Town of Fletcher
Town Council Regular Meeting
Minutes
September 14, 2026

Call the meeting to order at: 6:00 PM

Those who were in attendance are as follows:

Mayor Preston Blakely
Mayor Pro-Tem Trevor Lance
Councilmember Keith Reed
Councilmember Amber McKinney
Councilmember Jim Player
Assistant Town Manager Heather Taylor

Town Manager Mark Biberdorf did not attend this meeting.

Moment of Silence:

Mayor Blakely led the group in a moment of silence.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Mayor Blakely led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

Public Comments:

Amber Fawson of 31 Briar Lane, Fletcher, spoke on requesting two crosswalks with flashing beacons. She is requesting one on Fanning Bridge Road at Red Spruce Way and one on Rutledge Road at Tulip Tree Court. (map attached to final minutes) These two locations are where my daughter and her friends cross to see each other. She feels that this would be a safer option for everyone and better to connect these neighborhoods together.

Claire Fawson of 31 Briar Lane, Fletcher, also spoke about wanting crosswalks so that she could meet up with her friends and they could spend time together. She also said that she had been taught to cross Fanning Bridge Road with her friends and to wait for when there are no cars, but she said it would be much easier and safer if they could use crosswalks.

Councilmember Jim Player commented that he is on the French Broad River MPO and I encourage everyone that is here now to contact the MPO either by email or to come to a meeting and comment as well. DOT is working on a modernization project for Fanning Bridge Road that is on the radar for Fletcher. It is, of course, a money issue, especially after Helene, as a lot of money that was set for other projects was diverted to projects to make repairs to roads and pathways after the storm.

Rachel Stay of 12 Cranberry Bog Court, Fletcher also commented on wanting crosswalks in the area as well. She stated that her daughter is friends with Claire, and she would love to be

able to walk safely across the road to visit her friends.

Robin Broberg of 66 Whispering Oak Court, Fletcher, also spoke on the support for crosswalks in the area. She stated that her kids are homeschooled and also have jobs, and it would be much easier if they had crosswalks to use instead of going through the woods. We also like the downtown area and would like to see Fanning Bridge Road become a funnel to the downtown area.

Oliver Broberg of 66 Whispering Oak Court, Fletcher said that he walks from his house to downtown Fletcher and that he has to climb through a thorn-infested creek as well as narrow logs and poison ivy-infested areas. He said that the roads should be equally suited for cars and pedestrians.

Hazel Broberg of 66 Whispering Oak Court Fletcher said that she is friends with Lydia and Clarie and that she likes to go places with them and that crosswalks and sidewalks would make it a lot safer for them to do this.

Presentation of Proclamation in honor of Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month.

Mayor Blakely presented a proclamation to Ms. Debbie Robbins in honor of Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month.

Ms Robbins gave a brief speech on Ovarian Cancer and her story as a survivor of this disease.

Approval of minutes - corrections, additions or deletions

Agenda Review Meeting August 3, 2026

Regular Meeting August 10, 2026

Mayor Blakely asked for any corrections, additions or deletions of the minutes presented and if not is there a motion to approve the minutes as presented?

Councilmember Keith Reed motioned to approve the minutes and it was seconded by Councilmember Amber McKinney.

Motion all in favor.

Council Updates

Mayor Blakely commented that he did provide a letter that was addressed to DOT and Bob Moore about hopefully figuring out a cost-sharing arrangement for putting up a new net because there is obviously a need there. (Broadmoor and Hwy 280 golf balls)

Consent Agenda

Tax refunds/releases

Recommendation of a grant award in the amount of $8,376.75 for the Stormwater Off-Right-Of-Way Assistance Program.

Approval of Proclamation P-26-03 for Fall Litter Sweep.

Mayor Blakely asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Mayor Pro-Tem Trevor Lance motioned to approve the consent agenda, and it was seconded by Councilmember Jim Player.

Motion all in favor.

Discussion Items

Selection of an individual to fill a vacancy on the ABC Board.

Mayor Blakely stated that now on to the selection of an individual to serve on the ABC Board. He also asked council about appointing one of the existing ABC Board members to serve as the Chairman.

Council does agree to appoint one of the existing Board Members as Chairman.

Mayor Pro-Tem Trevor Lance made a motion to appoint Rachel Nard as Chairman of the ABC Board, and it was seconded by Councilmember Amber McKinney.

Motion All in favor.

Mayor Blakely then stated that we have 3 potential candidates that are more than qualified for the seat on the board. Does council have a preferred candidate?

Councilmember Keith Reed motioned to approve Mr. Scoggin, and it was seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Trevor Lance.

Motion all in favor.

Annual Market visit update with Retail Strategies — Joshua Davis.

Joshua Davis from Retail Strategies gave a PowerPoint presentation on what they have been working on for the last three years.

Discussion Followed:

Town Manager Report

Assistant Town Manager Heather Taylor stated that there has been only one change since last

week and that Mark wanted you to know that DOT has started the express review of HWY 25 now instead of waiting until January. I think this also includes Fanning Bridge Road as well as HWY 25.

Department Reports

August Reports

Adjourn

Mayor Blakely asked for a motion to adjourn.

Councilmember Keith Reed motioned to adjourn and it was seconded by Councilmember Jim Player.

Motion all in favor.

