



# TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 5:30 PM  
Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

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## AGENDA

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### CALL TO ORDER

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

*All items listed and adopted are for discussion or possible action*

### APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

1. March 12, 2026 Consent Agenda

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

### REPORTS

2. Mayor's Report
3. Commissioner's Report
4. Manager's Report

### NEW BUSINESS

### CLOSED SESSION

1. Pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) - Consult with Attorney
2. Pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(2) - Prevent Premature Disclosure of Award
3. Pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) - Personnel

### ADJOURNMENT

*Town of Sylva*  
**CONSENT AGENDA**  
*March 12, 2026*

1- **APPROVE MINUTES:** February 12, 2026, **Regular Board Meeting;** February 26, 2026, **Regular Board Meeting**

2- **BUDGET AMENDMENT:**

#33 24-399-0000 FC Appropriated Fund Balance	\$ 341,322 C
24-420-9000 FC Transfer Out	341,322 D
36-392-0000 PARTF Transfer In	341,322 C
36-329-0200 JCTDA PARTF Grant Match	341,222 D

**REF: To reverse Fisher Creek Non-Water Quality PARTF Grant Match and to appropriate JCTDA (Tourism Capital Project Fund) match into the Pinnacle Park PARTF Grant Project.**

3- **REPORTS:**

- 1- Business Registration Permit as of **February 2026**
- 2- Ad Valorem Tax Report as of **January 31, 2025**
- 3- Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, Changes in Fund Balance as of **January 31, 2025**

4- **OTHER:**

- **To amend the Pinnacle Park PARTF Grant Project Ordinance (see attached)**  
*The JCTDA awarded a PARTF Grant Project match of \$341,322. The original match came from Fisher Creek Fund Balance Non-Water Quality. This funding will be appropriated back to its original source (see budget amendment #33)*

Business Registration Permit Application

February 2026

<u>Date</u>	<u>Business Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Owner</u>
<u>Submitted</u> 2/9/26	H&C Smoke & Vape	1336 E. Main Street Ste. A	Askar Aldahabi
2/12/26	Next Life Games, LLC	56 E. Main Street	Charles Salyards

Tax Summary  
as of January 31, 2026

(10-301-XX)	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	Total	Current Year	TOTALS
Starting Balances	54280.15	27507.36	14404.67	9193.08	8413.67	5331.96	4600.86	4282.07	2411.82	1747.04	132,172.68	\$2,827,207.32	10-281-0000
July	-1709.47		-341.05	-148.53							-2,199.05		-2,199.05
August	-141.85	-95.63	-92.62	-198.14							-528.44		-528.44
September	-8071.28	-664.71	-512.45	-376.82	-273.58	-273.58	-275.64	-275.64			-10,723.70	-407,376.28	-418,099.98
October	-2443.33	-545.9	-440.95								-3,430.18	-166,657.75	-170,087.93
November	-1838.84	-1031.6	-239.14								-3,109.58	-487,585.15	-490,694.73
December	-4711.59	-16.48	-93.52								-4,821.59	-1,234,210.28	-1,239,031.87
January	-4761.36	-326.64	-648.42	-332.51							-6,066.93	-322,104.31	-328,173.24
February											0.00		0.00
March											0.00		0.00
April											0.00		0.00
May											0.00		0.00
June											0.00		0.00
July - June Totals	-23677.72	-2681.16	-2368.15	-1056	-273.58	-273.58	-275.64	-275.64	0	0	-30,881.47	-2,617,933.77	-2,648,815.24
Releases											0.00		0.00
Under Appeal											0.00		0.00
Bankruptcy											0.00		0.00
Refund/Adj											0.00		0.00
Subtotals	-23,677.72	-2,681.16	-2,368.15	-1,056.00	-273.58	-273.58	-275.64	-275.64	0.00	0.00	-30,881.47	-2,617,933.77	-2,648,815.24
EOY Adjustment											0.00		0.00
(10-110-XX) Balance	\$30,602.43	\$24,826.20	\$12,036.52	\$8,137.08	\$8,140.09	\$5,058.38	\$4,325.22	\$4,006.43	\$2,411.82	\$1,747.04	101,291.21	\$524,673.27	\$625,964.48
Interest	106.77		102.56	45.47							254.80		254.80
July											134.99		134.99
August	80.31	1.44	51.38	1.86							1,687.68	1.54	1,689.22
September	678.66	70.72	193.40	114.71	120.83	145.55	168.21	192.93	1.13	1.54	325.11		325.11
October	210.66	96.81	17.64								378.35		378.35
November	167.57	190.92	19.86								491.94		491.94
December	482.37	3.09	6.48								902.15	2,034.22	2,936.37
January	492.09	135.75	148.14	126.17									
February													
March													
April													
May													
June													
Interest Collected	\$2,218.43	\$498.73	\$539.46	\$288.21	\$120.83	\$145.55	\$168.21	\$192.93	\$1.13	\$1.54	\$4,175.02	\$2,035.76	\$6,210.78
Submitted by: Amanda Murajida, Tax Collector												Collection Rate	83.3403%

