

**Board of Aldermen
Regular Meeting
October 5, 2015
6:00 p.m.
Minutes**

Present: Mayor Dale Baldwin, Alderman Calvin Green, Alderman Tom Hartman, Alderman John Reeves, Alderman Stephen Shoemaker, Alderman Brett Summey, Town Manager Brantley Price, Town Clerk Wesley Barker and Town Planner Matthew Levi were present. Several other Town employees and residents of the community also attended.

At 6:00 p.m. Mayor Baldwin called to order the meeting of the Board of Aldermen. Alderman Hartman then said the invocation and those in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the October 5, 2015 Agenda- With no changes, Alderman Summey made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Alderman Hartman seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Approval of Minutes- September 14, 2015 Regular Meeting- With no comments, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the minutes as written. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Library Steps Project Update- Kathy Chefas of Imagination Ashe came forward to give the Board an update on the proposed library steps project presented to the Board in June 2015. Kathy said this project would use the steps from the Backstreet Park up to the Ashe County Library to celebrate Imagination Ashe's 10 year commitment to raising the literacy level of Ashe County. Kathy said the project would highlight words and phrases on the risers of the steps leading up to the Library. This "Step Project" would also include an engraved semicircle at the base of the steps with the words "Imagination Ashe, Est. 2006." Also, they would like to place a 54" bronze sculpture entitled "Mailbox Boy" which encapsulates what the program does; a book being mailed to an Ashe County youngster every month from birth to age 5. Kathy continued to explain that the words would be made of aluminum and installed into the steps. Potential fundraising requests had been put out to corporate sponsors and large sponsors would be recognized on a plaque. Kathy said they are seeking at least \$20,000-25,000 for the project. Kathy asked the Board for their approval to move forward with this project, as it had been approved by the County Commissioners per the Aldermen's request from the June 2015 meeting. Alderman Hartman made the motion to approve the Library Steps Project, seconded by Alderman Reeves. The vote of 5-0 in favor.

Public Restroom Project Update- Darron Dotson and Kevin Nichols presented plans for the public restroom project to the Board. Noteworthy items include the public restrooms to be a 38' building with men's and women's bathrooms as well as a utility room. The restrooms would be 37' from the sidewalk and would be constructed to where they could be washed down at any time including the walls and floors. Also, electrical outlets were discussed to be added outside of the building as well as installation of street lamps in the area. The Board thanked Darron and Kevin for their presentation.

ABC Board Report- ABC Board Chairman Haskell McGuire gave a quarterly report to the Board on the ABC store. Haskell said for the 1st Fiscal Quarter 2015-16 (July-September) total sales were \$419,786, a 7.9% increase from this quarter last year. A check was delivered to the Town for \$12,000 for the 1st Fiscal Quarter. Haskell then gave the Board a synopsis of the annual financial audit of the ABC store. Haskell said the audit was just delivered and a detailed review had not yet been done, but the auditors

advised it was a good audit with no significant findings. Haskell then spoke on the alcohol abuse training classes that retired Ashe County School teacher Mary Howell has been teaching in schools throughout the state. Haskell recognized Mary Howell and stated this program was initiated in Ashe County and is now being conducted in 12 counties across North Carolina. Haskell said each individual county's ABC Board pays for training in their county. Mary has been asked by the NC ABC Commission to attend a special meeting in November to discuss Alcohol Abuse Training across NC. The Board thanked Haskell for his report and Mary Howell for her work on these training courses.

Consideration of Amendment to West Jefferson Code of Ordinances: Section 94.32- Noxious Growth & Section 94.46(A) - Public Nuisances- Brantley said the Code of Ordinances had a duplicate section discussing uncontrolled growth of noxious weeds or grass. The proposed amendment would delete section 94.46(A) and Section 94.32 would be revised to add the sentence: "the uncontrolled growth of weeds or grass should not exceed a height in excess of 12 inches." With no discussion, Alderman Green made the motion to approve the amendments to the Code of Ordinances as presented. Alderman Shoemaker seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Agreement between Town & Municipal Engineering for PER & EA Services- Brantley said USDA Rural Development recommended that the Town and Municipal Engineering enter into an agreement to complete the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) and the Environmental Assessment (EA) independent of USDA at this point and to have these two reports complete before submitting application to USDA for the well dewatering project and water/sewer line extension. Brantley said in the proposed agreement, each report is priced separately as requested by USDA, and as long as the Town is approved for funding, we would be able to submit for reimbursement. The total cost of both reports as stated in the agreement is \$10,000. If approved, Mike Acquesta of Municipal Engineering would then be able to begin these reports. With no discussion, Alderman Summey made the motion to approve this agreement. Alderman Shoemaker seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Police Report- Chief Rose gave the police report for the month of September. During the month, 230 calls were dispatched through the communications center, 17 auto collisions were investigated, and 13 people were arrested which include charges of: DWI, Larceny, Assault and Drug related crimes. Also, 4 persons were arrested/charged for drug violations. The Board thanked Chief for his report.

Water/Wastewater Report- Charles said during the previous month, 10.64 inches of rain had been recorded. Currently, the water levels were good and the filter plant was down with a compressor to be repaired. Charles then said the State is requesting more data from the filter plant before it can be started back up. The Board thanked Charles for his report.

Maintenance Report- Eric Miller gave a report on the Maintenance Department for the month of September. 11 one calls had been called in for the month. Eric said 4 water leaks and 2 sewer line issues had been reported. The Town parking lot had been paved at Dr. Rector's office as well as the alleyway and Eric said the drainage seemed to be working well. The tennis courts had been resealed and repainted.

Eric then reported for the Fire Department and gave the Board an overview of the recent inspection. Eric said the inspection went well and the inspector seemed satisfied. The official results have not come in yet but would be reported to the Board once they did. Alderman Green expressed his appreciation to Fire Chief Donnie Miller for his hard work on preparing for the inspection. He feels the Board should send an appreciation letter to Donnie. Alderman Green then commented on the trees in downtown and their beauty. He asked about pruning them to keep them looking good. Eric said someone from the

Forestry Service recommended that the trees grow for a few years before pruning and to only prune them a little at a time. The Board thanked Eric for his report.

Town Managers Report- Brantley Price reported to the Board on the streetscape project at Jefferson Avenue and Second Street. This project would be rebid in December 2015 and it would begin tentatively in spring 2016. Other items reported include the CDBG grant, which is moving forward, and boring would take place to install electrical outlets in the bumpouts at Main Street & Jefferson Avenue. Taxes collected to date were \$636,176 or 63.5% of the levy. Brantley wanted to thank Barr Evergreens for replacing the tree at the Backstreet Park. Halloween trick-or-treating would be on Saturday, October 31st from 3-5 pm for any businesses who wish to hand out candy. Finally, Brantley announced the Town was recognized at both the State House and Senate for its 100 year celebration and a proclamation was read by Representative Jonathan Jordan.

Public Comment- The Mayor opened public comment at 7:03 p.m. With no comment, public comment was then closed at 7:04 pm.

Alderman Comments- Alderman Shoemaker thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Closed Session- The Mayor said the Board would be entering into closed session per G.S. 143.318.11(a) (6) to consult with the Town Attorney concerning personnel. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to go into closed session. Alderman Hartman seconded. A vote of 5-0 in favor. The time was 7:05 p.m.

The Board returned to open session from closed session at 8:00 p.m. With nothing further, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Alderman Reeves. The vote of 5-0 in favor.

Dale Baldwin, Mayor

Wesley M. Barker, Town Clerk