February 9, 2016

7:00 P.M.

The Town of Pink Hill held its monthly board meeting on Tuesday, February 9, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the town hall board room. Present for the meeting were Mayor Carol Sykes, Commissioners Mike Hill, Donald King and Debra Grady, Town Attorney George Jenkins, Public Works Director Timmy Kennedy, Police Chief Joey Thigpen, and Town Clerk Kimberly Mitchell.

Visitors present at the meeting were Susan G. Myers, Todd Jenkins, Wendy Jones, Tony Heath, Amanda Murphy and Al Rachide.

Mayor Sykes called the meeting to order and requested for all cell phones to be turned off please. Mayor Sykes welcomed everyone to the meeting. Commissioner King then led everyone in the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Hill made a motion to approve the agenda with amendment (a) Lenoir County Tax Collector Report 2015 for real estate taxes. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Commissioner Hill made a motion to approve the consent agenda including January 12, 2016 regular board meeting minutes. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The first item on the agenda was amendment (a) Lenoir County Tax Collector report of unpaid 2015 real estate taxes. Mayor Sykes read the tax collector report of the 2015 unpaid taxes. She stated that the Lenoir County Tax Department will advertise these unpaid taxes on March 30, 2016. Kim said the report showed that the town has $19,535.55 in unpaid taxes for 2015. Commissioner Grady made a motion to accept the tax collector report and advertising date of March 30, 2016. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was the use of two-story building. Kevin Gibbons said that the Lenoir County EMS is starting up a special response team. He said they are going to start training with the city SWAT team and hopeful start soon training with the Lenoir County SWAT team. Kevin said they are looking for some training facilities to get into that resemble the kind of situations that they are going to deal with. He said mostly it is for active shooter stuff like Columbine, Paris, and stuff like that. He stated really there is no precedent on what they are doing in this area of how to respond and we are pretty much starting from scratch. Kevin said they would hopefully love to use the two-story building to do some training in. He said no beating on walls or blowing anything up but just the fact that it is a school and has stairwells and classrooms and what better place to train than in a school. Kevin said then they don’t have to worry about kid’s stuff getting broken or teachers, computers, or all that stuff. Mayor Sykes asked Chief Heath what were the feelings of the fire department on this. Chief Heath stated he thought it would be good for the community but his only concern would be liability. Timmy said that would be his only concern as well because Kevin said some of the guys that would be coming would be volunteering. Kevin stated yes everybody who works for Lenoir County EMS is volunteering their time and not something they are getting paid for. He said they understand the risk they are taking. Kevin said the county SWAT or the city SWAT are getting paid so they will be under their liability if someone were to get hurt. He said if the volunteers need to sign something then they will sign something. Mayor Sykes said for the town’s protection she thinks something needs to be signed. George said a waiver of liability would need to be signed by the volunteers. Kevin said everyone would be willing to do that. Mayor Sykes stated it is for their protection as well as for the town’s protection. Kevin said they do not have a date set yet but right now they train once a month and they are looking for different places. He said he wanted to come before the board and see if this idea was even plausible before he brought it up before his guys. Mayor Sykes asked Kevin if they would be coming over on the Wellness Center. Kevin stated no, maybe just on the grounds around it. It is mostly going to be inside. Commissioner Hill made a motion to let the volunteers train at the two-story building and sign a liability waiver. Commissioner Grady seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Mayor Sykes asked if there was any discussion on the subject. Commissioner King asked who would be responsible for damage to the building. Timmy asked if that could be put in the waiver also. George said he would try to draft it that way. George asked Kevin who is going to be using the building, is it an organization. Kevin stated it is employees of Lenoir County EMS, Kinston SWAT, and the Lenoir County SWAT. George asked if they would be doing it under the offices of Lenoir County and City of Kinston. Kevin stated yes. George said he would like for them to sign off on it as well. Kevin said, so I need to bring this up to my director and George replied yes. Mayor Sykes said it would really be better if Roger Dail and whomever come to the meeting and explain the situation. George asked Kevin what kind of time frame he was looking at because surely you are not going to want to do it in 32 degree weather like next week. Kevin said well if we had it, situation opportunity, I mean nothing happens when it is sunny and 72 degrees and not raining. So it is not going to happen like any time next week because we have not even set up the next training date for this coming month. George suggested having Roger Dail, somebody from the cities Public Safety Department, and somebody from Ronnie’s staff come down. He told Kevin to have Roger Dail contact him and they could coordinate that. Kevin said this is something that Roger has allowed them to do off the books because most times if there is any kind of training they feel they have to pay us. So we are not allowed to do any training together that they don’t approve of. He said Roger has allowed them to go on their own time to volunteer to do this training to develop this program for our community. Kim asked Kevin to call her if they would be coming to the next meeting so she could put it on the agenda. Mayor Sykes thanked Kevin for coming.

