MINUTES

The Holly Springs Town Council met for their annual retreat at the Embassy Suites in Wilmington. Mayor Mayefskie presided, calling the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. A quorum was established as the Mayor and five Councilmembers were present as the meeting opened.

Council Members Present in the room: Mayor Sean Mayefskie, Mayor Pro Tem Dan Berry, and Council members Aaron Wolff, Shaun McGrath, Timothy Forrest, and Danielle Hewetson.

Council Members Absent: None.

Staff Members Present: Randy Harrington, Town Manager; Scott Chase, Assistant Town Manager; Daniel Weeks, Assistant Town Manager; Corey Petersohn, Administration; John Schifano, Town Attorney; Jaime Joyner, Director, Human Resources; LeeAnn Plumer, Director, Parks and Recreation; Chris Hills, Director, Director, Development Services; Linda McKinney, Town Clerk (recording the minutes); LeRoy Smith, Fire Chief; Paige Scott, Director, Public Works; Cassie Hack, Director of Communications and Marketing; Kendra Parrish, Executive Director of Utilities and Infrastructure; Tina Stroupe, Director, Finance; Paul Liquorie, Police Chief; Irena Krstanovic, Director, Economic Development; Jeff Wilson, Director, IT.

THURSDAY:

REVIEW OF AGENDA

Randy Harrington, Town Manager, gave an overview of the agenda and discussed with Council what they needed to have a successful retreat.

SUCCESS STORIES FROM THE CITY OF WILMINGTON

Mayor Saffo of Wilmington welcomed the group to Wilmington and introduced some of his staff.

Workforce Housing Public/Private Partnerships

Suzanne Rogers, Community Development and Housing Planner for the City of Wilmington, spoke about efforts Wilmington is making toward affordable housing. She said that the city and county joined together about seven years ago to work on this issue. They commissioned an outside consultant to answer the questions about where the gaps are. She said the city makes loans to developers, loans to homebuyers and homeowners, and developed incentives in their land development code to achieve affordable housing. She said this issue was identified in their Strategic Plan. She outlined some of the programs Wilmington has put in place. She said Wilmington sets aside 1 cent of the property tax for affordable housing, and combines that with federal funding and other one-time funds.

Ms. Rogers said that lessons learned are: leverage local funds; think of housing as part of the overall health and wellbeing of the community; identify and set aside land; Low-Income Housing Tax Credit is tool for public-private partnerships; don't wait – it won't solve itself; collaborate; take a multi-prong approach.

Scott Chase, Assistant Town Manager asked if the County had set aside funds for the partnership. She said it was ARPA funds, and then they set aside $15 million over 5 years.

Chad McEwen, Deputy City Manager, said that the hospital was sold to Novant, and the funds went into a controlled endowment through the County with a public/private board of directors. One of the components was housing and economic development on how that money will be distributed in the community. He spoke of the framework that needs to be put in place to use that money.

Council discussed leveraging investments, staff required to underwrite and otherwise service loans, the "missing middle," accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and recurring vs. one-time funding sources.

Downtown Vitality

Chad McEwen, Deputy City Manager of Wilmington, spoke about economic development in Wilmington. He said they have an issue of rail realignment, due to the port. As port traffic increases, train traffic is increasing. They are looking at moving the rail line to the west of downtown, with a separate or dual use bridge. This would cost over a billion-dollars, plus the bridge replacement costs. He said Economic Development in Wilmington is a three-pronged issue – Film Production; Downtown Development; Retention and Recruitment. He spoke about Wilmington redeveloping itself after the Atlantic Coast Line railroad left the city in the 1950s. He said Wilmington used performance-based incentives to recruit and retain businesses. He spoke of the checks and balances needed to make sure that jobs created are tied to your location, not just by check issuance, but by residence of employees. He spoke about the scarcity and cost of land, and how buying land in strategic locations can assist with economic development. Regarding Downtown Development, he said that it ties in to the other two legs of the stool. He said the area on the river, which is now hotel oriented, was full of warehouses, rail lines, and open storage. He spoke about what is coming to downtown, the city-owned property and plans for moving the city offices.

