished from a reference library, where books may consulted but not carried away.

Yes, the Red Caboose IS a Library!

To: Council Members, Delane Jackson, Town Manager
From: Brenda Hall, CAC Chair
Date: April 20, 2023
Subj: CAC recommendations

The CAC had a Special Meeting on April 19, 2023, 4 PM, Municipal Building. A quorum of three board members were present. There were two motions for the CAC members to vote on.

The first motion was made to recommend Pat Lineback to become a CAC Member. The motion passed unanimously.

The second motion was made to review final recommendations for the Plantation Median Project presented to Town Council on 4.20.2023. The motion passed unanimously.

Final CAC recommendations were:

1. Tree Health Safety

- a. Identify trees that need to be removed from the Plantation Drive medians
- b. Mitigate risks of diseased and dying trees and shrubs with prompt removal
- c. Remove invasive shrubs
- d. Include Anchor Way median in the process for the same issues identified on Plantation Drive
- e. Hire certified Tree Arborist to assess all trees on town property, annually

2. Road Safety

- a. Consider alternative median space utilization
 - i. Install walk path down the center of the longest median stretch (.8 miles) which....
 1. Decreases wind and storm liability by removing diseased and unhealthy trees/shrubs
 2. Improves utilization for pedestrians and bikers
 3. Improves aesthetics of median by planting appropriate plantings where space is available
 4. Creates barrier between cars and pedestrians
 5. Reduces risks of injuries to pedestrians and cyclists
 - ii. Remove medians, level ground, and repave roads with designated walk path on at least one side of the road
- b. Explore Grant funding opportunities for alternative median usage
 - I. Craven County funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Monies available to fund design/feasibility study for project and/or potential grant writing assistance to find the best grant funding for this project.
 - II. The AARP Community Challenge Grant Program that is part of the nationwide AARP Livable Communities initiative.

3. Maintenance

- a. Provide education and accountability for workers who are maintaining our community's trees
- b. Plant replacement shrubs that are appropriate for space and growing conditions of the medians
- c. Provide funding for annual Tree Arborist assessment and follow through with recommendations
- d. Maintain healthy trees and oversight according to River Bend's Tree City designation
- e. Enforce Tree City's Tree Care Ordinance that provides clear guidance for planting, maintaining, and removing trees from streets, parks, and public spaces

**TOWN OF RIVER BEND
BUILDING USE POLICY**

As a service to the community, the town’s meeting rooms may be made available on an equitable basis for the lawful activities of groups or individuals. Approval by the town to use its facilities does not constitute official endorsement of the event nor of the beliefs, viewpoints, policies or affiliation of its sponsors. The meeting rooms shall not be used for any purpose that is not a permitted use in the town’s zoning regulations.

(I) WHO MAY USE THE MEETING ROOM/FACILITY. The town’s meeting rooms may be reserved for activities by the following. These are examples and it is not an all-inclusive list.

- a. Individuals
- b. Groups officially affiliated with the Town of River Bend
- c. Other agencies that are affiliated with local, state or federal governments
- d. Legally established organizations, non-profits and civic groups such as Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, Lions Club, Rotary Club, Shriners, etc.
- e. Private organizations such as home owners associations, political party organizations and other private groups

The person who signs the meeting room request form will be recognized as the sponsor of the event and shall be the person who is responsible for compliance with this policy.

(II) HOURS. The hours the Meeting Room may be used are:

Monday through Friday	8:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Saturday	8:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Sunday	11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

(III) RESERVATIONS. Requests for the use of the room must be submitted to the town during normal town office hours. Reservations are not official until confirmed by the town. Adult supervision and responsibility are required for events involving children/minors. The sponsor is required to notify the town immediately of any cancellations. Official meetings of the town government and its boards and commissions have first priority and take precedence over all other activities. Any conflict in scheduling shall be resolved in the town’s favor. Non-town affiliated groups/individuals are prohibited from reserving the room/facility on a long-term basis, which is defined as: *more than once per week or any usage during more than twelve consecutive months*. All long-term reservations must be renewed each calendar year on a first-come basis.