The next item on the agenda was Survey of Property. Todd Jenkins stated he spoke with Wayland Humphrey first and he told him to speak to Mayor Sykes. He said Mayor Sykes told him to bring it to the board. Todd said he is doing a survey of Mr. Milton Murphy’s property out on Earl Howard Road which abuts Pink Hill’s property. Mr. Murphy’s deed calls for a certain distance across Ash Davis Road down to the mouth of Wild Cat Branch. That property down there is flooded. There is no mouth of Wild Cat Branch any more. He presented a copy of the tax map for the board to look at. Todd said he has gone to all the property owners around it and just trying to do a line agreement with what we have on record for the Town of Pink Hill. He stated he needs the town’s permission to go to their property. George asked does the Pink Hill line that is in there; does it refer to the run of Wild Cat Branch or does it have meets and bounds and monuments. Todd says it follows Cherry Tree Branch until it hits Tuckahoe Branch and then a straight line until it hits Wild Cat Branch. George asked how much of the town’s property abuts Wild Cat Branch. Todd stated he would have to add it up to know. George asked about the part of the town’s property that is on Wild Cat Branch how is it described. Todd said by this map, the deed refers to this map. He said all of it is flooded. Todd said he has surveyed this branch and it is called for and his deed calls for it. He stated he was going to tie into it right here (showed on map) and just do a property line agreement out to Tuckahoe. Todd said he has a whole area here that he cannot prove anything and it is just a big gap, and the only way he knows to fix it is boundary line agreements all the way around. George said he would recommend the town signing a boundary line agreement. Commissioner Hill made a motion to approve boundary line agreement and let Mayor Sykes sign after the Town Attorney George Jenkins approves. Commissioner Grady seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Mayor Sykes thanked Todd Jenkins for coming.

The next item on the agenda was the presentation of the FY 2014-2015 audit report. Amanda Murphy stated she appreciated the opportunity that the town gives her every year to come and do the audit. She said the first thing she wanted everyone to look at was the management letter:

#1 – Segregation of duty issue which is found every year in the audit report because of the size of the municipality. It is hard to hire enough people to segregate the duties. If it was an optimal situation like you would have one person writing checks, one person mailing the checks, and one person doing the bank reconciliation but with a town this size you just cannot have enough people to do separate duties. She stated the Local Government Commission recognizes that. She said it is up to the town board to provide compensating controls to take care of this issue like reviewing monthly reports at the board meeting, from time to time looking at the bank statement or whatever.

#2 – Budget overrun issue. Amanda said it was a small issue where Kim had made the budget amendments for the year, and then there were a couple of bills that came trickling in in July and a couple of bills that had to be approved as of June 30th which made her have a small budget overrun in the utility line item. Amanda said her suggestion to Kim is whenever she made the budget amendment just not to amend the budget so close to what the actual number is to allow for any extra bills that may come in.

#3 – Minges Bottling. Amanda said during her testing of cash disbursements and she thinks it has been resolved, there was a couple of months and it was one particular vendor that was charging finance charges but there was a communication problem. They were leaving the bill one place and it was not getting here to be paid but it has been resolved now.

#4 – Payroll issue. Amanda said there was a federal and state payroll report that was filed late and usually if the town has been in compliance for a long time and you have not had any penalties, they will usually waive the penalties and that is what happened here because the town did not suffer any financial ramifications for the reports being late. She said her advice was to make sure that the reports were timely filed and paid so we will not have any penalties in the future.

#5 – The General Fund is continuing to show improvement but we were in the red by $13,000 but we will talk about that later when we look at the financial statements.

Amanda asked if there were any questions on the letter. Mayor Sykes asked if there was any way to get those late fees back from Minges Bottling. Kim replied no, she said she had already asked. Kim said it was late because the invoice were being left at the fire department.

Amanda asked the board to look on Page 14 to make a couple of brief comments. This is the statement of net position with a balance sheet. She said one thing she wanted to look at was the cash. She stated she has been trying every year to keep a running total of how our cash increases or decreases each year and we did have an increase in our cash this year of $18,850. So for the past 4 years we have had an increase in our cash balances which is a positive thing. But on this statement cash is broken down between cash and restricted cash. The restricted cash is not cash that you can just spend readily whenever you want to, that cash is restricted for a particular purpose like the Powell Bill money and Fire Department Relief Fund money. She said there is some new items on this statement this year that will blow your mind, because it blew her mind. Amanda said they had a new accounting standard this year that came into play, it is a pension standard and you will see three or four new line items that relate to pensions. The concept was to kind of show some items as prepaid, not recognize in pension expense all in one year like what Kim paid in this year, because this is a benefit that is going to last a long time. That person is not going to take advantage of it until a future time, so we are not going to recognize the whole expense this year. She said that is the theory behind this new accounting standard, but her numbers that are in the report relating to that pension standard came from an audit report from the state auditor’s office. The state auditor had to go in and do an actuarial study on the whole pension plan of the state of North Carolina on every town. So her numbers were pulled from her report. At the bottom of the page – Total Net Position is $8,700,000. You had a decrease in your net position and most of that was due to just depreciation on your assets.

Amanda asked everyone to flip over to Page 16 – Governmental Fund Balance Sheet – Exhibit 3 – This is probably the one statement that the Local Government Commission goes to more often than any other statement in here and the reason being is that they are looking at what your total fund balance is for the year and particularly the fund balance that is available for appropriation. Because you should have enough fund balance at June 30, 2015 that you can appropriate next year. You should have enough to cover any unforeseen circumstances that might come up because revenues are going to be slowly coming in the first part of the New Year because your property taxes don’t go out until a later time. So you need to have enough fund balance on hand to make sure you can cover the coming expenses. As you all know the Local Government Commission have a formula and they want that fund balance to be 8% of your General Fund Expenditures. She said when she did that calculation it came up to like 81%, so we are way above the amount or percentage that the Local Government Commission wants.

Amanda asked them to flip over to Page 20, Exhibit 5 – This is just a summary of the General Fund and they make us prepare this statement because they want to make sure that towns are amending their budget throughout the year. She said the original and the final budget should be different and they just want to make sure that you are making the proper budget amendments throughout the year.

