

# TOWN OF MEGGETT COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

*Date: March 26, 2012*

*Time: 7:00PM*

*Location: SCPA Building 4770 Highway 165*

<b>Call to order by:</b>	Mayor Herrington
<b>Type of Meeting:</b>	Council Meeting
<b>Facilitator:</b>	Mayor Herrington
<b>Note Taker:</b>	Gail Seabrook

<b>Roll Call:</b>	Mayor Herrington	P	Matt Zender	P
A = Absent	Keith McCarty	P	Ellie Brabham	P
P = Present	Tom Hutto	P	Gail Seabrook	P
	Tommy Butler	A	Andy Gowder	P

**Prayer given by:** Mayor Buster Herrington

**Pledge led by:** Mayor Buster Herrington

**Minutes from previous meeting held on:** February 27, 2012

**Motion made by:** Councilmember Keith McCarty

**Seconded by:** Councilmember Tom Hutto

To accept minutes as written

**In Favor:** Buster Herrington  
Keith McCarty  
Tom Hutto  
Matt Zender

**Opposed:**

**Conclusion:** Motion carried

## Council Committee Reports

**Finance report given by:** *Mayor Herrington for Tommy Butler*

Financial Report 2012	Bank Balance First Citizen	C/D Bank of Walterboro	Bank Account Waste Water	Bank of Walterboro C/D Waste Water	Meggett 1925
	\$410,101.48	\$52,814.01	\$86,756.07	\$280,861.91	\$6,039.78

**Building and grounds given by:** *Mayor Herrington*

Mayor Herrington said that someone had tried to break into Town Hall Sunday before last. The front door was damaged and the alarm went off. It has since been repaired. The area behind the SCPA building will be under brushed this week.

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Drawings that we had in the office showing the back area behind Town Hall only focused mainly on parking areas and did not speculate on landscape design. Tom Hutto has been asked by Mayor Herrington to work on the design for the landscaping. Councilmember Hutto said Foresberg Engineering provided a quote of about \$2000 to complete the boundary survey of the back area.

**Communications report given by: Keith McCarty**

Councilmember Keith McCarty said he is in the process of getting names of individuals that can upgrade our webpage. He hopes to have some price quotes by our next meeting.

**Grants and projects reports given by: Tom Hutto**

Councilmember Hutto said the committee for the Walnut Hill Property had a meeting yesterday. (Sunday the 25<sup>th</sup>) It was the consensus of the committee that with the types of improvements needed it would be appropriate to apply for a land and water conservation grant. The deadline for the grant application is June 12. Councilmember Hutto said he attended a grant workshop in Columbia and received approval to apply for the 50/50 matching grant. He indicated that several organized groups such as the boy scouts had inquired about going out to the property. Baptist Hill School also wanted to take a few students out to learn about environmental issues. Mr. Hutto suggested that we go ahead and underbrush an area for parking, make the repairs to the cottage and the dock as well as place gates across the dyke areas to keep anyone from driving on them.

Councilmember Matt Zender asked if the property was now annexed into Meggett and was it set up so that it could never be developed. Mr. Hutto replied it is annexed. The intent when it was purchased was to never be developed. The Nature Conservancy assisted us with the application for the purchase. However, it could conceivably go back to Charleston County at some point and be developed. Mr. Hutto indicated we do not want to put a conservation easement on the property at this time because it may restrict us from doing what we can and can't do.

Councilmember Zender said he thought we should go ahead now and turn the park over to Charleston County and let them bear the burden and expense for the development of the park. He also said if we keep the park, then the Planning Commissioners should do a comprehensive plan for the park. Councilmember Zender further stated he had talked to Julie with the Parks and Recreation Department and she offered to work with our Planning Commissioners to come up with a plan for the Walnut Hill Park. In his conversation Julie also mentioned that Charleston County Parks and Recreation may be interested in a long term lease of the property with certain stipulations that they would run the park and pay for the improvements. Councilmember Hutto said the committee has come up with some ideas for a plan; he would get with Julie and get her suggestions on the ideas of the committee.

