



# TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 5:30 PM

Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

---

## MINUTES

---

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

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

**ABSENT:**

### CALL TO ORDER

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

**STAFF PRESENT:** Robbie Carter (Asst. Police Chief), John Jeleniewski (County Planner) and Michael Poston (County Planner).

**VISITORS:** Deborah Smith, Tammy Brown, Sarah Hirsch, Carol Hall, Chuck Hall, Keith Blaine, Bill Lefevers, Christy Agner, Pat Morris, Cody Lewis and Melissa Lewis.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

*Commissioner Brown made a motion to remove Item #11, Resolution of Support—Fontana Regional Library. The motion carried with a 3-2 vote. Voting in the affirmative were commissioners Brown, Estridge and Gelbaugh. Voting against the amendment were commissioners Waldrop and Waldrum. Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

### APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Sarah Hirsch addressed the board regarding the Fontana Regional Library and was hopeful the board would show support for the FRL instead of removing the resolution. Keith Blaine discussed political signs located throughout town during election time. He also asked the board to consider changing municipal elections to even number years.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:** None.

**COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:** Commissioners reported the following:

Waldrop—Commissioner Waldrop stated he was proud of the Town of Sylva and does not agree with removing the resolution in support of the Fontana Regional Library.

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

- Paving on Fincannon Road is being completed this week. Charles Street was paved last week.
- The basketball court at Bryson Park will be resurfaced this week. The fence and concrete work will be the last two remaining items.
- Employment: Josh Geiger has been promoted from Police Officer to Sergeant.

- Town Hall will be closed June 20<sup>th</sup> in observance of Juneteenth.
- The mast arms downtown will be painted in early July. Most work will be done at night.
- Dowling thanked Commissioner Estridge and Commissioner Waldrop for the work they've been doing on Mill Street to remove outdated utility lines.

**PUBLIC HEARING—ZONING MAP AMENDMENT—AWD FAMILY LIMITED PARTNERSHIP**

**LLLP/JACKSON COUNTY:** *Commissioner Brown made a motion to open the public hearing at 5:44 p.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**ZONING MAP AMENDMENT REQUEST—AWD FAMILY LIMITED PARTNERSHIP LLLP/JACKSON COUNTY:** John Jeleniewski, Senior County Planner, presented the staff report as follows:

**Applicant:** Jackson County Government – Kevin King, County Manager

**Property Location:** 899 Highway 107, Sylva NC 28779; PIN 7640-85-7027

**Current Property Zoning:** ETJ General Business (ETJ-GB)

**Ordinance Section for which the Text Amendment is requested:** Article 3 - Procedures - Section 3.9.B – Zoning and Map Amendments

**Description of Request:**

The applicant is requesting a map amendment that would designate the subject property as ETJ Institutional District (ETJ-ID).

**Background:**

The Institutional District (ID) is a moderately sized district within Sylva's zoned jurisdiction. The ID District offers a broad range of permitted (use-by-right) and special uses (SUP) such as public/civic/social services, auditoriums, community centers, emergency services, government facilities, places of worship, pre-school/daycare, parks/recreation, health care facilities, professional offices, etc. Property improvements in this district are subject to development standards as set forth in the zoning ordinance including building setbacks, landscaping, architectural standards, sidewalk construction, parking, storm water treatment, etc.

The subject property is located on Highway 107 and approximately 850 feet north of the Highway 107/Old Cullowhee Road intersection. This property is a total of 58.60 acres in land area and is vacant with no structures. Access to this property is from the public right-of-way of Highway 107. This property is adjacent to properties to the north and south that are in the ETJ-GB District and is not located within the 100-year flood plain or protected watershed. This property is or can be served by Tuckasegee Water & Sewer Authority for public utilities.

**Application Response:**

The applicant is requesting that the existing Town of Sylva Zoning Map be amended to designate this property (58.60 acres total) to the ETJ-I District.

**Staff Findings:**

The requested map amendment would not constitute "spot zoning" as the request is consistent with the Town's adopted 2040 Land Use Plan. The Town's adopted Land Use Plan for 2040 establishes that this property will be in the future *Community Corridors District* with encouraged land uses for this district being mixed-use buildings, institutional uses, walkable neighborhood commercial (retail, office, personal services), large scale commercial, business centers, community services and civic/educational services.

Bill Lefevers address the board and noted that the Lutheran Church did not received the adjoining property owners notice in the mail and the Town should make other efforts to notify property owners.

Pat Morris addressed the board and would like information on how traffic patters would change.

*Being no further comment, Commissioner Waldrum made a motion to close the hearing at 5:55 p.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**ZONING MAP AMENDMENT REQUEST—AWD FAMILY LIMITED PARTNERSHIP LLLP/JACKSON**

**COUNTY:** *Commissioner Brown made a motion to approve the zoning map amendment request. The motion carried with a unanimous vote. Commissioner Waldrop read the statement of consistency and made a motion to approve. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**FY 2025-2026 BUDGET ORDINANCE:** Manager Dowling explained that the budget ordinance presented is the same version as advertised. She thanked everyone for their time and effort on budget. *Commissioner Waldrum made a motion to approve the budget as presented. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**FY 2025-2026 FEE SCHEDULE:** Manager Dowling reported that the fee schedule is the same as the version advertised. *Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to approve the FY 2025-2026 fee schedule. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**ORDINANCE AMENDMENT—CHAPTER 22—LICENSE AND BUSIENSS REGULATIONS:** Currently, new businesses pay a \$100 occupancy use fee and the \$20 registration. Existing businesses pay a \$20 annual business registration permit fee. The occupancy use fee was intended to cover the cost of fire and zoning inspections. The business registration was intended to provide the Town with up-to-date information for correspondence and emergency contact information. The business registration permit process has not worked well the last few years and staff have ended up spending a lot of time billing, when few are returned and others are sent back without up-to-date information. It's creating an unpaid liability in our accounting system that we need to correct. The amended ordinance and fee schedule propose a \$200 fee for a new commercial business, professional service, and non-profit. This \$200 will cover the cost of zoning and fire inspections for new establishments. When a business moves locations, changes ownership, or expands in a way that would necessitate another inspection, the business will need to pay for the new inspection or permit. *Commissioner Estridge made a motion to approve the ordinance amendment. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST: SMHS CLASS OF 2005—ALCOHOL SERVICE:** The SMHS Class of 2005 has rented Bridge Park June 28th for a class reunion and is applying to have Balsam Falls sell alcohol at the event. This application is coming before the Town Board since Bridge Park is Town owned property. *Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to approve the request. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**ADJOURNMENT:** *Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

---

Johnny Phillips  
Mayor

---

Amanda W. Murajda  
Town Clerk