



WESTERN UNION MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, December 17, 2020 – 4pm

Banks Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 10012 New Town Road

Regular Meeting

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Call to Order & Determination of Quorum

Vice-Chair Fuller called the meeting to order at 4:05pm and determined a quorum was present.

Present: Vice-Chair Fuller (Wesley Chapel), Joe Pollino (Marvin) (*by phone*), Rick Becker (Mineral Springs), Steven Ayers (Stallings)

Absent: Chairman Perryman/Anne Pruitt (Weddington)

Staff Present: Austin W. Yow, Marvin Clerk & Assistant to the Manager; Rohit Ammanamanchi, Marvin Planning & Zoning Administrator (*by phone*)

2. Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION: Mr. Becker moved to adopt the agenda. Mr. Ayers seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

3. Adoption of the Meeting Minutes for: 11/19/20

MOTION: Vice-Chair Fuller moved to adopt the minutes for 11/19/20 as presented. Mr. Ayers seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comment Period

No comments were given.

5. DELEGATE AND MUNICIPALITY REPORTS

- a. **Wesley Chapel:** Vice-Chair Fuller stated that Wesley Chapel has opened their new park, passed all inspections, and received their certificate of occupancy. She expects that they will have to hire a park attendant, due to high interest. She added that Wesley Chapel recently adopted an updated tree conservation ordinance to “keep Wesley Chapel green and beautiful.”
- b. **Mineral Springs:** Mr. Becker informed everyone that Mineral Springs passed the WUMA resolution that calls for the incorporation of extraterritorial jurisdictions into the Union County 2050 Comprehensive Plan. He stated that Mineral Springs has been working with the Catawba Lands Conservancy and are heavily involved in invasive plant removal. Mr. Becker added that the Mineral Springs staff has been working staggered hours considering the COVID-19 pandemic.
- c. **Stallings:** Mr. Ayers informed everyone that Stallings also passed the resolution. He also informed everyone that Stallings prefers not to host next WUMA meeting since their Council is not even meeting in person because of COVID-19 concerns. He spoke about an ongoing project on Idlewild Rd, as well as the Town’s progress with building a downtown.
- d. **Marvin:** Mr. Pollino welcomed everyone and apologized for not being there in person. He stated that Marvin was in the process of appealing to residents living in Marvin’s annexation area to annex into Marvin. He discussed the positive responses to this annexation campaign. He cited ongoing projects, such as branding, traffic mitigation, and assuming maintenance of a portion of New Town Road from NCDOT, as reasons for the positive feedback. He also informed everyone about Marvin’s recent Santa Parade. Lastly, he encouraged others to consider the need for lighting when working to build roundabouts with NCDOT. He described an elongated process that Marvin is pursuing to get proper lighting installed at their two existing roundabouts.
- e. **Weddington:** In the absence of a representative from Weddington, Vice-Chair Fuller briefed everyone that Weddington has started developing their park. She also informed everyone that Weddington agreed to host the January WUMA meeting.

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. **Update on Resolutions Issued by Towns**

Vice-Chair Fuller welcomed the visitors from Union County and explained the rationale behind the formation of WUMA. She explained that the municipalities in WUMA are seeking greater involvement in the regulation of unincorporated areas that are surrounded by a municipality, otherwise referred to as “doughnut holes.” Citing the fact that all five municipalities have passed the previously mentioned resolution to advocate for the incorporation of extraterritorial jurisdictions into the Union County 2050 Comprehensive Plan, Vice-Chair Fuller requested a motion be made to present the resolution to the County.

MOTION: Mr. Ayers moved to present the resolution to the County. Mr. Becker seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

Delegates discussed the idea of conducting a community survey to show public support for the goals of WUMA. Mr. Ayers stated that he was concerned about the potential response rate. Mr. Becker spoke on a past survey in Mineral Springs, in which only ten percent of responses were submitted online. He cited Mineral Springs’ small online presence, as possible reason for this small online response rate. He advocated for direct mail as a better method for contacting residents.

Delegates discussed the reach of their websites, as well as innovative ways to reach the public. Mr. Ayers discussed “Open Meetings” in Stallings, where councilmembers meet with constituents to discuss issues in an open forum. Mr. Pollino discussed Marvin’s new website, communications practices, as well as “Coffee with Council,” an event held twice per month where two councilmembers meet with constituents over coffee to discuss local issues.

