

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE BOARD OF ALDERMEN**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**February 10, 2015**

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**THE WAYNESVILLE BOARD OF ALDERMEN** held its regular meeting on Tuesday, February 10, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the board room of Town Hall, 9 South Main Street, Waynesville, NC.

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present:

Mayor Gavin Brown  
Alderman Gary Caldwell  
Alderman Julia Freeman  
Alderman J. Wells Greeley  
Alderman LeRoy Roberson

The following staff members were present:

Marcy Onieal, Town Manager  
Woodrow Griffin, Town Attorney  
Amie Owens, Town Clerk  
James Robertson, Tax Collector  
Scott Muse, Detective, Waynesville Police Dept.

1. Welcome /Calendar/Announcements

Mayor Gavin Brown welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Manager Onieal to provide calendar updates.

Manager Onieal noted the following calendar events:

- February 23, 2015 – Haywood County Council of Governments meeting in Clyde. Manager Onieal reminded members of the need to RSVP.
- February 25, 2015 - Community Pride Awards at the Waynesville Inn
- March 18, 2015 - Town Hall Day in Raleigh. Manager Onieal noted that if any board members wished to attend to let her know so that registration and hotel reservations can be completed.
- March 27, 2015 – Board Retreat at the Wells Event Center

Manager Onieal added that the Downtown Waynesville Association's schedule of events for 2015 was included in the packet and these events would be added to the calendar and website prior to the next meeting.

2. Adoption of Minutes

***Alderman Caldwell made a motion, seconded by Alderman Roberson, to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2015 (regular meeting) as presented. The motion carried unanimously.***

## B. PUBLIC HEARING

### 3. Public Hearing to consider adoption of an ordinance requiring pawn brokers and secondhand dealers to submit daily pawn and/or purchase transactions to law enforcement exclusively through electronic means

Manager Onieal provided background information regarding the current process for logging and retrieval of purchase & pawn information by hand, and the efficiency that could be realized by both businesses and the Police Department, if businesses were required to directly utilize the Leads Online program. She reiterated that this system allows businesses to log information easily and free of charge. The Police Department through its access to Leads Online can review information about pawn transactions allowing for quicker response if there is a report of stolen items. Manager Onieal added that there had been no comments received about the ordinance since the call for public hearing on January 13, 2015. The request from the Police Department is for adoption of the ordinance.

Town Attorney Griffin called the public hearing to order at 6:06 p.m. No one addressed the board.

Town Attorney Griffin closed the public hearing at 6:07 p.m.

Manager Onieal commented that there were multiple exemptions indicated in the ordinance and clarified that this was not geared toward household consumers, yard sales or antiques/estate sale dealers, but to businesses which may deal with potentially stolen items. Detective Scott Muse added that some documentation is required by the business owner relating to who sold or pawned the items, but that the requirement to file electronically and the immediate availability of this information will be extremely useful in the event any investigation is necessary.

***Alderman Roberson made a motion, seconded by Alderman Greeley, to adopt ordinance (O-02-15) requiring electronic submission of daily pawn and/or purchase transactions, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.***

## C. PRESENTATIONS TO THE BOARD

### 4. Folkmoot Building Campaign Update

Karen Babcock, Executive Director, Folkmoot USA and Tom Ezell, Fundraising Co-Chair provided an update regarding the Folkmoot Center business plan. Ms. Babcock explained that a consultant has been working with the Folkmoot Board on future planning. She added if town board members had not been contacted, they would be, in order to gain community input.

Copies of the architectural renderings of the renovated building had been shared previously, and Ms. Babcock noted specific renovations such as the gymnasium and the deck outside of the cafeteria. She explained that classrooms would be set up as meeting spaces and dormitories for visitors. Some available space could be used by artists year-round as a means of continually having individuals on-site with the Folkmoot staff. Ms. Babcock noted that the vision is to become an international conference center that is located in Waynesville, as well as a local meeting and event venue.

Manager Onieal reminded members that there would be no budget amendment required for the \$20,000 which was being requested, as it was originally included and approved as part of the special appropriations in the budget process. Mayor Brown noted that it was held in reserve until Folkmoot could show progress in their planning process. He added that they have fulfilled that requirement.