She then asked everyone to flip over to Page 24, Exhibit 8 – The statement of cash flows and this is for the Water Fund. This statement is to show how you actually used your cash in the Water Fund. Amanda said we actually, from the Water/Sewer operation, increased our cash by $63,000. She told them to look at the top of the page at Net Cash Provided or Used by Operating Activities. She said if that was a negative number, we would need to be worried because that would mean that we are not bringing in enough money to support our operating expenses. But as it is, the net cash provided by operating activities was $35,000, so that means we had $35,000 more money coming in than what we actually spent. Net Cash Used or Provided by Capital or related activities – that is showing how you used your cash for capital activities like buying capital assets, fixed assets, if you had any grant money come in, if you made any principle payments on your loans, or interest payments on your loans. So we were able to add $27,200 to our cash balance from capital related activities. Amanda said that came probably from the grant money that came in.

She then asked everyone to flip over to Page 57-59. She said those pages are a detail of the General Fund showing a detail of our revenues and a detail of our expenses by department. She stated a lot of our revenues were actually down this year compared to 2014. Our local sales tax distribution was down by $3,900, our contributions from Duplin and Lenoir County for the Fire Department were down, and our ABC revenues were down by $2,500. Our expenses in each department were pretty much the same and they didn’t increase very little at all. She said she was not talking about Capital Outlay but just general operating expenses. She said the Police Department’s operating expenses remained pretty much the same, the Fire Department’s operating expenses actually decreased by $1,000. The General Fund did not change very much. The transportation and streets department expenses went up $48,000 but that was because we had some Powell Bill money that we spent and that attributed to that increase. So all in all despite that being said we were in the hole by $13,155 but that to her was not too bad because we had a lot of capital spending this year and also with the decrease in revenues.

Amanda asked everyone to turn to Page 60 – Water/Sewer Fund – She stated our revenues were up $11,000 from 2014. Our expenses were up because of WASA. We had $37,550 in expense because of having to purchase the water from WASA.

Amanda asked everyone to flip over to Page 61 – Revenues over Expenditures - $67,568 to the good. Our net income for the Water Fund was $38,230 but part of that was from where we had $267,000 in grant money in 2015 that we will not have next year. She said if you take away that grant money then we are going to be back in the hole because of depreciation.

Amanda asked everyone to turn to Page 65. She said as far as the current year property taxes, our collection percentage was 96.52 percent. Amanda stated she looked at the average for the state, the same population size without electricity and like the average for that population was 95.67 percent. So we are above the state average for property tax collection. She said our registered motor vehicles is at 100 percent so that has helped the town too. Mayor Sykes asked if everyone had any comments to make. The board thanked Amanda for doing the audit. Amanda said she appreciated the board allowing her to do the audit and that Kim is just super to work for and with the cuts she faces in the revenues and trying to keep the expenses at bay, she does a good job. Mayor Sykes stated she wouldn’t trade her. Commissioner Hill said Joey and Timmy needed a pat on the back as well because it takes everybody. Mayor Sykes said it has been kind of a hard/difficult transition for the fire department to be put on our books, but she thinks we are kind of almost on the same page with that and knowing that the fire department is a town entity. It is working out and is working out better for the both of us because we know what one another is doing. She said if the town is short it will show up and if the fire department is short it will show up and it will come back to the finance officer. Mayor Sykes said she appreciated everyone and Kim works hard and she appreciates it.

The next item on the agenda was Rose Festival & Garden Fund. Susan Myers handed out two sheets concerning the Rose Festival to everyone. She said one of the things that they are looking at the Rose Festival doing and other things particularly our properties are doing in Pink Hill is to increase the tax revenue for the town because that is something that has been falling. And to answer your question Mayor, I talked to J. Mac Daughety today about the bill that would make the state give more sale taxes to the rural area and he said that was tabled last year. That was what he thought and he was going to meet with Bill and find out more but we do need to petition the legislature about that to get it back on the table for discussion. Susan stated this is going to be the first year that there was going to be major changes at the Rose Festival and bringing it to a new level.

Independence from PHAPDC - First we have independence from the Pink Hill Area Preservation. She said she is basically given them a stipend for full authority and control over the Rose Festival. We are making this truly a community event. Other organizations will benefit from the Rose Festival. For example the RoseFest will share the profits from the softball, basketball and corn hole to the Pink Hill Recreation Association to help fix up the gym.

Entertainment - Susan said for entertainment they have Bryan Mayer and Dean Rouse paid for him, so you all might want to thank him. Bryan has three top 100 singles on the country charts so he will bring people and really because of him and some other things we expect the attendance to double from 4,000 to 8,000 this year.

Other Appearances - For other appearances John Currin and Scarlett will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award and then we have some other celebrities coming.

Media Sponsors - The media sponsors will be WTMV-29 and they transmit out of Wilmington and Jacksonville. They are giving us free advertising and Scotty’s Billboards is giving us two free billboards. They will be in two or three places, either in Greenville, New Bern, or Jacksonville.

How the Town of Pink Hill benefits from the Rose Festival - Susan said they also just received a grant from the Lenoir County Tourism Department and with that grant we will advertise 100+ miles. She stated what has been found is that the further someone travels to a festival, the more money they spend and the higher income they have. Susan said one thing we want to do is we want to serve our local community but we also want to bring money in tax revenues outside the community. She stated the further we get people to come from because those people will spend money here, they will see businesses here, and they will come back. The economic impact is tremendous. The economic impact of a one day North Carolina festival with 8,000 attendees is estimated at $200,000 plus.

Garbage Needs - Susan said other things that they will need is garbage cans. She said they are going to need 30 garbage cans this year and not 20. Susan asked Kim if she could look and see if the garbage would donate those cans. Susan said she would pay since the town does not have the manpower and all our men will be working at the fire department barbeque, her maintenance man will do all the garbage pickup.

