

Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 7, 2016 | 6:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Mayor Dale Baldwin, Alderman Calvin Green, Alderman Jerry McMillan, Alderman John Reeves, Alderman Stephen Shoemaker, Alderman Brett Summey, Sr.

Town Staff Present: Town Manager Brantley Price, Town Clerk Wesley Barker, Police Chief Jeff Rose, Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller, WWTP Superintendent Charles Call

Members of the West Jefferson Lions Club and several other residents of the community also attended.

At 6:00 p.m. Mayor Baldwin called to order the meeting of the Board of Aldermen. Alderman Shoemaker gave the invocation. Those in attendance then stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the November 7, 2016 Agenda- With no changes, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Alderman Shoemaker seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Approval of Minutes- October 3, 2016 Regular Meeting- With no comments, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the minutes as written. Alderman Summey seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Discussion of Flag Placement- WJ Lions Club- Representatives from the West Jefferson Lions Club were in attendance to discuss the American flags that are placed throughout Town during American holidays. Sally Covington of the Lions Club spoke to the Board and stated flags were placed on the Backstreet for the Board to view to see their placement and gather their opinions. Pete Yates of the Lions Club was next to address the Board. Pete stated the Lions Club have placed American flags in West Jefferson for 50 years, 10 times a year along the sidewalks in pre-drilled holes. Pete stated with the new streetscape and sidewalk improvements the Town has completed over the past few years, some flag holes had been removed and not been put back. Pete stated the Lions Club would like to have these holes placed back in order to place the flags throughout downtown. Currently, 29 flags cannot be put out because of the missing holes. Pete said the Lions Club is asking the Town's opinion if they would like the holes to be replaced, who will complete this work and who would pay for the expense incurred. Town Manager Brantley Price stated the Board of Aldermen were in control of the Town streets and sidewalks and would like the Board to discuss their thoughts. Options discussed for these holes would be in either the sidewalk as before, or along the asphalt on the street where it meets the sidewalk. All holes would be flush with the pavement or sidewalks and uniform along the street. Town Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller suggested these holes be placed on the sidewalks and not the asphalt due to the street sweeping and snow removal. Stuart's Landscaping, who completed some of the new sidewalks in Town, could remove one brick paver on the sidewalk and replace with concrete for the flag holes so it would be sturdy enough to hold the flags when in the holes. Alderman Green stated the Lions Club flags help with the aesthetics of the Town and all for the Town covering the cost of replacing these flag holes in the sidewalks. Mr. Green further stated the Town could incorporate this into next year's budget. He suggested working with Stuart's Landscaping and come back before the Board with an estimated cost to drill the new holes. Pete Yates stated if the Town was willing to incur the cost for the new hole drilling, the Lions Club would purchase new American flags to be placed in the bumpouts in Downtown as a gratuitous gesture. The Board was in consensus to move forward with the project and to acquire

estimated construction costs for drilling the holes on the sidewalks. The Board thanked the Lions Club for their attendance.

Discussion of Proposed Project- Jane Lonon, Ashe County Arts Council- Jane Lonon, Executive Director of the Ashe County Arts Council, spoke to the Board on a proposed project. Jane spoke on the improvements West Jefferson has made throughout the downtown. She presented a suggestion on possible improvements to the intersection of Main Street and School Ave/Sixth Ave as highlighted by the recent charrette conducted by Virginia Tech students on downtown improvements. Jane said this part of Town would benefit from a streetscape improvement due to the new public parking lots, pedestrian traffic increase and the Badger Funeral Home and Arts Center building located at this intersection. Jane stated she would like to propose this intersection be changed to a 3-way stop, eliminating the blinking light and a small bumpout be added onto the Arts Center/Regency Properties side of the street. This bumpout could include landscaping and brick pavers such as the other bumpouts do, or it could be a simple pedestrian friendly sidewalk extension such as is found at the intersection of Backstreet and Main Street. Jane said she is respectfully asking the Town to consider this project for 2017 to continue the revitalization efforts on that end of Town. The Board thanked Jane for her report.

ABC Report- Haskell McGuire- ABC Board Chairman Haskell McGuire gave a report on the ABC Board. Haskell said for the first Fiscal Quarter of 2016-17 (July-September), total sales were \$457,518, an 8.99% change from this quarter last year. Further, Haskell said a \$12,000 check was delivered to the Town for the first Fiscal Quarter. Haskell said all building repairs for the recent damages to the ABC Store have been completed and were recovered in full from the ABC Store's insurer. The total cost of repairs and lost inventory was \$24,296. Alderman Green asked Haskell how the check given to the Town each quarter was determined as the total sales continue to rise but the distribution to the Town stays the same. Haskell said the distribution to the Town was determined by their accountant who uses a formula to see how much should be distributed. Haskell said since the ABC Store has now removed some debt, the distribution to the Town should now increase.

