

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**February 25, 2025**

**THE WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL** held a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, at 6:00pm in the Town Hall Board Room located at 9 South Main Street Waynesville, NC.

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Gary Caldwell called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm with the following members present:

Mayor Gary Caldwell  
Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Dickson  
Councilmember Jon Feichter  
Councilmember Anthony Sutton

The following Councilmembers were absent:

Councilmember Julia Freeman

The following staff members were present:

Rob Hites, Town Manager  
Jesse Fowler, Assistant Town Manager  
Candace Poolton, Town Clerk  
Beth Gilmore, DWC Director  
Kirk Messer, Sanitation Crew Leader  
Luke Kinsland, Recreation Director  
Julie Grasty, Asset Services Manager  
Matthew Wright, Cemetery Services Specialist

Members of the Media:

Paul Nielson, The Mountaineer

1. Welcome/Calendar/Announcements

Mayor Gary Caldwell welcomed everyone and reminded everyone that the next Council meeting is March 11th.

**B. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**C. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.***

#### **D. CONSENT AGENDA**

*All items below are routine by the Town Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless a Councilmember so requests. In which event, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered with other items listed in the Regular Agenda.*

2.
  - a. Motion to approve the February 11, 2025 Regular Scheduled Meeting Minutes
  - b. Motion to call for a Public Hearing on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025 to consider a request for contiguous annexation, 64 Clement Dr, Waynesville, NC, 28786 and PIN# 8616-90-8565.
  - c. Motion to approve the yearly tax advertisements in The Mountaineer in accordance with N.C.G.S. 105-369.
  - d. Motion to approve the SOAR Eagle 5K Special Event Permit
  - e. Motion to approve the Farm Fresh 5K Special Event Permit

***A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Feichter, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.***

#### **E. PRESENTATIONS**

3. North Carolina Main Street and Rural Planning Center: Kirk Messer Main Street Champion Designation
  - Beth Gilmore, Director of Downtown Waynesville Commission

DWC Director Beth Gilmore presented Kirk Messer with the Main Street Champion Award for all his hard work and dedication to the Main Street District. She said this recognition is designated for people who make significant contributions to the Main Street Program.

4. Cemetery Master Plan Presentation
  - Julie Grasty, Asset Services Manager and Matthew Wright, Cemetery Services Specialist

Asset Services Manager Julie Grasty reported that funding for the Green Hill Cemetery Master Plan was approved in the Fiscal Year 2024 budget, in March of 2024 Council awarded the design of the Master Plan to the firm WC Fry Design. In June, Ms. Grasty said the team from WC Fry Design was onsite and meet with Cemetery Staff and the Cemetery Committee and the draft report was presented to the Cemetery Committee in July with the public input meeting held in August. Ms. Grasty stated that the final Master Plan was presented to the Cemetery Committee in January 2025. Mr. Wright presented the Cemetery Master Plan to Council. The highlights included:

- Restoration plan for historical monuments and gravestones
- A stormwater management plan that will prevent historical retaining walls from eroding in the future and replace crushed stormwater drains.
- Tree replacement and maintenance
- Redevelopment of maintenance and storage building and office spaces
- Clean and service the Veteran's area
- Landscaping
- Analyzation of fees-are they competitive compared to other municipalities?

Mr. Wright listed the next steps of implementing the Master Plan:

1. Develop a plan for regular inspection of markers and monuments.
2. Develop an inventory of all stone markers and monuments. Document findings of cracks, breaks and surface instability.
3. Hire a professional to provide training to Town maintenance staff on appropriate methods for monument stabilization, resetting & repair.
4. Work with and train volunteers to clean markers and monuments using appropriate methods, materials and tools.
5. Include volunteers from the Historic Preservation Committee, Haywood Co. Historical and Genealogical Society and the Cemetery Committee.

Councilmember Dickson asked how many sales the Cemetery Department makes each year and how many burials there are a year. Mr. Wright estimated between 50 and 60 and there are about 150 burials a year. Ms. Grasty said in the master plan, they proposed taking the interest from the perpetual care fund to fund some of the master plan projects. She said the perpetual care fund is averaging \$25,000 a year. Ms. Grasty stated the town is in line with other municipalities as far as fees go. Councilmember Dickson said the Environmental Sustainability Board would be interested in assisting with tree inventory and maintenance at Greenhill.

Councilmember Feichter asked about staffing for the cemetery. Ms. Grasty said with her fast-approaching retirement, things will change, but the new Public Services Director will come back with recommendations in the future regarding staffing.

Mayor Caldwell announced that Roy Pressley passed away and he was the representative for Veterans on the Cemetery Committee. He said he has a recommendation and will have him send an application to the Town Clerk.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Feichter, to approve the Cemetery Master Plan as presented. The motion passed unanimously.***

## **F. NEW BUSINESS**

5. Request to apply for NC Division of Parks and Recreation for Accessible Parks Grant
  - Luke Kinsland, Director of the Parks and Recreation Department

Recreation Director Luke Kinsland reported that the Kiwanis Club has committed \$25,000 toward replacement of the large wooden play structure within the Kiwanis playground and is applying for a grant from Duke Energy for another \$25,000. He said that staff would like to use this local match as part of a grant application to the State to increase accessibility in public playgrounds, at a \$1 local match to \$5 grant match opportunity. Mr. Kinsland explained that with \$50,000 of funding raised locally through Kiwanis and Duke Energy Foundation, the Town could apply for up to \$250,000. He added that if Kiwanis were not to receive the Duke Energy Grant, \$25,000 would be the local match and the Town could then apply for \$125,000. Mr. Kinsland said funding would be used to demo some of the old equipment and replace it with new and accessible features and the grant application is due on March 3, 2025. He said that Kidsaroundtheworld.com wants to donate a large piece of playground equipment to communities impacted by Helene, so that could be another potential option to replace the wooden structure. He said that group would send a team to assemble the playground.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to direct staff to complete an application to the NC Division of Parks and Recreation for Accessible Parks Grant. The motion passed unanimously.***

Mayor Caldwell thanked Mr. Kinsland and his team for making Chestnut Park look so great.