Manager Onieal added that Folkmoot has done well in their planning to secure a solid financial future for Folkmoot by establishing a \$1.2 million Capacity Campaign that is focused on three goals - improving the facilities (\$400,000), growing their operating endowment to \$1 million by raising \$600,000 and raising \$200,000 as annual seed money to be able to budget and expend for the Folkmoot Festival in advance each year instead of always paying in arrears, which has been the festival's model in recent years. She reminded the board that they have the discretion to restrict the use of the funds if they choose to do so. Manager Onieal concluded by noting that Folkmoot and HART both had ongoing multi-year capital campaigns and that both agencies had requested a similar level of funding in each of the next 2-3 years. Mayor Brown commented that he did not feel a need to restrict the use of funds. The board concurred.

***Alderman Freeman made a motion, seconded by Alderman Caldwell, to acknowledge receipt of an acceptable capital improvement and business plan from the Folkmoot Center and approve the release of \$20,000 in remaining funding for the Folkmoot Center already budgeted in FY15. The motion carried unanimously.***

5. Cycle North Carolina – 2015 Mountains to the Coast Tour Event, September 25 – October 3, 2015

Manager Onieal noted that the Town has been approached by Haywood Tourism Development Authority and Cycle North Carolina about serving as Host Start City for a week-long Mountains to the Coast bicycle touring event promoted annually by Cycle North Carolina, in partnership with the NC Departments of Commerce, Cultural Resources and Travel and Tourism, and NC Amateur Sports. She explained that this is an annual event that attracts roughly 1,000 bicyclists from across NC and other states, with approximately 60% in-state and 40% out-of-state participants, which is designed to promote tourism through small towns and off-the-beaten track routes across the state.

Manager Onieal added that as a host city, there are certain expectations of the Town including having a festival type atmosphere to welcome the riders and their families and offering entertainment and activities. The Recreation Center would be used for indoor and outdoor camping for participants.

Manager Onieal explained that the Town's responsibilities would largely be in-kind, and the event will require the participation of other partner agencies such as TDA, Chamber, DWA, Bicycle Haywood, the business community and others. She noted that the dates do not conflict with other major events in the area. The hope is that this event will bring many newcomers to Waynesville for the first time who will want to come back often. The Recreation Center will be closed for its annual maintenance beginning on Friday, September 25 and there should be no interruption in service.

Manager Onieal commented that while Waynesville has not been confirmed yet as the host city, the first step in gaining this honor is to have the blessing of the governing board.

Mayor Brown noted that this is a well-established event with a good reputation for families. Alderman Greeley added that this would be a great way to encourage bicycling and pedestrian traffic in the town and county.

***Alderman Greeley made a motion, seconded by Alderman Roberson, to approve the request by Cycle North Carolina and the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority that the Town of Waynesville serve as host start city for the 2015 Cycle North Carolina Mountains to the Coast Tour Event, and authorizing the manager to initiate planning and commit the in-kind, staff and financial resources in partnership with other area economic development and non-profit agencies as appropriate to promote this event in Waynesville September 25-27, 2015. The motion carried unanimously.***

Lynn Collins, Executive Director, Haywood County Tourism Development Authority arrived later to the meeting and added that this event would be the first booking under the Group Sales Initiative. She reported that the master plan for bicycling tourism is being presented this month and this event would be an excellent primary event to help raise awareness of the cycling opportunities in the county. Ms. Collins has been attempting to have Waynesville considered as the host city for this event for multiple years. Representatives from the event planning staff were impressed with the facilities and space available at the Recreation Center for camping. Ms. Collins added that the TDA continually attempts to include Waynesville in any regional or state-wide events and hosting this event may provide additional opportunities. She thanked the board for their consideration and approval to move forward with their support.

#### **D. NEW BUSINESS**

6. Authorization to Advertise Delinquent Property Tax Accounts in the Town of Waynesville for the Year Ending 2014

James Robertson, Tax Collector, explained that in accordance with NC General Statute §105-369 he is reporting delinquent tax amounts to the governing board. He noted that there are approximately 7,900 tax accounts for the town with 1,200 unpaid at the time of the meeting equaling around \$400,000; this is a 91.5% collection rate for 2014. Mr. Robertson added that the collection rate for last year was 97.15% which among peer cities was above the norm.