Top 10 Delinquent Accounts (2025 & prior)

Name	Balance 1/31/2026
Jackson Paper Manufacturing	\$ 334,371.60
Spirit Master Funding	\$ 28,050.83
JTS Transport	\$ 13,527.72
American Sewing Corp	\$ 9,660.11
Kelly Robinson	\$ 7,659.37
Tamara Holland	\$ 7,554.79
Gretta Worley	\$ 7,532.25
Marjorie Herbert Smith	\$ 6,893.37
Ridge Apartments LLC	\$ 6,788.85
Knox Inc	\$ 6,519.49

General Fund  
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances  
1/31/2026

		General Fund				Actual to	Statement		
		2025-2026	Previously	2025-2026	Current	Budget	Period	Variance	
		Budgeted	Reported	YTD Actual	Month	Budget Balance	7		
<b>Revenues:</b>									
Ad valorem taxes	\$	2,713,680	\$ 2,385,193.47	\$ 2,730,564.70	\$ 345,371.23	\$ (16,884.70)	100.62%	58.33%	42.29%
Other taxes and licenses	\$	2,200	780.00	1,140.00	\$ 360.00	\$ 1,060.00	51.82%	58.33%	-6.52% *
Unrestricted intergovernmental	\$	3,137,261	1,360,533.14	1,667,135.03	\$ 306,601.89	\$ 1,470,125.97	53.14%	58.33%	-5.19% *
Permits and Fees	\$	15,000	5,338.00	7,346.50	\$ 2,008.50	\$ 7,653.50	48.98%	58.33%	-9.36% *
Restricted intergovernmental	\$	319,488	166,456.63	182,391.76	\$ 15,935.13	\$ 137,096.24	57.09%	58.33%	-1.24% *
Investment earnings	\$	119,000	150,250.71	167,355.87	\$ 17,105.16	\$ (48,355.87)	140.64%	58.33%	82.30%
Other revenues	\$	58,777	24,768.82	54,349.69	\$ 29,580.87	\$ 4,427.31	92.47%	58.33%	34.13%
<b>Total revenues</b>	\$	<b>6,365,406</b>	<b>4,093,320.77</b>	<b>4,810,283.55</b>	<b>716,962.78</b>	<b>\$ 1,555,122.45</b>	<b>75.57%</b>	<b>58.33%</b>	<b>17.24%</b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>									
General Government	\$	1,109,200	531,468.64	614,789.77	83,321.13	494,410.23	55.43%	58.33%	2.91%
Salaries & Benefits	\$	444,310	239,024.97	239,024.97	50,104.69				
Capital outlay	\$	23,144	-	19,696.00	19,696.00				
All other expenditures	\$	562,767	292,443.67	356,068.80	13,520.44				
Public Safety	\$	4,245,796	1,808,769.14	1,938,110.36	285,681.28	2,307,685.64	45.65%	58.33%	12.69%
Salaries & Benefits	\$	1,897,255	948,694.12	1,038,124.06	178,063.14				
Capital outlay	\$	750,296	129,649.98	129,649.98	9,740.00				
All other expenditures	\$	1,325,073	730,425.04	770,336.32	97,878.14				
Culture and Recreation	\$	143,112	40,301.94	45,729.37	5,427.43	97,382.63	31.95%	58.33%	26.38%
Salaries & Benefits	\$	35,300	12,519.11	14,347.27	1,828.16				
Capital outlay	\$	10,474	-	-	-				
All other expenditures	\$	97,338	27,782.83	31,382.10	3,599.27				
Transportation	\$	1,089,720	379,099.81	547,506.90	168,407.09	542,213.10	50.24%	58.33%	8.09%
Salaries & Benefits	\$	358,500	180,182.29	206,199.47	26,017.18				
Capital outlay	\$	180,000	16,483.58	128,243.58	111,760.00				
All other expenditures	\$	551,220	182,433.94	213,063.85	30,629.91				
Economic and Physical Development	\$	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Salaries & Benefits									
