**MINUTES**

**TURBEVILLE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

**June 13, 2023**

**6:30 p.m.**

**Members Present:** Mayor Kathryn Turbeville, Councilmembers Herbert Mims, Doyl Gray,

Albert Mobley, and Judy Coker

**Others Present:** Town Clerk Kaitlin Alexander, Town Administrator Bill Taylor, Public Works Director Ellis Evans, Town Code Enforcement Officer Curt Whaley, Clarendon County Councilman Pat Coker, Carson Lee Coker, Amelia Coker, G Webster, Becky Keefe, Amy Coker, Michael Kirby, Quan Barnes, Pat Goodwin, Phillip Goodwin, Rhett Floyd, Tina Floyd, Alan Watford, Brooke Staves, Taylor Watford, Tammy Hicks, Terry Dickey, Madison Vanderlugt, Josh Vanderlugt, Ginie Turbeville, Karen Coker, Eric Coker,

Mikey Kirby, Allison Kirby, Pearl Graham, Kristan Coker, Ericson Coker.

1. **Mayor Turbeville** called the town council meeting to order at 6:30 pm and declared that a quorum was present. **Councilmember Mobley** offered the invocation.
2. **Mayor Turbeville** introduced for council’s consideration the agenda for the June 13, 2023, regular council meeting. A motion was made by **Councilmember Coker** to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by **Councilmember Mims** and passed by unanimous vote.
3. **Kristan Coker** addressed council about her new gym/ fitness center. She explained that she was led to consider the idea of creating such a facility as a result of the benefits that she had received from intensive physical therapy following a severe vehicle accident a number of years ago. She pursued schooling in physical therapy with her goal of giving back to the community and creating a space where local residents can better understand the benefits from exercises she has learned and from her own physical therapy. The building on Main Street became available and she and her husband **Ericson** bought it. The building was in an awful shape and needed many months of cleaning. 3C Properties applied for a roof permit in 2021 and needed a change of use, as well as a contractor. The building permit from 2021 was expired for the work they were wanting to perform in 2023 and a stop work order was issued. **Kristan** explained that because of this stop work order the front door was left wide open and was worried the interior of the building was damaged more than it already was because they were not allowed to even secure the front door of the building because of the order. **Coker** asked the council for approval to cover the front of the building so no more damage could be done and was asking that they be allowed dual jurisdiction of the building inspections by both the town and the county inspectors.

**Mayor Turbeville** asked if anyone was present who wished to address the council. On behalf of her husband, **Karen Coker** addressed the council by stating that her husband, Eric, along had met with Mayor Turbeville about how it would be cost prohibitive to use the town’s inspector, Curt Whaley, as building inspector. Coker asked if they could use Clarendon County inspectors and according to Eric, Mayor Turbeville said that would be fine, if the Town of Turbeville did not incur any of those costs. Karen went on to say the gym had been inspected three times by the County Inspector and that the town’s inspector red tagged the building because permits were expired. According to Clarendon County, if you are getting continuous inspections they can last up to a year. Karen, on behalf of Mr. Coker, respectfully requested that the town council allow for dual jurisdiction for the Town Building Inspector and County Inspector to finish the gym.

**Ginie Turbeville** did not see what the problem was because the Town has a building inspector and did not see why the property owner would need the county inspector as well.

**Mikey Kirby** believes the building is an eyesore and wanted to know why the town was fighting against a new business to come into town now that the downtown was starting to look better.

**Kristan Coker** stated that she simply could not afford Florence County fees and asked why the county cannot just issue permits instead since the Police Department and Recreation Departments are already outsourced to the county.

**Town Building Official Curt Whaley** addressed the room by stating that the state adopts building codes, and those codes are the same statewide, and each jurisdiction abides by them. If Clarendon County wanted to perform inspections within Turbeville, they would need a contract, such as the one Whaley has with the town. An inspector cannot perform inspections that are outside of his jurisdiction. He also added that contractors should never pay inspectors directly as that creates a conflict of interest.

**Ericson Coker** wanted to know how anything is different that Curt sees and why could the county not see it as well. **Whaley** answered his question by saying that Turbeville is not registered with the state through Clarendon County.

**Councilmember Gray** questioned why the owner of the building cannot just cover their building and **Karen Coker** said they were told they could not or that complaint could be filed for someone working on the structure.

**Ericson Coker** thought it was unreasonable that they could not cover the building and Mikey Kirby said the condition of the building was starting to affect other businesses.

**Curt Whaley** said they could put up a cover up to protect the building, but it would need to be permitted and it would be at their own risk.

**Karen Coker** wanted to be sure if they did that that there would not be a complaint filed.

**Mayor Turbeville** sent a text to Chris Todd and informed him that they could protect the building from rain.

**Whaley** said the town cannot permit work without a valid permit and that we could probably work with them at their own risk.

**Eric Coker** said he would like to continue using the county inspector.

**Ericson Coker and Pat Coker** both stated the need for dual jurisdiction, meaning one inspector would start the project and another would finish it.

**Councilmember** Gray stated that no one should have to obtain a permit to secure their building.

**Allison Kirby**, local town business owner, said before Eric bought the building, it was in horrific shape and has been a blessing to have the place renovated as it is beside her beauty shop.

**Mikey Kirby** questioned when Whaley was hired, as the town’s building inspector and Mayor Turbeville said it was 2019. She also stated she has received numerous complaints about work on the building without any permits and that is why the stop work order was put into effect.

**Karen Coker** believes the stop work order was issued the very day that Mr. Coker filed a variance request for his property located on Atkinson Street.

**Councilmember Mobley** stated that they need to go ahead and get the appropriate building permit so they can go ahead and cover the building.

**Eric Coker** once again stated that he would like to use the county inspector because he works with them every day. His son **Ericson** asked going forward who would be the inspector.

**Town Administrator Bill Taylor** said that **Curt** **Whaley** is the one with the contract with the town. They must use our building inspector to move forward.

**Councilmember Mims** asked how long it would take to switch inspectors and Taylor said they would have to approach the county, then the state, etc. The quickest option would be for Curt to respond to comments.

**Town Building Official Curt Whaley** indicated his willingness to sit down with the property owners and plan a course of action for moving forward with the project. It was agreed that he would review the previous inspection reports by the county inspector to see if they could be accepted and move forward from there. It was also agreed that the property owner could properly cover the roof and front of the property to protect it from the elements.

1. **Mayor Turbeville** introduced for council’s consideration the minutes from the May 9, 2023, regular council meeting. A motion was made by **Councilmember Mims** to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by **Councilmember Coker** and passed by unanimous vote.
2. Mayor Turbeville introduced the second reading of **Ordinance No. 2023 – 03. An Ordinance Establishing an Annual Budget for the Town of Turbeville for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024. Councilmember Coker** made a motion to approve the first reading. The motion was seconded by **Councilmember Mobley** and passed by unanimous vote.

1. **Mayor Turbeville** introduced for the council’s consideration a request by **Quan Barnes** for a special event to be held on the town square. Mr. Barnes wants to have a back-to-school bash for the community. Around 350 backpacks and school supplies are being donated and he wants to use the town square for this event to bring the community together. After the event, he would like to request permission to have a “Screen on the Green” movie event to end the evening. **Councilmember Gray** made a motion to approve this event. The motion was seconded by **Councilmember Coker** and passed by unanimous vote.
2. There being no further business, **Councilmember Gray** made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by **Councilmember Coker** and passed by a unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at **8:00 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

**Kaitlin Alexander**

Town Clerk