Mr. Robertson requested permission to publish the listing of delinquent taxes on March 13, 2015 in the Mountaineer newspaper. He added that the delinquent tax notices will go out this week allowing 30 days for individuals to pay before the listing is published. Mr. Robertson added that the final listing of delinquent taxes will be run immediately prior to the posting deadline for the newspaper to provide the most current listing.

Alderman Greeley complimented Mr. Robertson for his performance of his job as tax collector, and Mayor Brown added that he knows that the job can be a difficult one. Mr. Robertson thanked the board and management for allowing him the ability to work with the citizens to build relationships

within the community. Mayor Brown added that he has found Mr. Robertson easy to work with and knows that he is willing to assist in making payment arrangements. The Mayor concluded by reminding everyone that the tax collector cannot waive any of the penalties and interest per statute.

***Alderman Greeley made a motion, seconded by Alderman Caldwell, to authorize staff to advertise all 2014 delinquent property taxes in the Mountaineer on March 13, 2015, as required by NCGS §105-369. The motion passed unanimously.***

7. Approve amendment to Employee Benefits Article IX of the Town of Waynesville Personnel Policy manual related to group health insurance and health insurance for retirees

Manager Onieal noted that this item had been on an agenda previously. It was necessary to make some language changes to clean up the policy, amend the policy to reflect the dissolution of a two-tiered benefit system and to clarify the extension of health benefits for certain retirees.

Manager Onieal explained that Article IX contained outdated and non-compliant language regarding practice and policy as a result of federally mandated policy changes associated with HIPAA and the Affordable Health Care Act of 2014. Although the town has been in compliance with federal law, the policy manual had not reflected the Town's actual compliant practices. Also, the amendments recognize the Town's deletion of a two-tiered benefit structure based on hire date, which is now combined into a single benefit structure regardless of when an employee was hired, and a re-wording of the eligibility for insurance to be effective on the first day of the month that follows employment.

Manager Onieal took time to clarify the most significant change to the policy relating to providing health insurance benefits for retirees who are able to retire with 30 years of service prior to reaching the age of 55. Those individuals under the current policy would be left with a donut hole of no health coverage for several years, while awaiting Medicare eligibility. She noted that the Town's original intent in providing retiree health benefits was to carry retirees to Medicare eligibility. Potentially there are a few employees who would be left uncovered once their 10 year benefit is exhausted before they are eligible for Medicare, simply because they started work with the Town at such a young age.

Manager Onieal explained the proposed amendment would extend retiree health coverage from the date of separation (retirement), until the date of eligibility for enrollment in Medicare, to any retiree who separates with 30 years of creditable service as recognized by the Local Government Employees Retirement System, and who served at least half of their career in active full-time status with the Town of Waynesville.

Mayor Brown also called attention to the managers comments on the coversheet noting that at this time, there is a minimal number of individuals impacted by this change; however, this may need to be revisited in the future due to cost considerations. Manager Onieal added that at this point, the policy revision is in keeping with a promise that was made to employees. This is a very valuable benefit that shows that the town cares and is appreciative of long-term employees' commitment to the town. She again cautioned about the future, but reiterated that the cost at this time was negligible.

***Alderman Freeman made a motion, seconded by Alderman Greeley, to approve the amendment to the Employment Benefits, Article IX of the Town of Waynesville Personnel Policy Manual related to group health insurance for retirees, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.***

8. Resolution in Support of the 2015 Top Legislative Priorities brought forth by the Haywood Chamber of Commerce

Manager Onieal explained that the priorities were provided to the board as part of the previous board packet. The goal of sharing such information and requesting support from this and other boards is to have all Haywood County entities to coordinate a more cohesive Haywood County legislative platform so that when individuals are in Raleigh for Town Hall, County or other legislative days, everyone can share the interests of the county as a whole and build more solid relationships with legislators.

Mayor Brown noted concern with one of the bullet point related to Healthcare and discussion was held. Alderman Roberson added that access to care was definitely a priority, but the action related to Medicaid seemed counter-intuitive to that goal. Alderman Caldwell requested that the bullet point be omitted from the resolution of support.

