

City of Winston-Salem Government Meetings Notes

City of Winston-Salem: 2000-2004

HIGHLIGHTS

- 2000 - Contract approved for mobile data terminals in police cars; Allen Joines appointed Deputy City Manager; City departments move to City Hall South; Major bond referendum passed; Construction begins on new clubhouse at Winston Lake Golf Course
- 2001 - City begins using new logo; city website unveiled; Legacy Comprehensive Plan adopted; Ward realignment leads to Alderman's resignation; Allen Joines elected Mayor
- 2002 - State action forces massive budget cuts; Public Assemblies Commission created; Mayor begins Talk of the Town forums; Rock The Block celebrates the completion of the 4th Revitalization project
- 2003 - Aldermen now known as Members of Council; Free wireless internet collection in the 4th St restaurant area offered; City Hall rededication and open house held
- 2004 - Two recreation centers sold to private organizations; Pat Norris named Police Chief; Convention Center management turned over to adjacent hotel; Northwest Water Treatment Plant dedicated; New No. 2 Fire Station dedicated

2000

January 18, 2000-Contract awarded for the first 25 of the mobile data terminals for police cars. The cost was \$146,720.

February 2, 2000- Aldermen approved an agreement with Magnolia Properties regarding the construction of an office building at 4th and Main.

Carrie Sizemore Collins named new Director of Marketing and Communications on February 21. She was presented to the Board at the March 6th Meeting.

Allen Joines appointed Deputy City Manager. Prior to this, he had served as Assistant City Manager with the responsibilities for community and economic development programs. The title of Deputy City Manager had been formally created by the Board on February 21 following the recommendations of the Citizen Efficiency Review Committee. Joines retired on August 1, 2000.

In May, City departments moved to a new building City Hall South while old City Hall was completely renovated for the first time in 74 years. The move was completed by mid July.

BOND REFERENDUM PROPOSED

May 15, 2000- Board held a public workshop on a proposed Bond referendum at the LJVM Coliseum. Still smarting from the resounding 2 to 1 defeat of the Bond Referendum in 1997, this meeting was to gather citizen input as to what they would and would not support in Bond votes.

A public hearing was held at the July 17 meeting.

Sept. 12, 2000-Police Department began first Citizen's Police Academy. 25 citizens applied for a ten week course to learn the inner workings of the Department.

CITY BUDGET 2000-2001

\$306.2 Million - Tax rate set at 49.67 cents on the hundred

BONDS TO NOT CAUSE A TAX INCREASE

Aug 21, 2000-A resolution was proposed by the Mayor expressing the intention that the upcoming bond referendum would not require an increase in property taxes to pay the debt service. It was pointed out the resolution would not be legally binding on any Board of Aldermen in the future. The minutes state "Mayor Cavanagh commented on the bond package and stated that if this resolution passes, it would take away one of the arguments of bond opponents, so they will have to find something else to criticize. He then called for the question on the original motion for adoption of the resolution.

“Alderman Whiton stated that if Alderman Robinson was ruled out of order earlier, then he felt that the Mayor’s comments should be ruled out of order.

“Mayor Cavanagh responded that he was using the prerogative of the chair.

“Alderman Robinson disagreed and stated that if the Mayor was going to make political statements, and then he should surrender the gavel to the Mayor Pro Tempore.

“Mayor Cavanagh ruled Alderman Robinson out of order and again called for the vote on the motion.”

The motion passed 7-1 with only Robinson voting against it.

The debate was not over. The minutes state that after the vote “Alderman Robinson asked for a ruling from Mr. Seeber since Robert’s Rules of Order clearly indicated that when a chair wants to speak to an issue or editorialize, then the appropriate procedure is to surrender the gavel to the Mayor Pro Tempore.

“Mr. Seeber replied that if the Mayor wishes to speak on a subject that goes beyond that at hand, then it would be up to the Board of Aldermen to so find by a majority vote and the Mayor Pro Tempore would take the chair at that point.

“Alderman Robinson commented that this is not what is indicated by Robert’s Rules of Order.

“Mr. Seeber noted that Robert’s Rules of Order is designed primarily for large assemblies and club meetings and does not fit with precision the mechanics of a political board. In North Carolina, the Board of Aldermen is the final arbiter and can overrule any of the Mayor’s rulings.”

Sept 5, 2000-There was a major debate regarding the city funding of the Experiment in Self-Reliance. Again Robinson and the Mayor use parliamentary procedures to get their respective points across...both accusing the other of being out of order. Ultimately, the ESR program received its city funding.