Porta Potties - She stated they would need 36 porta potties on hand with hand washing stations. We are looking for a sponsor to pay for this and if anyone has an idea. Mayor Sykes asked Susan how much are we talking about. Susan said it is a lot and it seems to her like it is $2,000. It is a big expense but that makes or breaks the fun of a festival and women will leave to have to go to the bathroom. It is important to get people to stay and spend money and have time. One thing like the garbage cans, we had our maintenance man going around picking up all day long so you didn’t see any trash. Susan stated that really helped. She said we need recyclable bins also.

Barriers - Susan said that Michael Hoffman has volunteered to build some better barriers for us. His idea is to take the cones and put the PVC pipe across it and then that would make them bigger. We find that people will move the cones and go right in. This will make a better barrier but be more affordable than a sawhorse. Then he can take the PVC pipe and the cones and use them whenever we may need to use them for other events. She stated she thinks that will help.

Policemen on Duty - Susan said she had talked to the Mayor about it. She said there is only one policemen on duty and if something happens out at Food Lion then he has to go out to Food Lion, then he is going to have to go. Susan said the Rose Festival will hire three additional independent policemen. Chief Thigpen stated that he thought that needed to be increased if you are going to have 8,000 people. Susan told Chief Thigpen to come down to her office and they could talk about it. He said that is one thing that you have go to have is security especially if you are going to have alcohol. Susan said when they had figured the policemen number that was not figuring 8,000 people.

New Layout – Susan said the one thing that everybody has wanted them to do is move away from having it in front of the Wellness Center and move it up towards where it was with the Liberty Festival on Broadway Street. She stated what they are looking at doing is centering it on Central Avenue. Susan then asked everyone to look at their map so she could show them how everything was going to be laid out. She said they are going to have two professional stages this year which are going to cost a lot of money but entertainers are requiring them to do that. We will have somebody come in and put up a stage with lights and they will do the sound. We will be run continuously and run more professionally and that will really take it to the next level. The stage at the Media Center will be further back and will actually be on the grass so the whole parking lot can be used for people to sit in. This stage will stay open until 10:00 p.m. The other stage we propose will be on Broadway Street and that will close at 5:00 p.m.

Susan said going back to Central and East College, the festival will basically start there which will be at the corner where the tennis courts are. Commissioner Hill said in other words you want to close that whole intersection at Broadway and Central. Susan said not the whole intersection, they want to leave a spot open for Jones Furniture for any people that she needs to get in. She said but where the buildings start, we want to close off that part of Broadway. Susan said right now what they are planning on doing is just closing at the intersection right by R-Mart. Commissioner Hill said that morning people will be coming to the drug stores to get medicine and need to make sure that they can get to them, but they could park in First Citizens parking lot but people coming to the festival are going to park there. Al Rachide said here is the thing about the stages that didn’t get brought up, the stage company wants to come in and put these stages up Friday night and then the festival has to post a guard on them all night. Susan said no, they are only going to put the media stage up Friday night and the one on Broadway will be put up Saturday morning. Al said that Broadway will stay open until Saturday morning. The proposal is to approximately put the stage such that the front of the stage is at the edge of the intersection and it leans into Broadway and little bit in front of R-Mart but not blocking R-Mart. He said on Saturday morning Realo will have access but Pink Hill Pharmacy will not. Al said Pink Hill Pharmacy will be completely isolated from the whole world because there are going to be vendors down both sides of Central Avenue. Commissioner Hill stated he appreciated the idea of leaving Wendy’s open to where people can get to her business. Al stated they propose to block off the parking behind the medical center for Pink Hill Pharmacy customer parking until late in the afternoon when it is pretty obvious that we are not getting any more customers and then open it up for general parking. Susan said on Broadway the only businesses that will be blocked off will be businesses that will be actual vendors but they will have vendor booths afterwards. Susan stated on the corner of S. Central Avenue and West Broadway Street they are going to need to put power with a 220 and will probably have a temporary pole go up but a temporary pole that can remain for years to come. Mayor Sykes said that belongs to Duke Power and she is not sure if they will let them do that. Al said they have called Duke Power and they are the ones that are putting it down.

Susan said something important to them was the beautiful Fire Department Cafeteria and they are going to be selling barbeque and we wanted to tie that in. So the food court is going to be on the Fire Department’s grounds or the town’s grounds in the fenced in area. We are going to have a food court there with tables for people to eat and then we will have the other food vendors out in front of the Methodist Church. She said they are trying something different this year having all the food vendors in the same place. There is pro’s and con’s but really we are doing this for the Fire Department because this is a big fundraiser for the Fire Department and we want that.

Susan said they are going to be talking to the Methodist Church because they have a 220 outlet that was used for the Liberty Festival. She said back in front of Town Hall here we want to block this off for handicap parking so people will not be able to come up to Central and East College because that will be where vendors will start. Something they are going to do this year is the street in front of the old gym is going to stay open. She said that has been a traffic jam spot and that will stay open. There will be activities going on over there. The Wellness Center and the Preservation are okay with this layout. The Wellness Center will be for first aid, they will be doing tours, and they will have some parking available for people who want to go work out there too. Susan said her mentor for the festival is the Mum Fest and Susan Moffitt Thomas who did it for 29 years and she is like the best you have things right here on one street and bending off a little bit is better.

