

**Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen**  
**Special Meeting Minutes**  
**September 6, 2022 | 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 Attorney Jak Reeves, Police Chief Brad Jordan, Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller, and Wastewater Superintendent Brandon Patrick

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

**Approval of September 6, 2022 Agenda** – With no changes, Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the agenda. Alderwoman miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Public Hearings**

**Consideration of Voluntary Annexation of Parcel 19223276-Miller’s Country Store** – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed annexation of Millers Country Store located at 2144 NC Highway 88 West. The public hearing was open at 6:02pm. With no comment Mayor Hartman closed the public hearing at 6:02pm.

**Regular Session**

**ABC Report** – Haskell McGuire presented his report to the Board for the fourth fiscal quarter of 2021-2022. An increase of 2.51% in sales were reported from the same quarter in the previous year. A check in the amount of \$45,000 has been delivered to the Town. Haskell stated that sales continue to exceed the budget and last year’s results The budget for fiscal year 2022-2023 is \$3,300,000 with a town distribution of \$200,000. Haskell then informed the board that the NC ABC Commission has changed the process and procedure for determining the distribution of alcohol to ABC stores. The result of the procedural changes does not allow distribution of limited and rare liquors to the smaller ABC stores across the state. The change in distribution will have a negative impact on the sales of the store. Haskell then asked for the support of the board to distribute a letter to Governor Cooper to encourage a change in the new regulation. The board was in agreeance for the Mayor to sign the letter drafted by the ABC Board. The Board thanked Haskell for his report.

**Discussion of Christmas in July Concerns** – There was discussion at this time as Jason Lambert was not attendance for the meeting.

**Consideration of Voluntary Annexation of Parcel 19223276** – With no discussion, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the annexation. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of AIA Resolutions for Water and Wastewater** – Town Manager Brantley Price explained that the town is applying for Asset Inventory Assessment grant for both water and sewer. The grant will review all equipment related to water and sewer and provide us with an Asset Management plan for each. The grant will be for \$200,000 for each water and sewer. If the AIA is approved this allows us additional points when applying for water/sewer grants. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the resolutions as presented. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Capital Improvement Project** – Town Manager Brantley Price stated that the town did not receive any of the spring ARPA funding for our water and sewer projects as each project did not score well enough. An approved Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will improve our project scores with additional points. The board then reviewed the CIP, which shows a plan of what and when capital improvements are needed in the next 10 years. With no further discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the CIP as presented. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Revised Grant Ordinance** – With no discussion, Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the revised grant ordinance as presented. Alderwoman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Cemetery Plot Purchase** – With no discussion, Alderman Reeves made a motion to approve the cemetery plot purchase for James and Mary Williams. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Discussion of Board of Adjustment Date** – The Board was in consensus to meet Monday, September 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm.

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

**Police Report** – Chief Jordan gave his report to the Board for the month of August. A total of 306 calls were dispatched through the communications center including 15 motor vehicle crashes, 7 larcenies, 16 drug cases, 5 DWIs, 15 minor citations, and other miscellaneous calls. The Board thanked Chief Jordan for his report.

**Water and Wastewater Report** – Wastewater Superintendent Brandon Patrick gave his report to the Board. A total of 3.3 inches of rain were recorded for the month of August. Last month, a resident in town removed its gutters and sidewalk drains from the sewer system. A neighboring house also removed their sump pump from the sewer system. The sump pump alone was adding 10,000 to 20,000 gallons of groundwater to the system. The filter plant was shut down due to low flow but has since been restarted. Brandon estimated that 360,000 gallons of water were used to help extinguish the fire at Coble Creek Lumber. The Board thanked Brandon for his report.

**Maintenance Report** – Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller gave his report to the Board. A total of 18 one call tickets were located, 2 water leaks and 3 sewer issues were reported for the month. Paving has been completed on School Avenue and Witt Drive as well as all cuts paved. The maintenance department has been busy cleaning storm drains, mowing, and making 4 trips to the landfill. All streetlights reported out have been repaired. The board thanked Eric for his report.

**Town Managers Report** – Brantley Price, Town Manager gave his report to the Board. The EV charges have been used approximately 120 times since January for 288 hours of charging time. The average usage per day for the downtown wifi is at 335 clients per day. The town did not receive any grants for the first round but will automatically move into the fall round. An RFQ has been issued for the engineering as required by the DEQ for the \$1.5 million in state funds for the water and sewer projects. Section E of the Highway 221 widening project is estimated to be 50% complete. Wilkes County is attempting to have Highway 421 designated as an interstate which will allow for additional funding. Taxes collected to date equals 68.9% of the levy. GE incentive for this year was reduced by \$9300 as that did not meet the investment targets. Sales tax to date is up 13% for April and 13% year to date. The police department ordered the new patrol car to find out the price has increased by \$9000. The Board agreed to use the additional funds to be received from the ABC store that were not budgeted to cover the costs of the police car. Blue Ridge Energy has announced a 3.5% increase which will result in an estimated \$7000 increase in our annual electricity charges. The Blue Ridge Relay will be held on Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup> with runners entering town around 8am. Ashe Pregnancy Center walk, and fundraising event is scheduled for September 24<sup>th</sup> at the Backstreet Park. Mos Boots fall sidewalk sale is scheduled for October 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>. Brantley extended a thank you to all the volunteers and fire departments who assisted with the Cobble Creek fire. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

**Public Comments** – none

**Aldermen Comments** – The Board thanked all the fire departments, police, EMS, and other volunteers who assisted with the fire at Coble Creek.

**Closed Session** – Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to enter closed session under GS 143.318.11(a)(3) to consult with the Town Attorney.

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

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Tom Hartman, Mayor

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Rebecca Eldreth, Town Clerk