

Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2021 | 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 (absent)

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

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 April 5, 2021 Agenda – Before the agenda was approved Mayor Hartman stated the consideration to close the Town’s parking lot on State Street would need to be added to the agenda. Also, the Mayor requested to remove the discussion of emergency fire call from the agenda. Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the agenda as amended. Alderwoman Miller seconded with a vote of 3-0 in favor, with Alderman Barr arriving after the vote.

Public Hearings

Consideration of Voluntary Annexation of Parcel ID 19223 230 001 – Skyline – Mayor Hartman stated the purpose of the public hearing is to hear any comments on the proposed annexation of the property located at 1056 NC Highway 194 North owned and occupied by Skyline Coop. Mayor Hartman opened the public comment at 6:05pm and with no comments closed the public comment at 6:06pm.

Consideration of Voluntary Annexation of Parcel ID 13227 227 – Brad Jordan – Mayor Hartman then opened the second public hearing for the purpose of hearing any comments on the proposed annexation of the property located at 211 Justice Lane. Mayor Hartman opened the public comment at 6:06pm and with no comments closed the public comment at 6:07pm.

Regular Session

Approval of Minutes March 1, 2021 Regular Meeting – With no discussion, Alderwoman Miller made the motion to approve the minutes from the March 1, 2021 Regular Meeting. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Consideration of Addition of Basketball Court for April’s School of Dance Recital – Mayor Hartman stated that April’s School of Dance was given permission to use the tennis courts at the park for an upcoming recital. In addition to the tennis courts, she is requesting the use of the basketball courts for staging the recital. Alderman Green suggested moving the event to the Town parking lot located on School Avenue to keep the tennis courts from becoming damaged during the recital. Alderman Barr suggested the dance studio be allowed to use the tennis and basketball courts if the parking lot was not sufficient provide April Barnes sign a damage waiver prepared by the Town Attorney. Alderman Barr then made the motion to allow April’s School of Dance to hold the May 15th recital on the tennis courts along with the basketball courts if the parking lot will not be sufficient if a damage waiver is provided. Alderman Green seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor to follow.

Consideration of Letter of Support to Allow Vannoy Construction Access – Mayor Hartman explained Vannoy Construction is requesting support for a right in right out access off 211 for the potential commercial properties in the future, and they would like a letter of endorsement written to NC DOT from the Town showing support.

Alderman Barr made the motion in support of the request. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 following the motion.

Consideration of Voluntary Annexation of Parcel ID 19223 230 001 – With no discussion, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the voluntary annexation of parcel 19223 230 001 located at 1056 Hwy 194 North. Alderwoman Miller seconded with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Consideration of Voluntary Annexation of Parcel ID 13227 227 – With no discussion, Alderman Green made the motion to approve the voluntary annexation of parcel 13227 227 located at 211 Justice Lane. Alderwoman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Consideration of ABC Reappointment – The Mayor stated that Town Attorney Jak Reeves term on the ABC Board is expiring however he is willing to serve another three-year term. Alderman Green made the motion to approve the reappointment of Town Attorney Jak Reeves to the ABC Board for another three-year term. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Discussion of Farmers Market Stormwater Issue – Mayor Hartman explained that Shatley Paving and PADCO Paving have both reviewed the stormwater issues at the Farmers Market and submitted estimates for the project. PADCO's proposal came in significantly lower than Shatley Paving. A suggestion was made for the Town Attorney to draft a contract between the Town and PADCO based on the estimate with a 10% variation allowance. Alderman Green made the motion to approve the contract to move forward with the repair. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Discussion of Outdoor Dining – Mayor Hartman opened a discussion for the consideration to offer outdoor dining for 2021 as last year during the COVID 19 pandemic the Board approved restaurants to block off parking spaces in front of their restaurants in addition to the closure of First Street. Mike Kesterson came before the Board on behalf of Homeslice to ask for the same accommodations. Mike stated that even if the capacity restriction were removed and seating could return to 100% the need to socially distance tables would not allow the restaurant to seat any additional patrons. Alderman Green made the motion to allow outdoor dining seven days a week in the parking spaces directly in front of the restaurants until October 31, 2021 unless permission is revoked by the ABC Board provided that East First Street remains open to traffic. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Discussion of Closing the Public Parking Lot on East State Street – Mayor Hartman stated the car club requested access to the public parking lot located off East State Street on Saturday nights for the cruise ins. The Board expressed their concerns for closing the parking lot too early on Saturday since the parking lot is used by the merchants and visitors. A compromise was made to close the parking lot at 4pm on the days of the event by displaying a sign in the area. Alderman Barr made the motion to close the parking lot on East State Street on April 24 and to continue every third Saturday from May to October as requested. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Discussion of ETJ Map – Mayor Hartman presented the Board with an altered version of the ETJ map prepared by the High Country Council of Governments. After some discussion, the matter was tabled for a date in the future.

