

**Board of Aldermen
Regular Meeting
November 2, 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, Finance Officer Heather Holdaway, Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller, WWTP Superintendent Charles Call, Police Chief Jeff Rose. Several other residents of the community also attended.

At 6:01 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 November 2, 2015 Agenda- With no changes, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Alderman Shoemaker seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

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

Appointment of W.J. Fire Chief and Assistant Chief- The Mayor said this is the annual appointment of the Chief and Fire Chief for the West Jefferson Fire Department. Current Chief Donnie Miller said he was willing to be reappointed if the Board so desired. Alderman Green then made the motion to appoint Donnie Miller as Fire Chief for another year. Alderman Shoemaker seconded. The vote of 5-0 in favor. The Mayor then stated Assistant Fire Chief Eric Miller was willing to be reappointed as Assistant Chief. Alderman Reeves made the motion to appoint Eric Miller as Assistant Fire Chief for another year. Alderman Shoemaker seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration to add Whistleblower Policy to Personnel Policy under Section V- Conditions of Employment, Section 11- The Mayor explained that the grant the Police Department was awarded by the Governor's Crime Commission to purchase body cameras required the Town to have a current Whistleblower Policy in place within the Town's Personnel Policy. The Town currently does not have a Whistleblower Policy in place. With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the addition of the Whistleblower Policy to the Town's Personnel Policy under Section V. Alderman Hartman seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Police Report- Chief Rose gave the police report for the month of October. During the month, 189 calls were dispatched through the communications center, 18 auto collisions were investigated, and 5 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, 6.76 inches of rain had been recorded. Currently, the filter plant is still down as the State is requiring further reports to be sent in and the filter plant must meet specific guidelines before being allowed to go back online. Charles spoke on the pretreatment inspection, which went well. No major issues were currently reported with the WWTP. The Board thanked Charles for his report.

Maintenance Report- Eric Miller gave a report on the Maintenance Department for the month of October. 29 one calls had been called in for the month. Eric said 2 water leaks and 2 sewer line issues had been reported and resolved. Further, the department had completed flushing of 10% of the Town's sewer lines as required each year. NC Rural Water recently conducted smoke testing on sewer lines and found a few issues to be corrected. The pavement had been fixed to prevent the loud noises being made when trucks were running over the manholes on Jefferson Avenue. Finally, Eric said the water lines had been moved and corrected leading up to Westwood School. If DOT hit a water line during the 221 road construction, the school still could operate by using the water in the tank by the school. The Board thanked Eric for his report.

Town Managers Report- Brantley Price reported to the Board on the USDA application for the new well site, belt press project at the WWTP and water/sewer line expansion would be submitted in December after review of projects. The streetscape project would be rebid in December. Brantley then gave an update on GE from Cathy Barr, Ashe County Economic Director, which said 59 employees had been hired this year, well beyond the 18 committed. More employees may be hired next month with new web applications being taken for 2016 positions, when they plan to hire 60 more employees, exceeding the 105 jobs initially publicized. The engineering reports for the CDBG Grant for Burkett and Graybeal Avenues are complete but not approved by the state. Once approved, design can begin with the bid date to be in early spring with construction starting soon thereafter. Brantley said he spoke with Curt Hazelbaker last week and the YMCA project for Ashe County is currently on hold until spring as they are currently focusing on issues of locations already in operation. The capital campaign would possibly begin in spring 2016 and the YMCA would be applying for \$500,000 in grant funding that would assist with this project. Taxes collected to date were \$687,400 or 68.6% of the levy. Brantley then read a letter to the Board sent to the Chamber on how lovely West Jefferson is. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

Public Comment- The Mayor opened public comment at 6:26 p.m. No public comment.

Alderman Comments- Alderman Shoemaker thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and wanted to thank veterans for their service. He spoke on placing blue lights on your front porch to show appreciation to veterans. The Mayor said he would miss Alderman Hartman on the Board as he was not running for re-election.

With nothing further, Alderman Summey 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