Council asked questions about the primary drivers of growth in Wilmington, its total and downtown populations and short-term rentals. Council asked Mr. McEwen and Ms. Rogers about employer contributions to affordable housing solutions and the partnerships between the Chamber of Commerce, the Wilmington Downtown Inc., and the Downtown Business Alliance.

There was a short recess.

DESIGNING THE FUTURE

Village District Area Plan (VDAP) Charrette

Chris Hills, Development Services Director, explained the charrette process and introduced the consultants from Design Workshop, Chris Geddes and Emily McCoy. They recapped what they had done so far, and guided Council through case study discussions, prioritizing placemaking concepts and developing ideas for what Council would like to see in the Village District Area. They explained that they would create concept plans which would be presented to Council in part two of Friday's session.

Council discussed where the boundaries of the Village District should be, ultimately settling on an area approximately from 55 to Holly Springs Rd., and Avent Ferry Road to Grigsby Avenue, in a "bow tie" shape. They discussed parking and pedestrian connectivity; room to expand employment centers, and additional dining and shopping options; and connecting the Cultural Center and Mims Park to downtown. Social Districts were also discussed.

Mr. Geddes said that they would work on several concepts and bring them to Council tomorrow.

The meeting recessed until 8:30 am on Friday.

FRIDAY:

The meeting reconvened at 8:30 am.

<u>BUILDING THE FUTURE</u>

Outlook on Construction Inflation and Supply Disruptions on the Delivery of Town Projects

Aaron Levitt, Utilities and Infrastructure, said that this item was to give Council data on construction cost escalation trends in the current and future construction market and offer potential mitigation measures for consideration. He outlined the historical context around inflation and escalation, and compared it to the current climate. He then linked these factors to the Producer Price Index and other national and local trends and shared projected future market conditions. He offered options to mitigate these cost increases including triaging the portfolio for potential deferments; utilizing third party estimating specialists; using alternative project delivery methods such as Construction Manager at Risk; advanced acquisition of critical and complex components; and evaluating material and equipment substitutions.

Council discussed how these construction methods handle price increases. Council asked about incentives for early completion/penalties for late completion and the possibility of upsizing for future growth. Staff explained that that they upsize whenever possible, but that sewer systems cannot be oversized beyond a certain point or the hydraulics do not work. Council discussed the prospects for the situation improving in the near future, and the possibility of not adding any new projects to the CIP for a year.

Debt Affordability Outlook
Parks and Recreation Investments and Bond Referendum

LeeAnn Plumer, Parks and Recreation Director said the purpose of this item was to provide Council with updated cost projections for park projects and to discuss bond funding strategies. She outlined plans for Mims Park and Sugg Farm Park, pointing out the Accessibility features in each plan. Ms. Plumer then outlined the progress on the Cass Holt Road Park, including the options Council had approved in the Concept plan. She outlined the cost projections for developing this park and said they had escalated 9%. She presented four scenarios for developing the park, from full master plan development to three phased approaches. She outlined some potential considerations for additional bond projects, showing the locations in town of the potential investments. Finally she outlined a potential project timeline with bond allocation in FY2026, construction beginning in the fall of 2025, and the park opening in the summer or fall of 2027.

Council discussed the scope of the work anticipated, and where the town was in regards to meeting present demand and preparing for future demand. They said they would like to hear the financial advisor's report before deciding how to proceed with the Parks and Recreation bond question.

