

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE BOARD OF ALDERMEN
REGULAR MEETING
February 28, 2017

THE WAYNESVILLE BOARD OF ALDERMEN held a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 28, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. in the board room of Town Hall, 9 South Main Street, Waynesville, NC.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Gavin Brown called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present:

Mayor Gavin Brown
Alderman Gary Caldwell
Alderman Jon Feichter
Alderman Julia Freeman
Alderman LeRoy Roberson

The following staff members were present:

Rob Hites, Town Manager
Woody Griffin, Town Attorney
Amie Owens, Assistant Town Manager/Town Clerk
Elizabeth Teague, Development Services Director
Eddie Caldwell, Finance Director
David Foster, Public Services Director
Chief Bill Hollingsed, Police Department

The following media representatives were present:

Allison Richmond, the Mountaineer
Cory Vaillancourt, Smoky Mountain News

1. Welcome /Calendar/Announcements

Mayor Gavin Brown welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the following calendar events including:

- April 25th – REACH Fashion Show the Inn at Tranquility Farm on Camp Branch. Alderman Freeman noted that the focus is on young professional women.

2. Adoption of Minutes

Alderman Caldwell made a motion, seconded by Alderman Freeman, to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2017 regular meeting, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

B. PRESENTATION

3. Presentation of Revaluation Information for the Town of Waynesville

David Francis, Tax Administrator for Haywood County provided an update on the tax revaluation. He went over county statistics related to the reappraisal and provided graphic representations of new home building numbers and the grading systems (quality and condition) utilized in the revaluation. Mr. Francis added that land sales had decreased overall in the county. Waynesville had a slight increase 0.74% from the last revaluation. He provided some illustrative pictures as examples of where increases and decreases were seen. Mr. Francis explained that commercial development had helped Waynesville with the renovation of Ingle's, the addition of Chick-fil-A and the additional warehouse for Giles Chemical.

Mayor Brown inquired if appeals process would lead to a lessened value than those values presented tonight. Mr. Francis answered that he did not think there would be a significant decrease. He highlighted pending legislation related to waiver of property tax for fully disabled Veterans. This exclusion would impact approximately 210 in Haywood County. Mr. Francis noted that final numbers should be known in April.

Alderman Feichter clarified that the \$40 million which would be waived under the Veterans exclusion would be county wide. Mr. Francis confirmed. Mr. Francis added that appraisals for estates can impact the total valuation as well. He explained that it is his intention to request that the County return to a four-year revaluation cycle.

Mayor Brown commented that the numbers were expected and as time goes on hopefully, the commercial values will continue to increase. The housing sector is still very slow in its rebound and with 10 years of inventory for vacant land, commercial and residential, there is still room to improve.

Mayor Brown thanked Mr. Francis for his report.

C. CALL FOR PUBLIC HEARING

4. Call for Public Hearing to consider a staff and Planning Board initiated text amendment to the Town of Waynesville Ordinances regarding temporary signage, Land Development Standards Section 11.5.12

Development Services Director Elizabeth Teague explained that this request is being made by the Town Planning Board in response to the 2015, U.S. Supreme Court decision in the case entitled *Reed v. Town of Gilbert, Arizona* in which the Court determined that if an enforcement official has to read the content of a sign to determine whether its size and location are permitted, the local ordinance is unconstitutional. She had that both the staff and Planning Board had done extensive research and made some narrow changes related to temporary signage. Political signage is regulated by statute and the ordinance will reference the parameters outlined by the state.

Ms. Teague noted that the Planning Board had unanimously approved the amended language at their February 20, 2017 meeting. She added that there is no action required by the Board other than to call for a public hearing and requested that the hearing date be moved to March 28, 2017.

Alderman Roberson made a motion, seconded by Alderman Feichter to call for a public hearing on Tuesday, March 28, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. or as closely thereof as possible in the Board Room of Town Hall located at 9 South Main Street, Waynesville, to consider a staff and Planning Board initiated text amendment to the Town of Waynesville Ordinances regarding temporary signage, Land Development Standards Section 11.5.12, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

D. NEW BUSINESS

5. Request to approve the Interlocal Agreement with Haywood County

Ms. Teague explained that an Interlocal Agreement with Haywood County had been drawn up for the Calvary Street property. The essentials of this agreement allow the County to convey to the Town for use as a park with provisos that the Town will clean up and develop the property within 6 months. Ms. Teague noted the desire to move forward with the project as it is supported by the neighborhood and both Town and County. She added that she has been working with the Historic Preservation Commission on obtaining a Certified Local Government Grant for this area and the Dix Hill Cemetery which would allow for sharing of historical research that could be incorporated into the park.

Mayor Brown added that this solution benefits the citizens of Waynesville and Haywood County. He noted that there will be a reverter clause in the deed that if the property is not substantially used for park, the property would revert back to Haywood County.

Alderman Feichter made a motion, seconded by Alderman Caldwell to approve the Interlocal Agreement with Haywood County and to authorize staff to proceed with building demolition and property clean up, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Budget Amendment for the replacement of filter media at the Water Treatment Facility

Public Services Director David Foster explained that the filter media at the Water Treatment Facility have been in use for almost 60 years. Mr. Foster brought some of the new and used filter media to illustrate what happens when these ceramic balls become misshapen. The request is to increase the budget for this project by \$85,000 to replace up to 50% of the filter media at the facility. Any unused funds will revert to fund balance. Town Manager Rob Hites added that this funding would also allow for any repairs to walls and beds as the media is replaced.

