

**Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 5, 2018 | 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. (absent)

Town Staff Present: Town Manager Brantley Price, Town Clerk Rebecca Eldreth, Town Attorney John B. “Jak” Reeves, Police Chief Jeff Rose, Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller, and WWTP Superintendent Brandon Patrick.

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, and Alderman John Reeves led the those in attendance as they stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Hearing

Closeout of the West Jefferson CDBG Downtown Redevelopment Fund #16-E-2905 – The Mountain Outfitters Expansion Project – The Mayor stated the public hearing is to hear any comments on the closeout of the West Jefferson CDBG Downtown Redevelopment Fund #16-E-2905 Mountain Outfitters Expansion Project. The Mayor opened public comment at 6:01pm. Michelle Ball with the High Country Council of Government came forward to give a recap of the project. A minimum contribution of \$100,000 was required to be made by the recipient of the grant. However, the recipients, Brandon and Tracy Vannoy contributed \$164,011.56 and received \$349,410 from the NC Department of Commerce. The project was selected as part of the slum and blight category of the redevelopment project. The project was originally started as an expansion of the current business, Mountain Outfitters, to carry additional inventory and expand product lines, but as the project progressed, the decision was made to create a whole new business focusing on western wear. The change was made with the approval of the NC Department of Commerce. The grant was one of the last grants awarded by the state of North Carolina that did not have a job creation requirement. However, Bulls Western Wear has created 4 new jobs with the possibility of adding 3 more in the future. The business must remain in operation for a minimum of 4 years. With nothing further, the Mayor closed public comment at 6:07pm.

Regular Session

Approval of the November 5, 2018 Agenda – With no changes, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Alderman McMillan seconded with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Approval of October 1, 2018 Minutes – With no changes, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve all minutes as presented. Alderman Green seconded with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Consideration for the Mayor to Sign Closeout Documents for West Jefferson CDBG Redevelopment Fund # 16-E-2905 – Mayor Baldwin asked the Board for a motion for approval to sign the closeout documents. With no discussion, Alderman McMillan made the motion to approve the signing of the closeout documents. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Consideration of Planning Board Appointment – Mayor Baldwin stated that the Board would like to recommend to the Ashe County Board of Commissioners to appoint Zeb Gambill to the vacant seat for an ETJ member on the planning board after the passing of long-time board member, Mr. Charlie King. With no further discussion, Alderman Green made the motion to approve recommendation for appointment. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Consideration of Board of Alderman Serving as the Intown Board of Adjustments – Mayor Baldwin stated the Board had been considering replacing the current Intown Board of Adjustments. Alderman Reeves, who serves as the current Chairman to the planning board, reviewed the duties of the board of adjustments. Alderman Shoemaker thanked the current members for their time served and made the motion for the Board of Alderman to replace the current intown board of adjustment. Alderman Green seconded, with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Consideration of Cemetery Plot repurchase – Mayor Baldwin stated that James McMillan had purchased a cemetery plot and passed in the last few months. Before his passing James requested to be cremated so his sister, Pat Severt is requesting to resell the unused plot back to the Town. Alderman Shoemaker stated that plots are scarce, and the Town would be able to resell the plot later. Alderman Reeves stated that the Town should purchase the plot at full price due to the short time in turnaround. Alderman Reeves made the motion to offer to purchase the plot for \$500, which is the same amount that was paid on July 30, 2018. Alderman McMillan seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Tax Releases – Mayor Baldwin stated that business personal property in Town had been revalued reducing the balance by \$12.01. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the tax release. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Police Report – Police Chief Jeff Rose gave the Police report for the month of October. There were 240 calls dispatched through the communications center: 24 auto collisions were investigated, 18 people were arrested on charges of larceny, assault, and drug related crimes. A total of 5 persons were arrested/charged for drug violations. The Board thanked the Chief for his report.

Water/Wastewater & Maintenance Report – WWTP Superintendent Brandon Patrick gave his report to the Board on the WWTP. Nick Walters completed his Wastewater Collections Grade 1 certification. A service tech has been in to troubleshoot on the filtration system, and both filters should be running by the end of the month. Brandon stated that the modules will need to be updated or the system replaced entirely in the future. The Board thanked Brandon for his report.

Maintenance Report – Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller gave his report to the Board. Eric stated the department had completed several one call tickets, 3 water leaks, and 1 sewer tap for the month. A total of 300 radio read meters were installed. Eric stated the maintenance department had been working to repair wind damage from hurricane Florence and had chipped lots of brush and made 3 trips to the landfill. Paving is complete. Some tile had to be replaced on Main Street by the Park entrance. Eric Miller and Josh Miller attended Backflow and Cross Connection classes and passed the first part of the certification with the second part to be scheduled at the first of the year. The park has been closed for the winter, and Christmas lights are being installed. The Board thanked Eric for his report.

Town Managers Report – Brantley Price gave his report to the Board. Brantley provided an update on the new well site, sewer line extensions, and belt press. The water has been connected to the new well site on Ray Taylor Road, and the contractor for the project is starting to pour the cement to create the pad while they are waiting on the new building to arrive. The sewer extensions have been added from Mike's Muffler on Highway 221 Business up to Cardinal Lanes, and the Town should be able to connect the residents on that side of Mt Jefferson Road soon. North Carolina DOT held a public meeting here at Town Hall to hear public comments concerning the intersection at Beaver Creek School Road and Highway 194. The 2 options for the super street include a right turn only intersection or a 2 lane round about. Completion date for the project is 2024. Taxes collected to date total 73.5% of the tax levy. An RFP for directional signage was sent out with a deadline of Friday, November 9th. Brantley asked the for 2 members of the Board to review the proposals once submitted. Alderman Shoemaker and Alderman Green volunteered to participate in the group with Alderman Reeves serving as a backup. The Northern Peaks Trail that would connect Boone and West Jefferson with a 50-mile hiking trail is still in the works.

A meeting with the director of the Blue Ridge Conservancy has been scheduled in the upcoming weeks. Brantley received an email from the Chamber regarding all the compliments they have received about the flowers and how beautiful the Town looks letting the Mayor, Alderman, and the Town know that the work they are doing is not going unnoticed. Brantley extended an invitation to the Mayor and Aldermen for Annual Fire Department Banquet Saturday, November 10th at 7pm. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

Public Comment – none

Aldermen Comments – Alderman Shoemaker lead with thanking the Town employees for their efforts in making the Halloween Trick or Treating event a success and installing the Christmas lights. Alderman McMillan, Alderman Green, and Alderman Reeves extended the thank you to the volunteers of the fire department for the activities they made available to the children on Halloween including the rides on the old Seagraves fire truck.

Closed Session – The Mayor asked for a motion to enter closed session per G.S. 143.318.11(a)(6) to consult with the attorney about personnel and G.S. 143.318.11(a)(3) to consult with Town Attorney over Attorney-Client Matters. The Mayor stated they would return to open session before adjourning. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to go into closed session. The time was 6:31pm.

Return to Regular Session – The Board returned to open session at 7:48 pm. Upon returning Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to appoint Eric Miller Fire Chief and Jody Walters Assistant Fire Chief. Alderman Reeves seconded the motion with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Adjournment – With no further items to be discussed or voted on, Alderman Reeves made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Alderman Shoemaker. A vote of 4-0 in favor.

Dale Baldwin, Mayor

Rebecca L. Eldreth, Town Clerk