



TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, October 10, 2024 at 5:30 PM
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 5:30 p.m.

STAFF PRESENT: Bernadette Peters (Economic Development Director), Keith Buchanan (Assistant Fire Chief) and Mike Beck (Fire Chief).

VISITORS: Lisa McBride

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Phillips reported that the Town of Sylva was fortunate to not have suffered a large amount of damage during Hurricane Helene. He thanked everyone for their support of the surrounding communities and counties east of Jackson County.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT: All commissioners thanked all persons involved in helping clean up after Hurricane Helene. Commissioner Gelbaugh noted on October 19, 2024, Uncomplicated Kitchen would be hosting a cooking class at the library. Commissioner Brown thanked the Fire Department for allowing him to do a ride-along during the hurricane.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Dowling reported the following:

- Dowling thanked the town departments for their work during Hurricane Helene and expressed care and concern for neighbors to the east of Jackson County. The wall behind Town Hall was damaged by the hurricane significantly and the skate ramp is a total loss.
- Bryson Park Update: Dowling and Jake Scott met with Jeff Bliss on furnishings for Bryson Park to discuss tables, benches, bike racks, grills, exercise equipment, and other items the board and public expressed interest in previously. A finalized contract with Bartlett Operations for the pavilion renovation is forthcoming. The estimated construction time is 5 months.
- Audit site work has been postponed due to Hurricane Helene.
- Employment Update: Blake Cabe started full-time employment at the Fire Department. The Jackson County Health Department offered flu shots to Town employees this morning.
- I know it seems like a long way off, but the Christmas Parade is December 1st at 3:00 p.m. This year the parade falls on Thanksgiving weekend. The parade application will be up available soon.

NEW BUSINESS

FIRE DEPARTMENT REQUEST TO PURCHASE PUMPER TRUCK: Fire Chief, Mike Beck, addressed the board and explained that the department is in need of purchasing a new pumper truck. The truck would be paid out of capital reserve funds. Beck would like to open the bidding process on November 1, 2024 and have bids submitted by December 2, 2024. *Commissioner Brown made a motion to authorize the Fire Department to proceed with the bid process. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

PLANNING BOARD TERM LIMITS AND APPOINTMENTS: Planning Board members with expired terms are Geoffrey Hirsch (completed his first term), Rose Bauguess (ETJ representative, unexpired term), Russ Harris (completed his third term), and Kendall Waldrop (completed her first term). All members would like to be reappointed for another term. The Planning Board still has a limit of three terms, but since a 4th term was added for the ABC Board, it is recommended the Board add a fourth term for the Planning Board too. Russ Harris has served on the Planning Board the longest of the members and his background knowledge is incredibly helpful. *Commissioner Estridge made a motion to amend the Planning Board term limits to 4 terms. The motion carried with a unanimous vote. Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to reappoint Geoffrey Hirsch, Rose Bauguess, Russ Harris and Kendall Waldrop. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS: The Town has received Economic Development Committee applications from Donald Green, Marne Harris, Josh Carpenter, Tim Jones, Don Hensley and Johnny Maney. This is a seven-member committee with five voting members. Marne Harris is applying as the Small Business Center appointee. Josh Carpenter is applying as the Regional Economic Development appointee. These two seats would be ex-officio. Commissioner Jones asked to be recused because his brother has applied for a seat on the committee. *Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to recuse Commissioner Jones from voting. The motion carried with a unanimous vote. Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to appoint Marne Harris and Josh Carpenter to ex-officio seats. The motion carried with a unanimous vote. Commissioner Brown made a motion to appoint Jack Hennessee and Don Hensley to a 1-year term, expiring December 31, 2025. The motion carried with a unanimous vote. Commissioner Estridge made a motion to appoint Donald Green, Tim Jones and Johnny Maney to a 3-year term, expiring December 31, 2027. The motion carried with a unanimous.*

MSSA FAÇADE GRANT APPLICATIONS APPROVAL: There are three façade grants to be approved to utilize the remaining funding for this cycle.

- o Crystal Pace for Ilda, 462 W. Main Street. It will include a decorative space between the crosswalks that includes planters, repairing drips and windows, as well as painting on the Mill Street side of the building. The total cost is \$2170.80 which amounts to a \$1,085.40 match.
- o David Schulman for the Yoga Mill, 620 Mill Street to replace the metal awning with a metal framed canvas awning. The total cost is \$,5336, which amounts to a \$2,668 match.
- o Jay Coward for Coward Hicks and Siler, 705 W. Main Street to redo the connecting ally hardscape and landscaping. The total cost is \$1,545, which amounts to a \$772.50 match.

Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to approve all three applications for grant funding. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST: FARM TO TABLE DINNER—ALCOHOL REQUEST: Lisa McBride is applying for a special event alcohol permit for a farm-to-table dinner December 7th. Sante – The Wine Bar is the alcohol permit holder for the event. The event will be held at Bridge Park. *Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to approve the event request. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

HISTORICAL SIGN AT NEW PUBLIC RESTROOM: Luther Jones previously presented an idea for having a sign depicting the depot restroom as the center point of town. Since the restroom is nearing completion, the board needs to finalize the sign. Manager Dowling suggested adding pictures. Being no further comment, Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to move forward with completing and installing the sign. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

ADJOURNMENT: *Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:02 p.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

Johnny Phillips
Mayor

Amanda W. Murajda
Town Clerk