6. Project Ordinance for the Repair of Flood Damage to 280 Georgia Ave
  - Rob Hites, Town Manager

Town Manager Rob Hites reported that The Town's insurance carrier has compensated the town for damages to 280 Georgia Avenue due to flooding from Hurricane Helene. He said the settlement is such that the Town will not require a reimbursement from FEMA. During demolition, Mr. Hites said the contractor discovered that the ceiling insulation was loose and had fallen on the hung ceiling and the building inspector said that we could not use loose insulation to replace it. Mr. Hites explained we must use blown insulation that sticks to the ceiling, and to blow the insulation, several electrical and communications lines must be moved and re-attached. Mr. Hites presented several change orders for more unanticipated changes during construction as well as the replacement of water damaged furniture. To provide for a smooth process, staff recommended that Council adopt a "project ordinance" so that the funds we recommend for the project ordinance (\$307,000) are covered by the insurance proceeds which we have deposited in the General Fund.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to approve the Project Ordinance. The motion passed unanimously.***

7. Change Order to Harper Construction Contract for Waste Treatment Plant
  - Rob Hites, Town Manager

Town Manager Rob Hites reported that the Town initially contracted with Harper Construction Company to renovate the Sewer Plant in July of 2022 with the contract price of \$25,725,000. He said the engineers contemplated that numerous unknown issues would arise that would necessitate a change order. Mr. Hites said the contingency budget contains a contingency line item of \$1,286,250 to accommodate those unforeseen issues and in October of 2023 the Town approved Change Order #1 to cover a number of modifications to those plans. He presented a second Change Order of \$560,824.59 to Council.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Feichter, to approve Change Order #2 of Harper Construction's contract and approve the Change Order to McGill Associates' design contract for \$187,000 (\$152,00 and \$35,000). The motion passed unanimously.***

8. Approve proposals of Civil Design Concepts (CDC) to design, bid and administer projects to rebuild the dog park, greenways and bridges, and a rain garden at the terminus of the walking trail on Richland Creek.
  - Rob Hites, Town Manager

Town Manager Rob Hites reported that Hurricane Helene destroyed the dog park, greenways and the rain garden at Richland Creek. He said that FEMA requires that the Town use NC bidding procedures to acquire the services of an architect, engineer, and surveyor. Mr. Hites said CDC has split the projects into three contracts in accordance with FEMA guidelines and their proposed contracts to relocate the dog park would cost \$130,100; rebuild the greenway system and rebuilt the walking bridges would cost \$127,300 and conduct a study to determine the future of the rain garden would cost \$8,750. Mr. Hites said the contracts include meetings with the Town, topographic surveys, storm water, water and sewer and lighting design, permitting with the State and review by FEMA. He added that they will prepare the bid documents, review the bids and administer the construction of the facilities and the design work would take three months. Mr. Hites said the Rain Garden estimate is just for an analysis to see if the engineering firm is able to rebuild it, or if there will always be too much run off to rebuild the Rain Garden.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Feichter, to approve the proposals of Civil Design Concepts (CDC) to design, bid and administer projects to rebuild the dog park, greenways and bridges, and a rain garden at the terminus of the walking trail on Richland Creek. The motion passed unanimously.***

9. Set a time and date for the Town's annual retreat
  - Rob Hites, Town Manager

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to set the date for the Council Planning Retreat for March 21st. The motion passed unanimously.***

## **G. COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF**

10. Manager's Report
  - Town Manager, Rob Hites

Town Manager Rob Hites reported that the Depot Bridge project is going well.

11. Town attorney
  - Martha Bradley, Town Attorney

Town Attorney Martha Bradley reported that Mark Pless filed HB 169 to disband Haywood County TDA and eliminate the Occupancy Tax. Mayor Caldwell recommended that Council reaches out to Senator Corbin.

## **H. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

Mayor Caldwell thanked Councilmember Feichter for attending the Waynesville Rotary Club meeting on his behalf for the for their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary proclamation.

Councilmember Sutton reported that he will be attending the NCLM dinner tomorrow where he will see Representatives Clampitt, Pless, and Corbin. He said he will be delivering letters to them.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Feichter to appoint Councilmember Anthony Sutton to vote on behalf of the Town of Waynesville at the NCLM meeting. The motion passed unanimously.***

Councilmember Dickson thanked Tax Collector Sharon Agostini for all of her hard work.

## **I. ADJOURN**

***A motion was made by Councilmember Feichter, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to adjourn at 7:07pm. The motion passed unanimously.***

ATTEST:

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Gary Caldwell, Mayor

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Robert W. Hites, Jr. Town Manager

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Candace Poolton, Town Clerk