Sept 18, 2000- Contract was awarded for a Digital Photo System for the Police Department at \$151,841.80. The replaced the old photo processor for mug shots and crime scene pictures.

Sept 18, 2000- Contract awarded for the construction of a new club house at Winston Lake Golf Course at a cost of \$705,000.

Nov 7, 2000-Voters approve bond referendum. The results announced at the Nov 20 meeting were:

Item	Yes	No
\$40,600,000 in street and sidewalk improvements	41,553	20,329
\$12,500,000 economic development projects	37,027	25,236
\$11,500,000 for Public safety communications system	43,589	18,633
\$6,400,000 Home-buyer Assistance Program	40,131	22,892

MAYOR’S REQUEST FOR FREE PARKING DENIED

Nov 20, 2000- The Mayor had proposed that he and the Board receive free parking downtown on the meters. He stated that he had received “...a surprising number of comments regarding this proposal and he read from a tongue-in-cheek letter from a citizen who urged others to send in quarters to help fund parking for the Mayor and other elected officials. Although Mayor Cavanagh noted the merit of his proposal, he withdrew it from consideration in response to the public’s reaction.”

December 4, 2000- Board approved a new cable franchise agreement with Time-Warner cable.

2001

NEW CITY LOGO UNVEILED

City vehicles began using a stylized W-S logo instead of the city seal. The logo was created by The Woodbine Agency, advertising and design firm. The logo was to be used on city publications and on city vehicles. It had been presented to the Board on December 4, 2000.

March 5, 2001- Aldermen viewed the city’s new web site- www.cityofws.org.

LEGACY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

April 1, 2001-Aldermen adopted Legacy-A comprehensive plan for managing future growth in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. It included recommendations for reducing traffic congestion and suburban sprawl that would detract from the quality of life here. It replaced the Vision 2005 document and outlined strategies over the next 15 years. Aldermen held public hearing on February 20 at which 36 citizens spoke in favor of the plan and only one against it. The plan was adopted on Feb 29.

Lee Garrity was appointed Assistant City Manager on April 27.

WARD ALIGNMENT LEADS TO APPOINTMENT OF NEW ALDERMAN

June 4, 2001- Aldermen approved ward realignment in light of the 2000 census. West Alderman Northington had recently moved and the realignment placed him two blocks in the Northwest Ward. This was discussed in detail at the May 21 meeting. The Board did not change the realignment and Northington resigned from the Board. A special meeting on the budget was held the next night (June 5), and following the budget public hearing, there was a discussion about how the replacement of the West Ward Alderman would be made. It was decided that the Board would name the replacement and not be, has as been tradition, bound to the recommendation of the Republican Party.

June 18, 2001- W. H. Roberts, who was the Republican Party's choice for the seat, was appointed West Ward Alderman.

BUDGET WAR FOR THE TELEVISION AUDIENCE

June 18, 2001- A lively discussion is documented regarding items on the upcoming City budget. Alderman Robinson, as he had done the previous year, presented a series of changes to the upcoming budget. The Mayor's problems with parliamentary procedure continued. "A brief discussion ensued regarding whether this was a new motion or an amendment to the motion on the floor.

"Alderman Burke asked if Mr. Seeber would like to comment.

"Mayor Cavanagh stated that he had not recognized the City Attorney and noted that Alderman Robinson has the floor.

"Questions were raised regarding parliamentary procedure; Alderman Mershel called for a point of order, and moved that the Mayor was out of order.

"The motion was seconded by Alderman Johnson.

"Mayor Cavanagh called for the vote on Alderman Robinson's amendment. When questioned about Alderman Merschel's point of order, he responded that Alderman Robinson had the floor and no other motion had been recognized."

During the next few minutes, Alderman Merschel twice asked to be recognized and the Mayor recognized Alderman Robinson. All his proposed changes failed by a 3-4 vote until he moved to eliminate the position of Intergovernmental Relations Coordinator. This came to a 4-4 vote with the Mayor voting in favor of the motion. The minutes state "...Mayor Cavanagh stated that this position did not work out as he had envisioned. He had thought this position would be closely tied to the Mayor's office, but this is not the case. Mayor Cavanagh stated that he has had a number of discussions with the City Manager about this.

Alderman Burke commented that she supported the position when it was first created because the Mayor felt it was needed. She stated that she did not see the progress that she expected and with regard to the work this individual did on grants, she remarked that seeking of grants occurred before this position was created and that work will continue."

