



**TOWN OF SYLVA
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR
MEETING**

Thursday, September 24, 2026, at 9:00 AM
Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

MINUTES

PRESENT: Brad Waldrop, Mayor Pro Tem
Perry Matthews, Commissioner
Samuel McGuire, Commissioner
Johnny Phillips, Mayor
Joseph Waldrum, Commissioner

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

ABSENT: Blitz Estridge, Commissioner

CALL TO ORDER

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

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Beck (Fire Chief), Robbie Carter (Assistant Police Chief), Amanda W. Murajda (HR officer) Aimee Sumner (Police Chief), Bernadette Peters (Economic Development Director), Maleah Mathis (Lieutenant) and Jake Scott (Public Works Director).

VISITORS, Deborah Smith, Faustine McDonald, Jeannine Sowers, Cris Weatherford, Marie Cochran.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Phillips reported that he attended a meeting with Chief Hicks, of the EBCI, regarding the 441 corridor.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

Commissioner McGuire reported on attending the Pinnacle Park committee meeting September 14, 2026, and the Historic Preservation committee meeting September 21, 2026. The Historic Preservation committee continues to prepare for Mountain Heritage Day. Commissioner Waldrop reported that the Southwestern Community College sociology students will be interviewing candidates for Jackson County commissioner at the Burrell building on the campus of Southwestern Community College Thursday September 24, 2026. Commissioner Waldrum stated that the Pride Parade went well, and he acknowledged the amount of work that it took. Commissioner Matthews thanked everyone who came out to support and volunteer at the Pride Parade. He additionally mentioned the opening of the new Sylva Health and Fitness Gym.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Dowling reported the following:

- Sylva Pride paid for all expenses of the Pride Parade including the planning costs for staff time to plan the event.
- YRU Contracting has been selected for the PARTF RFQ. YRU was the only proposal after advertising twice. YRU did the work on the RTP grant and we look forward to working with them again.

- After advertising twice for the Ridgeway Street slope failure, the Town received two SOQs. Wurster Engineering and Construction, Inc. scored the highest. Wurster was the contractor on the Allen Street repair. They will provide the Town with a design-build contract for the repair.
- NCDOT and the Southwestern Commission Rural Planning Organization (RPO) are conducting the first six county Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) in the state in our region. Jackson County's last CTP was adopted in 2017. CTPs are 25-year multimodal transportation needs plans. Road projects that go through the State's transportation prioritization process must be included in a CTP. This plan is the first step in transportation prioritization. The steering committee is primarily made up of members of the Transportation Coordinating Committee. Dowling will serve as the Town's representative. The plan will be developed with local and community stakeholder engagements prior to being adopted locally, adopted by the RPO, and approved by the State Board of Transportation.
- Scott Creek Wall Update: October 8, 2026, is the FEMA comment deadline for the archaeological survey. The engineers are submitting the environmental permits on behalf of the Town. The projected construction timeline is March – September 2027.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT: Jake Scott reported the following:

- Repair for Ridgeway should take about four to six weeks.
- Scotts Creek retaining wall: October 8, 2026, is the EHP review deadline. Work continues with JMT Engineering. Construction plans are nearing completion and permits are pending approval. Advertising and the bid process should start in December 2026.
- Potholes have been patched around town.
- Mill Street loading zones have been restriped.
- Pride Parade went well. Scott thanked everyone for the assistance from the fire and police departments.
- Public works department is fully staffed.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Aimee Sumner, Police Chief, reported on the following:

- Officers Whitehead and Ryan have completed the FTO program and have been assigned their permanent shifts.
- The department has vacancies for a patrol officer and lieutenant.
- Reviewed calls for service for the month.
- Reviewed community care actions.
- Sumner thanked those from the fire and public works departments for their help with the Sylva Pride parade.
- The department's new breast cancer awareness car, Hope, was completed Wednesday September 23, 2026. Walk for Hope is scheduled at Bridge Park on Saturday October 3, 2026, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Mike Beck, Fire Chief, reported the following:

- 1425 calls so far this year.
- Open house is scheduled for Saturday October 3, 2026, 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.

MAIN STREET REPORT: Bernadette Peters reported the following:

- Last concert on the creek is rescheduled for Friday October 2, 2026.
- Friday, September 25, 2026, is the Mountain Heritage Picking in the Park concert at Bridge Park starting at 6 p.m.
- Attended the yearly Main Street directors meeting in August 2026.
- MSSA is hosting a candy drive for the Treat Street event. Drop off locations are the Sylva Herald, the Town of Sylva, Fusions and Balsam Falls.
- Christmas parade applications are available on the town's website. The theme this year is "A Mountain Story Book" Christmas, and the grand marshal is the Sylva Herald.
- Reviewed the yearly main street economic impact report. Volunteers logged 840 hours for the past fiscal year, valued at \$29,000.

PLANNING BOARD REPORT: None.

TWSA BOARD REPORT: Manager Dowling reported that TWSA updated their five year water shortage response plan that's due to DEQ. Waste Water Treatment Plant # 2 is being rehabbed and will be offline during November.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION OF ACCEPTANCE-GRANT FUNDING- DOWNTOWN STORMWATER REHABILITATION: The Town has received a \$968,651 grant from the NC Commerce Department to rehabilitate the stormwater system and drop inlet at the Ritz lot. The grant does not have a match. The Southwestern Commission submitted the application and will assist with administration. This resolution accepts the grant funding and allows the manager to sign the contract and begin implementing the project. *Commissioner McGuire made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

ART PROPOSAL: Faustine McDonald and Marie Cochran addressed the board regarding a revised public art proposal in memory of Victoria Casey-McDonald. They requested from the board a letter of support to use for seeking Monuments Across Appalachian Places grant funds for commemorative signage honoring Victoria Casey-McDonald. *Commissioner Brad Waldrop made a motion to approve their request for a letter of support. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

JACKSON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES FY2025-2026 PRESENTATION:

Cris Weatherford, Director of Jackson County Department of Social Services, gave a presentation to the board on the department's annual statistics, projects and funding sources.

ADJOURNMENT: *Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:16 a.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

Johnny Phillips
Mayor

Angela D. Stanley
Town Clerk