***Alderman Roberson made a motion, seconded by Alderman Caldwell, to approve the resolution (R-01-15) in support of the 2015 top legislative priorities brought forth by the Haywood Chamber of Commerce, omitting the specified bullet point listed under the topic of healthcare. The motion carried unanimously.***

**E. COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF**

9. Town Attorney

Town Attorney Griffin had no business to discuss.

10. Town Manager

2015 NCCCMA Manager's Conference Report and NCLM 2015-16 Municipal Advocacy Goals/Town Hall Day

Manager Onieal reported that she had just returned from the NC City and County Management Association Conference and provided a listing of the various sessions that she attended. She included a report copy from the NC League of Municipalities that highlighted the legislative goals for the current session and discussion points for Town Hall Day.

March 27 – Board Retreat – Tentative Agenda

Manager Onieal explained that there would be three major discussion topics for the board retreat:

- Watershed/Forest Stewards/Forest Management – discussion of studies and long-term use and access and legal issues related to the conservation easement. Manager Onieal explained that there are currently 600 acres not included in the conservation easement; however, this land cannot be accessed without going through the existing easement.
- Facilities Use Discussions - including co-location of the Downtown Waynesville Association, Tourism Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce; the potential moving of the Development Services office and related capital needs.
- Electric/Energy Services contract - review reports and discussion with UTEC and Nova Energy Consultants

Manager Onieal explained that routine budget items will be held between April and June, unless there are additional specific topics the board wished to address at the retreat.

#### Polar Plunge Success/Thanks to Team Waynesville and Board of Aldermen

Manager Onieal thanked the Board for their donation to Team Waynesville for the Polar Plunge, benefitting Haywood Waterways' Kids in the Creek Program and noted that the Town's team was the first place Community Fund Raiser and also received Best Team Costume. The Polar Plunge fundraising efforts netted just under \$25,000 for the Kids in the Creek program.

#### Development Services Community Focus Group

Manager Onieal reminded the board that they had placed a high priority on economic and community development for the future. To that end, Manager Onieal has had a number of conversations with planning board chair and vice-chair and would like to put together a manager's advisory focus group to improve customer service and streamlining of processes to be more responsive to the needs of the development and business community. She explained that this would be a short-term group focusing on identifying obstacles faced by developers and creation of short and long term objectives with sound growth principles coupled with suggestions that could be implemented in order to facilitate a more pro-active and customer friendly approach.

Manager Onieal noted that the size of the group would be 12-15 members who would meet over next several months. A proposed composition was included in a handout provided to the board. Manager Onieal requested to utilize an outside facilitator and she estimated that no more than 4 to 5 meetings would be required for conversations about the issues.

Alderman Greeley commented that he liked the listing of potential representatives to serve on this group.

Alderman Freeman agreed that an outside facilitator will be beneficial and provide a new perspective.

Mayor Brown noted that this seemed like a good path for the future. The board agreed that the manager's proposal was a positive step and commended her for moving forward in keeping with the Board's goals.

F. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN** – None.

G. **CALL ON THE AUDIENCE** – None.

H. **CLOSED SESSION**

*Alderman Greeley made a motion, seconded by Alderman Caldwell to enter into Closed Session to discuss litigation matters in the case of Richard Worth vs. Mountain Energy, David J. Clancy, Waynesville Police Department and the Town of Waynesville as permitted by NCGS § 143-318.11(a)(3). The motion carried unanimously.*

The Board entered closed session at 7:06 p.m.

The Board returned to open session at 7:20 p.m.

Upon return from closed session, it was noted that the 6:00 p.m. meeting start time was not compatible with Alderman Caldwell's work schedule, and it was suggested that the start time be altered to 6:30 p.m. beginning with the February 24, 2015 meeting.

*Alderman Freeman made a motion, seconded by Alderman Roberson, to change the regular meeting time of Board of Aldermen meetings to 6:30 p.m. beginning with the February 24, 2015 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.*

I. **ADJOURN**

*There being no further business to discuss, Alderman Roberson made a motion, seconded by Alderman Caldwell, to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.*

ATTEST

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Gavin A. Brown, Mayor

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Marcia D. Onieal, Town Manager