



TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, November 10, 2022 at 5:30 PM
Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

MINUTES

PRESENT: Lynda Sossamon, Mayor
Mary Gelbaugh, Commissioner
Ben Guiney, Commissioner
Greg McPherson, Commissioner
David Nestler, Vice-Mayor
Natalie Newman, Commissioner
Amanda Murajda, Town Clerk
Eric Ridenour, Town Attorney

ABSENT: Paige Dowling, Town Manager

CALL TO ORDER

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

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

VISITORS: Sarah Cochran, Garret Craig, Emory Schneider-Green, Mary Asgari, Cameron Walker, Ken Joseph, George Neslen, David Albaugh, Anne Link and Kevin Ritchie.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Sossamon reported that Southern City magazine features an article on the Town of Sylva's ARPA plans. She also encouraged members to send letters of encouragement to newly elected representatives for the district.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Gelbaugh reported that the traffic signal at Spring Street is still not operating correctly and requested Jake Scott investigate and report to NCDOT. Commissioner Nestler noted that he hoped to have a draft sidewalk ordinance ready for board members at the December meeting. Commissioner Guiney gave a community Covid update. He added that the crosswalk near Schulman Street needed to be repaired.

PUBLIC HEARING—ORDINANCE AMENDMENT: SECTION 30 STREETS & SIDEWALKS (PUBLIC SOLICITATION): Mayor Sossamon opened the public hearing at 5:38 p.m. Eric Ridenour, Town Attorney, gave an overview of the proposed panhandling ordinance and the intention behind it. He explained that it was brought to the Board's attention by several citizens and the Board decided to review panhandling in the Town of Sylva. Ridenour explained that the ordinance is designed to prevent people from soliciting aggressively.

Members of the public speaking against a panhandling ordinance were Sarah Cochran, Garrett Craig, Emory Schneider-Green, Mary Asgari, Ken Joseph, David Albaugh and Ken Richey. All expressed their concerns over the rights of citizens to participate in panhandling. George Neslen addressed the board and explained that he is one of the citizens who requested the Town look at panhandling actions. *Being no further comment, Commissioner Nestler made a motion to close the hearing at 6:19 p.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance Amendment: Section 30 Streets & Sidewalks (Public Solicitation): Commissioner Guiney thanked those who attended the meeting. Guiney added that he had an issue with aggressive behavior and this ordinance doesn't address that. He does not agree with the ordinance. Commissioner Nestler believes this kind of ordinance makes the Town look bad. Commissioner Gelbaugh thinks it could work if some items were removed from the draft, including 3, 14, and 15. Commissioner McPherson added that he thought the ordinance placed judgement on others. *The amendment dies for lack of a motion.*

Jackson County Municipal Grant Application: Bernadette Peters, Main Street Director, addressed the board and explained that the grant application was for a Sylva Art Walk launch. It would include Murals on Mill with rotating artists to be compensated, a Sylva Art Walk rack card and Sylva Walk kiosks throughout the Town to hold maps and information. *Commissioner Nestler made a motion to approve the resolution to apply for the Jackson County Municipal Grant Application and if awarded accept the funds and authorize the Town Manager and Main Street Director to implement the project. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.*

TWSA Board Appointment: Amanda Murajda reported that Michael (Mick) McCardle's seat on the TWSA Board will expire December 31, 2022. McCardle is eligible for one more term and is interested in serving. *Commissioner McPherson made a motion to reappoint Michael (Mick) McCardle to a third term on the TWSA board. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

CLOSED SESSION: *Commissioner McPherson made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to NCGS. 143-318-11(a)(3) to consult with the town attorney at 6:49 p.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

Commissioner Guiney made a motion to come out of closed session. The motion carried with a unanimous vote and the Board entered into regular session at 7:11 p.m. No action was taken during closed session.

ADJOURNMENT: *Commissioner Guiney made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 p.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

Lynda Sossamon
Mayor

Amanda W. Murajda
Town Clerk