



TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, July 24, 2025 at 9:00 AM
Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

MINUTES

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

Paige Dowling, Town Manager
Amanda Murajda, Town Clerk
Jeff Goss, Town Attorney

ABSENT: Brad Waldrop, Commissioner

CALL TO ORDER

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

STAFF PRESENT: Bernadette Peters (Main Street Director), Mike Beck (Fire Chief), Robbie Carter (Asst. Police Chief), Chris Hatton (Police Chief), Jake Scott (Public Works Director) and Members of the Sylva Fire Department.

VISITORS: Todd Raleigh, Stephanie Raleigh, Jordan Beck, Brittany Beck, Jason Beck, Samuel McGuire, Taylor Armstrong, Anne Couch,

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Brown made a motion to add an item for an FRL Resolution of Support. The motion carried with a unanimous vote. Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. 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

None.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT: Commissioners reported the following:

Gelbaugh—Expressed her gratitude to see so many have chosen to run for election to the Town Board.

Brown—Participated in a ride-a-long with the Fire Department and commended them on their work.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Dowling reported the following:

- Employment Update: James Blakely started in the Fire Department on July 14th instead of David Broom. James has filled in shifts in the past. He also previously was a junior firefighter/cadet.
- Pinnacle Park: The Recreational Trails Program grant contract has been completed. The Town is now working on contracting with a grant administrator to start the bidding process for a contractor to build 1.9 miles of trail. The Town needs the trail location approved from Land & Water before work can begin.
- Bryson Park is getting very close to being completed. Still to be finished is the water fountain, having the playground installers connect the rubber mat to the sidewalk, and a general mowing and cleanup.
- The mast arms on the traffic lights downtown have been painted.
- The Request for Qualifications for an engineer for the Scotts Creek Slope Stabilization is open until August 15th at 12:00 p.m.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT: Jake Scott, Public Works Director, reported the following:

- Surface slide on Allen Street has been repaired
- Peace Pole has been installed by Rotary at the new bathroom.
- 2025 Powell Bill certified statement has been submitted.
- The Town received a contract from Duke Energy for lighting on Mill Street.
- New garbage truck is expected to be delivered in the next month.
- Leaf vacuum has been ordered.
- July 4th celebration was a success.
- Welcome to Tim Ogle as the newest Maintenance Technician.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Robbie Carter, Assistant Police Chief, reported the following:

- One vacancy has been filled. Terran Brown joined the department from Jackson County.
- Department continues to work on training and presentations for conferences
- Reviewed calls for service.

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

- Calls for service have increased and currently stand at around 898 since January.
- Ladder truck is scheduled to be repaired in August.

MAIN STREET REPORT: Bernadette Peters reported the following:

- Attended the Blue Ridge Rising Conference
- Cycle NC will be in Sylva August 1-3 for their annual event.
- WCU Economic Impact report has been distributed to board members.

TWSA BOARD REPORT:

- A water conservation notice has been issued because the treatment plant is running at a lower capacity.

PINNACLE PARK REPORT:

- None.

NEW BUSINESS

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD PRESENTATION: Mayor Phillips presented a volunteer service award to Fire Chief Mike Beck for his 40 years of service with the department, 30 of those years as Chief.

Brian Taylor, NC State Fire Marshall's Office, also presented Beck with a lifetime achievement award from the Office of State Fire Marshall.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION UPDATE: Mike Poston, Jackson County Planning Director, and Ashley Clapsaddle from the Jackson County Planning Department addressed the board to explain that the County is updating the Historic Preservation Commission Ordinance to comply with NCGS 160D regulations. The Town has adopted several county ordinances like this one, cell towers, and emergency services that we have just included links to the County's ordinances in our Code. These are references in Sylva's Code, rather than including the entire ordinance, in case the County updates their ordinance. Once the County adopts the new ordinance, Sylva's Municode should immediately update.

PROCLAMATION—CAL RALEIGH DAY: Mayor Phillips presented a proclamation to parents Todd and Stephanie Raleigh on congratulating Cal Raleigh for his great success in Major League Baseball as well as winning the MLB Home Run Derby. *Commissioner Waldrum made a motion to approve the proclamation. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

PROCLAMATION—CONTRIBUTIONS TO MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL: Mayor Phillips also presented a proclamation honoring contributions to Major League Baseball by Jackson County residents through the years including Johnny Oates, Cal Raleigh and Zebby Mathews. *Commissioner Brown made a motion to approve the proclamation. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

COMMUNITY TABLE LEASE: The Community Table lease has expired. This is a 5-year lease agreement that will continue until June 30, 2028. *Commissioner Waldrum made a motion to approve the lease. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST—PRIVATE WEDDING ALCOHOL SERVICE AT BRIDGE PARK: Heather Foster has applied to rent Bridge Park for a wedding reception September 21, 2025. Lazy Hiker has provided their Certificate of

Regular Board Meeting July 24, 2025

Liability Insurance. This application is coming before the Town Board because the Board approves alcohol for special events at Bridge Park. *Commissioner Waldrum made a motion to approve the request. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT—FONTANA REGIONAL LIBRARY: *Commissioner Waldrum made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion carried with a 3-1 vote. Voting in the affirmative were Commissioner's Brown, Gelbaugh and Waldrum. Voting against the motion was Commissioner Estridge.*

ADJOURNMENT: *Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:41 a.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

Johnny Phillips
Mayor

Amanda W. Murajda
Town Clerk