

Walkertown council prohibits graffiti

Ordinance put on books even though town lacks police for enforcement

By John Hinton | Journal Reporter
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The Walkertown Town Council unanimously approved an ordinance Thursday night that prohibits graffiti on public and private buildings in the town. Under the three-page ordinance, it is unlawful for anyone to write, paint or spray graffiti on buildings, walls or structures. Mayor Kenneth "Doc" Davis said that the ordinance is similar to one in Kernersville that prohibits graffiti.

The town doesn't have a police department to enforce the ordinance, but Davis and Council Member Marilyn Martin said that it was the right approach. "I don't know if we have the means to enforce it, but it will be on our books," Davis said.

Davis said he recently saw a presentation about graffiti and how it relates to gang activity by Chief Neal Stockton of the Kernersville Police Department. The town doesn't want any graffiti on its buildings, he said.

Before the council meeting, Town Clerk Lynn McKinnie said that the town has not received any reports of graffiti. But Council Member Randy Mendenhall said during the meeting that he saw graffiti on a street sign in 2000. Some Walkertown residents may not be aware that there is gang-related graffiti in local schools, Martin said.

Walkertown and Kernersville are not the only Forsyth County municipalities dealing with graffiti. In May, the Winston-Salem City Council approved an ordinance that requires property owners to remove graffiti on their buildings within five days of city notification.

In other business, the council:

- Unanimously approved donating \$500 to the Walkertown Wolfpack cheerleading squad if it qualifies to compete in a national competition in Florida.

Sandra Miles of Winston-Salem, an organizer for the squad, had asked the town to donate \$12,060 to the cheerleaders.

McKinnie sent a letter to Miles dated Nov. 7, telling her that the town couldn't afford more than \$500 to the cheerleaders because of financial trouble caused by the slumping economy.

Last year, the council gave the squad \$1,000 after it had asked the council for \$8,000 to make a similar trip to Florida for the cheerleading competition.

The cheerleaders made the trip, which cost about \$10,000, after they raised money from residents and some businesses.

- Unanimously approved giving \$5,000 to Walkertown Elementary School so that it can buy or build a walkway shelter at the school.

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