

Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 2, 2020 | 6:00 p.m.

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, Town Clerk Rebecca Eldreth, Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller, WWTP Superintendent Brandon Patrick, and Police Chief Brad Jordan

Several other residents of the community also attended.

At 6:00 pm Mayor Hartman called to order the meeting of the Board of Aldermen. After the invocation was given, those in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the March 2, 2020 Agenda – Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Alderman Barr seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Public Hearings

Consideration of Recommendation to Rezone Parcel ID 19227 079 from Residential Agriculture (RA) to Industrial (M-1) – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed rezoning of parcel ID 19227 079. Several members of the community were in attendance to voice their concerns and opinions. Mayor Hartman opened the public hearing to allow comments at 6:01pm. County manager Adam Stumb addressed the Board and the community to give a brief overview of the project as the County would like to purchase the proposed site to construct an industrial park for future opportunities. Members of the community Scott and Violet Webber expressed their concerns pertaining to the increase risk of runoff and flooding in their neighborhood. Joann Woodie then spoke to voice her concerns with about the increase in traffic and noise. Director of Economic Development Cathy Barr and Joe Chamberlin spoke in favor of the rezoning pointing out the advantages of developing the proposed site. Billy Joe Woodie asked where the proposed entrance to the site would be and asked if there was anything that could be done to keep trucks from entering on Speaks Road to prevent traffic issues. With no further comment, Mayor Hartman closed the public comment at 6:16pm

Consideration of Voluntary Annexation of Parcel ID 19267 416 – Russell Vannoy – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed annexation of Russell Vannoy’s property located on Oakwood Road. Mayor Hartman opened the public comment at 6:16pm and with no comments closed the public comment at 6:17pm.

Regular Session

Approval of Minutes – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting and Special Meeting held on February 3, 2020. Alderwoman Miller seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Presentation of FY 2018-19 Town Audit – Priscilla Norris presented the Board with the audit findings for FY 2018-19. Some noteworthy items in the report include an increase in Fund Balance of \$63,879 as of June 30, 2019 with a balance of over \$2,000,000 with over \$1,400,000 as the unassigned portion with

the remainder being restricted by statutes. Further, 97.37% of the tax levy was collected as of June 30, 2018. Overall, the Town was in a good financial state with no major issues found. The Board thanked Priscilla for her report.

Consideration of Farmers Market Lease – Amanda Gentry, Farmers Market President came forward to update the Board on the status of the Farmer Market. Amanda then asked for the Boards approval to lease the Market for another year. In addition to the lease, Amanda asked the Board to remain the responsible party for the monthly electric bill for the market. With no further discussion, Alderman Barr made the motion approve the lease. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Discussion of Fire Tax – Fire Chief Eric Miller along with several members of the department came before the Board to ask for an increase in the fire tax of \$0.013. The current rate is the lowest in the county at \$0.017. Alderman Shoemaker made the to approve the request to hold a public hearing for the increase in taxes. Alderman Green seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Rezoning Parcel ID 19227 079 – With no discussion, Alderman Barr made a motion to approve the rezoning. Alderwoman seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Voluntary Annexation of Parcel ID 19267 416 – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the annexation. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Police Report – Police Chief Bradley Jordan gave his report to the Board. A total of 294 calls were dispatched through the communications center: 12 auto collisions were investigated; 12 larcenies; 1 counterfeit bill; 4 drug cases; 3 driving while impaired; 3 trespasses; 17 minor citations; 1 arson; and 1 recovered stolen vehicle. The Board thanked the Chief for his report.

Water/Wastewater & Maintenance Report – WWTP Superintendent Brandon Patrick gave his report to the Board. Rain totals for the month were reported at 7.5 inches. The guys were able to run the press all month, and the plant is in great shape for this time of year. Two bearings on the oxidation ditch had to be replaced. The Land App, EPA, Pretreatment, and Local Water Supply Plan annual reports were submitted last month. A copy of the Local Water Supply Plan, which shows the average amounts of water pumped from the wells and spring verses the amount of water sold. The plan also lists the monthly average flows for the wastewater plant. Both filters are running and averaging over 90,000 gallons per day, with a monthly total of over 2.5 million gallons. The Board thanked Brandon for his report.

Maintenance Report – Eric Miller, Maintenance Supervisor gave his report to the board. A total of 17 one call tickets were reported for the month. There were several water leaks reported with one broken meter, three sewer line issues. In addition, the maintenance department has been looking for infiltration in the water lines, made 6 trips to the landfill, chipped brush, trimmed trees, and cleaned drains. The Board thanked Eric for his report.

Town Managers Report – Brantley Price, Town Manager gave his report to the Board. He informed the Board about the infiltration concerns in the water lines and stated that 10,000 feet of lines will be videoed to help identify the issue. Galvanized pipe will be replaced along Buck Mountain Road. The final price for the booster pump was \$5,000 to \$6,000 more than originally thought. Taxes collected to date total 96% of the levy. The TDA is currently running an ad in Our State magazine for the months of February, March, April, and May. The Highway 221 aesthetics project has not entered the design phase of the project but will move forward soon. The US Census starts April 1, 2020. Brantley attended a

legislative update and City and County Managers seminar. Mountain Outfitters plans to hold a sidewalk sale on May 30, 2020. Brantley closed his report by reminding the newly elected officials to complete the required ethics training. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

Public Comments – Mayor Hartman opened the meeting to public comment. Zach Fulbright with the Blue Ridge Movie Lounge asked the Board to lift the restrictions to allow the sell of beer at location other than hotels, motels, and restaurants. The Town Manager informed Zach that the decision to lift the restriction would have to be added to the ballot for a vote in the general election with the Board approving the addition to the ballot with a motion. Zach then stated that East Second Street could benefit from the installation of a speed bump to slow down traffic.

Aldermen Comments – The Board thanked all those in attendance and thanked the County for initiating a county wide meeting and for choosing West Jefferson as the home of a future industrial site.

Closed Session – The Mayor then asked for a motion to enter closed session per G.S. 143.318.11(a)(6) to consult with the Town Board concerning personnel. Alderman Reeves made the motion to enter closed session.

Return to Regular Session – The Board returned from closed session at 8:17 p.m.

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

Tom Hartman, Mayor

Rebecca Eldreth, Town Clerk