Mayor Herrington asked that we move on with the meeting. He expressed that if we find in the future the property becomes a money pit, we will then look at other options.

**Utilities report given by: Matt Zender**

**(Sewer Taps)** Councilmember Zender inquired if Attorney Gowder had heard from the Bank of Walterboro as to whether they were interested in selling back the 4 sewer taps. Attorney Gowder said he had not received any response from the Bank of Walterboro.

**(Bridge project)** Matt spoke with Mickey Seabrook and all permits have been approved. He will send a copy to Mayor Herrington. Mr. Seabrook indicated that his estimate for the project did include him being on site during the bore for one day. Provided no problems are encountered he anticipates the boring will only take one day. The Corps of Engineers did say we will need to go 8 feet under the creek bed but that change will not affect the cost. Matt said he looked at the permit from the Corps of Engineers and it did state our engineer would need to be on site during the duration of the bore. Should any problems occur and the boring takes longer than a day we will have to pay the additional fees involved.

Councilmember Hutto asked with permits in hand how soon could we look at getting a cost analysis for the bore. Matt said he talked with Ken Hill and Russell Higgins at CPW, and they are working closely with Mickey Seabrook to coordinate the bidding process. Ken Hill indicated when all of the paper work is finalized they will handle the invitation to bid. They will work closely with Mickey Seabrook on the selection for the contractor. Councilmember Hutto asked if we had a time frame. Councilmember Zender said he had not been provided a time.

**(PUPS)** Councilmember Zender said he talked with Mr. Seabrook about Tom's suggestion of going out and marking the sewer line. Mr. Seabrook indicated it would be extremely costly. Trying to mark the pipe with a metal stake would mean we would have to place the stake 36" below the ground according to DOT regulations. Councilmember Hutto said he would

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check with someone he knows as to what it would cost to have the line located. Matt replied that since we are joining PUPS council needs to authorize Gail to make copies of the drawings to send off to PUPS so they can calculate a cost estimate.

**(Water in the Park)** Councilmember Zender stated that he had looked back through some old minutes and in the minutes for June 23, 2008, Council had voted to place a drinking fountain in the park along with a trash can facility. He encouraged council to move forward with what they had approved in 2008. Matt made a formal motion to install a drinking fountain and a water tap for residents to be able to get public water. He felt it would be an asset to the community since so many residents have to rely on wells for their water source. Many of the wells in this area have a high content of salt and not suitable for drinking. Councilmember Zender further stated he found information for a grant we could apply for which may finance the water fountain and the tap. He gave Councilmember Hutto, who is in charge of grants, the contact information. It is a grant from the Parks and Recreation Department and the number is (803) 734-0148. Mayor Herrington expressed his concerns about the water tap becoming an attractive nuisance and the possible negative impact it would have for children in the park. He indicated a discussion on this issue was held at the previous retreat. The negative side is the trash and safety issues with children playing in the park. Mayor Herrington said he did not have any problem with the drinking fountain but did oppose the water tap. Councilmember McCarty also indicated he did not support the water tap as well. The motion was not seconded and Mayor Herrington asked to move forward with the meeting.

### Agenda Topics:

Ordinance 2012-01 (Sewer Ordinance) – First reading of Ordinance 2012-01 regarding the Meggett Sewer System. The copy of the purposed ordinance was revised prior to this review to remove the section entitle “Gravity Sewer”. Further changes can be made prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading.

**Motion made by:** Keith McCarty

**Seconded by:** Matt Zender

**Decision:** Approve the first reading

**In Favor:** Keith McCarty

**Opposed:**

Tom Hutto

Matt Zender

Mayor Herrington

**Conclusion:** Motion Carried

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### Public Comments:

Mr. Bobby Shealy was recognized – Topic Walnut Hill and the proposed charter school.