Commissioner Hill asked Susan if they were planning on closing Macon Street. Susan replied no. Al stated that Macon and Pine Street will be completely open. Susan said where the Fire Department is on East College will have to stay open for the fire department to come in and out. The Fun Zone, like they did last year, is on property we own. Susan asked the board to give her their thoughts on this layout. Commissioner Hill said he thinks it looks pretty good. Commissioner Grady said she likes having all the food together in one spot so everyone can go eat and access to the fire department and the barbeque is great. Al said the reason for doing the food court in one place is because they will have vendors who will sell beverages and the food vendors can only sell food and by having everybody in one place then you do not have to trot a quarter mile to get the water, it is going to be right there.

Commissioner Hill told Wendy one thing that she would be allowed that morning is to put up signs outside of her business to say Jones Furniture parking only. Wendy stated that they are not going to honor them. Commissioner Hill said we will have a policemen around and if they park and don’t honor the signs then they will get a ticket. Wendy said it looks to her like from Susan’s little line on the map is the only thing that they are closing is what is in front of the store. They are not closing the rest of Broadway Street but what is in front of the store. Wendy said she wanted more than just that, I mean if they want their vendors on that side. If you start right with that building, I might have three parking spaces. Susan stated that she usually does not have more than three cars out there on Saturday’s anyways. Wendy replied really did you work with me this past Saturday. Susan said they were worried about Pink Hill Pharmacy parking for the last four years and we put signs up saying “Pink Hill Pharmacy Only Parking”, and we were surprised that they pretty much honored it. We were thinking we were going to have to be out all day handling it but they honored it.

Chief Thigpen pointed to a spot on the map and asked Susan if they were talking about closing off this part of Broadway too at Central Avenue. Susan showed Chief Thigpen on the map which streets would be closed and stated Mike was supposed to have gone over this with him. She said the businesses that are being festive will have vendor spots outside. Susan showed on the map that originally her suggestion was to have or concerned about leaving this open right here and wanting to do it all the way to the end because people were turning around and everything, but if Jones Furniture doesn’t want to have a vendor spot and you are talking about parking from the library down. Wendy stated that most of her customers are not within ten miles of here, most of them drive at least thirty miles. She said they are not going to know that we are doing this and they are going to show up, and whenever they show up and I am closed they will be upset. Wendy said everybody she had on Saturday drove from Richlands, Beulaville, LaGrange, and Vanceboro and if they have driven that far and they get there and there is no place for them, then they are going to be ticked. She said there is no way for her to estimate whether she will or will not be busy. Susan stated they have golf carts and what they can do is Wendy can call our people on the golf carts if somebody has trouble parking and someone was in their space, and another thing we could do is park them somewhere and golf cart them away. Susan said she can pull them up in the back of her property somewhere. She told Wendy they can help her figure it out if she has a customer. Susan said they are going to be advertising this and marketing this. Wendy asked Susan what time does the festival start. Susan replied it starts at 10:00 a.m. Wendy stated she does not close until 12:00 noon. Chief Thigpen said that the streets would be closed earlier than 10:00 a.m.

Wendy asked Susan where does the money go earned in the festival. Susan stated it has all changed this year. The Rose Festival was originally started by the Preservation group and not by her to help raise money for the Preservation group. It is to help other organizations as well. So what she did was she went in and said I will personally guarantee the Preservation a stipend every month in return you give me free range of the Rose Festival so that we can build it into a truly community event. Last year the Methodist Church sold the water and soda so no vendors were allowed to sell or give away water or soda. They sell the water and soda and do all the work and split the money with the Rose Festival and with the Methodist Church. The same thing with the group that is doing it for the Recreation Association. The NC Thirdis going to run the softball. Basketball will be new and corn hole. Susan stated half of those profits will go to the Recreation Association to help fix up the gym. She said they are getting more and more communities involved so that it is a fundraiser for a lot of different communities, a fundraiser for the fire department, and fundraiser for the churches around here. And also we get new people coming into the town who will be customers and who will come back. For example of the 8,000 people 6,000 are not going to be customers but 2,000 might or 1,000 might. You will get new customers out of this and people will see your business, will see your quality furniture, will see what you have and come back. Particularly if we market further and further away. We will be on A Chef’s Life next season because they filmed us last season.

Susan said something she doesn’t think she has told us is the Lieutenant Governor is very pleased with what we have done with no money. He thinks it is a good story to tell. He sent his video guy down here and he spent eight hours taping all over town. Susan said she brought in everybody she could, doing everything they could in town and we are on the verge of getting some big publishing. She said she has been contacted by people and she is holding back because we are not ready for it. We are not ready for the big publishers that Pink Hill is going to get and the kind of spot light we are going to get. She said it can be an internet service too. Mayor Sykes asked when was that going to be in place. Susan said it is already in place and you can go to the Wellness Center. Al said if you go to the Wellness Center and you have a brand new laptop and log in to the Wellness2 hotspot, your download will be as fast as your computer can go. You can get up to 1,000 megabits of data per second on this system. He said he has not seen a single computer that can download that fast. Susan said this is in the works and Dennis Tracz is working on it. Al stated the speed is there. Susan said one thing we can do with that is look at doctors on the internet because we can have specialist here. The customers out in the rural area particularly the Hispanics. They are doing this in Fresno, California and doing this in Bakersfield, California in poor areas. You think of what is going to happen to our town if Dr. Little dies. Do you think we will get another doctor and hopefully we will but all these specialist you can go see. What we are working on for the Rose Festival but it is not done yet is there may be free doctor visits at the Wellness Center through the gigabit internet service that you can even meet with a mental health doctor or all these different type of specialist for free that day. That will bring people into the community and that will bring population into this community as well.

