

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**June 9, 2026**

**THE WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL** held a regular meeting on Tuesday, June 9, 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 6:02 pm with the following members present:

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

The following staff members were present:

Rob Hites, Town Rob Hites, Town Manager  
Martha Bradley, Town Attorney (left early, no report)  
Candace Poolton, Town Clerk/Assistant to the Manager  
Elizabeth Teague, Development Services Director  
Hutch Reece, Deputy Director of Operations  
Ian Barrett, Finance Director  
Alex Mumby, Land Use Administrator  
Police Chief David Adams  
Fire Chief Chris Mehaffey  
Assistant Fire Chief Cody Parton  
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 will be June 23<sup>rd</sup>. He announced that this will be Town Manager Rob Hites' last Council meeting before he retires and expressed his gratitude.

**B. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

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

***A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Boyd, to add a special event permit to the consent agenda and 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 May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026 Special Called Meeting Minutes
  - b. Motion to approve the May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes
  - c. Motion to appoint Allison Richmond to the Waynesville Public Art Commission effective July 1, 2026.
  - d. Motion to reappoint Carly Pugh to serve another term and to recommend to Haywood County Commissioners that Kathy Lalonde be reappointed for another term.
  - e. Motion to approve the Budget Amendment for the Fire Department Training budget
  - f. Motion to adopt the “Reimbursement Resolution” for the expenses incurred prior to release of funds by USDA and closing of financing package. Reimbursement Resolution-Fire Station #2
  - g. Motion to adopt the “Reimbursement Resolution” for the “Little Champion Pump Station”. VUR-W-0030; SRP-W-0232; SRF-W-HEL-0004
  - h. Motion to adopt the “Reimbursement Resolution” for the “Clyde/Canton, Waynesville, Emergency Water Interconnect, SRF-D-HEL-0034.
  - i. Motion to adopt the “Reimbursement Resolution” for the Resiliency Project” VUR-W-0031.
  - j. Motion to approve the July 4<sup>th</sup> Neighborhood Block Party Special Event Permit
  - k. Motion to approve the Community Cookout and Vacation Bible School Special Event Permit

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

**E. PUBLIC HEARING**

3. A public hearing to consider the text amendments for the establishment of the Rural Conservation zoning district and related changes
  - Alex Mumby, Land Use Administrator

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Feichter, to open the public hearing at 6:06pm. The motion passed unanimously.***

Land Use Administrator Alex Mumby reported that the Planning Board and Town Council established a Density Work Group to examine areas of the 2035 Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan and current zoning. Working with Jake Petrosky of Stewart, he explained that the work group targeted multiple areas for potential reduction of density, or “down-zoning”, including parts of Allen’s Creek, Country Club, Raccoon

Creek, Francis Cove, Pigeon Street, Howell Mill, and Hazelwood zoning districts. The group also discussed building height and allowable uses for the proposed district.

Mr. Mumby said that before the amendment could be brought forward as a text amendment, the North Carolina State Legislature passed an omnibus bill at the end of 2024 that prohibited downzoning without the express initiation of the landowner, which would not prevent the creation of a text amendment for a new, lower-density district, but would prevent the Town's initiating a map amendment to apply such an ordinance without a property owners' agreement. Mr. Mumby said that at the Planning Board's direction, staff brought forward a version of the Rural Conservation District text amendment for review. He explained that the proposal creates the RCON district within the land development standards but does not apply the district to any property. He emphasized that individuals or groups of property owners could voluntarily rezone their property to this new zoning district.

Mr. Mumby explained the proposed ordinance and how it would establish the RCON district as a new zoning option. It would:

- Add a new purpose and need statement to the descriptions of zoning types in LDS Section 2.2.
- Amend the Dimensional Standards Table (LDS Section 2.4.1) to establish a maximum base density of 2.5 units per acre and set a maximum allowed density through a special use permit set at 6 units per acre.
- Set the minimum lot size at half an acre. However, this may be reduced with a conservation design to a minimum lot size to 4,000 square feet by setting aside 40% of land for civic and open space (overall density would remain the same).
- Use the same setbacks as the Low-Density Districts, unless part of a conservation or cottage subdivision.
- Caps the maximum building height in the RCON, to 45'.
- Amend the Permitted Uses Table (LDS Section 2.5.3) to create a new district column and allow the same uses as in Waynesville's low-density districts along with agricultural uses.

Councilmember Sutton asked why the three of the Planning Board members voted against recommending the text amendment to Council. Mr. Mumby said one member's vote centered around the alternate items that were removed from the original hearing, one voter wanted more density reduction, and one thought it wasn't the Town's place to lower density.