Delegates decided to add “Options for Resident Input” as an agenda item for the January WUMA Meeting.

b. **Discussion of Sphere of Influence Agreement**

The Delegates discussed recent actions to develop a general sphere of influence for each municipality, including voluntary annexation campaigns and joint efforts to pursue extraterritorial jurisdictions. They conversed with representatives from Union County on their efforts, as well as the recommended land use map in the Union County 2050 Comprehensive Plan.

Assistant County Manager Brian Matthews advised Delegates to submit their resolutions/proposals for information purposes first. He also advised municipalities to come to agreements with one another regarding desired land uses before asking for consideration from the County. Union County Chairman Helms encouraged Delegates to have their municipalities actively talk and work with Union County to address their issues. Regarding proposed developments, Mr. Matthews advised Delegates explain their opposition to the County and what they envision for the area in question.

Vice-Chair Fuller stated that the municipalities welcome the chance to be at the table to provide input for when a development near them is being considered for approval. She emphasized that the municipalities of WUMA want to improve their relationships with the County and work with the County on these issues.

c. **Solid Waste and Recycling**

In the absence of a representative from Weddington, Assistant County Manager Brian Matthews spoke on this issue. He referenced a conference call with officials from various municipalities, including Weddington Administrator, Lisa Thompson, who informed him that Weddington was seeking to establish solid waste collection for their residents. Mr. Matthews encouraged everyone to reach out to the County’s solid waste professionals for information on how to structure Requests for Proposals (RFPs). He emphasized the importance of the waste staying in Union County, so that the County does not have to increase the cost of its solid waste collection services. He also encouraged municipalities to work towards multi-jurisdictional agreement for economies of scale.

d. **Website Update**

Vice-Chair Fuller stated that Anne Pruitt (Weddington) has been working on the WUMA website, which includes contact information for delegates, as well as agendas, minutes, and the meeting schedule. Mr. Helms encouraged delegates to have their municipalities contact the County’s Communications Department to connect their websites to the Union County website, so residents may find resources easier.

e. **Visitors from Union County**

Union County Chairman Richard Helms spoke on bettering communications between municipalities and Union County. He spoke on the 2050 Comprehensive Plan and the current plan is not finalized. To highlight this, he spoke about the construction of a new water supply, which the plan recommends be controlled regionally. Mr. Helms stated that he and other commissioners are skeptical of this approach.

Planning Director Lee Jensen provided an update on the 2050 Comprehensive Plan. He highlighted the citizen-driven approach through a coordinating committee to develop the plan. With the close of the public comment period on Friday, December 18, the received comments will be presented to the coordinating committee for them to address. Following the completion of the committee's work, the Plan will go before the Planning Board prior to coming before the Board of County Commissioners in the Spring of 2021. He emphasized that the Board is not obligated to accept the recommendations of the committee and Planning Board and may choose to alter the plan before adoption. Mr. Pollino informed Mr. Jensen that the public comment period for the Plan was too short, as the Marvin Village Council was only able to meet on this topic on December 8. Mr. Jensen acknowledged that similar feedback was received, and that the committee will consider that feedback at their next meeting. Mr. Jensen later spoke on the County's BRIC Grant application. He said he was optimistic about the County's chances at receiving the grant which would help to address infrastructure and stormwater issues.

Union County Commissioner Jerry Simpson spoke on a past effort by Centralina Council of Governments. He praised the County Staff's efforts on the 2050 plan. He encouraged people to reach out to County Staff for additional resources and a wealth of institutional knowledge. He encouraged delegates to reach out to Alan Aldridge, District Director of the Union County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Assistant County Manager Brian Matthews encouraged delegates to reach out to Alan Aldridge, District Director of the Union County Soil and Water Conservation District, for help with stormwater issues and for help finding funding for stormwater projects.

Concluding this conversation, delegates spoke with the Union County Representatives on about how citizens often misunderstand the function and duties of the County Government. They also discussed the need for information sharing between local elected officials, County elected officials, and their respective staff members.

7. NEW BUSINESS

No items were discussed.

8. DELEGATE COMMENTS

Vice-Chair Fuller (Wesley Chapel): No comments.

Joe Pollino (Marvin): He thanked Vice-Chair Fuller for filling in for Chairman Perryman. He thanked everyone for attending and thanked the Union County Officials for information on establishing solid waste collection. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and a Happy New Year.

Rick Becker (Mineral Springs): No comments.

Steven Ayers (Stallings): No comments.

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Ayers moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:15pm. Mr. Becker seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.