

**Board of Aldermen
Regular Meeting
March 2, 2015
6:00 P.M.
Minutes**

Present: Mayor Dale Baldwin, Alderman Calvin Green, Alderman Tom Hartman, Alderman John Reeves, Alderman Stephen Shoemaker, Alderman Brett Summey, Town Manager Brantley Price, Town Clerk Wesley Barker, Finance Officer Heather Holdaway and Town Planner Matthew Levi were present. Several other Town employees, business owners and residents of the community also attended.

At 6:00 p.m. Mayor Baldwin called to order the meeting of the Board of Aldermen. Alderman Tom Hartman then said the invocation and those in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of March 2, 2015 Agenda- The Mayor stated he would like to add an item to the agenda which was approval of purchase of cemetery plots by Haskell McGuire. With no comment, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the agenda with the additional item. Alderman Hartman seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Approval of Minutes- February 2, 2015 Regular Meeting

With no discussion, Alderman Summey made the motion to approve the minutes as written. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

YMCA Update- Sam Franklin

Sam Franklin from the YMCA in Wilkesboro spoke to the board on the status of a YMCA coming to Jefferson Station. Sam stated the recently conducted feasibility study received positive feedback from the community for turning Jefferson Station into a YMCA. An architect has been hired to conduct drawings on the building at Jefferson Station. The approximate space being considered for this YMCA is between 12,000 and 20,000 square feet. A capital campaign would be conducted as well as open forums as plans come together. Further, Sam said the YMCA is working with the hospital for a potential partnership for use of the pool. The Board thanked Sam for his report.

Streetscape Design Update- Jefferson Ave. & Second St.

Brantley gave the Board an update on the streetscape project at Jefferson Avenue & Second Street. Brantley said Second Street would need to be resurfaced from Fifth Street up to Jefferson Avenue by grinding the asphalt down and repaving which included drainage solutions along Second Street. Further, Brantley said the cost estimate of this streetscape project would be \$275,000, which included \$25,000 engineering costs. This project would be federally funded and the only cost the Town would have to incur would be landscaping unless bids come in higher. Brantley said he felt the bids should be less than \$250,000 total. The bids for this project will go out in the next few weeks with construction to begin in May.

ABC Board Report- Haskell McGuire

Haskell gave a report on the ABC store. Haskell said for the 2nd Fiscal Quarter 2014-15 the total sales were \$450,620, a 6.3% increase over this quarter last year. A check for \$11,000 was delivered to the Town for the 2nd Quarter. Further, Haskell said the ABC store is saving approximately \$200 per month as a result of the new natural gas heating system. Also, the ABC store is expected to have an ABC Operations Review sometime this year. Haskell then spoke on the proposed House Bill 107/Senate Bill 24 which would allow NC distilleries to retail their own liquor other than through the NC ABC Commission. Haskell said the NC

ABC Commission and NC Association of ABC Boards oppose these bills as they feel it would bypass and undermine local opinion and the voters who can/cannot authorize ABC Boards to sell liquor in their municipality. The West Jefferson ABC Store currently sales NC made distillery products in their stores and helps advertise these. Haskell asked the Board to oppose this bill in support of the local ABC store. The Board thanked Haskell for his report.

Consideration of Purchase of Cemetery Plots

The Mayor said Haskell McGuire would like to purchase 2 cemetery plots and per the Town's cemetery policy, the Board must approve all cemetery plot sales. With no objection, Alderman Summey made the motion to approve the purchase of 2 cemetery plots by Haskell McGuire. Alderman Reeves seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of 2015 Farmers Market Lease Renewal

John Smyre, Farmers Market President, spoke to the Board thanking the Town for their continued support with the market. John said total visitors to the market during 2014 was an estimated 23,000. The market had an average of 34 vendors during the Saturday markets and an average of 8 vendors on the Wednesday markets. The Farmers Market offers the EBT program to its customers. The 25th year of the market would be celebrated this year. John asked the Board for their approval to renew the Farmers Market lease for another year at the cost of \$1. With no objection, Alderman Summey made the motion to renew the Farmers Market lease for another year, seconded by Alderman Shoemaker. The vote of 5-0 in favor. The Board thanked John for his report.

Consideration of Capital Budget Ordinance- Streetscape at Jefferson Ave. & Second St.

Brantley explained to the Board that this budget ordinance is required for the streetscape project due to it extending into another fiscal year. The total estimated project cost is \$275,000. With no comments, Alderman Hartman made the motion to approve the capital budget ordinance, seconded by Alderman Reeves. The vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration of Revised Town Cemetery Policy

The Mayor stated the Town's cemetery policy has been revised as previously discussed by the Board to include the sale of plots to "citizens *and* former citizens of the municipality." Also, the policy has been updated to include "location of all monuments must be approved in advance by the Town and foot stones must be a minimum of eight feet from head stone and their location must be approved in advance by the Town." Further, Alderman Reeves feels the price of the cemetery plots should be increased, as it has not been increased in a very long time, in order to remain competitive. Alderman Hartman agreed and feels the price per plot should be increased from \$250 to \$500 per plot. After some discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the cemetery policy revision as presented and to increase the price of the cemetery plots from \$250 to \$500 per plot effective immediately. Alderman Green seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Consideration to Apply for Grant with Governor's Crime Commission

The Police Department has applied for funding through the NC Department of Public Safety Governor's Crime Commission for body cameras for each officer. The grant is for \$5,600 and there is no match required. Brantley said the Town would need to purchase these cameras and then get reimbursed. The Police Department would wear these cameras when doing any enforcement acts or when out of the car dealing with the public. The Police Department would create a policy for use of these cameras. Discussion of the reliability of these cameras and malfunctioning took place. Brantley said the Board could approve to move forward with the grant and give him permission to sign appropriate paperwork. Alderman Hartman made the motion to approve this grant application and give the Town Manger authority to sign

paperwork. Alderman Reeves seconded. The vote of 5-0 in favor. Alderman Green suggested to make sure the Town wouldn't be liable for equipment if malfunctioned.

Consideration of Order to Advertise Tax Liens

Brantley explained 2014 property taxes are now past due and the first reminder letter has been mailed. The next step is to advertise 2014 past due taxes in the paper this month with the Board's approval. With no discussion, Alderman Shoemaker made the motion to approve the order to advertise delinquent taxes in the paper. Alderman Hartman seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Discussion of FY 2015-16 Town Budget Workshop Dates

After some discussion, the budget workshop date was set for Monday, March 23rd at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

Police Report

Chief Rose gave a report on the Police Department. Chief said during the month of February, 169 calls were dispatched through the communications center, 13 auto collisions were investigated, 7 people were arrested including charges of DWI, larceny, assault and drug related crimes. Further, the Chief said 4 persons were arrested for drug violations. The Board thanked the Chief for his report.

Water/Wastewater Report

Charles said the oxidation ditch was being replaced. Also, the annual required reports were being published in the paper. Overall, Charles said things were running well. The Board thanked Charles for his report.

Maintenance Report

Eric said during the month of February, 41 one calls had been reported. There had been 27 calls on frozen/busted water lines from the cold weather over the last month. 1 sewer line issue had been found and repaired. 40 tons of salt was delivered to the building. The department had been pushing snow, salting and picking up brush. Further, new signage would be installed for street sweeping and snow removal. Repair on 2 Town trucks was being done. The Board thanked Eric for his report.

Town Manager's Report

Brantley said the Town is still moving forward on the new well and sludge press projects with the USDA and ARC grant applications the Town would submit. Taxes collected to date is 94.5% of the levy. The Virginia Tech design team working on a design for the Backstreet and Main Street streetscape project would soon be presented to the WJ Community Partnership. The Town is working with Attorney Jak reeves on collecting past due taxes. Brantley said the Ebenezer's Children's Home would like to come downtown in May and collect money as they did last year if the Board had no objections. There were no objections. Brantley said the Town of West Jefferson has been named a Great Main Street by the NC Chapter of the American Planning Association for the streetscape efforts. The Board thanked Brantley for his report.

Public Comment

The Mayor opened public comment at 7:30 p.m. Wesley Dennis spoke to the Board with interest in providing train service to Downtown West Jefferson. He asked if this was something the Town was interested in bringing back. Wesley stated he would have a crew to survey, take measurements and see if land owners would be willing to donate land for this effort. The Board expressed concern on land acquisition from land owners. With no other public comment, the Mayor closed Public Comment at 7:35 p.m.

Aldermen Comment

Alderman Reeves thanked everyone who attended the Centennial birthday party. Alderman Green thanked the maintenance department for their work on snow removal. Alderman Hartman thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

With no further items to be discussed, Alderman Reeves made the motion to adjourn the Board of Aldermen meeting. Alderman Shoemaker seconded with a vote of 5-0 in favor. The time was 7:37 p.m.

Dale Baldwin, Mayor

Wesley M. Barker, Town Clerk