Don Smart- Mr. Smart spoke in favor of the text amendment. He said he would like Waynesville to maintain its character which includes maintaining the agricultural and rural areas.

Mandi Stasi- Ms. Stasi spoke in favor of the text amendment, citing similar reasons as Mr. Smart.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to close the public hearing at 6:21pm. The motion passed unanimously.***

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Boyd, to find the proposed amendment consistent with the 2035 Land Use Plan in that it continues to promote smart growth principles in land use planning and zoning by encouraging in-fill, mixed use, and context-sensitive development, and promoting conservation design to preserve the important natural resources. The motion passed unanimously.***

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Feichter, to adopt the proposed amendment in that it protects and enhances Waynesville’s natural resources by conserving open space and farmland by promoting infill and encouraging development in the urbanized areas of town and protecting rural lands, iconic views, and mountain vistas. The motion passed unanimously.***

**F. OLD BUSINESS**

4. Continue discussion of the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget

- Ian Barrett, Finance Director

Finance Director Ian Barrett reported that directives given by Council at Monday’s budget were directed to the Human Resources Director. Human Resources Director Page McCurry reported that in order to pay a living wage to all staff, and to adjust salaries to prevent salary compression, it would cost millions of dollars.

Councilmember Sutton asked how many employees are not paid a living wage. Ms. McCurry said 40-50 employees, with the majority of them working in Public Works and the Parks and Rec departments.

Councilmember Boyd asked how the benefits factor into the MIT living wage. Ms. McCurry said the MIT living wage calculations do not factor in benefits, but Councilmember Dickson said they do say that health care costs \$3,394 for one adult and one child.

Council agreed that the benefits the town offers are very robust. They agreed that they do not want to take away benefits to offer employees more pay, but possibly consider giving employees an option to have the Town contribute less to their retirement and more to their pay check.

Councilmember Dickson said they still need to see budget cuts from the Water and Sewer Department, Downtown Waynesville Department, and Public Works Department. Mr. Hites said that Water and Sewer staff have not been cooperative with cutting their budget, so Ms. McCurry and Mr. Barrett will have to make the cuts based on last year’s actuals.

Council agreed to have a 3-3.5% sales tax increase for next year’s budget.

5. Preliminary Architectural Report Contract- McMillan, Pazdan, Smith Architects

- Rob Hites, Town Manager

Town Manager Rob Hites reported that the Council selected McMillan, Pazdan, Smith Architects to design Fire Station #2. He explained that the initial Phase of this project is to prepare a “Preliminary Architectural Report (PAR) for submission to USDA. Upon approval of the PAR, Mr. Hites said the USDA should release the \$2.97 million Congressional Earmark to the Town. He explained that the next step in the approval of architectural services is to contract for the preparation of the PAR. Should the project be moved forward, Mr. Hites said the Town and architects will determine a lump sum fee for the remainder of the design/bid/construction services. He said the fee will depend on the complexity and cost of the structure, and if the project goes well, the contract permits the Town to use MPS for design services to renovate Fire Station #1 in order to accommodate additional bunk rooms and a second locker facility. Mr. Hites reported that the lump sum quote

for preparation and submission of a PAR is \$99,850.00, and if the project is approved by USDA, the Town may request that the sum be paid from proceeds of the appropriation. The timeline for the PAR is approval by September of 2027.

Councilmember Boyd asked if a land survey would be included in that cost. Mr. Hites said additional geographical reports would be an additional cost and may require a survey of the load bearing capacity of the soil.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to approve the Contract for preparation of the PAR. The motion passed unanimously.***

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$124,850 for PAR. The motion passed unanimously.***

## **G. NEW BUSINESS**

### **6 Sanctuary Drive Culvert Replacement and Road Repair Project**

- Hutch Reece, Deputy Director of Operations

Deputy Director Hutch Reece reported that the Sanctuary Drive Culvert Replacement and Road Repair Project is one of several infrastructure recovery efforts resulting from the impacts of Hurricane Helene. He explained that the storm exposed and exacerbated deficiencies within two existing culvert systems that provide critical stream and stormwater conveyance for residents along Sanctuary Drive and that the damage compromised portions of the roadway, retaining structures, and associated drainage infrastructure. Mr. Reece said that Enterprise G was determined to be the lowest responsive and responsible bidder and was awarded the project in the amount of \$240,141.00 and construction should take approximately five to six weeks to complete. He outlined the project to include the following: the replacement of two existing culvert systems, installation of new headwalls and wingwalls, reconstruction of retaining walls, and repair of roadway damage caused by flood-related erosion and washout. He said that if FEMA does not fund the project, it will have to come out of the General Fund or Powell Bill funding.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Boyd, to approve the contract award for the Sanctuary Drive Culvert Replacement and Road Repair Project to Enterprise G in the amount of \$240,141.00. The motion passed unanimously.***