Capital outlay									
All other expenditures	\$	-	-	-	-				
Environmental Protection	\$	486,323	110,920.56	129,146.46	18,225.90	357,176.54	26.56%	58.33%	31.78%
Salaries & Benefits	\$	104,500	51,949.73	59,751.01	7,801.28				
Capital outlay	\$	261,508	-	-	-				
All other expenditures	\$	120,315	58,970.83	69,395.45	10,424.62				
<b>Total expenditures</b>	\$	<b>7,074,151</b>	<b>2,870,560.09</b>	<b>3,275,282.86</b>	<b>561,062.83</b>	<b>3,798,868.14</b>	<b>46.30%</b>	<b>58.33%</b>	<b>12.03%</b>
<b>Revenues over expenditures</b>	\$	<b>(708,745)</b>	<b>546,468.69</b>	<b>1,535,000.69</b>	<b>155,899.95</b>	<b>(2,243,745.69)</b>	<b>-31.72%</b>		
<b>Other financing sources (uses):</b>									
Transfers in	\$	39,000	39,000.00	-	-	-			
Appropriated fund balance	\$	102,093	-	-	-	-			
Transfers to other depts	\$	374,236	374,236.00	-	-	-			
ARPA Appropriations	\$	30,000	-	-	-	-			
Fund Balance rollover	\$	825,652	-	-	-	-			
Capital reserve fund	\$	60,000	60,000.00	-	-	-			
Lease Liability	\$	-	-	-	-	-			
Sale of Assets	\$	37,000	-	-	-	-			
Loan Proceeds	\$	1,467,981	473,236.00	-	-	-			
Transfers to other funds:									
Contributed to GF fund balance	\$	-	-	-	-	-			
Transfers out	\$	759,236	759,236.00	-	-	-			
Transfer to Capital Reserve	\$	759,236	759,236.00	-	-	-			
<b>Total other financing sources (uses)</b>	\$	<b>708,745</b>	<b>(286,000.00)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>			
<b>Revenues and other sources over expenditures and other uses</b>	\$	<b>-</b>	<b>260,468.69</b>	<b>1,535,000.69</b>	<b>155,899.95</b>	<b>(2,243,745.69)</b>			

Analysis:

\* Timing of revenues - grants and taxes

**AMENDED  
TOWN OF SYLVA  
PINNACLE PARK - N.C. PARKS AND RECREATION TRUST FUND (PARTF)  
GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE**

**BE IT ORDAINED** by the Governing Board of the Town of Sylva, North Carolina, that, pursuant to Section 13.2 of Chapter 159 of the General Statues of North Carolina, the following grant project is adopted:

**Section 1.** The project authorized is the for the development of an outdoor classroom, campsite improvements, viewing platform, accessible platform with signage, accessible trail (303 LFT, 6 ft wide), site furnishings, vault toilet, trailhead kiosk, benches, trash receptacles, entrance sign, stone wall in parking area, paved parking area and stormwater feature, trail improvements, hiking trail (5,940 LFT) – (2 locations) and contingency.

**Section 2.** The project may be funded by grant funding, fisher creek funding (water quality and non-water quality) or other revenue sources that are applicable.

**Section 3.** The officers of the Town are hereby authorized and directed to carry out the project in accordance with the provisions of this ordinance and within the total budget authorized amount.

