

Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen
Special Meeting Minutes
February 19, 2024 | 6:00 pm

Board Members Present: Mayor Tom Hartman, Alderman Rusty Barr, Alderwoman Shelton, and Alderman Stephen Shoemaker

Town Staff Present: Town Manager Brantley Price, Assistant Town Manager Eldreth

At 1:00 pm Mayor Hartman called to order the meeting of the Board of Aldermen.

Regular Session

Welcome – Julie Wiggins with the High Country Council of Government welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a quick overview of the High Country Council of Government.

Remarks and Welcome – Caleb Marsh, Dean of Wilkes Community College extended a welcome to the group. Dean Marsh provided some information about the space furnished for the meeting and campus.

Introductions – Chairman McNeill started the introductions and the reason behind the meeting to share opportunities to support and work together. Senator Ralph Hise followed stating he has served the 9 county district for the past 14 years. Representative Picket introduced himself and acknowledged the collaboration between the groups at the table. The remaining attendees went around the table to introduce themselves.

Projects and Updates – Adam Stumb kicked off the projects and updates by highlighting the collaboration of all those in attendance for the Northern Peaks Trail. Jordan Sellers shared the status of the Northern Peaks Trail and Paddy Mountain Project on behalf of Blue Ridge Conservancy. Director of Ashe County Parks and Rec Kevin Anderson provided an update on the Family Central Expansion project that will serve multiple generations 12 months out of the year, which is to include fitness area, indoor pool, and indoor walking track. County Manager Adam Stumb then updated the group on the ag center project, the middle school project, and the industrial park on Ray Taylor Road. Town of Jefferson shared their projects that include an emergency interconnect with the Town of West Jefferson, an AIA grant opportunity for capital improvements and rate study, and the lead service line inventory and replacement project. Town Manager Shatley along with the board members in attendance gave a summary of the downtown pedestrian plan with potential town center in front of the old courthouse. Mayor of Lansing Mack Powers spoke about Lansing. Funding has been secured to improve infrastructure by replacing the sewer treatment plant, additional water tank, mapping the system and valves, and replace meters. An adventure playground has been fully funded for the park to be built in the fall. A pocket park with additional parking has been completed, new fire hydrant installed, and a trash trout scheduled for installation to reduce trash in the park. Town of West Jefferson finished projects and updates for the towns. Town Manager Price offered an update on new business coming to the area including Talia's, Hatchett Coffee, Blue Deer Cookies, Kilwin's and the opportunities for new businesses in the old tobacco warehouse renovation project. The hotel renovation project should be complete in July of this year. The Town of West Jefferson passed

the brunch bill allowing for the sale of alcohol starting at 10am on Sundays. Brantley then informed the group of a possible housing development on Oakwood Road to include approximately 28 new homes. Updates were given on sidewalks and sewer extensions close to the high school, Paddy Mountain Park, and sidewalk feasibility study to install sidewalks from East Buck Mountain Road to Beaver Creek School Road. The Town of West Jefferson is also working on the emergency interconnect, AIA grant, lead service line inventory and replacement, stormwater detention at the park and maintenance lots. Executive Director of the Ashe Chamber and Visitor Center Kitty Honeycutt shared upcoming events covering the reveal of the new Ashe County Guide and Ashe Bash. New River Conservancy offered details about the trash trout to be installed at the creeper trail park, the planting of new trees at the creeper trail park and Todd island.

Closing Remarks – Senator Ralph Hise encouraged those in attendance to have a list of wants prepared and prioritized with estimates to submit when asked since the window of opportunity could be short. Representative Picket urged everyone not to hesitate to ask, have the information to back up the request, and be precise and to the point.

Adjourn – Alderman Barr made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a vote of 3-0 in favor.

Tom Hartman, Mayor

Rebecca Eldreth, Town Clerk