Mayor Sykes said you are proposing to put a 200 amp pole down service. Al said yes, a 200 amp pole down service with a meter box on it and under the meter box they will have the box that lifts up and has all the plugins for everybody to plug in to. The stages need 100 amps of 220 volt which is like a whole house. Mayor Sykes said she understands but she was looking at the location. She said if Duke Energy will put it on that pole, she does not have a problem with that and there might not be a problem but would like Commissioner Hill and the guys to look at it. Mayor Sykes said Duke Power may put it on that pole but she kind of has her doubts because it is going to be an individual and not the town’s and she doesn’t think they are going to have a double service on a power pole. Al stated they will be working on that. Mayor Sykes said as soon as they find out they need to see Timmy and the guys about if it is going to be anywhere on that ground.

Susan asked Kim if on the water bill she could put something like RoseFest is Homecoming and Reunion Weekend. Kim asked Susan what month she was wanting that put on the water bill. Susan said she would rather do it sooner than later so if people wanted to get their relatives down here.

Mayor Sykes asked Wendy how many spaces at the very least she would need for that Saturday. Wendy said she does not see where it really matters because if you are going to close off the street, then I am definitely not going to ask anybody who parks to move because I am not that kind of person. She stated she thinks that is very rude and pointless. The best thing for me to do is just close my doors. What is the town’s profit from the Rose Festival? Mayor Sykes said bringing people in and letting them know about our town just like the Liberty Festival. Wendy said I know but back then it was part of the town and the town did it. Mayor Sykes said yes the town did it but we had people from everywhere coming. Every festival that I have ever been involved in we have always had vendors from everywhere and used to we would close off the whole street. Wendy said especially in the afternoon because of the street dance. Mayor Sykes said it is the recognition of Pink Hill just like the Barbeque Fest in Kinston. Wendy said shouldn’t the town reap some benefit other than just the recognition. George replied that the town gets the sales tax. Susan said there is a new law where all vendors have to pay sales tax and it is in our application. Mayor Sykes said the more sales tax reported in this county we get. Wendy said that was why she was asking because you bring all these vendors into town and you know they are making money and wondered if the town reaped any of those profits. Mayor Sykes said we are hoping that they will come back, hopefully they will see something that they really like. It is an advertisement gig too. George said if he had a retail business, I would be open but have extra people in just for browsers. Mayor Sykes said when you have something like this people are not really coming to buy necessarily, they are going to come to see what you have got going on. Al said it is a benefit to the business to have that many people in town. Commissioner King said yes, exposure to the public. Mayor Sykes said if we can have that many people and she hopes they can, that is going to say something. Susan said another thing they are hoping if they build houses in town and other people build houses in town that again increases the tax revenue. We want people to come here and want to move here like people who want to retire and need a small home.

Tony Heath asked if there are any kind of barricades to keep children out of the street by the Fun Zone. He said he has got 49 firemen and as soon as that fire whistle goes off, they get tunnel vision. Susan said the kids will be on the property like they were last year and they will not be in the street. The Fun Zone does this a lot and they know how to block off and they blocked off some of it last year. Tony said his concern is if there are kids in the street and the fire whistle goes off and they have 50 thousand pound vehicles leaving the station. Mayor Sykes said once everything gets blocked off like they have got it laid out, if they see that something else needs to be done then they can let us know.

Wendy said her only issue with all of this is the fact that today somebody just kind of comes by and it was Jeremy and she was busy with three groups of people in there. He comes in and she is really busy and she tells him that and he says he will wait. Wendy asks him what does he want and he shows her a paper and says if we do the thing do you have any problems with vendors being on the street. Wendy replied no not as long as she can function as an open business. He never told her anything about closing the street and she is pretty sure that that is the way they presented it to her and that is the reason she came here tonight and that is the reason she is concerned. Because nobody was open with her from the beginning about what they were going to do. She said someone else mentioned to her that they were going to close the street but the people in charge of the Rose Festival never did and it was not presented to her that way and that was the reason she was concerned. Wendy said possibly some of the other people feel the same way. Susan said you were supposed to be contacted on Friday by Jeremy and she should have come other there herself and done it. She said it was her fault and she apologized. Susan said she could not contact her before Friday because she had to talk to the Preservation and the Wellness Center. Susan said we should have contacted you Friday and I should have contacted you instead of Jeremy and take my apology. She said that is my fault. Wendy said that was her only concern that for some reason it was secretive. Commissioner Hill said that George has looked on the map and it should give you five parking spaces. Wendy replied that is awesome.

Commissioner Hill made a motion to allow the Rose Festival to close streets that are marked on the map and to make sure Jones Furniture has five parking spaces available. Commissioner Grady seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was leaning tree on Cherry Hill Drive. Timmy said he was approached by Mr. George Myrick who is the only one that lives on Cherry Hill Drive. His concern was a pine tree that is leaning at about 45 degree over the roadway. Mr. Myrick is concerned if it continues to lean and fall it is going to hit his driveway. Timmy stated Mr. Myrick is correct. He said it is a live tree and it is in the right of way/roadway. Timmy said we have either a 60 or 80 foot right of way. He said he went out there and measured and it is in our right of way. Mayor Sykes asked Timmy if Cherry Hill Drive was our street and Timmy replied yes it is inside the city limits. Mr. Myrick would like for the town to take down the tree. Commissioner King asked Timmy whose property is it. Timmy said Dean Rouse actually owns the property that the tree is on but it is in the right of way of the street. Mayor Sykes asked if that street is on our Powell map because if it isn’t then it isn’t our street. Kim went to get the Powell map for the board to look at. Timmy said the law as good as he knows it says if it is a dead tree, then it is our property but if it is a live tree and it falls it would be an act of God and not anybody’s fault. He said he had pretty much so told Mr. Myrick that the tree was not ours and he did not feel that the board would do anything about the tree but he would bring it up anyway. Commissioner King said during the big storm he had five trees blown down in his yard. At that time if it is a dead tree and it is on your property, then it is your responsibility for whatever happens or damage. He said but this is not our property it is just a right of way for us so he is saying no. Mayor Sykes asked George if she needed a motion to that effect. George stated no, if you aren’t going to do anything.

