



TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Thursday, September 26, 2024 at 9:00 AM
Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

MINUTES

PRESENT: Jonathan Brown, Commissioner
Blitz Estridge, Commissioner
Mary Gelbaugh, Mayor Pro-Tem
Mark Jones, Commissioner
Johnny Phillips, Mayor
Brad Waldrop, Commissioner

Paige Dowling, Town Manager
Amanda Murajda, Town Clerk
Eric Ridenour, Town Attorney

ABSENT:

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Phillips called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

STAFF PRESENT: Jake Scott (Public Works Director), Bernadette Peters (Main Street Director) and Mike Beck (Fire Chief).

VISITORS: None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Phillips reported that he participated in conference call with local WNC mayors in regard to Hurricane Helene and storm preparation.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Gelbaugh expressed her concern with Hurricane Helene and reminded everyone to stay safe. Commissioner Waldrop reported that Sylva Pride festivities were successful. Commissioner Estridge has been attending the Pinnacle Park Foundation meetings. They are in the process of working on a directional sign to be located at the base of Fisher Creek Road. Commissioner Brown noted that he received great feedback about the Sylva Websterfest.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Dowling reported the following:

- Property tax bills have been mailed and payments are beginning to come in.
- Employment Update: Jacob Lewis has resigned at the Fire Department. He is moving back home near Wilmington to be closer to family. Blake Cabe has been covering shifts at the Fire Department and he will begin full-time.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT: Jake Scott reported the following:

- The department is working on storm preparation in anticipation of Hurricane Helene.
- Bryson Park—playground equipment is approximately 95% installed; the poured-in-place rubber is complete, and Bliss Products will submit plans for shade structures. The contract with Bartlett Construction has been received and under review.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT: None.

Regular Board Meeting September 26, 2024

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Mike Beck reported on the following:

- Storm preparation is underway for Hurricane Helene.
- Just over 1055 calls so far in 2024.

MAIN STREET REPORT: Bernadette Peters reported the following:

- Community entrepreneurship pitch program and 7 participants presented their business ideas.
- Social district celebration was lightly attended so the board will debrief on the future of the event.
- There are 3 façade grant applications remaining. If approved, that will conclude the first round of awards.

TWSA BOARD REPORT: Manager Dowling reported TWSA was preparing for Hurricane Helene.

NEW BUSINESS

PLANNING BOARD TERM LIMITS AND APPOINTMENTS—DISCUSSION ONLY: Mayor Phillips reported that the term limits of the ABC Board were recently changed for the Town of Sylva, and he would like to see the planning board changed to the same. This would allow four, 3-year terms instead of three. Manager Dowling explained that there are four seats for reappointment. Those include Russ Harris, Rose Bauguess, Kendall Waldrop and Geoffrey Hirsch.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE APPLICATIONS—DISCUSSION ONLY: Mayor Phillips explained that applications had been received for the 2 ex-officio seats and three of the five general seats. Those include Marne Harris and Josh Carpenter for the ex-officio seats and Donald Green, Tim Jones and Don Hensley for the general seats.

HISTORICAL SIGN AT NEW PUBLIC RESTROOM—DISCUSSION ONLY: Luther Jones submitted a proposal to the Town for a historical sign identifying the center of town near the new public restrooms. Commissioner Gelbaugh suggested “then and now” pictures from David Schulman be included.

ADJOURNMENT: *Commissioner Estridge made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:32 a.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

Johnny Phillips
Mayor

Amanda W. Murajda
Town Clerk