General Debt Affordability

Doug Carter, DEC Associates, said we are beginning to see leveling in the interest rate markets, especially in the far-out maturities. So that is some good news. He said inflation does positive things for revenue, as property rates go up and taxes go up. He outlined the projected new general government debt for Fire Station 3, the Operations Center, the Transportation Bond and the Parks and Recreation Bond. He gave illustrations of scenarios for issuing debt in FY25-26, and how timing has affected this outlook. Randy Harrington, Town Manager, said a bond referendum in November of this year would not require a tax increase until the following fiscal year. If the trajectory holds, we are likely to see some organic capacity increase which would require less of a tax increase. Mr. Carter said Council could possibly even wait an additional year on the tax increase. Council discussed when the next revaluation would occur and what the rate jump would be. Mr. Carter said that every year he would present the debt affordability model; when Council hears this a year from now, these numbers could get better. The model is conservative so he anticipates the news continuing to be good. Council discussed the last bond and how much revenue would come per penny of increased taxes.

In light of this information Council discussed the Parks and Recreation scenarios. Council discussed the high percentage of the population that is under 18, and their feeling that the Town was behind in developing parks. They asked if the full $80-100 million would have room to complete projects at parks other than the new park on Cass Holt Road and Ms. Plummer said that there were some smaller projects with fast turnaround that could be included. Consensus was to go with the full buildout with a target cost of $80-100. Ms. Plummer discussed additional grants that could be applied for and other funding sources that staff is investigating. There was discussion about seeking a donor and offering naming rights.

Utility System:
Projected Infrastructure Needs
WATR Partnership Interlocal Agreement Framework
and Water Conveyance Planning

Kendra Parrish, Executive Director of Utilities and Infrastructure, said this item was to present Council with the 2023 updated Utility Fund Debt Affordability Model and to provide a progress update on the primary projects. She gave an update on the progress of the 5-year CIP utility projects and the difference in the 2022 estimated cost and the 2023 estimated cost. The total difference, over ten projects is $75,000,000. The 6- to 10-year Secondary CIP Utility Projects have an overall cost increase of $2,000,000 over six projects.

Seann Byrd, Utilities and Infrastructure, reviewed with Council the current capacity for water and wastewater and the reasons for the needed upgrade, which will take the Town up to a population of 125,000 residents. He gave overviews of the Harnett County – Holly Springs water transmission upgrade, the Sanford Water Filtration Facility, and the Fuquay-Varina – Holly Springs Conveyance project, and shared wastewater capacity projections through 2040. He explained why the Utley Creek Water Reclamation facility needed the 6-8 million gallons per day (MGD) upgrade and the timelines and cost for that project. He outlined some potential risks, including regulatory changes, funding delays, permit delays, etc.

Council discussed potential regulatory changes and future trends. They discussed the potential for cyber-type threats to the water and sewer systems and what could be included to upgrade security at the treatment plant.

John Schifano, Town Attorney, spoke about the Inter-local Agreement which will guide the Water Treatment Plant. He said that they moved from ownership of capacity to part ownership in the treatment plant, which will allow that capacity to be utilized in calculating system development fees. He outlined the highlights of the forthcoming Interlocal Agreement (ILA) for the Sanford Water Project, including Holly Springs' 12.5% ownership, the term of the ILA and the division of capital costs and fixed annual costs among the four owners. He gave details on capacity, service interruptions, bulk water sales, and other aspects of the agreement. He also touched on similar agreements with Fuquay-Varina regarding the conveyance line.

R*ate Model Projections*

Michael Maker with NewGen Strategies and Solutions said that minimum financial targets for Debt Service Coverage must be 1.75, or revenue at least 75% higher than debt service, in order to meet AA rating standards and increase PayGo to diversify capital funding.

He said that Days Cash on Hand needed to be a target of 200 to meet AA rating standards and provide for adequate cash flow. He outlined the assumptions and drivers that went into the calculation of how fees relate to the CIP projects. He offered multiple scenarios to meet the primary CIP projects.

Doug Carter said this would be 30-year financing, and looking at impacts they have structured the debt in a sound but aggressive manner. He said that moving the debt a year actually only moved the bids by 6 months, and helps enormously with debt issuance.

Council discussed whether these predictions were based on System Development Fees staying the same.

Corey Petersohn outlined projected rate projections over a five-year timeframe. He showed how Holly Springs compared to other municipalities in 50- and 100-mile radius, and across the state.

