

Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen
Regular Meeting Minutes
July 6, 2020 | 6:00 pm

Board Members Present: Mayor Tom Hartman, Alderman Rusty Barr, Alderman Calvin Green, Alderwoman Crystal Miller, Alderman John Reeves, and Alderman Stephen Shoemaker

Town Staff Present: Town Manager Brantley Price, Town Attorney Jak Reeves, and Town Clerk Rebecca Eldreth

At 6:00 pm Mayor Hartman called to order the meeting of the Board of Alderman. The invocation was given by Alderman Shoemaker, those in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance by Alderman Reeves.

Approval of the July 6, 2020 Agenda – Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Alderman Barr seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Regular Session

Approval of Minutes – With no discussion, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting held on June 1, 2020 and the Special Meeting held on June 16, 2020. Alderman Miller seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Demonstration Permit and Application – Mayor Hartman explained that due to the recent events it was discovered that the Town does not have an ordinance in place to address demonstration permits and applications. A drafted copy of an application and permit were provided to the Board for review. The Board recommended for the Planning Board to review the draft of the new ordinance and application prior to approval.

Discussion of Adopting Executive Order 147 Policy Requiring Face Coverings – Mayor Hartman explained Executive Order 147 requires face coverings in retail establishments. However, it does not address requirements for state and local offices leaving the opportunity for the Town to adopt the restrictions outlined in Executive Order 147. After some discussion it was agreed to move forward as is since there have been no issues.

Review of Paving Streets – The Mayor stated that the Town has set the budget for paving with Powell Bill funds included in the current budget. However, it is still unknown if the pandemic will affect Powell Bill funding. Alderman Green made the motion to take the recommendation of the Town Manager on the timeline and paving of additional streets. Alderman Shoemaker seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Statements that Shows Consistency with the 2008 Land Use Plan – With no discussion, Alderman Barr made a motion to approve the statements of consistency for the rezonings and text amendments from the last meeting. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Planning Board Appointment – The Mayor stated that Bob Adams term on the planning board is set to expire, but he is willing to serve another term. With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the reappointment. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Closing Parking Lot for the Hobby Barn – Mayor Hartman explain that the Hobby Barn has requested to use a Town owed parking lot to hold a radio-controlled car race between the hours of

6pm and 11pm. The date for the event is still to be determined. After some discussion, a consensus was made to allow Hobby Barn to hold the event in the public lot behind Badger's Funeral Home if no services are being held at that time.

Town Managers Report – Brantley Price, Town Manager gave his report to the Board. A total of 4.7 inches of rain was reported for the month with year to date totals at 44.6 inches. The spring is currently producing 80,000 gallons of water a day. The restrictions of Executive Order 147 have been extended to July 17, 2020 due to reported cases rising with 58 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Ashe County. Carolina Grading has replaced the sewer line at the park reducing the amount of water infiltrating the sewer lines and entering the plant by 30,000 gallons. A meeting has been arranged with the High Country Council of Governments to discuss the CDBG Grant to replace existing terracotta lines in the sewer system. The booster pump is scheduled to be installed on the new well this month. The wayfinding kiosks have been installed and are being utilized daily. There have been several positive comments about the addition of the wayfinding signage and the relocation of the clock. The application has been submitted for the downtown wi-fi grant. The deadline for the resurfacing of Jefferson Avenue has been extended to December 2021. The Town signage located on US Highway 221 Business will be relocated to the other side of the street after receiving some complaints on the current location. Taxes collected to date total 97.8% of the levy. A 2020 Census sign has been placed on the corner of Jefferson Avenue and Main Street to remind everyone to complete their survey. North Carolina has reported 58.1% of surveys complete with Ashe totaling 47.9% and West Jefferson at 48.7%. Mo's Boots will hold a sidewalk sale on July 24th and 25th. Brantley then thanked all the agencies and demonstrators involved with the recent protest and keeping the event peaceful. The Fourth of July fireworks display was successful in the new location and had no complaints. The restaurants have been taking advantage of the offer of outdoor seating with great response from patrons and merchants. Gallery Crawls and Backstreet Park Concerts have been cancelled with hopes of beginning in August. The Heritage Iron Club would like to use the Town parking lot on July 10th. Sales tax was only down 0.5% in the month of March and 4.9% down in April mostly due to the government restrictions during the pandemic. Brantley ended his report by reminding the newly elected officials to complete their online ethics course. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

Public Comments – Mayor Hartman opened the meeting to public comment. With no comments the Mayor closed public comment.

Aldermen Comments – There were no Alderman comments at this time.

Closed Session – The Mayor then asked for a motion to enter closed session per G.S. 143.318.11(a)(4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to enter closed session.

Return to Regular Session – The Board returned from closed session at 7:24pm.

Adjournment – With nothing further, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by Alderman Barr with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Tom Hartman, Mayor

Rebecca Eldreth, Town Clerk