

Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 5, 2023 | 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, Town Clerk Rebecca Eldreth, Police Chief Brad Jordan, 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 June 5, 2023 Agenda – Mayor Hartman made the request to add a public hearing for the 2023-2024 town operating budget and for a representative of the Blue Ridge midnight Runners to address the board. Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the agenda with the additions. Alderman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Public Hearings

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Town Operating Budget. – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed 2023-2024 operating budget. The public hearing was open at 6:07pm. Alderman Green thank Town Manager Brantley Price for his efforts in making a fiscally responsible budget. With no further comment Mayor Hartman closed the public hearing at 6:08pm.

Regular Session

Approval of Minutes – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the minutes for the May 1st Regular Meeting. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Approval for the Ashe County Comprehensive Transportation Plan – David Graham with the High Country Council of Government and James Upchurch with NC DOT reviewed the Ashe Comprehensive Transportation Plan with Board. A steering committee including representatives from Jefferson, West Jefferson, and Lansing Municipal governments, Ashe County government, Chamber of Commerce, school system, emergency management, bicycle and pedestrian advocated, and other key stakeholders worked in collaboration with NC DOT staff and High Country Rural Planning Organization staff in the development of the Ashe County Comprehensive Transportation Plan update. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the Ashe County Transportation Plan update. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of FY 2023-2024 Audit Contract – Priscilla Norris has submitted the audit contract for fiscal year 2022-23 for approval. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve

the audit contract as presented. Alderwoman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Live Music at Lifestore Corporate Office –Judy Current requested permission to have outdoor music at the ribbon cutting for their newly renovated corporate office on Thursday, June 15th from 5:30pm to 7:00pm. Music will include one individual with an acoustic guitar. With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the outdoor music. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Year End Budget Amendment – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the budget amendment. Alderman Green seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Approval-FY 2023-24 Budget Ordinance – With no discussion, Alderman Green made the motion to approve the budget ordinance as presented. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Approval-FY 2023-24 Schedule of Fees – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the schedule of fees with no increase from the previous year. Alderwoman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Discussion of Blue Ridge Midnight Runners – Mayor Hartman opened the floor for Alderman Barr to address the board concerning the monthly cruise ins. Alderman Barr informed the board that the Blue Ridge Midnight Runners would be seeking a permit for the remainder of the cruise ins and would like to move the October cruise in to a Sunday. Alderman Barr then asked the board about allowing the car group to close West Main Street to park cars starting at 1pm during the event. Alderman Green did not feel this location would work with the traffic from the Farmers Market. Alderman Reeves suggested using the park as an alternative to park the cars. No motions were made at this time.

Police Report – Chief Jordan gave his report to the Board for the month of May. A total of 233 calls were dispatched through the communications center including 16 motor vehicle crashes, 11 larcenies, 8 drug cases, 2 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 5 inches of rain were recorded for the month. A sewer spill occurred in front of Ingles from a hold in a forced main coming from the Beaver Creek pump station. The hole appeared to be caused by weakening after being hit by a boring crew. Both filters are running, producing about 100,000 gallons per day. The Board thanked Brandon for his report.

Maintenance Report – absent

Town Managers Report – Brantley Price, Town Manager, gave his report to the Board beginning with project updates. The town was awarded \$250,000 from Golden Leaf to support the construction of an underground stormwater detention chamber at the maintenance lot and a vegetated swale in the park beside the shelter to mitigate the frequent flooding downtown businesses experience. This will help slow the water from the park and the maintenance area to downtown. Taxes collected to date total 97% of the levy. Sales tax for February was up 6% over

the prior year with year-to-date sales tax up 15%. Hometown Strong made a stop in town to discuss the town's top priorities – Paddy Mountain, issues with the pump station, sidewalk feasibility study, unapproved infrastructure grants. The group ended the day with a tour of the hotel renovations. NCDENR was here to inspect the town's water treatment plants, water supply wells, and associated distribution system. Brantley met with the sheriff's department and ABC Board to discuss how to use the ABC education funds. The decision was made to go forward with the Lead program which is like DARE. Fireworks for the Fourth of July will be held on the hill between West Jefferson and Walmart as in previous years. Brantley then invited the board to the company picnic on Friday, June 23rd and Lifestore open house on Thursday, June 15th. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

Public Comments – None

Aldermen Comments – Alderman Barr showed his appreciation for Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Brandon Patrick for a job well done.

Closed Session – Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to enter into closed session per GS 143-318-11(a)(3) to consult with the Town Attorney over Attorney-Client matters. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor. The time was 7:08pm.

Adjournment – Upon returning from closed session, Alderman Barr made the motion to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by Alderman Shoemaker with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Tom Hartman, Mayor

Rebecca Eldreth, Town Clerk