

WORK SESSION—SEPTEMBER 21st, 2017

Minutes of the Huntsville Town Council Work Session, held at the Huntsville Town Hall at 5:30 p.m. September 21st, 2017.

Name	Title	Status
James A. Truett	Mayor	Present
Doug Allen	Council Member	Via Phone
Michael Engstrom	Council Member	Present
Bill Wangsgard	Council Member	Present
Bill White	Council Member	Present
Gail Ahlstrom	Clerk/Recorder	Present
William Morris	Legal Counsel	Excused

Citizens: Ron Gault Dave Booth Jeff Hyde
Dakota Hyde McKenzie Hyde Britain Sorensen
Steve Lyon/Economic Development Director for Morgan
Ashley Haslam/Director of Animal Control
W.C. Sheriff Terry Thompson

Mayor Truett opened the work session and welcomed the visitors. There was not a quorum present at the beginning of this meeting.

Discussion with Dave Booth about his Landscaping Business:

Mayor Truett mentioned that the Town Council wanted to talk to Dave Booth about his Conditional Use Permit. When Dave’s original CUP was approved it had five buildings that would create a retail development. Now trees have been planted along Hwy 39 and more trees are waiting to be planted. Mayor Truett asked Dave where he is with this project. It appears that his scope of work has changed and things are different from what the TC was led to believe was going to happen there.

Dave replied that he discussed this at the PC meeting held in June 2017. Dave stated that the landscape center will be along the east side of the property, along Hwy 39. The residential side will still have retail buildings. The big pine trees that were delivered this week will be the dividing wall to block off the sand, gravel, and topsoil from being seen. If you look at the subdivision from the Post Office looking north, the trees will go down the center of the property to divide the landscape center from the retail section. Dave mentioned that he just got the plans for the community center which will be in the northwest corner and will have the first building to go in.

Dave said one of the concerns the PC had was that they didn’t want to see tractors. Dave plans to build a small building that will hide the Kubota tractor. The community center will have a business office above it and hopefully, this will bring activity to the property.

Dave plans to use a small portion of the community center and there will be three or four office spaces upstairs for lease in that building.

The Mayor commented that the landscape component was not included in the original CUP. Mayor Truett stressed that this property is the entrance into Huntsville. Dave agreed that's this is why he needs to be careful aesthetically and one of the reasons why he is planting big trees all around the property. The sign will be on the mound of dirt in the SE corner of the property and will have big boulders around it. It will be big and attractive and bordered by trees. The trees will be for sale, and for landscaping the development. Dave commented that there will be 6 different types of trees that will be planted throughout the subdivision. He plans to plant pines along the side of the property to buffer the neighbor. The small building will be a 10' X 12' building, the building will be temporary. Dave would like to sell mulch, sand, gravel, and topsoil.

Mayor Truett clarified that Dave is going to do the landscaping business for now until he can get the retail section going. Dave agreed that the landscaping center will go away as the retail development builds out. The landscape center is a temporary business. Dave said he has a man from Georgia who is interested in the grocery store. This is the first person who has appeared to be serious. Dave said he is building a home for him in Hawkin's Creek and he wants to start the store at the same time. Trees will be for sale and if they don't sell they will stay. There are 1500 trees planned for the subdivision when it complete, including shrubs, shade trees, and pines. Everything will be watered on a drip system. CM White said the town held a public hearing when this property was rezoned and the CUP was approved, and the neighbors were ok with the original plan, but now that plan has changed. CM White is concerned that this change has not been presented to the neighbors, he wondered if this is a fair thing to do.

Dave replied that he has spoken with most of the neighbors; they have come over while he has been working there, and they appear to be ok with this. A public hearing will be set for one of the next town council meetings after Dave has his drawings ready and he can present this new idea. Dave mentioned that this is a temporary way to bring income and activity to that corner. CM White pointed out that the sign needs to be set back enough so people can see traffic. CM White suggested putting the design on the sign so people can see what's planned. Mayor Truett asked Dave to stay in touch with the Council and let them know what he's doing.