- a. The town reserves the right to assign/change room reservations, based on the number of attendees at the function, when rooms are being used simultaneously.
- b. Use of the kitchen will be granted by reservation only. No town supplies may be used without permission.
- c. Rental fees are assessed per room. If you reserve multiple rooms, you are charged per room.
- d. The Municipal Building is the primary location for all meetings. The large meeting room in Town Hall is available for usage but only in very limited circumstances.

(IV) RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SPONSOR. Activities must begin and end in a timely manner to allow for setup, cleanup and restoration of the room within the time allotted. The sponsor is responsible for setting up the room for the use for which it is intended and for cleaning and restoring it to its original configuration upon completion of the meeting. **The sponsor is responsible for disposal of any/all trash generated during the function.** The sponsor assumes all responsibility for any damage caused to town's facilities and equipment during their usage of the facility. Any damage must be reported immediately to the town. If the meeting begins or ends outside of normal town office hours, the sponsor is responsible for arranging opening and closing, including locking the building once all participants have vacated the building. This can be done by notifying the police officer on duty by calling 252-638-1108.

(V) PROHIBITIONS.

- a. Smoking of any kind (tobacco or e-cigarettes)
- b. Open flames of any kind, except those specifically designed for and used to warm prepared food pans, such as those typically used by caterers
- c. Alcoholic beverages
- d. Cooking (does not include simply warming foods that are cooked elsewhere)
- e. Animals
- f. Any unlawful activity
- g. Painting**

**** the painting prohibition does not apply to official town organizations and/or events**

Events that include the serving of food/drinks are allowed. However, any foods that require cooking shall be cooked elsewhere prior to being used in the town's facilities. Activities that involve more than normal wear and tear on the meeting room facility, generate excessive noise or are disruptive to the conduct of town business may not be permitted.

(VI) RENTAL FEES.

- \$ 40.00 fee for room use up to four hours in a single day
- \$ 80.00 fee for room use more than four hours in a single day.
- \$ 20.00* fee for kitchen use

**Uses that are eligible for room use exemption are exempt from kitchen use fee*

a. Meetings organized by the Town of River Bend, its advisory boards, town-sponsored organizations or town authorized meetings of other local, state or federal governments are exempt from rental fees. Local chapters, that serve the Craven County area, of legally established organizations, non-profits, and civic groups such as Boys Scouts of America, Girls Scouts of the USA, Lions Club, Rotary Club, Shriners, etc. may also be exempted from rental fees. Groups such as these may be considered for exemption from the rental fees by requesting a waiver from the Town Manager, using the form provided by the Town.

b. In addition to the exemption examples stated in VI (a), any meeting/function/activity that is fully open to the public, allows full public participation and does not require an attendee to be

a member of the group, pay an admission fee, own property to be eligible to participate or vote or assesses any type of participation/membership dues or fees may be eligible for exemption.

c. Any meetings/function/activity that is not eligible for exemption based on VI (a)(b) and restricts public attendance and/or participation based on membership, ownership, assessment of fees or in any other manner, or is a private function, is not exempt from the rental fees.

(VII) DEPOSIT.

Any event conducted by non-officially town affiliated groups that includes the serving of food and/or beverages of any kind or any craft activity requires the pre-payment of a \$100 deposit. The deposit may be fully returned to the sponsor following an inspection by the town, provided that the facility was not damaged during the event. Any damages caused during the event, as solely determined by town, shall be assessed to the sponsor and deducted from the deposit. If the damages exceed the amount of the deposit, the sponsor shall be responsible for any additional payment necessary to repair the damages to the town's satisfaction. Failure to pay for any damages shall result in legal action against the sponsor and possible prohibition of future use of the facility by the sponsor/individual/group.

ADOPTED: 12-21-94.

AMENDED: 12-20-00
12-19-01
8-19-21