



TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, August 27, 2026, at 9:00 AM
Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

MINUTES

PRESENT: Blitz Estridge, Commissioner
Perry Matthews, Commissioner
Samuel McGuire, Commissioner
Johnny Phillips, Mayor
Joseph Waldrum, Commissioner

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

ABSENT: Brad Waldrop, Mayor Pro Tem

CALL TO ORDER

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

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Beck (Fire Chief), Robbie Carter (Assistant Police Chief), Aimee Sumner (Police Chief) and Jake Scott (Public Works Director).

VISITORS: Diane Parker, John Perry, John Byne, Cathy Loucks, Bill Loucks, Rose Garrett, Ben Woody, Sheila Setzer, Dale Broom, Deborah Smith, Brenda Setzer, Bobbie Brooks, Sandra Wiggins, Kenny Cagle, Crystal Cochran, Andy Anderson, Jessica Smith, and Greg McPherson.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS: The following individuals spoke in support of the Veterans Parade and encouraged the Board to approve the request:

Bill Loucks, Deborah Smith and Crystal Cochran

Greg McPherson addressed the board in regard to a portion of sidewalk on Mill Street in front of his building that was removed for underground repairs. He was instructed to replace the sidewalk that he removed which he did with decorative bricks and concrete. The Town has notified him that he must replace it to match the current sidewalk on Mill Street. He added that nothing in Sylva matches and that is part of the charm of the area. He feels that there are numerous other health and safety violations throughout town and that there is a pick and choose process which is not ok.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Phillips spoke in support of the Veterans Parade.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

Commissioner McGuire reported on the Historic Preservation Committee meeting held on August 17th. The committee continues to prepare for Mountain Heritage Day and is collecting photographs and images depicting items, places, and other aspects of the county that are significant to the area's heritage and local history. The deadline for submitting those is September 11th. The Mountain Heritage Festival is scheduled for September 21-26, 2026. Commissioner Waldrum welcomed all attendees to the meeting and emphasized the importance of recognizing and honoring those who have served in

the military. He expressed his appreciation to the veterans. Commissioner Estridge expressed his appreciation to all veterans for their service and emphasized the importance of honoring veterans through the parade. Commissioner Matthews thanked the veterans for their service and expressed his appreciation for their contributions. He additionally mentioned the upcoming AWAKE benefit.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Dowling reported the following:

- Employment Update: David Broom has been hired for the vacant fire fighter position. David has been in the fire department as a volunteer and has filled a part-time capacity. He will begin full-time employment August 30th. Lieutenant Tammy Pavey submitted her resignation letter. She is returning to WCU's Police Department.
- The Town's auditors, Gould Killian CPA Group P.A., are onsite this week conducting fieldwork.
- The RFQ for Ridgeway Street is due August 31st and the one for PARTF is due August 30th. If we receive three proposals, staff will begin by ranking the qualifications. If three proposals are not received, it will need to be advertised again.
- R-5600/NC 107 Update: NCDOT provided a project construction update and a GIS tool that both have been shared on the project page on our website.
- Town offices are closed for Labor Day on September 7th. Monday's trash route will be run on Tuesday, September 8th.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Aimee Sumner, Police Chief, reported on the following:

- Reviewed calls for service for the month.
- Reviewed department training for the month.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT: Jake Scott reported the following:

- Groundworx has completed the foundation rehabilitation at the Community Table.
- Lifeway Church has completed the repairs on their side of the Scott Creek wall.
- The annual solid waste report has been submitted with 765 tons of household waste collected last year.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Mike Beck, Fire Chief, reported the following:

- 1260 calls so far this year.
- The department has had 2 resignations, and one position has been filled.

MAIN STREET REPORT: None.

PLANNING BOARD REPORT: None.

TWSA BOARD REPORT: Manager Dowling reported that TWSA is working on a grant expansion.

NEW BUSINESS

VETERANS PARADE APPEAL REQUEST: Sheila Setzer, Director of Veterans Services for Jackson County, addressed the board and requested approval of a Veterans Parade. She explained that the original request was for November 11th but she was given November 8th as the date by Manager Dowling. Mayor Phillips asked why November 11th could not be accommodated. Dowling explained that the original request was from Mark Watson through town and back in the middle of the day which would require substantial detour routes and logistical issues. Staff suggested the 2-block route to accommodate the parade on Sunday, November 8th. Bill Loucks, a veteran attending the meeting, noted that celebrations for Memorial Day are not moved and believes it is disrespectful to move Veterans Day celebrations. The board continued to discuss the parade request and logistics. Other veterans, including Crystal Cochran and Cathy Loucks spoke in support of parade but noted that Sunday would be tough because of church. Commissioner McGuire noted that he would like a policy to keep the board from deciding on such things. He also added that he wanted the Veterans Parade to be only US Veterans. Bill Loucks, a veteran attending, added that it is for all Veterans, including Confederate Veterans who fought for their beliefs because they are considered US Veterans. Sheila Setzer added it will include all Veterans. Ben Woody, also from the Veterans Service Office, added that they were in agreement for the parade to be on November 8th this year but moving forward would like it to be on November 11th. *Commissioner McGuire made a motion to approve the request and resolution to close the street as presented for a 2-block parade for Sunday, November 8, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.*

Regular Board Meeting August 27, 2026

ADJOURNMENT: *Commissioner Waldrum made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:54 a.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

Johnny Phillips
Mayor

Angela D. Stanley
Town Clerk