**Section 4.** The following amounts are authorized and appropriated for the project:

**Revenues:**

PARTF GRANT (Awarded 8/22/2025 – Project # 2025-1160 Includes Contingency \$32,507)	341,323
Match (Fisher Creek Fund Balance non-water quality)	1
Cash Flow (Fisher Creek Fund Balance non-water quality)	341,323
Professional Services (Fisher Creek Fund Balance non-water quality)	68,000
Match (JCTDA- Tourism Capital Project Fund)	<u>341,322</u>
	<b>\$ 1,091,969</b>

**Expenditures:**

Professional Services	68,000
Cash Flow Reimbursement (Fisher Creek Fund Balance non-water quality)	341,323
Construction/Repair	582,139
Contingency	<u>100,507</u>
	<b>\$ 1,091,969</b>

**Section 5.** The Finance Officer is directed to maintain accounting records for this project in a manner sufficient to satisfy the requirements of any granting agencies and to ensure compliance with all applicable federal and state regulations.

**Section 6.** The Finance Officer is authorized to transfer amounts between line items within the project ordinance, including the contingency appropriation, provided that the total project budget remains unchanged.

**Section 7.** If needed, funds may be advanced from the Fisher Creek Fund Balance for the purpose of making payments due. The Board of Commissioners will approve whether the funding source is water quality or non-water quality. All advanced funds will revert to the respective Fisher Creek Funds.

**Section 8.** The Finance Officer is directed to report on a quarterly basis the financial status of each project element in Section 4.

**Section 9.** Copies of this grant project ordinance shall be furnished to the Clerk of the Governing Board and the Finance Officer for direction in carrying out this project.

**Section 10. Fund 36** Pinnacle Park (PARTF) Grant Project Ordinance will account for the bookkeeping records of this project.

**Section 11.** Per PARTF Grant requirements, all records related to the grant project must be retained for a minimum of five (5) years or until all audit exceptions have been resolved, whichever is longer.

**Section 12.** The Town Manager or their designee is responsible for administering this grant project.

Adopted this the 12th day of March, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Johnny Phillips, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Amanda Murajda, Town Clerk



# TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, February 12, 2026, at 5:30 PM  
Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

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## MINUTES

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

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:** Jake Scott and Robbie Carter

**VISITORS:** Justin Castle, Kendall Link, Nelia Waldrum and Antoinette MacWatt.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Waldrum 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 a request from residents on King's Mountain regarding a dangerous area near the switchback curve. A steep drop of approximately 300 feet exists off the road, and residents have requested installation of a short section of guardrail for safety. Public Works Director Jake Scott indicated he would feel more comfortable with board approval before proceeding. The board agreed to place the item on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting.

### COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

Multiple board members expressed appreciation for the work of Public Works, particularly Jake Scott and his crew, for their efforts during the recent snowstorm. The team worked overnight to keep roads clear and safe. Board members also thanked healthcare workers and first responders for their service during the storm. Residents were encouraged to support local businesses in Sylva and throughout Jackson County, especially with Valentine's Day approaching. Commissioner Waldrum reported attending a recent community discussion about the impact of data centers in North Carolina. Topics discussed included water consumption by data centers, potential infrastructure strain, noise concerns and questions about job creation. It was noted that there are approximately 100 data centers across North Carolina, primarily concentrated around Charlotte. Some communities have considered moratoriums while evaluating potential impacts. Waldrum suggested Sylva consider being proactive regarding potential land-use planning related to data centers. Commissioner Estridge reminded everyone that Beech Mountain Restaurant is a new eatery open in Dillsboro and The Jarrett House is hoping to open in April.