Curb & gutter/street paving was next on the agenda. Commissioner Hill stated they had just gotten a couple of the bids today. Timmy said he received two bids: one was from Barnhill and one from Garris Grading and he is pretty satisfied with Garris Grading’s bid. Commissioner Hill asked Timmy if Barnhill had the asphalt curbing on their estimate. Timmy said actually Barnhill never did a formal on that but it was $15,000 to do the asphalt curbing and the cement curbing was going to be $30,000. Garris did not want to get into the cement part. Timmy told Garris Grading to just bid on the asphalt part and let it go. Commissioner Hill stated they have talked to the residents about what they are going to do in previous meetings but will make sure that this is what they want before they tell Garris to do that asphalt. Commissioner Hill asked if Garris gave a total price of everything including Jones Furniture paving. Timmy said the only estimate he had for concrete was from Wiggins and it was $6,355. He reminded them that the patch he had done at Jones Furniture was partly his which is a yard of concrete added to that bill and also a patch to the sidewalk in front of Realo Drug. Mayor Sykes asked about how the asphalt would be used. Commissioner Hill said it would be made into like a roll and it is going to have to go all the way across their driveways or the water is just going to come and run down their driveways. Timmy said it is $6,880 for the first part. Mayor Sykes asked if it is in the minutes that this is what the residents wanted and documented. Commissioner Hill stated that is what they had talked about with them in the meeting. He said before they agree on this, they need to make sure that is what they want. If they don’t want this, then the town will not do nothing. Mayor Sykes asked how long the bid was good for. Commissioner Hill stated it was good for 30 days.

Kim asked what was the grand total of what they are wanting to do. Timmy said it is about $11,000 for the sidewalk and the parking. Commissioner Hill said the total for everything is $26,892. He asked Kim if we had that much money in the Powell Fund. Kim said when they had talked about it she had said they did not need to go over $22,000 because you don’t want to use all the money that is in the Powell Fund. Commissioner King stated no one is going to come and do part of it. Mayor Sykes said they do not need to spend down to zero on the money until we get some more in and that does not come in until the first of October. Kim said you have got to remember we still have our budget items that we have already got in our budget that we still have to pay for from now until the end of June. You have got to keep enough money in there so if we have to do any budget amendments, we have the money to cover it. Kim said if we do the project based on her figures of today of what expenditures we had in last year’s budget and she based this on spending the same amount this year, and with spending $22,000 on this project that would leave $14,000 in the Powell Fund. But if you do that full project and we use what we did last year as far as our general expenses in the Powell Fund that would leave $9,500 in the Powell Fund. She said they get two payments from the Powell fund a fiscal year so we will not get any more money until the end of September in 2016 and then again in December 2016 which is close to $20,000.

Mayor Sykes asked if the quote included the streets that need attention. Kim said it is in the whole quote. Timmy said if they needed to knock something off, Wendy said that she would be satisfied with just getting the cement done this year and try real hard to get the asphalt done next year. Mayor Sykes asked if they did that then how much would it knock off the total for this year. Commissioner Hill stated it would knock off $5,600. Kim said she would just hate to get the Powell Fund money down so low and something happen. Commissioner Hill said he understood but what he is saying is that we can probably negotiate with them about that and tell them that we can’t do that part now but we will do it. If we can’t do at least cement work for Wendy and the curb and gutter around on Circle Court, then we might as well forget the whole thing because they are not going to come for a little bit of patching. Timmy said that we could take off another $500 for right now for the spot at Realo that can be fixed later. Kim said she thinks it needs to be fixed because we have had complaints about that spot. Commissioner Hill said that is why he wants to go ahead and leave that in there and just take out the asphalt work that Garris was going to do in front of Wendy’s place now and get it done next year. He said he was going to go ahead and make a motion to approve it with the exception of taking the asphalt work out and we discussed that in the meeting what we were going to do, but we want to make sure that that is what the residents want with the rolled curb because it has got to go across their driveways and when they come in the driveway they are going to have a hump. We want to make sure that the residents are aware of that and make sure that is what they want around there. So if they don’t want to do that, then we can take that out and put Wendy’s back in. Mayor Sykes stated whatever the residents want to do, and if it is not in the minutes like that, she wants them to come here and tell us. She doesn’t want them to tell you, she wants them to come in here at this meeting and tell us what they want to do so we all know it. Commissioner Hill replied that we discussed that in the meeting. Mayor Sykes stated she knows they did but she wants to know if it was in the motion like that. Commissioner Hill said it was not put in a motion but we just told them that we had to get prices. He said we had to get prices before we can make a motion. George said legally the town can do whatever they want in that regard, you don’t have to get the approval of the people but politically you do. He said it is the polite thing to do but you don’t have to, you are not legally required to get their permission to do for them what you told them you would do. Mayor Sykes asked how many people are involved. Kim replied Del Holt, James Quinn, John and Joann Sirmons, and Tracey Price. Timmy said he got the price for both sides of the road. Commissioner Hill made a motion that we do the project from Garris Grading for the asphalt curb on West Macon and Turner Street, West New Street and Central Avenue, leaving out the Jones Furniture paving, adding the concrete work done by Wiggins Custom Builders in front of Jones Furniture and Realo Drugs, and with the signatures approval about the asphalt curb on Circle Court. Commissioner King asked if this was going to keep us within our limits on the money. Everyone replied yes. Commissioner Grady seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was the WASA Report. Commissioner Hill said that Caldwell Tanks handled the tank maintenance for WASA and they are going out of business. Instead of bidding it out again or redoing it, they are just going to turn it over to Utility Service. He said he was not pleased with the way it was handled and he voted no for Utility Service. He stated after he voted no, one of the other board members got to checking on some things that were said in the meeting and he found out he didn’t like it very well either. So the whole thing may be renegotiated at their next meeting because a couple of other board members got into it because they found out that Utility Service is not an American company and they don’t like it.

