

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
Regular Meeting
February 10, 2026

THE WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL held a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 10, 2026, 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 6:03 pm with the following members present:

Mayor Gary Caldwell
Mayor Pro Tempore Chuck Dickson
Councilmember Jon Feichter
Councilmember Anthony Sutton
Councilmember Julia Freeman

The following staff members were present:

Rob Hites, Town Rob Hites, Town Manager
Jesse Fowler, Deputy Manager
Martha Bradley, Town Attorney
Candace Poolton, Town Clerk/Assistant to the Manager
Elizabeth Teague, Development Services Director
Fire Chief Chris Mehaffey
Assistant Fire Chief Cody Parton
Police Chief David Adams
Page McCurry, Human Resources Director

The following members of the media were present:

Paul Nielsen, The Mountaineer

1. Welcome/Calendar/Announcements

Mayor Gary Caldwell welcomed everyone and announced that the next Council meeting is February 24th, there's an open house at the Rec Center for the new Master Plan on the 25th, a Council review session on the 26th, and the annual Council retreat on the 27th.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

Charlie Trump- Mr. Trump said that this year is the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. He requested that Council ask Kiwanis to have flags on Main Street in celebration of the 250th Independence Day from Memorial Day through July 4th.

C. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilmember Feichter, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to delete from the agenda, items 7 and 8, "Addition of Full-Time Electrician Position to Support Town Facilities and Operations" and "Addition of Part-Time Wastewater Treatment Plant Position for Laboratory Support", respectively, and to approve the agenda as amended. 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 January 27, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes
 - b. Motion to call for a Public Hearing for February 24, 2026, to consider a request for annexation for the 57-51-acre parcel at 192 Ratcliff Cove Road, Waynesville, NC 28786 (PIN 8625-08-4616).
 - c. Motion to call for a Public Hearing for February 24th, 2026, to consider a map amendment (rezoning) for the 4.96-acre parcel at 38 Hall Top Road, Waynesville, NC (PIN 8616-13-3822).
 - d. Motion to approve the Appalachian True Heritage Festival 2026 Special Event Permit
 - e. Motion to approve the Christmas Parade 2026 Special Event Permit
 - f. Motion to approve the Church Street Art & Craft Show Special Event Permit
 - g. Motion to approve the Mountain Street Dances Special Event Permit
 - h. Motion to approve the Smoky Mountain Christmas Special Event Permit
 - i. Motion to approve the Stars and Stripes Parade Special Event Permit
 - j. Motion to approve the Treats on the Street Halloween Special Event Permit
 - k. Motion to approve the Tree Lighting 2026 Special Event Permit
 - l. Motion to approve the Oasis Shriners Spring Parade Special Event Permit
 - m. Motion to approve the Whole Bloomin Thing Festival Special Event Permit

A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to approve the consent agenda as amended, with a change to the year on item "h." to read "2026" instead of "2025". The motion passed unanimously.

E. PRESENTATIONS

3. Promotion of Paige Shell to Lieutenant
 - Chief David Adams

Chief David Adams announced Sgt. Paige Shell's promotion to Lieutenant of Criminal Investigations and swore her in.

4. Presentation of awards to 2025 Christmas parade winners
 - Eva Hansen, Kiwanis Club

On behalf of the Kiwanis Club, Eva Hansen and several other members presented the first-, second- and third-place plaques to the top three Christmas parade winners. Legacy Dance Center placed third, Elks Lodge Placed second, and Lake Junaluska Animal Hospital placed third.

Development Services Director Elizabeth Teague presented the first-place trophy won by the Town of Waynesville for Most Funds Raised for the Haywood Waterways Association Kids in the Creek Program.

5. Request for Town Council Support to Engage Haywood County Commissioners on Reinstatement of Annual Recreation Funding
 - Dan Schultz & Eva Hansen-Recreation Advisory Commission

Eva Hansen, Chair of the Recreation Advisory Commission, requested that Town Council consider moving forward as a unified body to engage the Haywood County Board of Commissioners regarding the reinstatement of annual county funding for Town recreation facilities and programs. Ms. Hansen introduced Dan Schultz, long-time resident of Waynesville and member (12 years) of the RAC. Mr. Schultz said that historically, Haywood County would contribute ~\$70,000 through 2009. He said the Town is funding facilities that are mostly used by Haywood County residents. He said that the cost of operating the recreation facilities is four to ten times higher than what revenue brings in. He added that the summer programs are frequently waitlisted. Mr. Schultz outlined the many benefits of having access to parks and recreation facilities, including improved mental and physical health. On behalf of the RAC, he requested that Council submit a formal request to Haywood County to reestablish their annual contribution for FY27 with a contribution proportional to usage (~65%).