Finance Director Eddie Caldwell explained that the funding is available and would not have to spend savings as it could come from current revenues.

Alderman Feichter inquired as to how long the project would take. Mr. Foster answered that the project should take just over one month. This would leave only the refurbishment of the two-million gallon tank for Water Treatment.

Alderman Roberson made a motion, seconded by Alderman Freeman to approve budget amendment #4 to the 2016-2017 Budget Ordinance, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Board Appointments for vacant positions

A. TDA 1% Zip Code Subcommittee

Mayor Brown explained that there were two vacancies for the Tourism Development Authority (TDA) 1% Zip Code Subcommittee for 28786/28785. He confirmed with Lynn Collins, TDA executive director that there was approximately \$100,000 expended within the zip codes in the past year.

The two applicants are Angie Leatherwood and Tina Masciarelli. Both of these ladies have experience with tourism-related projects and were eager to serve. No additional applications were received.

Alderman Caldwell made a motion, seconded by Alderman Feichter to appoint Angie Leatherwood and Tina Masciarelli to serve as representatives on the 1% Zip Code Subcommittee representing 28786/28785. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Brown added that the Haywood County Board of County Commissioners had to confirm these applicants as well and that this was on their upcoming agenda.

B. Waynesville Housing Authority

Mayor Brown explained that there was one vacancy on the Waynesville Housing Authority Board. This vacancy has to be filled with someone who is currently utilizing services of the WHA. The applicants for the position were Patricia McLean and Mary Ann White.

Board Members voted via written ballot and Ms. Mary Ann White unanimously elected to serve. Ms. Owens will inform Ms. White and WHA Board of this appointment.

D. COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF

8. Manager's Report – Town Manager Rob Hites

Town Manager Rob Hites noted that he had nothing to report but would be interested in hearing the Board members' priorities for the upcoming year.

9. Attorney's Report – Town Attorney Woody Griffin

Town Attorney Griffin had nothing to report.

E. COMMUNICATION FROM THE MAYOR AND BOARD

Mayor Brown began the discussion of Board Priorities by thanking the staff for their presentations at the retreat. He commented that it was nice to hear what is going on from a detailed and department specific perspective. Mayor Brown took the time to explain that in looking back through previous retreats and strategy sessions, it was interesting to find that some items such as

succession planning and health care will always be concerns, but that many items had been achieved such as the addition of new fire fighters, renovation to the public services building, etc....

Mayor Brown recounted that the major source of revenue is taxes, noting that sales tax is barely equal to 2006 and property tax increased but not as it should. General fund operations have been flat to say the least. Mayor Brown explained that if the Town is going to fund projects such as waste water treatment improvements, greenways and other recreational amenities, we will have to find additional sources of revenue or raise taxes. The board members indicated that they were not inclined to raise taxes since the rate had increased 8 cents over past four years.

Mayor Brown offered the possibility of trying for a general obligation (GO) bond to fund future projects. This is a way to gain voter input and have funding available for projects that are too large to finance for short term. Due to the current credit rating for the Town, a GO bond may be a better option.

Mayor Brown asked all board members to weigh in as to their priorities. Board members provided their listing with justification as such. The following collective list of priorities was agreed upon by members.

2016-2017 Board Priorities

1. Continued Development of Greenway(s)
2. 2030 (or 2040) Plan Development
3. Waste Water Treatment Plant – analysis and proposals for necessary upgrades and improvements to be paid for from sewer fund
4. Personnel - addition of two (2) telecommunicators for Police and one (1) position in Finance; if possible, add the Locator position in Public Services
5. Improvements to Frog Level and Hazelwood including infrastructure
6. Recreation – addition of restroom facilities centralized to activities
7. Additional projects for recreation and/or infrastructure as funds are available

Mayor Brown again reiterated that a tax increase is off the table this year and the goal is to not raise taxes moving forward. He added that projects will come up as part of regular operational considerations. However, the projects should be prioritized for Frog Level and Hazelwood.

Alderman Roberson asked about the Allens Creek Sewer consideration. Mr. Foster explained that it would be his recommendation to not have Waynesville as the lead on such a project, but rather defer to another agency such as Haywood County as it is still a health situation or Haywood Waterways as they just got Richland Creek off the impounded creek listing and have access to several grant programs.

Mayor Brown thanked the Board members for their time and consideration of these priorities and Manager Hites for his leadership in relaying the information to staff.

E. CALL ON THE AUDIENCE

Dick Young addressed the board. Mr. Young inquired if Bill's Barbershop could have been used as a restroom site in Hazelwood. Mr. Foster explained that due to concerns with building materials, it was more economical and safer to demolish and build new facilities.

Mr. Young asked why the trees at Hazelwood Tire were being cut down. Mr. Foster surmised that horticulturalist Jonathan Yates was chasing disease in the trees but that he would have Mr. Yates contact Mr. Young to explain what was being done and why.

F. ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, Alderman Feichter made a motion, seconded by Alderman Caldwell to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST

Gavin A. Brown, Mayor

Robert W. Hites, Jr., Town Manager

Amanda W. Owens, Town Clerk