Ms. Parrish said that investing significantly in water and sewer infrastructure was important because water is a limited resource, critical for communities, and that these investments would secure long-term drinking water sources for generations to come. This supports population growth, but also commercial and economic growth. She said extensive debt affordability modeling is being used to project revenue requirements. She said that staff does not take rate increases lightly, and that neighboring municipalities are also facing rate increases.

There was discussion on whether the perspective on System Development Fee increases had changed with this information. Staff said they are proposing raising the fees on the larger meters, and updating the System Development Fee report more frequently than is statutorily required. Council discussed the location of the proposed booster station. There was discussion about whether the rates would be raised every year.

There was a short recess.

VDAP Charrette Results

Chris Hills, Director of Development Services, said they wanted to present what they heard from yesterday and receive feedback on what was envisioned. Ms. McCoy reiterated what Council had identified yesterday as priorities and possibilities for the area. They would present three concepts, and would layer programmatic and density discussions on top of those concepts. She showed some placemaking elements used in other municipalities that could be considered for Holly Springs. She talked about food incubators – a food court like concept that incubates food entrepreneurs. She showed an example in Montreal where food is grown downtown in that space.

Mr. Geddes presented some rough concepts. The first was Cultural Spines. Focus would be on the "cross" from the cultural center to Main Street, and reorienting the center to the intersection of Ballentine and Avent Ferry. Possibilities could be adding a park and performance venue; a farmers market pavilion/food incubator combination. The second concept was Park Avenues: allowing Mims Park to take over as the "jewel" in downtown, expanding to place the Cultural Center in the center of a park; and closing part of Ballentine to become a pedestrian way with connection to Womble Park. The third concept was the Green Concept, centered around gateways and walkable nodes. It focused on celebrating the historic assets as well as adding new. There could be a connection between the Masonic Lodge and Main Street, for example.

Council discussed the differences between the three concepts. They discussed the heights of any proposed buildings and step-downs that could be determined. Council expressed a preference for 3 – 4 stories as the tallest buildings downtown. They were leaning towards Concept 1, but with changes on where the park was put, the heights of buildings, and access from Main to Raleigh. There was discussion about traffic calming measures for Main Street to allow safer pedestrian access.

There was a one-hour recess for lunch.

Housing Affordability

Lee Worsley of the Triangle J Council of Governments introduced himself, gave his professional background and shared information on what TJCOG does to support local governments. He said that housing affordability is an issue that comes up every time he talks to any elected officials. He said he would review the Town Strategic Plan around housing, review data points, and discuss potential strategies and tools for implementation. He asked if housing affordability was still a priority for the Strategic Plan. Council was split between those who thought it was a priority and those who did not. Mr. Worsley talked about the issue being regional in nature and how municipalities should work together.

He spoke about the data showing those who are cost-burdened to be housed. He said that aging in place, allowing seniors to be close to services, was a consideration he heard expressed. He pointed out the housing inventory in Holly Springs is dominated by single family dwellings, and the supply gaps which lead to higher costs.

Council discussed who they were concerned about helping, the adequacy of the housing mixture, and whether the proposed strategies would help achieve those goals. There was discussion about the trajectory of rents, and the availability of different sized units.

Mr. Worsley said that he was hearing that Council were willing to ask developers to provide a certain percentage of affordable/adequate housing, but there were disagreements on how to get there.

Sean Ryan, Development Services, spoke about some possible tools and strategies for dealing with housing issues. He organized the tools into four categories. He used online polling to asses Council's opinions. Council discussed their priorities and the four below polled with four or more votes.

1. Promote Partnerships: Incentivizing using Utility Allocation policy
2. Preserve and Expand Ownership: Review Future Land Use Map
3. Retain Existing Residents: Focus on Housing Hub Website
4. Meet Demand: Determine development incentive options

Staff said that this would be workable over a 2- to 4-year period, and it would come back to Council at a later date.

There was a short recess.

