

**Town of West Jefferson - Board of Alderman
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 5, 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, 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 January 5, 2026 Agenda – Mayor Barr made the request to add a discussion of renaming Hamilton Street to the end of the agenda. Alderwoman Shelton made the motion to approve the agenda with the addition. Alderman Absher seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Regular Session

Public Comments – none

Approval of the Meeting Minutes – With no discussion, Alderman Green made the motion to approve the minutes for the December 1, 2025 meeting. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Presentation of Interconnect – Doug Chapman presented the potential West Jefferson and Jefferson water interconnect final report that included an interlocal agreement to the Board. The project was funded with grant funds. The Town of West Jefferson has approximately 700 water customers with use of 200,000 gallon and capacity of 500,000. The system includes 27 miles of water lines. The Town of Jefferson is similar to West Jefferson as they have approximately 850 water customers using just under 200,000 gallons with a capacity of 889,000 gallons per day. Their system includes 17 miles of water lines. Both systems have enough capacity to support the other if needed. Water fed from West Jefferson to Jefferson would be gravity fed while water from Jefferson to West Jefferson would require pumping. Estimated project cost total \$1.6 million with hopes to apply for grant funds to cover the total cost of the project. West Jefferson would like to enter into an agreement with Jefferson to split the maintenance cost of the system once installed. The Board thanked Mr. Chapman for his report.

Consideration of Resolution for Industrial Development Fund Utility Account Grant – Mayor Barr explained that the resolution for the IDF grant must be adopted to move forward with the EDA funding. Alderman Blanco made the motion to adopt the resolution. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Consideration of Award to Carolina Grading for Greenfield Pump Station – The second bid opening for the Greenfield pump station was held with the lowest bid received from Carolina Grading and Utility at \$458,833. Alderman Green made the motion to award Carolina Grading

and Utilities the Greenfield Pump Station project. Alderman Absher seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Consideration of Award to PADCO Excavating for Golden Leaf Public Works and Park Stormwater Mitigation – The second bid opening for the Golden Leaf public works and park stormwater project was held with the lowest bid received by PADCO Excavating at \$469,832. Alderman Absher made the motion to award PADCO the stormwater mitigation project. Alderman Blanco seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Consideration of Street Sweeper Repair – A total of \$16,000 was budgeted to repair the streetsweeper, after having the streetsweeper reviewed there are several more items that are needed to complete what the company calls a routine refurbish. The estimated total of the refurbish is \$46,935 with 3 to 5 more years of service. Alderman Green made the motion to approve repair. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Consideration of 2026 Holiday Schedule – A discussion was held over the days off for the Christmas holiday. Alderwoman Shelton made the motion to approve December 28, 2026 for a third day off for the holiday. Alderman Blanco seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor. The board was in agreement to revise the personnel policy to reflect the additional day for the Christmas holiday to be discussed at a later date.

Discussion of Board of Adjustment Date – The board agreed to meet Monday, February 2 at 5:30pm.

Discussion of High Country Council of Government Executive Board Member – A discussion was held on who would take the open seat on the High Country Council of Government's Executive Board. Mayor Barr agreed to take the position.

Consideration of Tax Release – With no discussion, Alderman Blanco made the motion to approve the reduction as presented. Alderwoman Shelton seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Discussion of Road Name Change – Alderman Barr updated the board on renaming the Hamilton Drive stating the reasons for addition of the private drive in the parking lot was for emergency services. Town Manager Price offered to order a sign to identify the private drive of Jefferson Station Place if the condo association would like to make the purchase. No action was taken on this item.

Police Report – Chief Jordan gave his report to the Board for the month. A total of 211 calls were dispatched through the communications center including 6 motor vehicle crashes, 6 larcenies, 1 DWI, 3 damage to property, 3 trespasses, 17 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 1.5 inch with 40 inches for the year that is 12 inches less than previous years. The new UV disinfection system at the wastewater plant should be operational this week or next. The filter plant remains shut due to weather. Brandon updated the board on a potential project to install a 20,000 gallon tank at the water filter plant that can be filled by the spring. With the addition of the tank, Brandon would be able to run the filter plant even in drier conditions. The Board thanked Brandon for his report.

Fire Report – Fire Captain Matt Lambert gave his report to the Board. A total of 69 calls were recorded for the month. State grants have opened which the department plans on applying. The Board thanked Matt for his report.

Maintenance Report – Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller gave his report to the Board. Monthly totals were reported with 33 locate tickets, 1 water leak, 1 sewer issues and 3 water taps. The department has cleaned up after damage from the wind, removed Christmas lights, repaired the sewer line in Beaver Creek, and completed other general maintenance. The Board thanked Eric for his report.

Town Managers Report – Brantley Price, Town Manager gave his report to the board starting with project updates. A total of \$1,240,00 has been received from FEMA with all but two projects being obligated and still waiting on permits before completing the work. The sewer line installation on Ridge Avenue is scheduled to be completed by next week depending on weather. A new UV system has been installed at the wastewater treatment plant. The Town has received 6 requests for proposals for the park upgrades which will need to be selected at the February meeting. Taxes collected to date total 88% of the levy with \$176,000 remaining uncollected. Sales tax for the month of October are up 5% over last October. Year to date sales tax is up 5.7% over prior year. The town audit was submitted to the LGC on December 19. A total of 504 hikers used Mount Paddy in December. A budget amendment will need to be completed to increase the maintenance and repair equipment account in streets due to the extraordinary expenses incurred including the repairs to the backhoe and 45 tons of salt purchased. The trailer in the creek at Eric Gilley's is to be removed in the upcoming weeks after a camper is moved out of the path. Brantley will be attending the city and county managers' seminar in Winston Salem the last week in January. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

Aldermen Comments – Alderman Blanco thanked staff for the organization of the meetings. Alderman Absher shared compliments from Joe Costello on working with the Town during recovery from Helene. Mayor Barr thanked everyone in attendance along with town staff. Alderwoman Shelton expressed her sentiments for another great year and looking forward to the future. Alderman Green echoed Alderman Absher.

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 4-0 in favor.

Rusty Barr, Mayor

Rebecca Eldreth, Town Clerk