



TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, January 12, 2023 at 5:30 PM
Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

MINUTES

PRESENT: Mary Gelbaugh, Commissioner
Ben Guiney, Commissioner
Greg McPherson, Commissioner
David Nestler, Vice-Mayor
Natalie Newman, Commissioner

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

ABSENT: Lynda Sossamon, Mayor

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Mayor Nestler called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

STAFF PRESENT: Lynn Bryant (Finance Officer), Jake Scott (Public Works Director), and Chris Hatton (Police Chief).

VISITORS: None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner McPherson made a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT: None.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Nestler reported he recently met with Sarah Thompson with the Dogwood Health Trust to discuss the need for a coworking space in Sylva and the possibility of funding through grants for a feasibility study and rehabilitation of a meeting space. They also discussed money for housing to purchase a parcel of land for housing. He would like for it to be a 3-way partnership between Dogwood Health Trust, Jackson County and the Town of Sylva. Commissioner Guiney thanked staff for all of their work on holiday activities in the Town. He requested that the Public Works department look at repair needs on Ripple Run. Commissioner McPherson also asked the Public Works departments to look at repairing holes in the Cogdill parking lot. He thanked staff for working on the skate park. McPherson noted that he and Bernadette Peters, Main Street Director, attended a county commissioner meeting to present a grant application request for the Municipal Grant. County Commissioners requested further information before they would consider the application. McPherson noted that he was not pleased with the Commissioner's responses.

McPherson made a motion to add an item to the agenda to discuss the Municipal Grant application. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Dowling reported the following:

Project Updates:

- **Allen Street:** CDC is finalizing the contract with Wurster, and the Town should be receiving the draft for final review in the coming days. Duke Energy has completed their relocation of overhead power lines, and Frontier is waiting on the appropriate cable to start their relocation, which will begin as soon as it is received. NCDEQ has received the permit application for Soil and Erosion Control measures, and they asked that we make a couple

changes to clarify the excavation plan and include construction designs for the soil nail walls. CDC will be submitting these additional items, however that process is still on track. Kessel has conducted inclinometer readings that show that slope failure is still moving, though these are extremely small movements, they are significant enough to tell us that the slope has not stopped moving and isn't likely to stop on its own.

- **Depot Bathroom:** Odell Thompson has submitted more detailed renderings, and we are at the phase of the project where he and the engineers are ready to discuss fixtures, specific design, building material etc. This meeting will occur in the coming weeks. Once stamped plans are completed those will be submitted to Blue Ridge Southern/Watco for approval of the lease application.

Other Updates:

- Town offices will be closed Monday, January 16th in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
- NCLM legislative goals were emailed to board members and a response is needed with your top 10 out of the 16 goals. Those will be sent to NCLM.
- The GUTM planning process has started. Tammy and Mark Haskett will be the festival coordinators this year.
- Sylva was voted as the location for a Tesla supercharger. Details are forthcoming about the project.
- Employment Update: Ty Foxx has resigned to accept a position with the Sheriff's Department. Albin Gashi has been working reserves for several months and is going to fill the vacant officer position.

NEW BUSINESS

FUNDING FOR BRIDGE PARK STORMWATER PROJECT: Manager Dowling reported that the Town of Sylva, unfortunately, did not receive the Rural Transformation Grant for this project so the board will need to discuss funding to move forward on the project. The total cost of the project is now estimated at \$758,357 and the Town previously committed \$418,000 to the project. There is a shortfall of \$340,357 that the board will need to address. Commissioner Nestler suggested that the Town apply for the TDA grant where the cycle is due by June 30, 2023. Commissioner McPherson agreed with Nestler about the TDA grant. Nick Breedlove, Director of the TDA, believes that this project is a good fit for this type of grant. The board discussed the timing of other projects in the Town and funding awards. Commissioner Newman made a motion to direct staff to apply for the \$400,000 TDA grant for the Bridge Park Stormwater Project. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

AMENDED FY 2023-2024 BUDGET CALENDAR: Manager Dowling explained that the agenda had been amended to add a discussion of non-budget priorities on March 23, 2023, and the balanced draft budget submitted to the Board will be on April 19th. *Commissioner Guiney made a motion to approve the amended FY 2023-2024 budget calendar. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

JACKSON COUNTY MUNICIPAL GRANT APPLICATION DISCUSSION: Commissioners discussed the recently submitted municipal grant application for public art related items and whether or not to withdraw the application due to requests from the Jackson County Commissioners. The County decided not to proceed with approval of the application and instead ask for further clarification. The board discussed options for the art project. The consensus was to continue with the application for the municipal grant offered by Jackson County.

ADJOURNMENT: *Commissioner Guiney made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:24 p.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

David Nestler
Vice-Mayor

Amanda W. Murajda
Town Clerk