Discussion with Animal Control:

Mayor Truett said the Council is very happy with W.C. Sheriff's Department and our relationship with Lt. Talbot is great! However, we don't have a good relationship with the animal control. Dogs are continually running wild through the town. Mayor Truett personally called Animal Control to report dogs that are biting kids. The Mayor mentioned that the town just had a citizen, Laurie Van Zandt and her husband Randy Lloyd, who were riding their bikes down First Street, when a dog darted into the road like he was going to attack, Randy fell off his bike, got a concussion and three broken ribs, and Laurie fell off her bike as well. There is a real problem with dogs here in town. Mayor Truett said the Council is wondering if the town should do something to deal with the problems. The Mayor asked Ashley and Sheriff Thompson to come to this work session tonight to sell them on the idea of signing the Animal Control contract.

CM Allen said he has been researching this and he feels it is time for the dog catching industry to catch up with the electronics industry. We all have phones that can take pictures and videos now.

CM Allen remarked that the town doesn't need a dog catcher; we have the availability with technology to have citizens take pictures or videos of the offending dog and send it to the dog catcher with the date, address, and a sentence about what happened. The dog catcher no longer drives around town looking for loose dogs; the dog catcher receives an email with a photo of the dog. The dog catcher can go to the address provided, knock on the door, verify the dog, show them the picture and impose a fine. Fines should increase each time the dog is turned in. That's how you get people's attention. Mayor Truett is concerned about children and people jogging who might not have their phones handy.

Sheriff Thompson remarked that CM Allen made some good points that need to be discussed. There are still some enforcement aspects that require personnel and manpower. They love it when people send the photos or videos to them, it helps them tremendously. Mayor Truett said the council would like to throw some ideas at Ashley and Sheriff Thomson and have them tell us how to things can be fixed.

The Mayor asked Jeff Hyde to report his experiences with Animal Control. Jeff started off by saying he is a dog owner and has owned many dogs, he is a responsible dog owner and all of his dogs have been licensed and leashed. Jeff explained that he is a business owner in the center of Huntsville and one of those businesses is a wedding reception center. Jeff has had multiple issues with neighboring dogs for over three years. Huntsville Town has put out many notices about dog control and dog problems. Jeff shared multiple pictures of dogs loose on his property. Jeff went down to the Animal Control Office to make a complaint and got no response. Jeff has called animal control 6 times this past year with no callback. His calls to animal control are going unnoticed and unanswered.

CM White stated that he has been bitten twice by dogs in town. He has witnessed W.C. Animal Control officers parked under a tree at the park over a dozen times. Mayor Truett mentioned that Jake Dangerfield was at 6800 E. when three dogs came out and bit him. CM Engstrom said the ordinances require all dog owners to license their dog. If a dog doesn't have a tag, it should be picked up and taken to the pound immediately. Ashley said when an animal is picked up and there is no tag, they are scanned for a microchip. If there is no identification they are taken to the shelter right away, they require the dog to be licensed and microchipped before they can be let out. Mayor Truett said he has a report that shows from April to July that 6 animals were picked up by animal control.

Ashley said these are valid concerns being brought to her attention; she is new to her position. Now she knows about them she can address them with her officers. There are three animal control officers, with one officer being assigned to the upper valley. They can keep track of their control vehicles with Geo-Tabs.

The fastest way to get ahold of Animal Control is to call Weber Dispatch. Their office is open Monday-Friday 8 am-5 pm. Mayor Truett asked if the animal control officers can step it up. Ron suggested making a list of the problem areas so the officer can check these areas out. CM Engstrom asked if there could be an intentionally increased presence of animal control officers in town for an extended period of time to send a message to the residents.

Sheriff Thompson replied yes, that would be possible. CM Engstrom stated that a call back the next day seems unrealistic. Ashley recommended that people take pictures of the offending dogs so when they do an investigation they can identify the dog. CM White asked why they don't go pick up the offending dogs, Jeff has multiple pictures with dates, as proof, that those three dogs have been on his property. Ashley replied that she will need to look into this. She is wondering about writing a citation as opposed to actually removing the dogs.

The Animal Control Contract is for one year and expires in 2018. There are issues brought up tonight that can be resolved and worked on. CM Engstrom recommended that they come back in a month. Sheriff Thompson stated that they are happy to come back every month if that's what the Council wants. Sheriff Thompson said they are going through the budget process and need to know if the Town is on board with the contract or not. Mayor Truett remarked that this item is on the agenda for tonight's TC meeting and if the motion passes to enter into this contract, he will sign the contract tonight, with the promise that calls for service will increase dramatically and the residents will see some changes.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Gail Ahlstrom, Clerk/Recorder