Councilmember Dickson said that Haywood County employees get reimbursed if they attend the hospital fitness center. He suggested that the County could do the same thing for the Town's fitness center. He asked how they could incentivize the County to contribute since they are currently getting the benefits of Waynesville's recreation facilities for free. He suggested monetizing the dog park, having paid naming rights for facilities, and having more memorial benches. Councilmember Freeman said Council has been wanting the County to contribute for many years. She agreed with Councilmember Dickson and suggested speaking directly with County Commissioners who are up for election. Councilmember Feichter said the facility and programs that the Rec Center provides are so beneficial to working families and that it's disappointing that up to 200 kids cannot participate in summer programs because we lack staffing. Mayor Caldwell added that the Town's Recreation Center is helping Haywood County schools with afterschool programs. Councilmember Sutton said the County should pay their fair share. Councilmember Dickson said he would like to join the RAC at a County Commissioner meeting to present this information. Town Attorney Martha Bradley requested that staff find out how many Town residents are waitlisted versus the County. She suggested opening the summer program application period to Town residents first, then opening it to County residents. Ms. McCurry said that could affect employees, so Council said the initial application period could also include Town employees.

A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Freeman, to authorize Town Council to move forward as a unified body to engage the Haywood County Board of Commissioners in discussions regarding the reinstatement of annual county funding for Town recreation facilities and programs, with the funding amount to be determined. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Main Street Mural Public Art Commission Presentation

- George Kenney, WPAC Chair

WPAC Chair George Kenney reported that the Waynesville Public Art Commission (WPAC) received 15 responses to our Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a new mural that will be located at 121 N. Main Street. He explained that following the initial review of the RFQs, the WPAC requested that 4 semifinalists present their proposals to the WPAC and the public, and following those presentations at a special called meeting of the WPAC on February 10, the WPAC voted to select a finalist, Max Dowdle. He presented Max's design concept.

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Feichter, to commission Max Dowdle for the fabrication and installation of a mural to be located at 121 North Main Street. The motion passed unanimously.

F. **NEW BUSINESS**

7. Request for brick sidewalk installation along Walnut Street as part of NCDOT U-5839.

- Elizabeth Teague, Development Services Director

Development Services Director Elizabeth Teague reported that NCDOT is replacing the sidewalk as part of roadway improvement projects along Russ Avenue and Walnut Street. She reminded Council that in 2017, NCDOT held public hearings to get input on the roadway designs for the Russ Avenue Improvement Project, U-5839 and the public asked for brick pavers and curbing to be included along the east side of Walnut Street so that the sidewalk there would match the brick pavers and curbing that would be replaced on the other side, in front of First Presbyterian Church and would improve the sidewalk along the frontage of the Spread Out Historic District. Ms. Teague said that the Town would have to pay the difference, an additional \$55,000 for pavers along 300 linear feet of Walnut Street to match those across the Street, or an additional \$90,000 to continue brick pavers the full length of the block from Main Street to Boundary Street. She said that a portion of these funds may be offset by fee-in-lieu payments associated with projects impacted by the roadway project (of which there are approximately \$22,000). She added that once costs are finalized for the scope of work that Council approves, staff will then make a formal request for an allocation from the General Fund.

Councilmember Sutton said he would like to see brick sidewalk on both sides going to Boundary Street, but with budget constraints, he is open to just doing side for side. Councilmember Freeman asked if there is any preservation money that we could use because the area is historic. Ms. Teague said no, but they could use the fee-in-lieu funds from NCDOT impacted construction projects. Councilmember Sutton said that area is the gateway into downtown. Councilmember Feichter said the brick sidewalks are the most charming part of town and that for many generations, people will be walking that area, so it's important to keep the sidewalk brick. Councilmember Dickson commented that there are many sidewalks that need to be repaired, so he'd prefer that additional money to be spent on repairs.

A motion was made by Councilmember Feichter, seconded by Councilmember Freeman, to approve a scope of work to include brick pavers into the sidewalk along Walnut Street and continue down to Boundary Street,

and for staff to proceed with finalizing an agreement with NCDOT. Councilmembers Freeman, Feichter, and Sutton voted in the affirmative. Councilmember Dickson voted against. The motion passed.

8. Recycling Can Grant Opportunity
 - Jon Feichter, Councilmember

Councilmember Jon Feichter presented a grant opportunity offered through the Community Waste Reduction and Recycling Grant Program for purchasing approximately 30 new public recycling cans to accompany the 30 new public trash cans purchased in fiscal year 24/25. He said that the state grant is for \$30,000 and the Town would have to match \$6,000. Deputy Manager Fowler said that the last set of 30 cans cost \$1000 each. Councilmember Feichter said they budgeted \$36,000 for the 30 recycle cans, and that includes educational materials and stickers that go on the cans that depict what can be recycled.

A motion was made by Councilmember Feichter, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to authorize the grant application, and match the grant, if received, in the amount of \$6,000. The motion passed unanimously.

G. COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF

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

Town Manager Hites reminded Council that they have a retreat on the 27th. He provided a draft agenda and encouraged Council to let him know as soon as possible if they have a request for the agenda.

10. Town Attorney's Report
 - Town Attorney, Martha Bradley

Nothing to report.

H. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Councilmember Feichter said he will be attending CityVision in May. He said the Town will be recognized for their Commitment to Civility participation.

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Freeman, to appoint Councilmember Feichter as a voting member for the NC League of Municipalities. The motion passed unanimously.

I. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to adjourn at 7:14pm. The motion passed unanimously.

ATTEST:

Gary Caldwell, Mayor

Robert W. Hites, Jr. Town Manager

Candace Poolton, Town Clerk