### **7. Budget Amendment for Development Services**

- Alex Mumby, Land Use Administrator

Land Use Administrator Alex Mumby reported that the Town of Waynesville's Development Services Department, on May 28<sup>th</sup>, was awarded a Haywood County TDA grant in the amount of \$127,500, with local matching funds of \$127,357, for a total of \$254,857 for the Boyd Avenue Greenway Connector Project. He said the work will include paving, removing invasive bamboo, and lowering manholes. Mr. Mumby explained that the match requirement was met by the Town without additional budgetary spending.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Boyd, to approve the Budget Amendment. The motion passed unanimously.***

8. Floodproofing Finance Department
  - Rob Hites, Town Manager

Town Manager Rob Hites reminded Council that the Hazelwood Fire Station/Finance Building has flooded twice in the last 10 years, once from a thunderstorm and the other from Helene, from which the Town received an insurance settlement on flood damage to the building in the amount of \$342,000. He added that FEMA has indicated that they may partially fund the flood proofing using “Mitigation Funding”. Mr. Hites requested McGill Associates to design a floodproofing plan for the building which involves the removal of the 2’ x 2’ metal panels below the aluminum windows and replace them with a porcelain tile (style to be selected by Town). He said the flood proof doors will be installed in place of existing doors. Mr. Hites said the apparatus bays will not be made flood-proof since the height of the water during Helene did not reach the cabs of the trucks.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Feichter, to authorize the staff to bid out the flood proofing project with bids to be approved by the Council. The motion passed unanimously.***

Councilmember Sutton requested Councilmember Boyd’s assistance with tile selection, citing her interior design degree.

9. Selection of Engineering Services to design, bid and provided construction administration for Little Champion Pump Station and associated projects
  - Rob Hites, Town Manager

Town Manager Rob Hites reported that the Town has been awarded three State Grant/Loans with 100% forgiveness, one SRF Loan totaling \$5 million dollars and a second \$3 million dollar Wastewater State Reserve Program grant and a third \$490,531 Viable Reserve grant; all totaled \$14,990,531 to design, construct, and provide construction administration for replacing the existing junction box located on Little Champion property and 15’ from Richland Creek up the hill to the 500’ flood line. He said the main outfall from Town and the two lines to the plant must be relocated to account for the difference in elevation of the new junction box and pumps. Mr. Hites said staff drafted an RFQ in accordance with GS 143-64.31 (Mini-Brooks Act). It advertised the project Statewide and posted it on its website and received one bid on May 28, 2026, from McGill and Associates.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Boyd, to Approve McGill and Associates as Engineer for the “Little Champion Wastewater Renovation Project” and authorize the staff to negotiate a price for the “Engineering Evaluation” and a lump sum fee for the remainder of the improvements. The motion passed unanimously.***

10. Temporary Social District for Events in Hazelwood
  - Meredith Norris Vuotto

Ms. Vuotto, on behalf of Hazelwood business owners, requested that Council approve a temporary social district for the following events which are to be held in the Hazelwood area of town:

- Hot Summer Nights
  - June 20, 2026 4:30-10:15
  - July 18, 2026 4:30-10:15
  - August 15, 2026 4:30-10:15
  - September 26, 2026 4:30-10:15
- Hazelwood Fest in Downtown Hazelwood
  - Date and time TBD
- Hometown Christmas Parade
  - Date and time TBD

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to approve a temporary social district the Hazelwood Hot Summer Nights Special Event dates, and to approve a temporary social district for the Hazelwood Fest and Hometown Christmas Parade events following approval of a special event permit application for those events. The motion passed unanimously.***

#### **H. COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF**

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

Town Manager Rob Hites expressed his sincere appreciation for Council and said he enjoyed serving them and the community of Waynesville.

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

Council expressed their appreciation for Town Manager Hites and all he has done for the Town of Waynesville.

#### **J. ADJOURN**

***A motion was made by Councilmember Feichter, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to adjourn at 7:50pm. The motion passed unanimously.***

ATTEST:

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Gary Caldwell, Mayor

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Page McCurry, Interim Town Manager

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Candace Poolton, Town Clerk