

**Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**September 11, 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, 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 11, 2023 Agenda** – Mayor Hartman made the request to add a resolution for downtown stormwater detention construction, the homecoming parade, and resolution of intent to close an alleyway. Alderwoman Miller made the motion to approve the agenda with the additions. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Public Hearings**

**Consideration of Text Amendment to Article V Section 505.3 Dimensional Requirements** – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed text amendment to Article V. The public hearing was open at 6:03pm. With no comment, Mayor Hartman closed the public hearing at 6:04pm.

**Consideration of Rezoning 901 Mount Jefferson Road from Low Density Residential to Highway Commercial** – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed rezoning of 901 Mount Jefferson Road. The public hearing was open at 6:04pm. Town Clerk Rebecca Eldreth read a letter from the property owner Laura Nedosick as she was not able to attend the meeting in person. With no further comment, Mayor Hartman closed the public hearing at 6:07pm.

**Consideration of Voluntary Annexation of Parcels 19227517 and 19227 214** – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the voluntary annexation of parcel 19227517 and 19227214 owned by the County of Ashe and the Ashe County School Board. The public hearing was open at 6:08pm. With no comment, Mayor Hartman closed the public hearing at 6:08pm.

**Regular Session**

**Approval of Minutes** – With no discussion, Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the minutes for the August 7th Regular Meeting. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Text Amendment to Article V Section 505.3 Dimensional Requirements** – With no discussion, Alderwoman Miller made the motion to approve the text amendment as recommended. Alderman Green seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Rezoning 901 Mount Jefferson Road** – With no discussion, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the rezoning as requested. Alderwoman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Voluntary Annexation of Parcel 19227517 and 19227214** – With no discussion, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the annexation of both parcels. Alderwoman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Statements of Consistency** – With no discussion, Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the Statements of Consistency as presented. Alderwoman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Resolution for Downtown Stormwater Detention Construction** – With no discussion, Alderman Barr made the motion to adopt the resolution. Alderwoman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Resolution of Support for the Homecoming Parade** – With no discussion, Alderman Green made the motion to adopt the resolution. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Resolution Intent to Close Alleyways** – The Town has received a request to permanently close two of the town's alleyways. The first is located off West Fourth Street on the Shelton's property, and the second located off College Avenue on the Morris's property. After some discussion, Alderman Reeves made the motion to adopt the resolution of intent. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a vote of 4-1 in favor with Alderman Green opposed.

**Discussion of Statue in Bumpout** – Kelly Vannoy, owner of Naked Creek Farmacy came before the board to request the installation of a bigfoot statue in the bumpout in front of her store located at 102 North Jefferson Ave. After some discussion, Attorney Reeves recommended that if the statue was placed for a lease agreement to be in place between the Town and the business owner. Alderman Green made the motion to approve the installation of the statue with lease agreement. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 3-2 with Alderman Reeves and Alderman Shoemaker opposed.

**Discussion of Eliminating Parking Space on East First Street** – Kelly Vannoy then asked the board to eliminate the parking space on the side of her business where the newest mural "The One" is located. Alderman Green recognized the efforts that Kelly has put into her building and with that made a motion to eliminate the parking spaces, install two benches for seating, and a bollard for safety. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Text Amendment to Chapter 54.004** – Mayor Hartman explained that both Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller and Wastewater Superintendent Brandon Patrick felt that the town should require all new buildings with sprinklers to have a meter placed on the line. The installation of the meter would allow the town to monitor usage generated from leaks and would allow the town to know how much water was used in case of a fire. The text amendment would

read “Any building that is required to be sprinkled will be required to install a meter on the line before any fire prevention device (hydrant) or backflow prevention device. Any water used for fire suppression there will be no charge - Any water not used for fire suppression, including leaks, will be charged at the appropriate rate.” Alderman Barr made a motion to adopt the text amendment as presented. Alderwoman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor of the text amendment.

**Consideration of Resolution for Lead Service Line Inventory** – Mayor Hartman stated that the HCCOG submitted a solicitation for a find and replace project for lead service lines for the town. A resolution is required to turn the solicitation into an application. With no discussion, Alderman Barr made the motion to adopt the resolution. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Resolution for ABC Board Strategic Planning** – With no discussion, Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the resolution as presented. Alderwoman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Short Term Rental Regulations** – A list of regulations were provided to the board for their review. Alderman Green added the request for a fire extinguisher to the list of required safety equipment. Alderman Barr made the request for the fire department to be able to check compliance of the regulations. Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the regulations with the additions. Alderwoman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 4-1 in favor with Alderman Shoemaker opposed.

**Budget Amendment #1** – With no discussion, Alderman Green made the motion to approve the budget amendment. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Discussion of Town Hall Renovation** – Mayor Hartman opened the floor for discussion on the renovation of town hall. Alderman Green made the motion to eliminate the honeycomb exterior of the building. Stephen Shoemaker seconded the motion. A vote of 2-3 to eliminate the honeycomb exterior with Alderwoman Miller, Alderman Barr and Alderman Reeves opposing. Next Alderman Barr made the motion to install an exterior wall in the old drive through. Alderwoman Miller 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 209 calls were dispatched through the communications center including 11 motor vehicle crashes, 10 larcenies, 2 drug cases, 1 minor citation, 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. There was a water leak at McDonalds last month. The alarms alerted Brandon a 4:30am of the leak so that the leak could be located, and the valve cut off. A loss of 200,000 to 300,000 gallons were lost within the 30-minute time span. Only one filter is running. The board thanked Brandon for his report.

**Maintenance Report** – Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller gave his report to the Board. A total of 70 one call tickets were located, 4 water leaks, 2 water taps, a valve replacement, 1 sewer issues were reported for the month. Stop bars were painted on Wilton Avenue. Paving of the roads were put on hold for a week or two. New banners have been installed on North Jefferson

Avenue. The fire department has been flowing hydrants, painting hydrants, cleaning trucks. Eric then extended an invitation to the board to the fire department's annual dinner. The board thanked Eric for his report.

**Town Managers Report** – Brantley Price, Town Manager, gave his report to the Board beginning with project updates. The Lead Service Line Inventory and Replacement project is due to be complete on October 16 of 2024 with the estimated cost of \$1.2 million. The town received one RFQ on the stormwater project from Municipal Engineering. The project must be completed by May of 2025. A stakeholder meeting for the sidewalk feasibility study was held. The plan is to install a 7 to 8 foot multipath that will be separate from the road with plantings. Carolina Grading will be installing the dry hydrant by the pond at the Old Barn Winery for the fire department. The highway 221 widening project is over 75% complete. Shatley is to start milling next week and start paving right after with all paving complete by Friday. Taxes collected to date total 64% of the levy which is about \$10,000 less than last year. Sales tax for May was up 9% over the prior year with year-to-date sales tax up 13.1%. The TDA is currently running the digital ad campaign. The certified population for West Jefferson has increased to 1370 from 1279. Ashe Pregnancy walk for life is September 30<sup>th</sup>. The PARTF grant for Paddy Mountain has been approved for \$500,000 with the count and the town each budgeting \$85,000 for the match. Blue ridge Conservancy would like to start Trail construction in October. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

**Public Comments** – Town resident Shelley Elliott would like to see swings installed closer to the pavilions.

**Aldermen Comments** – The board thanked all those in attendance.

**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