



TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, May 22, 2025 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
Johnny Phillips, Mayor
Brad Waldrop, Commissioner

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

ABSENT: Joseph Waldrum, Commissioner

CALL TO ORDER

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

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

VISITORS: Luther Jones, Jay Spiro and Sara White.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Luther Jones address the board and expresses his concerns regarding the Fontana Regional Library system.

MAYOR'S REPORT

None.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT: Commissioners reported the following:

Waldrop—Thanked those who attended the County Commissioner's meeting regarding the library

MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Dowling reported the following:

- Budget: The public hearing on the budget is Thursday, May 29th at 5:30 p.m. The budget is scheduled to be adopted June 12th.
- A proposed rezoning public hearing will be held on June 12th for the parcel of land in the ETJ for the middle school. The County is requesting a zoning map amendment from General Business to Institutional. The Planning Board unanimously voted to recommend the Town Board approve this request.
- R-5600: The let date on the R-5600 project is now November 18, 2025. Funding is still committed. This delay is due to utilities.
- Town offices will be closed Monday, May 26, 2025, for Memorial Day.
- The employee wellness fair will be held on June 10th from 7:30 a.m.-9:00 a.m.
- Open enrollment for supplemental benefits was held May 13th.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT: Jake Scott, Public Works Director, reported the following:

- The department has been working to clean up from the weekend storm that caused damage across town. A new landslide area was discovered on Allen Street, but it appears to be surface runoff. Engineers will evaluate it and let Jake know their findings.
- Bryson Park renovations are on schedule.
- Charles Street and Fincannon Road are scheduled for resurfacing.

- The Public Works Department and Emergency Management will be working on a proposed helicopter site at Pinnacle Park.
- The department still has one vacancy.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Robbie Carter, Assistant Police Chief, reported the following:

- Two vacancies remain in the department.
- The department received new body camera equipment and thanked the board for their support.
- The department received new radars to upfit the entire patrol fleet.
- Sgt. Flesch completed traffic crash reconstruction certification.
- The Sergeant promotion process is upcoming to fill a vacancy.
- Reviewed calls for service.

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

- Calls for service have increased and currently stand at around 585 since January, approximately 100 more than the same time last year.

MAIN STREET REPORT: Bernadette Peters reported the following:

- Hosted the NC Main Street regional directors meeting.
- Concerts on the Creek begin Friday, May 23rd.
- Quarterly merchant meeting is May 22, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. at Martha's Place.

TWSA BOARD REPORT:

- Budget was approved Tuesday, May 20th.
- The Clearwell project is moving forward and on schedule.

PINNACLE PARK REPORT:

- None.

NEW BUSINESS

ABC BOARD APPOINTMENT: Mayor Phillips' seat on the ABC Board expires June 30th. He has served one full term on the ABC Board, which started July 2022. Mayor Phillips would like to be appointed to serve this upcoming 3-year term. *Commissioner Estridge made a motion to reappoint Mayor Phillips to a second term on the ABC Board. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

Jackson County appointed David Nolan as Chairman of the ABC Board, therefore the Town will need to also appoint the Chairman. Both the Town and the County appoint the Chairman each year. *Commissioner Estridge made a motion reappoint David Noland as Chairman. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

ROTARY CLUB PEACE POLE DISCUSSION: Rotary has raised \$4,300 and hired David Burris to craft a 6 ft. tall metal sculpture with a 6" X6" base. The sculpture says "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in English, Spanish, and Cherokee. Rotary initially wanted to install it at Bridge Park, but we do not have space for permanent sculptures at Bridge Park. Manager Dowling and Jake Scott suggested placing the Peace Pole on the concrete behind the new public restroom and Rotary has approved that location. Jay Spiro, Rotary representative, discussed the history of a peace pole with the board.

SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST—THE JACKSON COUNTY FARMERS MARKET—ALCOHOL SERVICE: The Jackson County Farmers Market has submitted an alcohol request for Bridge Park September 20, 2025, for a salsa contest fundraiser. Innovation will provide alcohol. This application is before the board because it is a request to have alcohol on town owned property. *Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to approve the request. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

ADJOURNMENT: Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 a.m. *The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

Johnny Phillips
Mayor

Amanda W. Murajda
Town Clerk