Adjourned at: 06:54 pm

Upcoming Events

Fletcher Family Festival September 19, 2026, from 2:00 to 8:00 pm
Agenda Review Meeting October 5, 2026, at 6:00 pm
Regular Meeting October 12, 2026, at 6:00 pm
Voting in the council room starts October 15, 2026
Halloween Carnival in the Park October 24, 2026
Fall Food Pantry October 26 through November 14.
Agenda Review Meeting November 2, 2026, at 6:00 pm
Regular Meeting November 9, 2026, at 6:00 pm
Veteran Salute Breakfast November 7, 2026
Christmas in the Park December 5, 2026

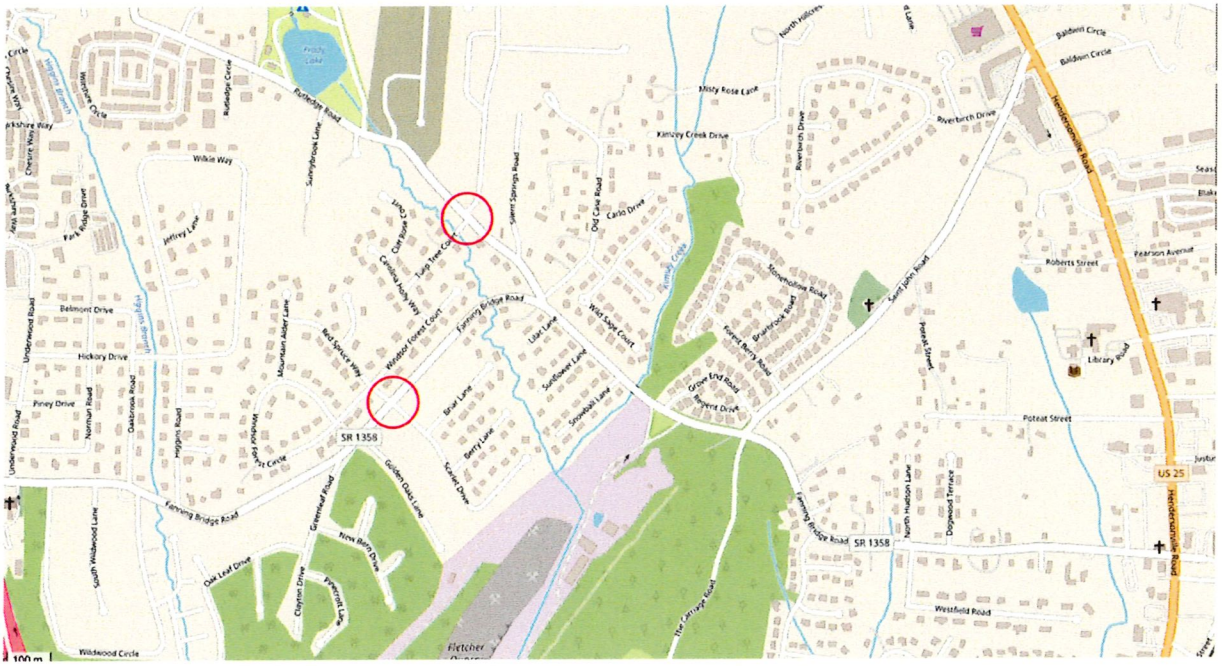
Approved.

10-12-26
Date

Preston Blakely
Signed

September 14, 2026

Requesting two crosswalks with flashing beacons: One on Fanning Bridge Road at Red Spruce Way, and one on Rutledge Road at Tulip Tree Court, as marked on the map below.



Research suggests "that **a primary cause of the rise in mental disorders is a decline** over decades in opportunities for children and teens **to play, roam**, and engage in other activities **independent of direct oversight and control by adults**."

"A study conducted in Zurich, Switzerland...compared **5-year-olds** living in neighborhoods where children of that age were **still allowed to play unsupervised outdoors** to **5-year-olds** living in economically similar neighborhoods where, **because of traffic, such freedom was denied**. Parents in the latter group were much more likely than those in the former to take their children to parks, where they could play under parental surpervision. The main findings were that **those who could play freely in neighborhoods** spent, on average**, twice as much time outdoors,** were much more active while outdoors, **had more than twice as many friends,** and had better motor and social skills than those deprived of such play. The researcher concluded further that trips to the park with parents failed to compensate for lost neighborhood freedom..."

"All in all, the evidence convinces us that the **decline in children's independent activity** and, hence, in mental well-being **is a national and international health crisis** and should be treated as such." [1]

Research has also shown that a **street designed for fast vehicle traffic instead of for pedestrians destroys the social life** of a residential street.[2]

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[1] Gray, Peter, et al. "Decline in Independent Activity as a Cause of Decline in Children's Mental Well-being: Summary of the Evidence." *The Journal of Pediatrics*, vol. 260, Sept. 2023, article 113352. *ScienceDirect*, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpeds.2023.02.004.

[2] Appleyard, Donald. "Livable Streets: Protected Neighborhoods?" *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 451, no. 1, 1980, pp. 106–17. *SAGE Journals*, https://doi.org/10.1177/000271628045100111; Hart, Joshua, and Graham Parkhurst. "Driven to Excess: Impacts of Motor Vehicles on the Quality of Life of Residents of Three Streets in Bristol UK." *World Transport Policy & Practice*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2011, pp. 12–30. *UWE Bristol Research Repository*, https://uwe-repository.worktribe.com/output/968892.