Discussion of Backstreet Parks Concerts – The Mayor explained the West Jefferson Community Partnership discussed the future of the Backstreet Park Concerts at the March meeting. The Partnership would like to hold the concerts with extra safety precautions including additional signage, masks and marked areas for seating with approval from the Board. Alderman Barr made the motion to resume the Backstreet Park Concerts for the summer of 2021. Alderwoman Miller seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Discussion of Board of Adjustment Date – After some discussion, the date of Monday, April 19th was chosen by the Board.

Tax Release – Mayor Hartman presented the only one tax release for Ameriprise Financial Services in the amount of \$2.84. Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the tax releases as stated. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Budget Discussion – Town Manager Brantley Price led the discussion and reviewed the items for the 2021/2022 fiscal Year. Items noted were as followed:

General Fund

Revenue

- Property tax
- American Rescue Plan

Administrative

- COVID Relief Funds
- EV Charger
- Election
- Replace Bows on Wreaths
- Refrigerator for Town Hall
- Replace Town Hall Roof
- Mural at Restroom (3 way split)
- Redo Board Meeting Bench Solid Granite
- GE Incentive Amended Three Years
- WCC
- Budget for WIFI Annual Fees
- Budget for Stormwater Grant
- Paint/coat Honeycombs
 - Paint logo on front above door & side

Police

- Pay Scale for Officers
 - Brad checked with other local departments and has found that our officer pay is lower.
- Health Insurance Available for Retiring Officers After 25 Years of Service
- Uniforms
- Departmental Supplies
 - Tasers, vests
 - 3 computers
 - Replace server
 - Replace 3 AR-15s
- New Vehicle
- Viper Radio

Maintenance/Streets

- Maintenance has Requested the Units Below and Ranked by Importance:
 - #1 - Replace Ranger w/new-used F-150
 - #2 - Skid Steer w/tracks
 - #3 - Replace Bucket Truck
 - #4 - New/used Dump Truck for Chipping
- Utility Bed for One Truck
- Diagnostic Scanner
- MIG Welder
- Battery Powered Tools
- Extend Storm Drain between Town Hall and Craft Bistro
- Replace Culvert on Backstreet between Grate and Sidewalk
- Road Salt
- Flower Planters
- Replace Street Trash Cans
- Place Floor Tile in Public Restrooms
- Quote Equipment to Remove Snow from Sidewalks
- Replace Downtown Sidewalks
 - Sidewalk N Jefferson Avenue
 - Complete section at Homeslice
 - Town Hall to Planter
 - Perry's Goldmine to Blackjack
- Do an engineered study of installing sidewalks from ABC store to Ingles
- Review Parking
- Pave Maintenance Front Lot
- Street Paving
- Alley Work

Park

- UTV Kubota w/Cab
- Mulch for Playground
- Repair Tennis Courts
- New Sinks for Shelters
- Bridge Replacement
- Heat (natural Gas?)/Insulate Park restrooms (hot water heaters)

Fire Department

- Remodel
- Raise 7 Hydrants 2' System
- Replace 9 Air Packs
- New Liner for Drop Tank
- Weed Eater

Water/Sewer

- Discuss increasing water/sewer rates 3-5%/year to meet future needs

Water

- Replace Handheld for Meter Reading
- Extra Samples
- Misc. Parts for Filter Plant
- Training and Education
- Penalties and Fines
- Pressure Transducer
- Detention Tank Sensors
- Chemical Feed Pumps
- New Well Meters
- Extra SCADA Parts
- Ross Valves Maintenance
- Small Hand Tools
- 5% Raise

Sewer

- Penalties & Fines
- Training & Education
- 4" Trash Pump
- Backwash Pump for Filters
- Suction Hoses
- Small Hand Tools
- Lime for Sludge Fields
- New Blowers
- Beaver Creek Pump Station Pump
- Polymer/Landfill Tipping Fees
- UV Bulb and Ballast Replacements
- Belt Press Maintenance
- Boot/Rubber Boots
- Extra Sampling
- Add Return Pumps/Clarifiers to SCADA
- Generator (plus installation)
- New lawn mower
- 5% Raise
- Pull behind sewer Jetter
- 2 Gas Detector meters
- Replace hydrant end of Ridgecrest/Long St
- Review paying extra on USDA loan
- Engineering for pump station at Oakwood (get water to Forest Ridge)

- Add booster pump to Oakwood
- Upgrade UV at WWTP
- New generator at WWTP.
- Cat
- Review 2” meters to replace
- Water Line Replacement
 - Village Inn to WWTP
 - S Church Avenue
 - Wilton & Second St Valve replacement
 - Replace vault water meter at Westview Apartments
 - Water line Terrace 6”
- Sewer Line Repair to Reduce I&I

Town Managers Report – Brantley Price, Town Manager informed the Board of the upcoming dates for the Mountain Outfitters sidewalk sales for the year

Public Comments – None

Aldermen Comments – None

Adjournment – With nothing further, Alderman Barr made the motion to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by Alderman Reeves with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Tom Hartman, Mayor

Rebecca Eldreth, Town Clerk