



TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, July 10, 2025 at 5:30 PM
Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

MINUTES

PRESENT: Jonathan Brown, Commissioner
Mary Gelbaugh, Mayor Pro-Tem
Johnny Phillips, Mayor
Brad Waldrop, Commissioner
Joseph Waldrum, Commissioner

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

ABSENT: Blitz Estridge, Commissioner

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Phillips called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

STAFF PRESENT: Fire Department: Eric Fanslau, Allen Orcutt, Blake Cabe, Kevin Burrell, James Blakley, Brian Wellmon, Keith Buchanan, Mike Beck, James Surrosco, Abbie Smith, Mike Farmer, Sam Shuler, Belinda Clawson and Mallary Caraway.

VISITORS: Jay Coward, Shawn Oberlies, and Luther Jones

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Luther Jones expressed his thoughts to the board on the decision to remove the FRL Resolution from the agenda at the June 12, 2025, meeting.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Phillips reported that NCDOT is working on plans for a crossover bypass between exits 83 and 85 for emergency response access.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

Commissioners reported the following:

Commissioner Waldrum: Thanked everyone for their work on the July 4th festivities.

Commissioner Brown: Also thanked everyone for their work on the July 4th festivities. Brown addressed concerns regarding the FRL resolution. He noted that the board should be careful in what resolutions are presented and approved. Brown attended the Pinnacle Park board meeting and updated the board on progress with trails and signs.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

Manager Dowling reported the following:

- Employment Updates: Terran Brown started as a Patrol Officer July 1st. Terran was formerly with the Sheriff's Department. Tim Ogle started Monday in the vacant Maintenance Technician position in Public Works. The new positions in the Fire Department are Logan Green, who started July 6th, and David Broom, who will start his employment July 14th. We want to extend a warm welcome to the Town of Sylva.
- The mast arms on the streetlights will be painted this month. The painting started last week.

- Bryson Park is getting very close to being completed. Over the last few weeks grills have been installed, the wall at the basketball court was completed, the basketball court was paved, and the fence was finished. Remaining work includes painting the basketball court, tying in the rubber playground mat to the sidewalk, water fountain installation, and cleaning up the grounds.
- The Town did not receive any proposals for engineering on the Scotts Creek wall behind Town Hall. It has been sent out again and proposals are now due mid-August.
- The mud on Allen Street was caused by surface runoff missing the drain and jumping the curb instead of an actual failure.
- Administration staff had a preliminary site visit with the auditor on June 26th and they will return in September for field work.

NEW BUSINESS:

FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR AWARD: Mayor Phillips presented the Firefighter of the Year award to Brian Wellmon.

RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT GRANT-RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM: Jay Coward addressed the board and expressed his appreciation for the support given by the Town board. Manger Dowling explained that the Board needs to approve the resolution accepting the Recreational Trails Program grant so that the contract can be executed. The Town was notified six months ago that this \$92,000 grant was awarded to construct an additional 1.9 miles of trail at Fisher Creek. This grant application was part of the Pinnacle Park Master Plan. The grant along with the Town's \$23,000 match will connect the West Fork and East Fork trail, build a footbridge, and provide access to a waterfall that hasn't been visible in the past. The Town will use the grant funding to contract with a trail builder to construct the trail section. *Commissioner Waldrum made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

RESOLUTION OF EXEMPTION FROM ARCHITECT/ENGINEER/SURVEYOR QUALIFICATIONS-BASED SELECTION: The Resolution for Exemption from the Qualification Based Selection process will allow the Town to contract for grant administration of the Recreational Trails Program grant without going through the RFP process since the fee will be under \$50,000. The Town would like to contract with Equinox to administer this grant since they completed the Master Plan and submitted the grant application for review. Grant administration is included in the Fisher Creek budget. *Commissioner Brown made a motion to approve the resolution of exemption. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT AND ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDING-DUKE ENERGY FOUNDATION LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT GRANT: The Resolution of Support for the Duke Energy Foundation's local environmental impact grant is for \$25,000. If awarded, the Town will use the \$25,000 to hire a trail builder to improve 300 feet of the Forest Therapy Trail, making it more accessible and include signage along the trail. This resolution authorizes staff to accept the grant if it is awarded. *Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to approve the resolution of support. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

ADJOURNMENT: *Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 p.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

Johnny Phillips
Mayor

Amanda W. Murajda
Town Clerk