

Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 3, 2025 | 6:00 pm

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

Town Staff Present: Town Manager Brantley Price, Assistant Town Manager Rebecca Eldreth, Town Attorney Jak Reeves, Police Chief Brad Jordan, Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller, Wastewater Superintendent Brandon Patrick and Fire Captain Matt Lambert

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 March 3, 2025 Agenda – Mayor Hartman requested the addition of Grape + Grain requesting to close parking spaces to the agenda and to remove the discussion about the cruise ins. Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the agenda with the changes. Alderman Shomaker seconded with a motion of 5-0 in favor.

Public Hearings

Consideration of Text Amendment to Article V – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed text amendment to Article V. The text amendment would add “animal care facilities, including groomer and kennels” as a special use in the Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential and Residential Agriculture Districts. The mayor opened the hearing at 6:03pm. Destany Edwards and Leann Richardson spoke on behalf of their business Bed Bath and a Bone as well as Kyler Roten for her business Farm Dog Grooming. With no further comment, Mayor Hartman closed the public hearing at 6:08pm.

Consideration of Annexation to 1157 Mount Jefferson Road – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed annexation of 1157 Mount Jefferson Road. Carrie McNeil, owner of Westhaven Aesthetics and Wellness, has purchased the property to relocate their business. The property needs to be annexed for them to receive water and sewer service. The mayor opened the hearing at 6:09pm With no comment, Mayor Hartman closed the public hearing at 6:09pm.

Regular Session

Approval of Minutes – Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the minutes. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Text Amendment to Article V – With no comment, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the text amendment to Article V to include Animal Care Facilities, including Groomers and Kennels in the Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and Residential Agriculture Districts. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Statement of Consistency – The Statement of Consistency was read aloud. Alderwoman Shelton made the motion to approve the statements as presented. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Annexation to 1157 Mount Jefferson Road – With no comment, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the annexation. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Closing Parking Spaces for Grape + Grain – The owners of Grape + Grain have requested the use of the parking spaces in front of their business for an anniversary celebration. Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the closing of the space for one night. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Approval for Sidewalk Feasibility Study – Kimley Horn and NCDOT have asked for board approval of the feasibility study completed that will connect Downtown to Ingles. Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the study. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Review NC DOT Letter of Response to Highway 221 Business Flooding Issues – Town Manager Price shared the letter he received in response from the NCDOT concerning the flooding issues on Highway 221 Business. Town Attorney Reeves advised the board on the next steps to take if the board want to move forward would be to hire an engineer to conduct an independent study to disprove the NCDOT's report and to reach out to our representatives for support.

Discussion on Skateboarding – The Mayor has requested a discussion on skateboarding downtown. Town Attorney Reeves shared his thoughts on the issue and shared an ordinance from a town nearby allowing skateboarding on certain streets. The Board requested a draft ordinance to be presented at the next meeting.

Consideration of Amended Capital Budget Ordinance for WWTP and Sewer Line Extension – With no discussion, Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the amended Capital Budget Ordinance for the WWTP and sewer lines. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Discussion of Budget Meeting Date – The Board agreed to meet Monday, March 24 at 5:30pm.

Discussion of Board of Adjustment Date – The Board agreed to meet Monday, March 24 at 5:00pm before the budget meeting.

Police Report – Chief Jordan gave his report to the Board for the month. A total of 199 calls were dispatched through the communications center including 4 motor vehicle crashes, 7

larcenies, 4 drug cases, 2 DWIs, 2 trespasses and 10 minor citations, and other miscellaneous calls. The Board thanked Chief Jordan for his report.

Water & Wastewater Report – Wastewater Superintendent Brandon Patrick gave his report to the Board. A total of 3.5 inches of rain were reported for the month. KRG videoed the sewer line from Boone Family Funeral Home to old Lowes Foods building and only found one problem. Quotes are being received to fix the pipe to resolve some of the I and I issues. The filter plant is producing a little over 50,000 gallons per day. The Board thanked Brandon for his report.

Fire Department Report – Fire Captain Matt Lambert gave his report to the Board. A total of 66 calls were received for the month. Paperwork has been submitted for a state grant and an estimate on the roof has been received. The damaged water points will be inspected on March 31 by a FEMA site inspector. The Board thanked Matt for his report.

Maintenance Report – Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller gave his report to the Board. Monthly totals were reported with 19 locate tickets, 1 water leak, and 1 sewer issue. The maintenance department has picked up brush and cut back trees to meet the debris pick up deadline. Additional salt has been ordered, several taps have been scheduled, and quotes for replacing tiles have been received. Eric informed the board about the new hire for the maintenance department. The Board thanked Eric for his report.

Town Managers Report – Brantley Price, Town Manager gave his report to the Board. Brantley started his update with the status of the Town after Hurricane Helene. Site visits for the culverts have been completed and the damage, dimension, and description reports have been submitted. The scope of work for the fire department must be revised to add the insulation replacement. Another company is quoting the water point repairs. FEMA has reported that \$12,000,000 has been awarded in individual assistance to residents in Ashe County. A total is 3,967 valid registrations have been submitted with 3,303 referred to individual assistance where 2,192 have been found eligible so far for housing assistance and other needs. Currently, 37 households from Ashe County are being housed in hotels through the TSA program. The town has received \$97,500 for the May flooding event and \$425,000 from the PARTF reimbursements. The renovation of the Town Hall is almost complete with only trimming the newly installed window. A public comment session on connecting Paddy Mountain Park to Mount Jefferson State Park will be held on March 25th. Taxes collected to date totals 95% of the levy. Sales tax is up 15% from the previous year with year to date at a 6% increase. Brantley shared quotes from Thompson Nursery to take care of the bumpouts and planter at State Street and for Third Day to install the flower baskets on the poles. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to continue with the flowers. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor. Brantley then extended the invitation to the board for the ribbon cutting at Paddy Mountain on May 9th. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

Public Comments – none

Aldermen Comments – Alderman Shoemaker and Alderman Reeves recognized the boy scout in attendance. Alderman Barr thanked those in attendance for their interest in the town. Alderwoman Shelton stated she was looking forward for Spring and Summer events in the Town.

Closed Session – Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to enter into closed session. The motion was seconded by Alderman Barr. The time was 7:19pm.

Return to Regular Session – The Board returned to regular session. The time was 7:41pm.

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.

Tom Hartman, Mayor

Rebecca Eldreth, Town Clerk