

**Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**August 2, 2021 | 6:00 pm**

**Board Members Present:** Mayor Tom Hartman, Alderman Rusty Barr, Alderman Calvin Green, Alderwoman Crystal Miller, Alderman John Reeves, and Alderman Stephen Shoemaker

**Town Staff Present:** Town Manager Brantley Price, Town Clerk Rebecca Eldreth, Wastewater Superintendent Brandon Patrick, and Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller

At 6:00 pm Mayor Hartman called to order the meeting of the Board of Aldermen. After the invocation was given, those in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of the August 2, 2021 Agenda** – With no discussion, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Alderman Shoemaker seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Regular Session**

**Approval of Minutes** – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting held on July 12, 2021. Alderwoman Miller seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Discussion of NC Four Way Stop at Ashe Street and Backstreet** – Mayor Hartman explained that Gary Brown with Boondocks would like to discuss a change to the intersection at Ashe Street and Backstreet making it a four way stop. At that time the mayor open the discussion. Gary Brown along with Mason Harris voiced their concerns for their employees as well as visitors crossing Backstreet at the intersection. The concerns included vehicle traffic passing at high speeds and the potential for pedestrians to be hit using the crosswalk. With no further discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the addition of a four way stop as discussed. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**ABC Report** – Haskell McGuire presented his report to the Board for the fourth fiscal quarter. An increase of 14.33% in sales were reported from the same quarter in the previous year. A check in the amount of \$32,500 has been delivered to the Town in addition to a \$40,000 yearend budget adjustment. The year will close with record sales approaching \$3,000,000 with projected sales to reach \$3,200,000 for fiscal year 2021-2022 with a planned distribution of \$180,000 to the town. Haskell then reported that deliveries for the store have slowed with no deliveries in the last month. The Board thanked Haskell for his report.

**Consideration of Road Closure for the Antique Fair and Holiday Parade** – The stated that each year the town must check with NC DOT to ensure there are no conflicts with the closure of Jefferson Avenue and adopt a resolution in support of the closing of Jefferson Avenue for the Antiques Fair and the Holiday Parade. With no discussion, Alderman Green made the motion to adopt the resolutions in support. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Tax Release** – With no discussion, Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the tax release as presented. Alderwomen Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Discussion of September Board of Alderman Meeting Date and Board of Adjustment Date** – Mayor Hartman explained that the next regular board meeting falls on Labor Day. The Board agreed for the meeting to be moved to the following Monday, September 13 with the Board of Adjustment meeting immediately before the board meeting.

**Water and Wastewater Report** – Wastewater Superintendent Brandon Patrick gave his report to the Board. A total of 5.29 inches of rain were recorded for the month of July totaling 28.02 inches for the year. The wastewater lab passed the qualifying analysis to be recertified for the upcoming year. The filtration plant is running with on filter averaging about 40,000 gallons per day. The Board thanks Brandon for his report.

**Maintenance Report** – Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller gave his report to the Board. The maintenance department repaired 3 water leaks, repaired 2 sewer issues, and marked 89 locate calls. A drill bit was located and removed from the sewer line. The paving of Jefferson Avenue is complete, and manholes have been replaced. The Board thanked Eric for his report.

**Town Managers Report** – Brantley Price, Town Manager gave his report to the Board. The COVID case count for the county is 2343 total cases with 28 currently active and 39 being monitored. Over half the population remain unvaccinated with 42% fully vaccinated and 45% at least one dose. The downtown wifi is averaging 65 clients per day. The town has not received the American Rescue plan funds at this time. Shatley has completed the street paving and will pave the basketball courts, alleyway, and maintenance lot in a few weeks. Taxes collected to date total 7% of the tax levy. Sales tax is up 15% over last year with the month of April up 21% over last year. Occupancy tax revenue increased 40% over the last year totaling of \$95,381. The Shriners will be holding their annual paper drive this weekend. An invitation was extended to the Board to pay tribute to the 20-year anniversary of 9/11. Brantley then gave an overview for the West Jefferson Volunteer Fire Department stating the department responded to 23 calls mast month. A thank you was included for assisting with traffic control during a water leak on Highway 163. An invitation was extended to the Board for the fire departments annual dinner. Brantley then informed the board about a meeting at the county office discussing a potential county wide fire commission. Patty Gambill with Ashe County Emergency Management has requested the Board attend the meeting. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

**Public Comments** – Mayor Hartman opened the meeting to public comment. Several in attendance, including Pat Nordea Connie White, Ken Severt, Michael Lyon, Greg Stebben, Pam Lather, Mark Lucky, Sherman Lyle, and Gary Brown spoke on various reasons they liked the live music and the atmosphere it brings to the town. Kitty Honeycutt with the Ashe County Chamber and Visitor Center introduced the new board chair Travis Birdsell.

**Aldermen Comments** – Alderman Shoemaker thanked all those in attendance and welcomed Travis Birdsell. Alderman Shoemaker informed everyone that a group of students from UNC have been in town interviewing residents and merchants for a project that will be online. Alderman Reeves thanked those in attendance and for sharing their opinions. Alderman Barr agreed with the statements made at public comment stating he would like to allow outdoor music. Alderwoman Miller thanked those who attended the meeting and complimented the appearance of town. Alderman Green acknowledged how wonderful it is to live in a place where the community can voice their opinions. He also congratulated Travis Birdsell on his new role with the Chamber.

**Closed Session** – The Mayor then asked for a motion to enter closed session per G.S. 143.318.11(a)(3) to consult with the Town Attorney over Attorney-Client matters. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to enter closed session followed by Alderman Green seconding the motion.

**Return to Regular Session** – The Board returned from closed session at 7:46 pm.

**Adjournment** – With nothing further, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by Alderman Barr with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

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Tom Hartman, Mayor

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Rebecca Eldreth, Town Clerk