WASA this year are tied with Raleigh for the best tasting water in North Carolina through the AWWA. Right now through his organization, Rural Water, Jones County is going to Washington, DC this week to be in a national taste contest. Commissioner Hill said he would see how things are at the next meeting and invite Harold Herring to come to the next board meeting.

Police Updates was next on the agenda. Chief Thigpen said since the last meeting on January 12, 2016 they have had just 2 reported incidents which were minor, 4 accidents, issued 8 citations with a total of 10 charges, and issued 13 warning citations. He said he did get his car fixed and it was the battery. It had shorted out somehow. Chief Thigpen said the other car is still doing pretty good and has not had any problems with it.

The next item on the agenda was Appointment of 2016 Fire Department Officers. Mayor Sykes stated everyone has a copy of this to look at. Tony Heath said first off he wanted to thank the mayor for her support. He said he did speak with her prior to him accepting the position and understood that he had the approval of the town board members. Tony wanted to let them know that if there is anything that he can do as Fire Chief to give him a call and he is mobile 24/7. Commissioner Grady said as Fire Department Commissioner I congratulate you. She stated that Timmy has done a great job and she knows that he will as well. Commissioner Grady made a motion to accept Pink Hill Fire Department 2016 Officer line up. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Mayor Sykes thanked Tony and Timmy.

The next item on the agenda was the Fire Department Report. Timmy said since the last meeting they have had 1 structure fire, 1 vehicle accident, and 12 EMS calls. He said also since the last meeting he has stepped down as Fire Chief and Tony Heath has stepped up to be Fire Chief.

The next item on the agenda was Water/Sewer Report. Timmy said the biggest news that he has about their sewer plant is that it is full of water. We have had a lot of rain episodes and it has been hard to find it dry enough to spray and get rid of some water. He said we are not to level where we are out of compliance or anything like that. Timmy said he is having problems at their old plant lift station which is the main lift station on Earl Howard Road just before it goes to the lagoon system. When it gets a high level, there is a valve in the ground there with a flow meter and the meter is still in place but it is not in working condition. Whenever it went bad Jamie was still the supervisor here and at that time, and it was probably a money thing, it was decided to put a different flow meter in and just let the water flow through it and not use that meter anymore. Since then it is actually causing a problem. You can’t run both of the pumps that are in the ground to get rid of the water. So when you get high level issues, you can’t run two pumps. You have to go and cut one of the pumps off. It seemed like we were going through motors and about every two years we were having to change at least one and that is a pretty expensive bill. You are talking about anywhere from $5,000 to $10,000 each time that you have to get one pulled and redone. We were told by Johnny Grady which is our electrician for our motors recommended because of that valve being in the ground restricting the flow that we would have to go and cut one of the pumps off. The gallons per minute is 350 gallons a minute and when he runs two it only ups it about 50 or 75 gallons, so you have got a lot of back pressure and it is causing the pumps to go bad. Timmy said he is working on trying to get some prices and hopefully he will have them by the next meeting and it is probably going to be a pretty good price tag. Mayor Sykes asked Timmy who does them. Timmy said he has called ER Lewis and Bear Contracting and both of them have the proper insurance. Over the last couple or three weeks we have spent a few nights, he and his other two guys, down at the sewer plant and that is because of all the rain episodes. Commissioner Hill said he appreciates Phillip and Alex. He said he knows the other day Alex had come in that night and spent all night and then worked all the next day. So that is the kind of dedication we have got with our boys. They don’t mind working. He said he sure does appreciate what they did and Timmy too. Timmy said everything else seems to be going well. It is just very saturated and wet and we got 7 inches of rain this week.

The next item on the agenda was Budget Amendments if needed. Kim said there were no budget amendments at this time.

The next item on the agenda was Remarks by Town Attorney. George said he appreciates the opportunity to represent the town, enjoys it, and enjoys being here.

Comments by the Board was next on the agenda. Commissioner King said he would like to reiterate the job that Timmy is doing especially while he was chief. He said they have got a lot done at the old cafeteria and he is really pleased with that. Commissioner King said he thinks that the old cafeteria is going to be a big asset for the Town of Pink Hill. Timmy said he appreciates that but he did not do it all by himself. Commissioner King also wanted to let Timmy know that he appreciates the work he does as the Public Works Director and Chief Thigpen and his Police Department for the work that they do. They are doing a good job and have not had any complaints that he is aware of.

The next item on the agenda was Closed Session. Commissioner Hill made a motion to go into closed session for contract negotiations and advice of counsel. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Commissioner Hill made a motion to come out of closed session. Commissioner King seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

With there being no further business to be discussed the meeting was adjourned.