Consideration of Horse Drawn Carriage Ordinance Revision- The Mayor stated when this ordinance was originally passed, the Board could update as necessary. Town Manager Brantley Price stated he felt some sections needs to be revised within the ordinance including the headquarters location and headquarters location approval. The following are the proposed changes to the ordinance:

§ 111-10.3. Fixed place of business required.

Each horse-drawn carriage company shall establish and maintain a fixed headquarters ~~on private property for the operation of the company's business~~ as designated by the Town- see 111-10-16(a). The headquarters shall conform to the ordinances of the Town and shall provide adequate off-street parking for all horse-drawn carriages not in service on the streets. The company headquarters shall not be moved except by the approved transfer of the company's permit to another location.

§ 111-10.16. Carriage stands.

- (a) *~~If To be approved by the Town Manager, the director of the public works department, or the director's designee, in consultation with the chief of police, and is hereby empowered to designate the location and extent of space for stands located on Town streets and parking spaces or lots and which shall be known as "carriage stands." Unless otherwise allowed by the Town, no automobiles or other means of conveyance other than horse-drawn carriages as defined in this article shall be permitted to use such stands.~~*

With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the revisions to this ordinance as presented. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of WJ Fire Department Chief & Assistant Chief- The Mayor stated the Board would need to appoint the WJ Fire Department Chief and Assistant Chief to a one-year term. Current Fire Chief Donnie Miller and current Assistant Chief Eric Miller were willing to serve another term if the Board desires. With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to appoint Donnie Miller as Fire Chief and Eric Miller as Assistant Fire Chief for another year. Alderman Green seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Budget Amendment #2- FY 2016-17- The Mayor stated this budget amendment was for the 5% match (\$2,500) for the Dr. Pepper Museum Building Reuse Grant Project as approved by the Board in the October meeting, funds to repair a maintenance truck from damage from February 2016 (\$2,400) (the insurance check was received in FY 2015-16 and repairs were completed in this FY 2016-17), and paving of area at Farmers Market as approved at the October meeting (\$8,200). These funds would come from Fund Balance in amount of \$13,100. Alderman Green made the motion to approve the budget amendment as presented. Alderman Shoemaker seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Police Report- Chief Rose gave a report on the Police Department. Chief said during the month of October, 211 calls were dispatched through the communications center, 22 auto collisions were investigated, 9 people were arrested including charges of DWI, larceny, assault and drug related crimes. Further, the Chief said 5 persons was arrested for drug violations. The Board thanked the Chief for his report.

Water/Wastewater Report- WWTP Superintendent Charles Call gave a report on the WWTP. Charles said the Town's water supply levels were holding up well with the ongoing dry weather. Pump repairs has been made at one of the Town's wells. The State had given the Town permission to run the filter plant, but the dry weather was preventing it from being ran. Further, Charles said lots of sludge had been hauled out of the WWTP and the recent testing came back good with the water system. The Board thanked Charles for his report.

Maintenance Report- Eric Miller gave his report to the Board on the maintenance department. Eric said 2 water leaks had been reported and fixed. Eric stated the water line project on Burkett Avenue was moving forward with the main line installed. Further, Eric said the street sweeper was in need of some repairs and the power hookup in the bumpouts at Ashe Street were complete. Eric suggested the Town add a streetlight on Third Avenue between Jefferson Station and Parker Tie as it has a dark spot along the road. The Board thanked Eric for report.

Town Managers Report- Brantley Price gave his report to the Board. Brantley said the USDA project for the new well, belt press and water/sewer extensions had begun with the engineer working on the design. Brantley then gave an update on the Highway 221 expansion project phases. Taxes collected to date is \$798,350 or 70.3% of the levy. Brantley said West Jefferson recently won the Strongest Infrastructure contest by Strong Towns. He said this was good PR for the Town nationally. Brantley then read a letter sent by a West Jefferson visitor praising our friendly town. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

Public Comment- The Mayor opened public comment at 6:59 p.m. Mike Sawyer, Town resident, thanked the Town for the Halloween activities. He then spoke on parking along Ashe Street by Boondocks. Mike stated cars were always parked on Ashe Street on both sides of the street and is hard for traffic to pass. He recommends placing no parking signs on this street as the street isn't big enough for parking on both sides. With no other comment, the Mayor closed public comment at 7:03 p.m.

Aldermen Comments- Alderman McMillan spoke on some dying chestnut trees located in the alleyway near First Street and College Avenue. He asked the Town to see what could be done about these trees before they fell.

Closed Session- The Mayor stated the Board would be entering into Closed Session per G.S. 143.318.11(a)(3) to consult with the Town Attorney on attorney-client matters. The Board would return to open session before adjourning and any votes would be taken if necessary. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to go into closed session. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

The Board returned from Closed Session at 8:00 pm. 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