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

- Attended the NC City and County Managers Association conference in Winston-Salem. Important sessions were on using AI in local government and collaborating with partners.
- She commended the Public Works for how hard they worked around the clock during the recent 11” snowstorm.
- TWSA’s annual meeting is March 3<sup>rd</sup> at TWSA’s office. The social time begins at 4:00 p.m. and the meeting at 4:30 p.m. There will be an overview of TWSA and their ongoing projects. Many ongoing and upcoming projects impact city limits.
- Jackson County is holding a joint meeting with municipalities March 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Burrell Building at SCC.
- The Police Chief applications are due Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT PUMPER TRUCK PURCHASE APPROVAL & RESOLUTION OF FINANCING:** Manager Dowling reported that the Town received three bids on the pumper truck that ranged from \$528,800-\$559,314. The fire department wants to go with an alternative bid that piggybacks the current pumper ordered from Safe Industries. The cost is \$544,800 and it will have four-wheel drive. The purchase will come from the FD capital reserve fund (\$250,000), \$80,000 from contributed capital, \$14,800 in investment earnings, and a \$200,000 loan from the Town’s Capital Reserve Fund. *Commissioner Estridge made a motion to approve the purchase. The motion carried with a unanimous vote. Commissioner McGuire made a motion to approve the resolution of financing. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST: GREENING UP THE MOUNTAIN BEVERAGE ARTS:** *Commissioner made a motion to approve the Beverage Arts request for Greening Up the Mountains. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST: CONCERTS ON THE CREEK ALCOHOL SERVICE:** *Commissioner Waldrum made a motion to approve alcohol service at Concerts on the Creek. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**PRESENTATION—JACKSON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY COMPLEX—ANTOINETTE MACWATT:**

Antoinette MacWatt, a representative of the Friends of the Jackson County Public Library, presented information regarding the history and importance of the Jackson County Public Library complex.

Key points included that the historic courthouse was condemned in 1988, a joint town–county effort began in 2004 to evaluate sites for a new library, and in 2007, architects recommended renovating the courthouse and constructing a new library building as a unified complex. Significant funding was raised from Jackson County taxpayers, the Town of Sylva, The Friends of the Library, and private donors and foundations. MacWatt emphasized that donors contributed funds with the expectation that the library and renovated courthouse would remain a single integrated complex.

Concern has been raised about possible changes to the lease agreement between Jackson County and the library complex that could separate the courthouse from the library system. MacWatt requested the Town of Sylva consider expressing support for renewal of the existing lease structure and maintaining the courthouse and library as a unified complex.

Board members discussed the request and indicated they would consider the matter and potentially revisit it at a future meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:** *Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:01 p.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

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Johnny Phillips  
Mayor

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Amanda W. Murajda  
Town Clerk



## TOWN OF SYLVA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, February 26, 2026, at 9:00 AM  
Board Room, 83 Allen Street Sylva, North Carolina

---

### MINUTES

---

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

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

**ABSENT:** Blitz Estridge, Commissioner

#### CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Waldrop called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Mike Beck (Fire Chief), Robbie Carter (Asst. Police Chief), Chris Hatton (Police Chief) and Jake Scott (Public Works Director).

**VISITORS:** Eric Romanisyn, Ken Brown, Katie Price and Alex Pickard.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Waldrum 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 noted prior discussions with Public Works Director Jake Scott regarding the potential installation of a small guardrail at the switchback curve on top of King's Mountain due to safety concerns. The town manager advised that the item has already been included in budget worksheets and would be most appropriate for discussion during the upcoming budget work session.

#### COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

Commissioner McGuire thanked staff, volunteers, the American Red Cross, and The Blood Connection for organizing a recent blood drive. He also gave recognition to the Jackson County Education Foundation and volunteers organizing the upcoming prom fundraiser. Funds raised will support local teachers and students by providing resources and educational opportunities. Commissioner Waldrop reported that the recent Jackson County Public Library board meeting was cancelled due to a medical procedure for Director Tracy Fitzmorris. The future of the current board structure remains uncertain as the library system undergoes organizational changes. Waldrop expressed appreciation for Tracy Fitzmorris, recognizing her 30 years of service to the library system. He also provided an update from the Mountain Projects Board of Directors meeting. Mountain Projects is a valuable community organization providing assistance with food support, housing, childcare, and transportation. Commissioner Matthews announced the upcoming grand opening of the Sunrise Jackson County Recovery Community Center on March 11, 2026, above Blue Ridge Bootleg Coffee.

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

- Jackson County TDA and the Jackson County Commissioners approved the Town's grant application for \$341,322 to match the PARTF funds at the County Commissioners meeting.
- The Town received notice to proceed from the Recreational Trails Program, so the contractor has started the trails in Pinnacle Park. The work is expected to take 40 days.
- TWSA's annual meeting is March 3<sup>rd</sup> with a social at 4:00 p.m. and the meeting at 4:30 p.m.
- Jackson County's joint meeting with municipalities is March 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Burrell Building at SCC.

