



TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Thursday, August 24, 2023 at 9:00 AM
Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

MINUTES

PRESENT: Mary Gelbaugh, Mayor Pro-Tem
Ben Guiney, Commissioner
Greg McPherson, Commissioner
David Nestler, Mayor
Natalie Newman, Commissioner
Brad Waldrop, Commissioner

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

ABSENT:

CALL TO ORDER

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

STAFF PRESENT: Jake Scott (Public Works Director), Bernadette Peters (Main Street Director), Keith Buchanan (Assistant Fire Chief), and John Thomas (Asst. Police Chief).

VISITORS: Luther Jones

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

None.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Gelbaugh thanked the Sylva Police Department for their extra patrol efforts during the first days back-to-school. She also offered condolences to the family of Tina Farmer who passed away unexpectedly.

Commissioner Waldrop announced that there would be a candidate forum at the Jackson County Library on September 28, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. and noted that it needed to be added to the agenda because a majority of the board would be in attendance for the town election. *Commissioner Waldrop made this a motion to add the item to the agenda. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

Commissioner Guiney thanked the Public Works department for installing cross walk signs.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Dowling reported the following:

- NC Commerce Department Secretary Machel Sanders visited Wednesday, August 16th. The purpose of her visit was to learn about the Main Street program while touring women and minority owned businesses. Stops on the tour included the Chamber of Commerce, Fusions Spa, Farmhouse, Black Balsam Outdoor, Baxley's Chocolates, Jackson's General, and Bridge Park. The Secretary and her staff were very complimentary of Sylva.
- Employment Update: Pierson Owen resigned to take a job at WCU. We are advertising for a maintenance technician.
- The lease with Blue Ridge Rail has been executed.
- Town offices will be closed for Labor Day September 4th.

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- Administration staff will be busy with audit fieldwork September 5th-8th.
- Tax bills will be mailed within the next few days. We will include a flyer with a QR code for the Pinnacle Park recreational needs survey for the master plan.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT: Jake Scott reported the following:

- Scott gave an update on Allen Street repairs.
- Equinox is working on permitting for the Bridge Park project.
- Jackson County Litter Sweep is September 16-30.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT: John Thomas reported the following:

- Department is fully staffed after two recent hires.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Keith Buchanan reported on the following:

- Reviewed calls for service for 2023.
- Department is fully staffed after a recent hire.
- Training burns will be conducted throughout Town in the next few months as part of the NCDOT R5600 project.

MAIN STREET REPORT: Bernadette Peters reported the following:

- Updated the board on current projects.
- Thanked the board for approving work with Outdoor Economies.

TWSA BOARD REPORT: None.

PINNACLE BOARD REPORT: Mayor Nestler reported the following:

- Recreational needs survey will be distributed with property tax bills.

NEW BUSINESS

CIVIL PENALTIES DISCUSSION: John Thomas addressed the board and explained that 2021 legislation in the state of North Carolina decriminalized all town ordinances. There are two that the police department would like recodified as misdemeanors. Discharging a firearm in city limits and Molotov cocktails. He explained each ordinance. The board discussed each one. *Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to make discharging a firearm in city limits and Molotov cocktails misdemeanors as well as remove section C of chapter 24:38. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST—WARD PLUMBING & HEATING COMPANY PICNIC WITH ALCOHOL: Ward Plumbing & Heating submitted an application for review to have alcohol at Bridge Park October 5th from 4:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. for their employee and family appreciation party. Innovation Brewing will supply the alcohol under their ABC permit. Brad Waldrop abstains from voting as he is part owner of the company. *Commissioner Guiney made a motion to approve the request. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

SCHEDULE A MEETING OF THE TOWN BOARD: There will be a community forum for candidates of the upcoming Town Board election held at the Jackson County Library on September 28, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. where a majority of the Town Board will be present and hosted by Indivisible Common Ground. *Commissioner Newman made a motion to schedule the meeting. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

ADJOURNMENT: *Commissioner Guiney made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:42 a.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

David Nestler
Mayor

Amanda W. Murajda
Town Clerk