

Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 14, 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

Other residents of the community joined via Zoom.

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 September 14, 2020 Agenda – Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Alderman Barr seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Regular Session

Approval of Minutes – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the minutes from the August 3, 2020 Regular Meeting. Alderman Barr seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Text Amendment to Code of Ordinance – Mayor Hartman stated a public hearing was held at the meeting last month to discuss the possible revision to the current noise ordinance. The following revision was compiled from the suggestions from the discussion on August 3, 2020 meeting:

(19) No owner shall permit a band or any type of music to be emitted there from between the hours of 10:00pm and 9:00am so that the sound can be heard from the exterior of said structure. Nor shall a band or any type of music be played outdoors:

- *between the hours of 10:00pm and 9:00am*
- *within 150' of a church or funeral home which is to be measured from the stage to the nearest corner of the church or funeral home.*

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

Consideration of Statement of Shows Consistency with the 2008 Land Use Development – With no discussion, Alderman Barr made the motion to approve the statements as presented. Alderwoman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Road Closure on East First Street – Mayor Hartman stated the business owners located on either side of East First Street would like to ask the Board for their consideration to permanently close a portion of the street to allow the continuation of outdoor dining. Alin Retezatu the owner of Black Jacks joined in person while Tammy Parrish the owner of Burgers Y'all joined via Zoom and presented the Board with options to close the entire width of East First Street along with other options to only close the existing parking spaces. After some discussion, the recommendation was made to allow the businesses to continue to occupy the street for outdoor dining for the remainder of 2020 providing the business owners time to move forward with specific design plans for street closure.

Discussion of Restaurants to Use Side Streets and Parking Spaces – Mayor Hartman opened a discussion to permit restaurants to extend the use of their outdoor seating everyday of the week as the additional seating has been an asset to the businesses during the pandemic. With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the use of the outdoor seating seven days a week until the end of 2020. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Property Tax Releases – With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the property tax releases as presented. Alderwoman Miller seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Cemetery Plot Purchase – Mayor Hartman informed the Board that Linda Mullis, who lives in the town limits, has requested to purchase two plots in the West Jefferson Cemetery. The plots have been paid and is awaiting Board approval per the cemetery policy. With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the purchase of two plots. Alderwoman Miller seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Town Managers Report – Brantley Price, Town Manager gave his report to the Board. Rain totals for the month are 13.3 inches with 4 inches on Saturday alone. The spring is currently shutdown and awaiting parts for repair. Brantley then gave an update on the COVID-19 pandemic. Executive Order 163 extends Phase 2.5 until October 2nd. A total of 243 cases have been reported in Ashe County with 6 cases currently active. The latest outbreak was reported at Mount Jefferson Developmental Day Care. The Town has received CARES funding from the County and will need to discuss how to utilize the funds. Several sewer lines were videoed identifying a busted pipe behind Ashe County Cheese that was allowing water from the creek to infiltrate the line continuously. In addition, to some spot repairs, the maintenance department resealed around the storm drain located on the Backstreet. The electrical panel on the booster pump at the new well is soon to be replaced which will complete the ARC project. Paving of the parking lot, Church Avenue, and First Street has been scheduled for next week. McGill began surveying the area on North Jefferson Avenue for sidewalk installation with hopes of an engineering report and estimate by January. The ARC Downtown Wi-Fi Project has been approved by the state and is currently being reviewed on the federal level. The Town is applying for a stormwater grant to develop a stormwater plan with the assistance of the High Country Council of Government. Taxes collected to date totals 64.3% of the levy. Sales tax for the month of June increased 2.6% with the April through June sales tax down 2.4% or \$2,670 from the prior year. The 2020 Census is scheduled to end September 30th with completion rates at 60.6% in North Carolina, 50% in Ashe County, and 50.9% in West Jefferson. Brantley ended his report by inviting the Board to the employee luncheon on September 25th. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

Public Comments – Norris Jackson came before the Board to propose the idea to install 3D crosswalks behind Jefferson Station. The Board was in favor of the idea and would like to discuss it further in the future.

Aldermen Comments – none

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

Tom Hartman, Mayor

Rebecca Eldreth, Town Clerk