Robinson also proposed cutting \$88,000 from the Marketing and Communications budget. This motion also went to a 4-4 tie with the Mayor voting in favor of the motion.

Again, Alderman Merschel asked to be recognized. The Mayor stated that Alderman Robinson still had the floor. Alderman Merschel stated that she wanted the record to show that she has been shut out of this meeting for more than two hours. The Mayor stated that anyone could discuss any of Alderman Robinson's motions during the discussion periods for each.

The budget, with several other minor changes was finally approved.

CITY BUDGET 2001-2002

\$331.4 Million - Tax rate set at 46 cents per \$100 Water and sewer rates increase 9%.

“NO CONSIDERATION”

The use of the “No Consideration” call by an Aldermen was traditionally used to stop debate on an item. It was usually used to give the Board members time to gather more information and come to an agreement before the item is brought up at the next meeting. It was used on zoning cases and sometimes on appointments to boards and commissions. On July 16, Alderman Robinson used it to stop an honorary resolution recognizing the United Way of Forsyth County.

At the August 6 meeting, the United Way asked that the resolution be pulled from the Agenda. After a great deal of discussion, the Board instead voted to pass the resolution with Aldermen Robinson and Whiton asked to have their names removed from it.

July 16, 2001-Contract awarded for copier, mail, printing services for the City. The City print shop was closed and its personnel reassigned.

July 16, 2001- Resolution approved authorizing construction of the Fourth Street Streetscape Improvement project.

MAYOR RULED OUT OF ORDER

Aug 20, 2001-Mayor Cavanagh had generally used the first few minutes of the Board meetings following roll call to review a list of events in the community during the upcoming week. He once said that he thought it was important that the public know of the variety of things going on in the city...other news media notwithstanding. This list was prepared for him before the meeting by the Office of Public Information. For three years, the Board had quietly listened, but since the items had no effect on city government his comments are not recorded in the Minutes Books. That said, it was during the August 20 meeting with the municipal election campaign in full swing that this exchange took place.

Immediately after the roll call “Mayor Cavanagh spoke about recent articles which appeared in the Winston-Salem Journal which, in his opinion, focused on insignificant issues rather than the vision he has for the City. He continued giving information about programs and issues which have been developed during the current term of office.

“Alderman Robinson expressed his object to Mayor Cavanagh’s statements, stating that they sounded too much like a campaign speech.

“Mayor Cavanagh stated that Alderman Robinson had not been recognized.

“Alderman Robinson appealed the ruling from the Chair and made a motion that the Mayor relinquish the gavel to the Mayor Pro Tempore.

“The motion was seconded by Alderman Whiton.

“Mayor Cavanagh continued with his remarks, and Alderman Whiton called for a point of order.

“Mr. Ron Seeber, City Attorney, explained that the floor now belonged to Alderman Whiton, who called for the point of order.

“Alderman Whiton commented that he believed that the Mayor was out of order to continue speaking in this fashion and asked him to stop.

“Mayor Cavanagh declined to recognize the point of order and continued with his remarks.

“Mr. Seeber advised that any member of the Board could make a motion to appeal the rejection of the point of order.

“Alderman Whiton made a motion to appeal the point of order to the full Board.

“The Motion was seconded by Alderman Robinson.

“Alderman Robinson withdrew his earlier motion for the Mayor to relinquish the gavel.

Alderman Whiton’s motion passed unanimously.

EMPLOYEE SHARED LEAVE PROGRAM

Nov 19, 2001- Resolution approved allowing employees to donate leave to a fellow employee who is involved in a catastrophic health event. Employees were able to draw from a shared leave “bank” to which consenting employees had donated leave hours.

MUNICIPAL ELECTION NOVEMBER 4

Allen Joines, a retired Assistant City Manager was elected Mayor in a landslide. He is the first former city employee to be elected Mayor.

Aldermen

- Northwest Ward Wanda Merschel
- North Ward Nelson Malloy
- Northeast Ward Vivian Burke
- East Ward Joycelyn V. Johnson
- Southeast Ward Frederick N. Terry
- South Ward Vernon Robinson
- Southwest Ward Dan Besse
- West Ward Robert C. Clark

City Hall building placed on National Register of Historic Places.

Dec 3, 2001- The new Board of Aldermen was sworn in but not before the outgoing board has a major discussion on the expansion of the Hanes Mill Rd. landfill. The discussion was continued with the new Board at a special meeting held on December 10 and at the regular meeting on February 18, 2002.

