



TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, September 10, 2026, at 5:30 PM
Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

MINUTES

PRESENT: Perry Matthews, Commissioner
Samuel McGuire, Commissioner
Johnny Phillips, Mayor
Blitz Estridge, Commissioner
Brad Waldrop, Mayor Pro Tem

Paige Dowling, Town Manager
Angela Stanley, Town Clerk
Eric Ridenour, Town Attorney

ABSENT: Joseph Waldrum, Commissioner

CALL TO ORDER

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

STAFF PRESENT: Amanda Murajda (HR Officer).

VISITORS: Robin Garrett, Mardy Ashe, Ron Arps, Deborah Smith, Justin Castle, Representative Anna Ferguson.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Ron Arps, with Jackson Environmental Stewards, addressed the board about a project to increase the number of trees in Sylva. They would like to plant approximately a thousand trees along the Highway 107 corridor. The organization would use grant funding and would like a letter of support from the board supporting this project.

Deborah Smith expressed her appreciation for the approval of the Veteran's parade.

MAYOR'S REPORT: None.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

Commissioner McGuire reminded the board of Jackson County's 175th anniversary Saturday September 12, 2026, 4pm-8pm at the Whittier Heritage grounds. Mayor Pro-tem Waldrop expressed his appreciation to the board for the approval of the Veteran's parade during his absence. He noted one concern regarding the July 4th parade in Dillsboro about participants marching wearing confederate uniforms and carrying confederate flags. Commissioner Estridge reported that during last month's Main Street Association meeting, it was good to see tourists downtown from across the United States. Commissioner Matthews reported that Reflections of Inspiration will be hosting a golf tournament, "Driving out violence one swing at a time", on October 11th at the Smoky Mountain Country Club.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Dowling reported the following:

- Employment Updates:
 - Waterfall Gardens apartment complex project on Savannah Drive received a federal housing grant.
 - Jaden Johnson was hired to fill the vacancy at the Fire Department. They are fully staffed now.

- Scott Creek Retaining Wall Update: FEMA has reviewed the edited Phase 1 Archaeological Survey, and it has been sent to the requesting State and Tribal parties to review. October 8, 2026, is the deadline for the comment period.
- Neither the Ridgeway Street RFQ nor the PARTF RFQ received the required three responses, so they have been readvertised with a new due date of September 15th. After advertising twice, only one RFQ is required.
- Tax bills were mailed to property owners late last week.

NEW BUSINESS:

PROCLAMATION FOR CONSTITUTION WEEK 2026: Mardy Ashe, representing the National Society of the Daughters of American Revolution, addressed the board and requested approval of a Proclamation that declares September 17-23 as Constitution week. *Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to approve the proclamation. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

SPECIAL EVENT STREET CLOSURE RESOLUTIONS:

- (A) **EVENT RESOLUTION—TREAT STREET:** A request has been made by the Main Street Sylva Association to close Main Street for the purpose of having a “Treat Street” festival for Halloween on October 31, 2026.
- (B) **EVENT RESOLUTION—WCU HOMECOMING PARADE:** A request has been made by Western Carolina University to close Main Street for the purpose of having a homecoming parade on October 23, 2026.
- (C) **PARADE RESOLUTION—CHRISTMAS PARADE:** A request has been made by the Main Street Sylva Association to close Main Street for the purpose of having a Christmas parade on December 6, 2026.
- (D) **EVENT RESOLUTION—GREENING UP THE MOUNTAINS:** A request has been made by the Main Street Sylva Association to close Main Street for the purpose of having the Greening Up the Mountains festival on April 24, 2027.
- (E) **EVENT RESOLUTION—JULY 4TH CELEBRATION:** A request has been made by the Main Street Sylva Association to close Main Street for the purpose of having a July 4th celebration on July 4, 2027.

Mayor Phillips explained there had been a lot of discussion regarding parades and establishing a policy. He also noted that some board members would like to make adjustments to the resolutions presented on this agenda. Commissioner Waldrop expressed interest in approving events for the remainder of this fiscal year and agrees it would be helpful to revisit a policy specifically trying to address differences between parades and street closures. The board discussed other options and routes but staff will need to evaluate all concerns. *Commissioner Waldrop made a motion that all resolutions for the remainder of this fiscal year, which would remove the July 4th resolution be approved. The July 4th temporary street closure resolution will be revisited at a later date. The motion was carried with a unanimous vote.*

ADJOURNMENT: *Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:54 p.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

Johnny Phillips
Mayor

Angela D. Stanley
Town Clerk