Mr. Shealy expressed concerns about how Council was handling certain issues. He especially emphasized that he thought the public should have the opportunity to discuss issues before a vote is taken to pass a motion. He was in opposition of the town making a donation to the committee for the proposed charter school. He urged the council to reconsider and to withdraw their motion because this could open a door for many problems with other organizations asking for donations as well. He also had concerns that it may violate some legal issues with giving money to a group since at this point the school is nonexistent. His other concern was that when council makes a decision involving a lot of money, such as the Walnut Hill purchase, the town should have the option to vote on it through a referendum. He urged council to handle matters as good stewards for the citizens and not only be legal but do the right thing for the community. He urged council to make decisions that would serve the betterment of the community and to be more transparent if they want the support of this community.

Mr. Lew Tefteau was recognized – Topic charter school and Walnut Hill

Mr. Tefteau said he thought the charter school was a very commendable project but also felt council should stay out of the business of the school. He expressed that giving a donation could open the door for many problems. His second issue of concern was the amount of money being spent on the Walnut Hill facility. He said he does not feel the majority of residents will use the park and for the town to spend 22% of the town’s liquid assets for infrastructure plus the additional cost per year for the upkeep seems to be a lot of money to put into something that may only be used by a few individuals. There is already a 300 acre tract at Botany Bay that is preserved. He further stated our government should be a responsible steward of the citizen’s assets. Towns don’t just build parks just to have a park but towns do what is necessary for their citizens to lead a decent life. He also added he thought we needed to think very carefully about what we are spending our money on, especially for things we don’t need.

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*Beth Smoak was recognized – Topic charter school*

Beth Smoak was recognized. She said she wanted to correct what seems to be a misconception. Charter schools are public schools and there is a lot that has to be done before you appear before Charleston County to get approval. Whether or not Meggett makes a donation, I really believe the Town at least in spirit should support the charter school.

*Mr. Bobby Shealy was recognized – Topic charter school.*

Mr. Shealy asked if anyone could provide an update of what had transpired since the last meeting regarding the charter school. Jennifer Gilliland said she would share as much information as she knew. She said they were getting a lot of support and signups. The committee would have a lot of information to hand out at the picnic. Mr. Shealy said his question was directed more as to what action had been done over the last month such as location for the school, the number of signups as well as other accomplishments. She offered to give him a contact that could provide him with more information than she could at this time. Mr. Shealy asked if she would get that person to call him.

*Mrs. Grace Kennedy Clark – Topic water in the park*

Resident, Grace Kennedy Clark asked council to consider putting water in the park. She said we have a great town center and many children play in the park. It would also be beneficial to the group of ladies that walk in the morning as a place to get water after their walk. Water is pretty basic and it would be nice to have water in the park.

*Mr. Witty Boykin – Topic Walnut Hill Property*

Witty Boykin was recognized and spoke on the Walnut Hill property. He said he serves on the committee for the Walnut Hill property and he thinks it is a beautiful piece of property with a lot of potential. Mr. Boykin said it could be a great place for weddings or events such as an oyster roast. It is covered with azaleas and the ponds are really pretty. He indicated he would hate to see Meggett give it up.

*Councilmember Matt Zender – Meggett Creek Bridge*

Mayor Herrington asked if there were any other comments before he closed the meeting. Matt Zender said he had one more question. He asked Robert Clark with DOT, if his budget included a new bridge for the Meggett Creek Bridge and the time frame if approved for the construction. Mr. Clark said it would depend on the money situation and the priority for new construction. However, he said he would keep monitoring the bridge and if a new bridge seemed too far in the future, he would have DOT rebuild the existing bridge so the weight limit can be lifted from the bridge. Of course the rebuilding of the existing bridge would not have all of the features that a new bridge would have.

*Jennifer Gilliland – Topic promoting new book*

Jennifer Gilliland asked if there was a way that her book, *Images of America St Paul's Parish*, could somehow have a link to the Meggett webpage since it contains information about the history of Meggett.

*Councilmember Matt Zender – Topic account to help with a natural disaster*

Councilmember Matt Zender mentioned that we should think about starting an account that would help with expenses should we ever have to endure a natural disaster. Councilmember Hutto said he thought that was a good idea. He further stated most of the roads in Meggett are county or state maintained except the private roads which the responsibility would fall on the residents that live on the road. The town would need to make sure the sewer system functioned properly to the point where it enters the Hollywood system.

With no other comments Mayor Herrington thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting.