

Town of West Jefferson - Board of Aldermen
Regular Meeting Minutes
July 1, 2019 | 6:00 pm

Board Members Present: Mayor Dale Baldwin, Alderman Rusty Barr, Alderman Calvin Green, Alderman Jerry McMillan, Alderman John Reeves, Alderman Stephen Shoemaker

Town Staff Present: Town Manager Brantley Price, Town Clerk Rebecca Eldreth, Town Attorney Jak Reeves, Police Chief Bradley Jordan, Maintenance Supervisor Eric Miller, WWTP Superintendent Brandon Patrick.

Several other residents of the community also attended.

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

Regular Session

Approval of June 3, 2019 Minutes – With no changes, Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve all minutes as presented. Alderman Shoemaker seconded with a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Organizational Meeting

Appointment to Replace Vacant Alderman Seat – Mayor Baldwin recognized the service of the late Alderman Summey by stating the Town lost one of its most devoted members and citizens with the untimely death of Dr. Brett T. Summey. Dr. Summey served on the Board for 28 years and as we mourn his death and miss his friendship and advice, we also realize that the Town must continue to move forward. The Mayor continued by asking for everyone to remember Alderman Summey's wife and family and give thanks for the 28 years of faithful service to our Town and County as the Town looks to fill the opened seat. The Mayor then asked the Board to vote to seat Russell Wilson Barr III, better known as Rusty, to fill the unexpired term of Dr. Brett T. Summey until the Town election in November. The Mayor stated that Dr. Summey would be proud to see Rusty fill his chair by appointment until November when Rusty will file for a full four-year term in the upcoming Town election. At this time the Mayor asked for any questions from the Board. Without any further discussion Alderman Green made the motion to appoint Rusty Barr to the Town Board of Aldermen to fill the unexpired term of Dr. Brett T. Summey until Town election in November 2019. Alderman McMillan seconded the motion with a unanimous vote of 4-0 in favor.

Swearing in Ceremony of Newly Appointed Official – Mayor Baldwin swore in newly appointed Alderman Rusty Barr.

Comments by Newly Sworn Official – Alderman Barr addressed those in attendance and thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve the Town. The Aldermen welcomed Rusty to the Board.

Return to Regular Session

Review of Wayfinding Project – Eric Woolridge with Destination by Design presented a summary of the current wayfinding sign project. The project will include directional signage, kiosks, and parking signage throughout the Town to highlight all businesses including those on Backstreet and Third Avenue. The

preplan has been approved by NCDOT. Alderman Reeves asked for Destination by Design to lead a guided walk through Town to indicate the proposed locations of each sign. Eric agreed to the walking tour at a later date.

Consideration New River Brewing Lease on Town Property – Mayor Baldwin stated that Dr. Hershner has requested to lease the portion of Town property directly in front of his new business on Third Ave. The addition of the space would allow the establishment to offer outdoor seating for diners. Dr Hershner confirmed that a barrier would be in place to signify the designated area in front of the building. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the lease agreement created by Town Attorney Jak Reeves for \$500 per year for the next 5 years. Alderman McMillan seconded with a vote of 4-1 in favor, with Alderman Green opposing.

Resolution to Issue USDA Bonds – Mayor Baldwin explained the USDA/ARC project to construct the new well, add a belt press to the wastewater plant, and extend water and sewer service to O'Reilly's/Wade Vannoy Drive is almost complete, and the revenue bonds need to be converted to a USDA loan, as the bonds are set to mature on July 17th. A resolution will need to be adopted for the July 17th closing. Alderman Reeves made the motion to approve the resolution as presented. Alderman McMillan seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Discussion of Downtown Parking – Danna Little, Owner of Cutter's Edge Salon, expressed to the Board her concerns for parking regulation and enforcement in Downtown. She suggested the business owners and their staff should not be permitted to park on the main streets but instead use the public parking lots. She gave examples of parking policies from other towns for the Board to review. The Aldermen thanked Danna for her thoughts.

Discussion of Sidewalk Bumpout at Ashe County Cheese – Mayor Baldwin informed the Board that the Town has budgeted to replace the sidewalks from Third Ave to Ashe County Cheese along Main Street. Norman Stuart provide a quote to add a bumpout to the area in front of Ashe County Cheese that would include a planting area with a paver area for the crosswalk. The addition of the project would be \$5,800. With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the construction of a bumpout. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0.

Discussion of Street Paving – Mayor Baldwin stated the Town has \$105,000 budgeted for paving projects. A list of quotes has been provided for various paving projects including Main Street from Badger Funeral Home to the Backstreet for \$75,248 leaving \$30,000 budgeted for additional projects. Alderman Green suggested an amendment to the budget to allow the paving of Library Drive and the end of North Church Avenue for \$39,608. Alderman Reeves agreed to the paving of Library Drive. Alderman Green made the motion to approve the paving projects for Main Street, Library Drive, and the end of North Church Avenue. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of TDA Appointment – Mayor Baldwin stated that Len Horton's term on the TDA expires in July but has agreed to serve another term if the Board agrees. Alderman Reeves made the motion to appoint Len Horton to another 2-year term. Alderman McMillan seconded with a unanimous vote of 5-0.

Consideration of Third Day Market Statue – Mayor Baldwin stated that Third Day Market has requested to install a bronze statue beside the bench outside their shop. Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the installation of the statue with an agreement to indemnify the Town from loss. Alderman Barr seconded the motion with a vote of 5-0.

Tax Releases – Mayor Baldwin stated three tax bills need to be corrected including a partial release for the wrong year model listed, and two that were billed to the incorrect person. With no discussion,

Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to release the taxes on the accounts listed. Alderman McMillan seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Police Report – Police Chief Bradley Jordan gave the Police report for the month of June. There was a total of 230 calls dispatched through the communications center including 10 auto collisions, 6 larcenies, 3 drug related cases, 1 DWIs, and 3 minor citations. The Board thanked the Chief for his report.

Water/Wastewater & Maintenance Report – WWTP Superintendent Brandon Patrick gave his report to the Board. There was a total of 15 inches of rain for the month of June bringing the total amount of rain for the year to 40 inches. A total of 54,000 gallons of sludge were hauled to the landfill. Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, Nick Walters now has his Land Application Certification. Lead and copper sampling were completed last month with all 10 samples showing no lead in the water. Both filters are running at about 60 gallons per minute, and the technician has rescheduled for next week. The Board thanked Brandon for his report.

Maintenance Report – absent

Town Managers Report – Brantley Price gave his report to the Board after welcoming newly appointed Alderman Barr to the Board. The report included an update on several ongoing projects including the USDA/ARC projects that are completed except for the belt press. Training for the new equipment will be on July 9-10, and a dump trailer has been purchased instead of a skid steer. The loan closing for the project is set for July 17, and the first payment will be due June 2020. The Library parking lot expansion project is complete. Jefferson Avenue is scheduled to be milled and paved before December. Taxes collected to date total 94.9% of levy. Brantley provided a breakdown of the Fire Department calls that totaled 29 calls for the month. The improvements to the Park are moving forward as the new playground equipment has been installed. The walking trail has been resurfaced and new lighting has been installed along the path. New picnic benches and trash cans have been delivered and will be installed in July. Ebenezer Children's Home will hold a roadblock on July 19. Brantley thanked the water treatment plant employees for working extra hours during the heavy rain. He then stated the ditch issue on Long Street has been corrected, and the new water line at People's Drug has been installed and will be paved next week. Brantley reminded the Board that Christmas in July was this weekend. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

Public Comment – At this time the Mayor open the meeting for public comment. Tom Hartman came before the Board to request the yellow line on Third Avenue be extended to create a visual barrier between the walkway and street. Nancy Preece expressed her concerns about parking saying she appreciated the business owners requesting their employees park off the main streets, but the side and backstreets need customer parking as well. She then asked the Board to consider a formal parking policy.

Alderman Comments – Alderman Shoemaker started by welcoming Alderman Barr to the Board. Alderman Reeves also welcomed Alderman Barr and then acknowledge the Town is growing and hopes the wayfinding project will help improve any parking issues. Alderman McMillan agreed that the new signage would be a step in the right direction. Alderman Green welcomed Alderman Barr as well. Alderman Green also thanked Town Manager Brantley Price for a job well done handling the day to day issues and addressing matters as they come.

Closed Session – The Mayor asked for a motion to enter closed session per G.S. 143.318.11(a)(3) to consult with the attorney over attorney-client matters and would return to open session before adjourning. Alderman Green made the motion to go into closed session. The time was 7:28pm.

Regular Session Continued – The Board returned from closed session at 8:30 pm.

Adjournment – With no further items to be discussed or voted on, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Alderman Reeves. A vote of 5-0 in favor.

Dale Baldwin, Mayor

Rebecca L. Eldreth, Town Clerk