

**Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**July 1, 2024 | 6:00 pm**

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

**Town Staff Present:** Town Manager Brantley Price, Town Attorney Jak Reeves, Assistant Town Manager Rebecca Eldreth and Police Chief Brad Jordan

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 of July 1, 2024 Agenda** – Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Alderman Reeves seconded with a motion of 4-0 in favor.

**Public Hearings**

**Consideration of Rezoning Parcel 19227210010 to Highway Commercial** – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed rezoning of the property located on Mount Jefferson Road. The public hearing was open at 6:01pm. The Assistant Town Manager read an email from adjoining property owner Jacqui Handal who was opposed to the rezoning. Additional adjoining property owners Don and Cindy Palmer inquired about the future use of the property. Carrie McNeil, the prospective buyer of the property provided a general idea of her vision for the property which includes an expansion for her medical spa. With no further comment, Mayor Hartman closed the public hearing at 6:09pm.

**Consideration of Rezoning Parcel 19223029 to Residential Agriculture** – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed rezoning of the property located at 1711 NC Hwy 194 North. The public hearing was open at 6:10pm. Alderman Barr asked about the timeline to cleanup the property from the collapsed buildings. Brittany Patel was in attendance stating that cleanup would be rather quick with the hopes of completing it by the end of the year. With no further comment, Mayor Hartman closed the public hearing at 6:10pm.

**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 4-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Additional Paddy Mountain Funds** – Jordan Sellers with Blue Ridge Conservancy approached the board to request additional funds for the Paddy Mountain project as the opening bids were higher than anticipated. Revisions are being made to the project to bring the project closer to budget but an additional \$40,000 was requested by Sellers. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the additional funding. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Approving MBI Contract for Paddy Mountain** – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the contract as presented. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Approving Municipal Engineering Contract for Golden Lead Stormwater Project on Backstreet and Long Street** – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the contract as presented. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

**Consideration of 2024 Homecoming Parade** – Crystal Miller with the West Jefferson Business Association came before the board to request the road closure for the second annual homecoming parade. The parade would start at Hamilton Street and conclude on East Second Street allowing parade participants to be picked up in the town parking lots after the parade. Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the road closure. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0.

**Consideration of Resolution of Support for AARP Age Friendly Town** – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the resolution as presented. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0.

**Consideration of Rezoning Parcel 19227210010 to Highway Commercial** – With no discussion, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the rezoning of the property on Mount Jefferson Road. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0.

**Consideration of Rezoning Parcel 19223029** – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the rezoning of the property located at 1711 NC Highway 194 North. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0.

**Consideration of Statements of Consistency** – With no discussion, Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the statements as presented. Alderwoman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0.

**Consideration of Revised MOU with Rescue Squad in Baldwin** – Town Attorney Reeves made the revisions requested at the June meeting stating West Jefferson agreed to reimburse 25% of the utility expenses. In addition, the annual contract can be terminated by either party with written notice at least 30 days prior to July 1 of the present year. Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the MOU as presented. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Fire Contract Addendum** – With no discussion, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the addendum as presented. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

**Consideration of Encroachment Agreement** – Town Attorney stated that the Drane's property encroaches 2 inches on Long Street. The Drane's have listed the property for sale and would like to complete the agreement before an offer purchase is received. With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the agreement as presented. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

**Consideration of ARPA Policies** – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the policies as presented. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

**Discussion of ETJ Map** – The board agreed to form a committee to explore the possibility of reducing the ETJ. Committee members will include Mayor Hartman, Alderman Rusty Barr, Alderwoman Shelton, and Rebecca Eldreth.

**Order to Collect Taxes** – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the order to collect taxes. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

**Tax Release** – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the tax release. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

**Police Report** – Chief Jordan gave his report to the Board for the month. A total of 325 calls were dispatched through the communications center including 12 motor vehicle crashes, 9 larcenies, 1 drug case, 36 minor citations, and other miscellaneous calls. The Board thanked Chief Jordan for his report.

**Water & Wastewater Report** – absent

**Maintenance Report** – absent

**Town Managers Report** – Town Manager Brantley Price gave his report to the Board. A sewer issue was reported at the Ingles pump station which is the largest pump station in the town. Brandon and his crew were able to get one pump operational while the other is repaired. Per County Manager Adam Stumb, the Highway 88 connector project did not score well with NC DOT. Alternate projects to be submitted include NC Highway 163, South Jefferson Avenue at Beaver Creek School Road intersection, US Highway 221 to NC Highway 16, followed by the NC Highway 88 connector. In addition, a new terminal building has been requested for the aviation project. Taxes collected to date total 98.2% of the tax levy leaving only \$48,000 past due for all years. Sales tax was down 1% from the previous year with year-to-date up 1%. The town will be receiving \$250,000 from the ABC budget, which is up \$30,000 from the previous year. Connie White donated a bench in the backstreet park in memory of her husband Frank White. The employee picnic will be held in August. Brantley reminded the Mayor and Alderman Barr to complete the required ethics training by November 1<sup>st</sup>. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

**Public Comments** – none

**Aldermen Comments** – Alderman Shoemaker expressed his delight to be back with the board and that he appreciated everyone in attendance. Alderwoman Shelton stated she was excited about the upcoming Christmas in July Festival and the arrival of the tourists for the season.

**Closed Session** – Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to enter closed session. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0.

**Return to Regular Session** – The Board returned to regular session at 7:13pm

**Adjournment** – With nothing further, Alderman Barr made the motion to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by Alderman Shoemaker with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

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Tom Hartman, Mayor

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Rebecca Eldreth, Town Clerk