Transportation

Aaron Levitt, Utilities and Infrastructure, gave an update on the Transportation Projects to discuss progress, delivery schedules, and the next steps on the Avent Ferry Road Realignment. He said that Holly Springs Road (east) was on budget and on schedule for a spring 2025 completion. The Main Street right turn lane project is underway, but is over budget and on schedule for summer 2023 construction start and mid-2024 completion. The NC 55 right turn lane project is under NCDOT review currently and is over budget but on schedule for a summer 2023 construction start and mid-2024 completion.

Corey Petersohn explained the $2.5 million in funds from the state SCIF Grant which were intended for widening the bridge on Old Holly Springs Apex Road from 2 – 4- lanes could only be used for a town-owned asset, and the bridge is an NCDOT bridge. Those funds could be applied to Fire Station 3, to reduce the Limited Obligation Bond needed, or reduce the need to value engineer the fire station. This requires approval from the Local Government Commission (LGC). He said that since staff does not recommend completing the Avent Ferry Rd. realignment, the $2.9 million in bond funds for that could be applied to Holly Springs Road

Widening - Central, and the $2.5 million in Fund Balance designated for that project could be applied to the Old Holly Springs Apex Road bridge widening, which NCDOT says is two years out.

Mr. Levitt outlined funding plans for the various projects and gave next steps on the various transportation projects. He said that NCDOT has about 65% vacancy in staff and therefore working with them is slower than normal.

Council discussed the issues that caused the overruns for the Avent Ferry Road realignment project, and the LAPP grant implications. They discussed the impact of delaying one project over another, and the implications on right of way and property. Council decided to complete the construction plans and specs on Avent Ferry Road and then pause the project, with the intention of trying to retain the LAPP Grant and use it to construct the sidewalk part of the project. If the LAPP Grant is not able to be used for that, the sidewalk construction would also be paused.

ALIGNING THE STRATEGIC "ROADMAP"

Strategic Plan Updates

Corey Petersohn said the purpose of this was to discuss the Strategic Plan. He said after the discussion today the plan would come back to Council for adoption in June. He outlined the five elements of the strategic plan and the staff-driven goals and initiatives.

Daniel Weeks, Assistant Town Manager, discussed the initiatives that have been incorporated and/or completed in the Engaged Healthy and Active and Economic Development areas. He said these could be deleted from the public document, except that Initiative 1.1, which identifies target industries, might want to stay in for symbolic reasons. Scott Chase, Assistant Town Manager, discussed initiatives that have been incorporated and/or completed in the Organizational Excellence and Responsible and Balanced Growth areas.

Mr. Petersohn said that current challenges include inflationary cost increases and managing growth and on-going maintenance of infrastructure. Another challenge is a 38% increase in the number of strategic initiatives. Building that number of initiatives can create competing priorities. Staff recommends using the next year to focus on accomplishing existing initiatives adding only a few select initiatives at Mayor and Council's request. He said that next year marks the 5th anniversary of the current plan, and suggested that Council might wish to re-engage with the plan next year.

He outlined some recommendations under Sustainability: Reduce town facility energy consumption by 10% over five years; transition all town light duty non-public safety vehicles to hybrid or electric by 2030; implementation of new yard-waste cart model and resident convenience centers. On Safe and Friendly – to asses fire station coverage needs and potential locations for Fire Stations 4 and 5.

Staff will review feedback and bring back a draft Strategic Plan at the March workshop.

Council discussed what it would take to move to SolSmart Gold.

The meeting was recessed until 9:00 am Saturday.

SATURDAY:

MPT Dan Berry was not present when the meeting resumed.

BUDGET OUTLOOK AND SERVICE DELIVERY

FY2023-24 Budget Outlook

Corey Petersohn, Administration, gave an outline of the budget timeline. He defined the difference between Operating Budget, including the General Fund and the Enterprise Funds, and the Community Investment Plan.