2002

SPECIAL RULES OF ORDER

Jan 7, 2002- In an effort to curtail some of the raucousness that the previous board had become known for, Mayor Joines presented a resolution adopting Special Rules of Order for the Board that would supersede the often maligned Robert’s Rules of Order. He stated that he had discussed this issue with each member of the Board and this item was presented as a way to move meetings forward in an efficient manner.

The resolution read in part that “A member may speak twice on a particular question before the Board and is limited to five minutes on each of the two occasions. The Mayor or Mayor Pro Tempore may grant permission to waive this rule at the member’s request.

- “...Debate should be confined to the merits of the pending question.
- “...Members should maintain a courteous tone and should avoid interjecting a person note into the debate.
- “Members should not attack or make any allusion to the motives of the other Board members.”

After some debate the resolution passed 7-1.

CABLE TV FRANCHISE

January 22, 2002- The Board discussed in depth the new cable agreement with Time-Warner Cable. This discussion also includes the contract for funding of the local Community Access Channel. The agreement was unanimously approved at the February 4th meeting. The contract regarding operation of the access channel was approved on February 18.

STATE ACTION FORCES MASSIVE BUDGET CUTS

February 8, 2002-Aldermen held an emergency meeting and a special meeting was held on February 15 to discussion the actions of the Governor in withhold expected funds for the City. On February 22, the Board voted to cut \$8.16 million from the current budget. The cuts were required when Governor Mike Easley announced that he would withhold that amount in reimbursements that the city had coming. City Manager proposed a budget of \$268.6 million that cuts overall spending by more than 15 percent to cope with the poor economy and the State’s withholding.

February 1, 2002-Resolution approved for \$800,000 for the development of a park in the Piedmont Triad Research Park.

March 6, 2002- Fire Station on Peace Haven Rd. dedicated as Robert S. Northington, Jr. Fire Station. Northington served as West Ward Alderman from 1977 until 2001.

June 3, 2002- Resolution approved for the purchase of a heavy duty rescue truck for the Fire Department- \$241,730.

June 17, 2002- Mayor Joines offered a resolution donating his \$11,000 salary as Mayor into a fund to be used for the "...benefit of the City, community agencies, or religious, educational or charitable organizations, at the discretion of the Mayor."

Attorney Seeber affirmed that this applied only to Mayor Joines and not to future Mayors. The resolution passed 6-2.

Departments began to return to the completely renovated City Hall with TV 13 being the first to move in October. Total renovation costs \$8.2 million, not including the Council Chamber or Committee Meeting Room.

May 20, 2002- Board agreed to merge the Fairgrounds Commission and the Coliseum and Convention Center Commission into the Public Assembly Facilities Commission.

May 28, 2002-Mayor began "Talk of The Town" Forums with each alderman in their respective wards. The series would continue until a session had been held in each ward. The series was repeated in 2003-04.

July 22, 2002- The Mayor and the Board engaged in a strategic planning session held at the LVMC meeting rooms to set out their goals for the city in the coming year.

August 19, 2002- Resolution approved regarding stream bank restoration projects for Brushy Fork Creek and Silas Creek.

CITY BUDGET 2002-2003

\$268.7 Million - Adopted in September. Property tax rate increased to 49.5 cents for every \$100.

Utility rates increase 9 %.

Utility Commission and W-S/Forsyth County schools agreed to establish a comprehensive recycling program in schools beginning with the 2002-2003 school year. The program was phased in over 3 years with a goal to divert as much as 2,000 tons of solid waste from the landfill each year. The commission allocated \$227,500 over three years to implement the program at all 67 public school campuses in the county.

ROCK THE BLOCK

4th Street revitalization was completed in September. Fourth Street between Main St and Broad was converted to two-way traffic on September 14. The completion of the project was celebrated with the first Rock the Block street party on Sept. 20.

A second Rock The Block Celebration on May 2, 2003 was swept with driving rain and thunderstorms. Still some 2-3 thousand people came out. It then became an annual fall event.

Tom Griffin retired as Assistant City Manager for Public Works on December 1. He was succeeded by Greg Turner. Turner had been director of the Department of Transportation since Sept 2001. Stan Polanis named new Director of Transportation

2003

January 21, 2003- Resolution approved regarding the keeping of animals and fowl within the City. The keeping of hogs was still prohibited but in keeping with some of the rural nature of recently annexed areas the keeping of goats, sheep, horses, mules, donkeys and cattle was allowed as long as their stables are maintained "...in a clean and sanitary condition." The revised ordinance deleted the word "stable".

