

**Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**January 8, 2024 | 6:00 pm**

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

**Town Staff Present:** Town Manager Brantley Price, Town Attorney Jak Reeves, Police Chief Brad Jordan, and Wastewater Superintendent Brandon Patrick

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 January 8, 2024 Agenda** – Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Alderman Reeves seconded with a motion of 5-0 in favor.

**Public Hearings**

**Consideration of Rezoning Parcel 19223002 & 19223660** – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed rezoning of the Paddy Mountain property located off North Jefferson Avenue. The public hearing was open at 6:01pm. With no comment Mayor Hartman closed the public hearing at 6:01pm.

**Consideration of Zoning Parcel 19267393** – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed zoning of parcel 19267393 located off US Highway 163. The public hearing was open at 6:01pm. With no comment, Mayor Hartman closed the public hearing at 6:02pm.

**Consideration of Voluntary Annexation of Parcel 19223230004 & 19223230016** – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed annexation for 2 parcels owned by Skyline Telephone. The public hearing was open at 6:02pm. With no comment, Mayor Hartman closed the public hearing at 6:02pm.

**Regular Session**

**Approval of Minutes** – With no discussion, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of 2024 Christmas in July Festival** – Dorthy Ingram presented to the Board for the first time as committee president. Dorthy outlined the road closures along with the dates and times for the upcoming festival. Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the 2024 festival layout. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Rezoning Parcel 19223002 & 19223660** – Alderman Barr made the motion to rezone parcel 19223002 and 19223660 from Low Density Residential to Residential Agriculture. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a unanimous vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration Zoning Parcel 19267393** – Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the zoning of Happy Trails Cowboy Church of Ashe to Highway Commercial. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Voluntary Annexation of Parcel 19223230004 & 19223230016** – Alderwoman Shelton made the motion to approve the annexation. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Statements of Consistency** – With no discussion, Alderman Green made a motion to approve the statements of consistency. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Resolution to Exempt Paddy Mountain Construction Oversight Contract from RFO** – Mayor Hartman explained that the town needs to hire an engineering firm for the construction oversight of the Paddy Mountain construction of the parking lot, prefab shelter, prefab restrooms, grading, concrete, and stormwater work. A quote has been received from Warren Consulting and Design. They are recommended by both Blue Ridge Conservancy and Carrie Caviness who is assisting with the design and bidding of the project. A resolution will need to be adopted to allow Warren Consulting to do the work by exempting the Request for Qualifications process for contracts under \$50,000. Alderman Barr made the motion to adopt the resolution as presented. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Resolution to Exempt Town Hall Renovation Contract from RFO** – Mayor Hartman explained that an architect needs to be secured to complete the plans for the Town Hall renovations to move forward. Darron Dotson is able to complete the plans including bid specs. To allow Darron to do the work exempting the Request for Qualifications process a resolution to eliminate the process must be adopted. Alderman Barr made the motion to adopt the resolution as presented. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Review of Paddy Mountain Restrooms and Pavilion** – Pictures and spec of the prefab shelter and restrooms for Paddy Mountain were shared with the group. The structures will be rated for 130 mile per hour winds as required by the NC Building Code for structures above 3000 feet. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the shelter and restroom designs as presented. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Approval for Paddy Mountain Construction Oversight Contract** – Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the contract with Warren Consulting and Design. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Capital Budget Ordinance for Golden Leaf** – A capital budget ordinance is required for all projects that occur in multiple years. With no discussion, Alderman Reeves made the motion to adopt the ordinance as presented. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Capital Budget Ordinance for AIA Water & AIA Sewer Projects** – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to adopt the ordinance as presented. Alderman Green seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Capital Budget Ordinance for Interconnect Feasibility Study** – With no discussion, Alderwoman Shelton made the motion to adopt the ordinance as presented. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Capital Budget Ordinance for Paddy Mountain PARTF & State Funds** – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to adopt the ordinance as presented. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Budget Amendment #2** – With no discussion, Alderman Barr made the motion to adopt the budget amendment as presented. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of 2024 Holiday Schedule** – With no discussion, Alderwoman Shelton made the motion to adopt the ordinance as presented. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Streetlight Replacement on Jefferson Avenue & Main Street** – Town manager Price discussed the possibility of replacing the downtown streetlights with new LED lights with Blue Ridge Energy. Since the lights have not fully depreciated the cost will be \$467 per light with Blue Ridge Energy only able to replace 51 lights within the next year. After some discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to replace the 37 lights on Jefferson Avenue along with the overhead lights on each corner of the three main intersections. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Discussion of Planning Board Appointment** – Alderman Barr made the motion to appoint Melody Rector to the planning board to replace Beth Shelton. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Police Report** – Chief Jordan gave his report to the Board for the month. A total of 286 calls were dispatched through the communications center including 18 motor vehicle crashes, 8 larcenies, 2 DWIs, 4 minor citations, and other miscellaneous calls. Alderman Shoemaker inquired about how often officers patrol the residential area during a shift. Alderman Green stated he would like to see more officers in the residential area at night. Chief Jordan informed the board that he has communicated with the officers to increase the patrol in the residential area moving forward. Alderman Green made the motion for the officer on duty to check in with dispatch with their location each hour from 10:00pm to 6:00am. Without a second the motion was not passed. The Board thanked Chief Jordan for his report.