Tina Stroupe, Director of Finance, said the property tax preliminary outlook for FY22 is close to 99.8% already. She said estimated growth for FY24 was 4-7%. She reminded Council that the next property tax revaluation is FY25. Sales tax revenue was impacted by the economic climate. Staff budgeted conservatively, but inflation impacts are uncertain. Still, staff predicts a 7-10% growth for next year. She said development fees are projected to be similar to last year, but rising interest rates and supply chain impacts could reduce housing production. Parks and Recreation fees have bounced back after COVID and are on track to meet and potentially exceed the revenue budgeted.

Mr. Petersohn outlined some potential budget considerations, including new positions with Police, and identifying potential future locations for Fire Stations 4 and 5. Other potential considerations are project management, construction and inspection positions; Public Works technicians to maintain service levels and implement the convenience centers; Parks and Recreation positions to support community events and facility maintenance and upgrades; expanded GIS services and an updated Human Resources management system. Staff is looking at analyzing operating budget capacity to shift a portion of property tax rate to offset a portion of current and future capital investment funding needs.

He said that the budget for the Enterprise Funds (Utility and Stormwater) are on target for FY23 and he outlined some considerations for needs in FY24. He outlined the grants that have been awarded through the second quarter, and those that were pending.

He outlined the next steps in the budget process, starting with the updated Strategic Plan and ending with adoption of the budget in June.

MPT Dan Berry arrived at 9:21

Trash/Recycling and Yard Waste

Randy Harrington, Town Manager, introduced some challenges with synching the timing for the roll out of this program with the arrival of the equipment (which has faced some delays) and with the seasonal differences, including leaf season. Paige Scott, Director of Public Works, said she would provide an update on the yard waste model, the trash/recycling contract and the communications plan. She gave an overview of Council's approval of the cart model and the equipment purchase. She said the department has implemented leaf sweep zones and introduced Freddie Rodriguez, who came on in December as the new Solid Waste Manager. Ms. Scott reported on the success of the leaf season Sweep Zone model. She showed where an interim Convenience Center will be opening in April 2023 on Sunset Lake Road. This will be covered under the yard waste fee. Future centers will be at the Operations Campus, and at the Transfer Yard.

Ms. Scott reviewed the reasons for switching to a Yard Waste Cart model, and what the residents can expect from the new system, including two fee-free curbside collection events annually. She said that brush, grass, lawn clippings, tree trimmings (small branches) leaves and house plants can go into the carts. They must be loose, not bagged. She said that brick, stone, rocks, large stumps, excessive dirt, trash and recycling are not permitted in the cart. She said the department will still offer the excessive load collection. Staff recommends that the fee be increased to accurately reflect the cost of the service.

Ms. Scott said that the vehicles are estimated to be delivered in summer of 2023. After delivery the vehicles will need to be upfitted and staff will need to be trained on using this equipment, and new CDL drivers will need to be hired. Staff is working on cart procurement, but they will not be delivered to the residents until they are branded and there is communication on their proper use. She offered two possible timelines for beginning the process, outlined challenges due to volatility in the timeline and the compressed implementation risks of starting the program during leaf season. The recommended timeline, to mitigate these challenges, would have the cart collection begin in the spring of 2024.

Ms. Scott outlined the yard waste fee cost recovery model based on preliminary potential FY2023-24 budget recommendations. She compared the proposed fees to those charged by neighboring municipalities.

Cassie Hack, Director of Communications and Marketing, said this new model will be a behavior change for residents, so they will be initiating a huge marketing campaign to explain why this program is beneficial to the entire community. She said staff is in the process of coming up with a slogan focusing on the environmental and beautification impacts. This will be on the trucks and the carts. She said the new 311 number would be highly visible in this campaign.

Ms. Scott outlined the trash and recycling contract, recommending a one-year extension with GFL in order to bid a new contract in a responsible way. She outlined the requirements of a new contract, with expanded scope of service including performance measures and sustainability initiatives. The new contract will be awarded in the summer of 2023. She asked for Council direction on the cart implementation timeline and the cost recovery fee changes.

