



# TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Thursday, October 27, 2022 at 9:00 AM  
Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

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## MINUTES

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**PRESENT:** Mary Gelbaugh, Commissioner  
Ben Guiney, Commissioner  
Greg McPherson, Commissioner  
David Nestler, Vice-Mayor  
Natalie Newman, Commissioner

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

**ABSENT:** Lynda Sossamon, Mayor

### CALL TO ORDER

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

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jake Scott (Public Works Director), Mike Beck (Fire Chief), Keith Buchanan (Asst. Fire Chief), Bernadette Peters (Main Street Director), Albin Gashi (PD), Robbie Carter (PD), Ty Foxx (PD), Bruce Moore (PD), John Thomas (Asst. Police Chief) and Chris Hatton (Police Chief).

**VISITORS:** Dave Russell, Cyndy Caravelis, Galadriel Lavere and Greg Bauguess.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

*Commissioner McPherson made a motion to remove the closed session from the agenda. The motion carried with a unanimous vote. Commissioner McPherson made a motion to approve the amended agenda. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

### MAYOR'S REPORT

Vice Mayor Nestler reported that he has a first draft written of a sidewalk ordinance. He would like to discuss with Manager Dowling and Town Attorney Ridenour for a future agenda.

### COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner McPherson noted the passing of Lambert Wilson and Jen Gordon who were two community members who had a lot of passion and care for the community. Commissioner Newman gave birthday wishes to Sylva Herald reporter Dave Russell. She also mentioned an opportunity for food truck owners to attend a food truck boot camp in conjunction the EBCI on November 9, 2022.

**MANAGER'S REPORT:** Manager Dowling reported the following:

- Treat Street is Monday, October 31, 2022 from 5-7:00 p.m.
- The WCU Homecoming Parade will be November 4, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.
- The WNC Pottery Festival will be held at Bridge Park November 5, 2022 from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.
- Downtown Restroom: The depot survey is complete. Odell Thompson has contacted engineers for the public restroom. Looking at the timeline of their projects, designs, and bid process, Odell anticipates having documents for the railroad to approve in February.
- Bridge Park Stormwater Project: After the Bridge Park Stormwater Project ordinance is approved the contract with Equinox for project management and oversight of the project can be executed.

**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT:** Jake Scott reported the following:

- Leaf collection has begun and the town will deliver to the community garden.

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- Public Works is preparing for upcoming events.
- Duke Energy recently installed power for the skate park and Scott hopes to install surveillance cameras next week.
- He rural transformation grant deadline is November 1, 2022; Scott thanked Ann Wade and Becca Scott for their help.
- Scott is currently coordinating overhead utility relocation on Allen Street.
- Scott, along with TWSA director Daniel Manring, participated in a field trip with 7<sup>th</sup> graders on stormwater systems in the city limits.
- Holiday decorations will go up in November and the Christmas tree will be up December 1, 2022.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT:** Chris Hatton reported the following:

- As of November 3, 2022, the department will once again be fully staffed.
- Albin Gashi, from the Wendale PD, is now working as an Auxiliary Officer.
- Walk for Hope was very successful, and the attendance was around 100 people.
- Event season planning is underway; the department is working on solutions for security during events.
- Call for service in the last month total approximately 1200 calls.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT:** Mike Beck reported the following:

- There have been 977 calls since January 1, 2022, which is 200 more than all of the previous year.
- Members of the paid staff and seven volunteers are currently in training.
- Fire Academy training will begin in Haywood County for members who have not completed the training.

**MAIN STREET REPORT:** Bernadette Peters reported the following:

- Peters attended a State Workforce Conference.
- Peters reviewed the upcoming activities and events in the Town of Sylva.
- MSSA will be launching winter bingo through the Promotions Committee so that people are incentivized to visit all merchants.
- There will be a food truck program at the EBCI.
- Christmas parade board participation: Peters suggested that the Town Board, staff and families decorate wagons to carry candy and walk in the parade following at the front of the parade behind the WCU Chancellor, SCC President and Town Mayor so that they can stop at the fountain to watch the rest of the parade.

**TWSA BOARD REPORT:** Daniel Manring, TWSA Director, was present for the meeting and thanked Jake Scott for his help with a field trip for local schools. He added that TWSA did a pump startup and the new Jackson Paper location and reminded the public to always report any leak they noticed.

**PINNACLE BOARD REPORT:**

Commissioner Nestler reported that a workday was scheduled for Saturday, October 29, 2022, and that a biodiversity study was underway.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Police Department Special Recognition:** Chief Hatton presented Assistant Police Chief John Thomas with a plaque in recognition of leadership training he has completed through NC State University Administrative Officers Management Program. It is the premier law enforcement management training for leadership.

**Police Department Community Care Program:** Cyndy Caravelis addressed the board and gave an update on the Community Care Program. Several months earlier, she and her colleague, Katy Allen approached the Sylva Police Department about implementing a Community Care social work program. The program has proven very successful. Chief Hatton expressed to the board that the program has become an important resource for officers to have when responding to certain calls. Galadriel Lavere, the current intern, gave the board an overview of what she sees and what services she provides when responding to calls with officers.

**Allen Street Project Ordinance Updates:** Manager Dowling reported that the amended version of the Allen Street Capital Project Ordinance includes \$63,500 previously spent with Kessel Engineering for geological exploration. This should have been included in the prior version since it shows a more accurate picture of project costs. *Commissioner Guiney made a motion to approve the amended Allen Street Capital Project Ordinance. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**Jackson County Emergency Operations Plan/Hazard Mitigation Plan:** Manager Dowling explained that every 5 years the county and its municipalities are required to approve the Jackson County Emergency Operations Plan. Jackson County

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approved the plan September 20, 2022. Their letter of approval and the presentation Todd Dillard, Director of Emergency Services, gave to the county commissioners are included in this agenda packet. FEMA mandates the Smoky Mountain Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan be renewed every 5 years by the counties of Jackson, Haywood, Macon, Swain, Graham, and Cherokee along with their municipalities. *Commissioner Guiney made a motion to approve the Jackson County Emergency Operations Plan. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**Cancel November 24, 2022 Board of Commissioner Meeting:** The November 24, 2022 Board of Commissioners Meeting falls on the Thanksgiving holiday. *Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to cancel the meeting. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**Cancel November 24, 2022 Planning Board Meeting:** The November 24, 2022 Planning Board Meeting falls on the Thanksgiving holiday. *Commissioner Newman made a motion to cancel the meeting. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**Christmas Parade Discussion on Board Participation:** During the Main Street Report, Bernadette Peters suggested that the Town Board, staff and families decorate wagons to carry candy and walk in the parade following at the front of the parade behind the WCU Chancellor, SCC President and Town Mayor so that they can stop at the fountain to watch the rest of the parade. The Board agreed to participate in the parade with this suggestion.

**ADJOURNMENT:** *Commissioner Guiney made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 a.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

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David Nestler  
Vice-Mayor

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Amanda W. Murajda  
Town Clerk