**Water & Wastewater Report** – Wastewater Superintendent Brandon Patrick gave his report to the Board. A total of 6 inches of rain were reported for the month with a total of 50 inches for the year. A total of 80 million gallons of drinking water and 86 million gallons of wastewater were treated at the plant in 2023. The highest daily flow was recorded at just over 600,000 gallons compared to over 800,000 gallons in 2022. Both filters are currently running. The Board thanked Brandon for his report.

**Maintenance Report** – absent

**Town Managers Report** – Brantley Price, Town Manager gave his report to the Board. The Lead Service Line Project had to be readvertised for engineering services since only one

response was received. Surveying has begun for the Golden Leaf Stormwater Project. Over a mile of trails have been completed on Paddy Mountain. Taxes collected to date total 89% of the tax levy. Sales tax for the month was up 1% over the prior year with year-to-date sales tax up 2% over last year. The EV charger located in the lot off Main Street had 258 charging events logged for the year and is the most heavily utilized level 2 charger that Blue Ridge Energy operates. The EV Charge located in the lot off School Avenue had a total of 155 charging sessions. Brantley informed the board that he will be attending the County and City Managers seminar in Winston from January 31<sup>st</sup> to February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Brantley then extended a thank you to Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller and his crew for working late on a sewer issue on Wilton Avenue the last day before Christmas break due to a tap that had not been cut out when the sewer lines were in the process of being lined. Roof issues at the Arts Council have been evaluated by local roofer James Church who states there are shingles that need to be replaced in addition to some wood that might need to be replaced. The board was in agreement to wait until the new budget year to complete the repairs. The roof at Town Hall has also been leaking and has been patched until other issues can be assessed. Lastly, Brantley informed the board of an issued identified in an Airbnb during the inspection with bunkbeds located in a storage area with no egress. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

**Public Comments** – Bob Nash of West Evergreen Drive addressed the board with his hopes of the town taking over his street. Bob was instructed to follow up with Town Manager Price on the issue. Sherman Lyalls and Andy Guion briefly spoke to the board about considering adopting the ordinance for the brunch bill.

**Aldermen Comments** – Alderwoman Shelton expressed her appreciation for the town staff, and said she was looking forward to attending the Essentials of Municipal Government in February. Then, Alderwoman Shelton made the request to leave the snowflake decorations on the pole through the wintertime. No action was taken on this item. Alderman Barr thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting. Alderman Reeves and Alderman Shoemaker thanked the police department for their quick response to an incident that occurred in the residential area.

**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