Council discussed the two timelines and the timing of the messaging. Consensus was to use the staff recommended timeline, beginning the cart model after the leaf season. Council discussed how much the operating budget was subsidizing the yard waste collection. Consensus was to increase the fee to a 50% cost recovery level, which would be lower than Apex, Cary, Raleigh, and Fuquay-Varina. Council discussed the hours they would recommend for the temporary convenience center to avoid the high traffic times and days.

Stormwater User Rate Tier Structure

Scott Chase, Assistant Town Manager, said he wanted to share with Council considerations for a tiered billing structure for stormwater fees. He gave a background on the stormwater program and the increased level of service tied to the rate change in FY21. He shared the elements of the stormwater program, from Program Management, Operations & Maintenance, and the Community Investment Plan, and which measures have been impacted and improved since that time. He said that the program is now fully funded with no subsidy from the General Fund. He said staff wanted to get equity in the program between residential and commercial users. He said that currently residents pay a flat rate, no matter the size of the impervious surface. He defined various levels of service, showing where the town is now, and where they want to be. He described some of the larger projects the Town has responded to in the past year and is working on currently.

Mr. Chase gave examples of the flat fee inequity, and explained the formula that was used to calculate non-residential fees. He gave two ways that a tiered structure could be calculated: a GIS analysis of residential properties with areal mapping; or basing the calculation on the square footage of the home, which would be quicker, cheaper, and a less complex process. He showed comparisons with the fees in other municipalities.

Council discussed what increase would be required to move the service level from C - to B. They discussed the current staffing and the needed staffing. Council discussed the maintenance schedule currently in place and needed. Council discussed upcoming regulatory changes. Council's consensus was to leave the flat fee in place as it is, and revisit the issue in a year.

There was a short recess.

<u>PARKING LOT ITEMS / OPEN DISCUSSION</u>

Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)

Kendra Parrish, Executive Director of Utilities and Infrastructure, shared progress and projected expenses for the implementation of the ITS. She discussed the options for keeping it inhouse or outsourcing the traffic control center. Jeff Wilson, Chief Information Officer, discussed operational costs per intersection and potential reimbursements from NCDOT. He said that NCDOT sets the fee schedule and agreement for reimbursements. The required staffing minimum would be 1 signal technician and 1 signal engineer, with some costs eligible for reimbursement. Staffing can be contracted resources. He discussed the benefits of upgrading to the ITS system. He outlined the considerations that go into the timing of launching the system. Ms. Parrish said that the ITS buildout is part of Council's State legislative priorities because it improves traffic flow without additional construction. She said that with an approved budget it might be possible to accelerate the system a year or two.

Council discussed whether shortening the timeline was financially feasible and how much traffic improvement would be realized. They discussed what would be sacrificed if the general fund monies were diverted to accelerate this program. Council consensus was to have staff bring back information from the March meeting with NCDOT on what portion of the expense was reimbursable and explore funding options.

School Crossing Guards

Chief Paul Liquorie, Police Chief, said that Apex and Morrisville use part-time Town employees as crossing guards. Cary contracts with an outside company. He discussed the minimum pay requirements to make the position enticing. He said that all of the models included a required the Police department to staff positions in instances when someone is absent. There are staffing issues with either model. Another consideration is that improvements in Holly Springs Rd. and the Holly Meadow signal may mitigate the need in some areas where crossing guards are being considered.

Council asked if there was a public safety need that was not being met. Chief Liquorie said that the department was not seeing an unmet need or a lot of accidents related to school crossings.

Early Voting

Town Clerk, Linda McKinney presented Council with the estimated cost of the 2023 municipal election, what it would cost to have one early voting site, and the voter turnout rate for four municipalities in 2021 – two with an early voting site and two without. Council decided not to have an early voting site for the next municipal election.

Chris Hills informed Council about some upcoming Development Services meetings.

Adjournment: There being no further business, MPT Berry made a motion to adjourn at 11:45 am on Saturday, February 11, 2023. It was seconded by Council member McGrath and passed with a unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted on Tuesday, March 21, 2023.

Linda C. McKinney

Linda C. McKinney
Town Clerk