Regular Board Meeting February 26, 2026

- Scotts Creek & FEMA: The FEMA Public Assistance application is still pending review under Environmental and Historic Preservation. This portion of the review period usually takes several weeks. S&ME completed their borings the week of February 13<sup>th</sup> and soil samples have been sent to the lab.

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

- Poteet Park Restroom Project remains on schedule--framing, plumbing, and electrical work are complete; fixtures and door frames are on site and fence upgrades have been completed.
- Scotts Creek Retaining Wall Project--tree removal is scheduled for the following week. This will be the first major physical step for the project.
- Recreational Trails Program (RTP)--contractors began work immediately after the notice to proceed and completion is expected by early spring.
- Fisher Creek Dam--a site meeting was held with the engineering firm S&ME. A report is being prepared detailing costs for either repairing or decommissioning the dam.
- Assault on Black Rock Event is scheduled for March 21. Public Works crews will maintain the trail prior to the event.
- Municipal Drive/Vance Street road resurfacing is planned from the fire department to Grindstaff Cove Road once weather conditions allow.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT:** Robbie Carter, Asst. Police Chief, reported the following:

- Reviewed calls for service.
- Lieutenant Amy Sumner completed the FBI Leadership Institute Supervisor program.
- Detective Chris Cobb received his Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate, the highest certification level in North Carolina.
- The department implemented **Axon AI Assistant technology** integrated with body cameras. Capabilities include real-time translation in 76 languages and assistance identifying hazardous materials placards and evacuation distances.

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

- A total of 219 calls for service so far in 2026.

**MAIN STREET REPORT:** Manager Dowling, reported the following:

- Hosted a We Speak event with the Mountain West Partnership and economic development partners.
- Greening Up the Mountains Festival-- Vendor spaces are full and volunteers are still needed.
- Participated in Western Carolina University College of Business accreditation review discussions highlighting partnerships with local businesses.
- Attended a housing stakeholder meeting related to the Jackson County housing plan.

**PLANNING BOARD REPORT:** None.

**TWSA BOARD REPORT:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**WATR—WATERSHED ACTION PLAN PRESENTATION:** Katie Price from the Watershed Association presented findings related to a Watershed Action Plan for Scotts Creek and Savannah Creek. Both creeks have been federally listed as impaired since 2008 due to fecal coliform bacteria levels. Monitoring indicates frequent exceedances of recommended recreation safety thresholds. Data suggests the primary sources include human-related contamination, domestic animals, aging septic systems, and sediment runoff. Proposed solutions include septic system repair and replacement programs, and agricultural best management practices, stormwater management improvements, etc. Completion of the Nine Element Watershed Plan will allow access to additional grant funding for remediation projects. The plan has been submitted to the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality for review. Town officials expressed interest in exploring potential partnerships and grant opportunities once the plan is approved.

**AUDIT RFP ADDENDUM:** As of the February 13, 2026, deadline, the Town received one audit proposal. In order to promote full and open competition and ensure the Town has adequate opportunity for reviewing qualified firms, the Town is extending the deadline for submission of proposals until March 6th at 4:00 p.m. *Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to authorize the extension and reopening of the audit services RFP deadline to March 6, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. to promote competitive participation. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

Regular Board Meeting February 26, 2026

**SMALL BUSINESS INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM RESOLUTION:** This resolution allows the Town to apply for a grant from the NC Commerce Department’s Rural Engagement and Investment Program for assistance with a stormwater project in the Ritz lot. This grant would repair infrastructure and improve business access. The Town plans to apply for \$952,760.00. A local match is not required. Bernadette Peters has been working with the Southwestern Commission on this grant application. *Commissioner Waldrum made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

**CLOSED SESSION:** *Commissioner McGuire made a motion to enter closed session at 10:07 a.m. pursuant to NCGS. 143-318-11(a)(3) and (6) for personnel and to consult with attorney. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

*Commissioner McGuire made a motion to come out of closed session. The motion carried with a unanimous vote and the Board entered into regular session at 11:14 a.m. No action was taken during closed session.*

**ADJOURNMENT:** *Commissioner Waldrop made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:15 a.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

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Johnny Phillips  
Mayor

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Amanda W. Murajda  
Town Clerk