

**Town of West Jefferson - Board of Alderman
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2026 | 6:00 p.m.**

Board Members Present: Mayor Rusty Barr, Alderman Absher, Alderman Blanco, Alderman Calvin Green, and Alderwoman Beth Shelton.

Town Staff Present: Town Manager Brantley Price, Town Attorney Jak Reeves, Assistant Town Manager Rebecca Eldreth, Police Chief Brad Jordan, Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller, and WWTP Superintendent Brandon Patrick.

Several other residents of the community also attended.

At 6:00 p.m. Mayor Barr called to order the meeting of the Board of Alderman. After the Mayor offered the invocation, those in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the February 2, 2026 Agenda – With no changes, Alderman Absher made the motion to approve the agenda. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Regular Session

Public Comments – Jacqueline Handal who resides in the ETJ expressed her desire to become more involved with the town. With nothing further the public comment period closed at 6:06pm.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes – With no discussion, Alderman Green made the motion to approve the minutes from the January meeting. Alderman Blanco seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Consideration of Appointment for Alderman and Swearing In of New Alderman – Alderman Blanco made the motion to appoint David Miller to fill the remaining term expiring December 2027. Alderman Green seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor. Clerk of Superior Court Sherman Lee swore in Alderman Miller.

Consideration of 2026 Christmas in July – The 2026 festival layout was presented to the board for consideration with no changes from the 2025 request. Alderman Green made the motion to approve the festival layout with no changes. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Presentation of FY 2024-25 Town Audit – Priscilla Norris, CPA presented her findings to the board stating the town received a clean report. The board thanked Priscilla for her report.

Consideration of Pinecone Project – Business owner Kelly Vannoy came before the board seeking permission to move forward with placing pinecones made from metal throughout the town. The cones will be fabricated by the welding department at the high school or community college with materials purchased by the business association. There will be no cost incurred to the town for the project. The cones will be in three different sizes and placed around town in the bumpouts under the advice of Thompsons Nursery. Alderman Blanco made the motion to move

forward with the pinecone project. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration to Award EDA IDF Project to Municipal Engineering – The Town received five proposals for the project with Municipal scoring the highest. Alderwoman Shelton made the motion to award the project to Municipal Engineering. Alderman Absher seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration to Award Park Transformation to BREC – A total of six firms submitted information for the park transformation project to create a master plan. A master plan is needed for the town to apply for future funding. Alderman Absher made the motion to award BREC with the park transformation project. Alderman Blanco seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Budget Amendment #3 – With no discussion, Alderman Green made the motion to approve the budget amendment as presented. Alderman Blanco seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Financial Review – Town Manager Brantley Price provided a review of the financials for the first six months for each department and updated the Board on past due property tax.

Consideration of Cemetery Plot Purchase – With no discussion, Alderwoman Shelton made the motion to approve the cemetery plot purchase for Martha Kincaid and Mary McLaurin. Alderman Blanco seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Order to Close a portion of West Fourth Street – Alderman Green made the motion to approve the order for the road closure that was presented in December of 2025. Alderman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Resolution for Small Business Infrastructure Grant Program – Mayor Barr explained the resolution must be adopted to move forward with the grant opportunity. Alderman Green made the motion to approve the resolution. Alderman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0.

Consideration of Application and Resolutions for SRF Helene Grant Funds – An additional grant opportunity is available to fund the water tank project and sewer lining that is needed. Alderman Miller made the motion to approve the application and resolutions for the SRF Helene Grant Funds. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration to Amend Personnel Policy – At the last board meeting a request was made to update the personnel policy to make Christmas a three day holiday. A revised policy was presented to the board. Alderman Absher made the motion to approve the new holiday schedule that included Christmas Eve, Christmas day, and a third day to be decided by the board. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Planning Board Appointments – Alderman Absher’s term on the planning board has expired. Mayor Barr has spoken with Jeren Holman, who has agreed to serve on the board. Alderman Green made the motion to appoint Jeren Holman to the planning board. Alderman Absher 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 250 calls were dispatched through the communications center including 11 motor vehicle crashes, 6 larcenies, 1 fraud case, 1 damage to property, 1 trespass, 21 minor citations, and other miscellaneous calls. The Board thanked Chief Jordan for his report.

Water/Wastewater & Maintenance Report – WWTP Superintendent Brandon Patrick gave his report to the Board. Rain totals for the month were reported at .75 inches. The new UV disinfection system installation was completed and is operational at the wastewater plant. One filter is currently running at the filter plant. The Board thanked Brandon for his report.

Fire Report – Fire Captain Matt Lambert gave his report to the Board. A total of 98 calls were recorded for the month with four of those being structure fires. The department has been battling issues with the snow and ice during all the winter weather. The Board thanked Matt for his report. Fire Chief Miller approached the board along with fire fighter Zachary about altering the fire department schedule from 12 hour shifts starting at 7:00am to shifts that start at 7:30 or 8:00am to allow the employees to also work medic shifts. Alderman Green was opposed to the change in schedule. The board requested Town Manager Price reach out to the medic base to inquire about the ability to alter the medic schedule to accommodate the fire department schedules.

Maintenance Report – Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller gave his report to the Board. Monthly totals were reported with 19 locate tickets, 1 water leak, and 2 sewer issues. Work on the sewer line install on Ridge Avenue has been stalled due to the weather. The department has been working on snow removal around town during the weather. An additional load of salt was ordered without a delivery date due to the shortage. The bucket truck was repaired and returned with the sweeper being sent out for repairs. The Board thanked Eric for his report.

Town Managers Report – Brantley Price, Town Manager gave his report to the board. Brantley welcomed David Miller to the board. All FEMA projects are waiting for permits to begin work. Completion date for the sewer line install is delayed due to the weather. The UV system at the wastewater treatment plant has been installed and in use. Taxes collected to date total 91% of the levy. Sales tax for the month of November shows an increase of 1% over last year. Year to date sales tax is up 4.8% over prior year. Paddy Mountain trail had 455 visitors in January. There is a possibility of a demonstration in March called the Great Mothers March with attendance expected to be between 50-100 participants. The Town of Andrews will be visiting the downtown area on February 27. Lee Lilly North Carolina Secretary of Commerce visited GE, AEV and Lansing with plans to return to West Jefferson. GE plans to begin their 35,000 square foot expansion in April with a completion date set for April 2027. Town Manager Price and Maintenance Supervisor Miller along with county met with GE to review the project. Taco Bell is constructing a new building on Mount Jefferson Road across from the high school. WWTP Supervisor Patrick and Town Manager Price would like to use budgeted funds in water capital outlay to purchase generators for two wells. The purchase of the generators would allow the

wells to keep up with daily consumption in the case of a power outage. Town Manager Price thanked all the town employees and emergency personnel for working the past two weekends, keeping the roads clear and responding to emergency calls. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

Aldermen Comments – Alderman Blanco welcomed Alderman Miller to the board. Alderman Miller expressed his gratitude for his appointment to the board and for the town staff. Alderman Absher also welcomed Alderman Miller to the board and thanked the town staff. Mayor Barr echoed all previous comments. Alderwoman Shelton welcomed Alderman Miller and town staff recognizing the both police and fire departments for a job well done. Alderman Green welcomed Alderman Miller to the board.

Closed Session – Alderman Absher made the motion to enter into closed session. The motion was seconded by Alderwoman Shelton.

Return to Regular Session – The Board returned to regular session.

Adjournment – With nothing further, Alderwoman Shelton made the motion to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by Alderman Absher. A vote of 5-0 in favor.

Rusty Barr, Mayor

Rebecca Eldreth, Town Clerk