Further, the law ended the tradition of allowing guineas to run loose while keeping chickens, etc. in pens. A flock of guineas had run loose in Old Salem for a number of years.

ALDERMEN NOW "MEMBERS OF COUNCIL"

The Board of Aldermen began using the name "City Council" effective Monday February 10, 2003. The Change had been approved at the January 6 meeting.

February 17, 2003- Nissen Building was designated as a Historic Landmark.

A major ice storm struck the City on February 27, 2003. Mayor asked that the city be declared a disaster area and declared a state of emergency on February 28. Brush collection was still going on in mid April.

City of Winston-Salem Directing Board: 2000-2004

“WiFi on Fourth”, one of the first government sponsored free wireless internet service in North Carolina became available on April 1, 2003. The service was available along Fourth St between Spruce and Main St

A Public Hearing on the city’s proposed annexation drew several hundred mostly irate citizens to the LJVM Coliseum on May 27, 2003. The hearing was televised live on TV 13 using a microwave setup between the Coliseum and City Hall.

The total area for annexation was downsized somewhat and a lawsuit held up a portion of the proposed annexation.

June 17, 2003- A Resolution was approved revising the personnel policy and moving every employees’ anniversary date to July 1 for pay increases.

CITY BUDGET 2003-2004

\$307,605,080 - Utilities rate increased 12 percent. Tax rate set at 46 cents per hundred dollars of property valuation.

July 21, 2003- The Longevity Pay Bonus Plan for City Employees was frozen at its current levels.

A City of Winston-Salem University with 25 citizens began on September 11, 2003. In addition to educating citizens about city functions, the course emphasized how citizens can have a more active voice in government. The program was held annually after 2003.

Sept 15, 2003-A City Hall open house and rededication ceremony was held. Council Chamber renovations were completed at a cost of approx \$550 thousand dollars...almost exactly the amount of the total cost of construction of City Hall in 1926.

Sept 18, 2003- Resolution approved adopting a policy for the naming of city facilities.

Nov 17, 2003- Resolution approving purchase of a fire pumper truck for \$319,000.

Loris Colclough retired on December 1, 2003 as City’s Chief Financial Officer. Colclough was responsible for the creation of the North Carolina Municipal Leasing Service which allowed the city to spread out capital outlays for new equipment and vehicles over a five year period. He also raised that the city’s bond rating to the highest in its history. Denise Bell, the long time deputy Chief Financial Officer, was named as his replacement.

2004

January 20, 2004-Resolution approved allowing the location of an ambulance at Fire Station #11 at 2745 Waughtown St.

January 20, 2004-Police Dept. authorized to purchase four new patrol cars at \$20,014.48 each. This price was for the base unit and did not include the emergency and electronic equipment that was to be installed by Fleet Services.

February 16, 2004- Resolution approved for the Redevelopment plan for the Happy Hill Gardens Area.

February 16, 2004- In a continuing effort to downsize, the Council approved donation of the Northhampton Community Recreation Center to the NAACP.

The North Hills Recreation Center was sold to New Life Church for \$150,000.

POLICE CHIEF P.D. NORRIS

February 28, 2004- Linda Davis retired, Patricia Norris sworn in as second female and first black police chief.

May 3, 2004-City Hall was designated a historic landmark.

CITY BUDGET 2004-2005

\$292.4 Million Tax rate set at 52.5 cents on the hundred.

CONVENTION CENTER NO LONGER A CITY PROPERTY

July 1, 2004- Convention Center management was turned over to Nobel Investment as part of a deal that they buy the two adjacent hotels. One would be converted into an Embassy Suites Hotel and the other into a Marriott Hotel. City employees at the Convention Center were offered jobs with Nobel. At the February 16th meeting, the proposal was first discussed. Nobel would invest 28 million dollars in the properties with the city providing 10 million in capital over 15 years. The Board had approved the proposal 7-1. A public hearing, with no opposition was held on March 22.

July 23, 2004- City Manager cut eight current positions as part of the 2004-2005 budget. Seven of these were placed in other departments, one took early retirement.

Northwest Water Treatment Plant came on line in August. The 84.4 million dollar project has been in the works for 16 years.

Sept 11, 2004- New Number 2 Fire Station dedicated. This larger station had bays for two fire trucks and an emergency services unit.