Town Council Regular Meeting - Minutes

Monday, March 24, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Town Council Chambers, Town Hall, 30 S. Main St. Weaverville, N.C.

The Town Council held a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, March 24, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers at Town Hall, 30 S. Main Street, Weaverville, N.C.

1. Call To Order

Mayor Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Councilmembers present: Mayor Patrick Fitzsimmons and Vice Mayor John Chase, Councilmembers Doug Jackson, Catherine Cordell, Michele Wood, Peter McGuire, and Dee Lawrence.

Staff members present: Town Attorney Michael Frue, Interim Town Manager Scottie Harris, Planning Director James Eller, Public Works Director Dale Pennell, Water Plant Superintendent Randall Wilson, Finance Director Tonya Dozier, Town Clerk Tamara Mercer, Planner Graham Crawford, Community Center Director Mike DeSerio, and A/V Coordinator Lauren Ward.

2. Public Hearing

Mayor Fitzsimmons opened the public hearing for proposed amendments to Town Code Chapter 20 concerning multifamily residential regulations.

No one in attendance offered any comment on the matter and no online submissions were made.

Mayor Fitzsimmons declared the public hearing closed without objection.

3. Appointment of Town Manager

Mayor Fitzsimmons stated that Town Council conducted a months-long nationwide search for a town manager facilitated by Developmental Associates, Inc., and was pleased to announce David Scottie Harris has been selected.

Motion to appoint and hire David Scott Harris as the Town Manager for the Town of Weaverville.

Moved by: Patrick Fitzsimmons

Aye	Peter McGuire, Doug Jackson, Dee Lawrence, Patrick Fitzsimmons, Catherine Cordell, John Chase, and Michele Wood

Carried unanimously. 7-0

Mayor Fitzsimmons requested a motion to approve the Employment Agreement for the Town Manager.

Motion to approve the Employment Agreement for the Town Manager.

Moved by: John Chase

Aye Peter McGuire, Doug Jackson, Dee Lawrence, Patrick Fitzsimmons, Catherine Cordell, John Chase, and Michele Wood

Carried unanimously. 7-0

4. Approval/Adjustments to the Agenda

Mayor Fitzsimmons asked if anyone had any adjustments to the agenda. There being none the Mayor called for action to approve the agenda.

Motion to approve the agenda as presented

Moved by: Doug Jackson

Aye Peter McGuire, Doug Jackson, Dee Lawrence, Patrick Fitzsimmons, Catherine Cordell, John Chase, and Michele Wood

Carried unanimously. 7-0

5. Conflict of Interests Statement

Mayor Fitzsimmons stated that it is the duty of the Mayor and every Town Councilmember to avoid both conflicts of interest and appearances of conflicts. No member had any known conflict of interest or appearance of conflict with respect to any matters on the agenda.

6. Consent Agenda

Town Manager Scottie Harris reviewed the consent agenda.

Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Moved by: Catherine Cordell

Aye Peter McGuire, Doug Jackson, Dee Lawrence, Patrick Fitzsimmons, Catherine Cordell, John Chase, and Michele Wood

Carried unanimously. 7-0

A. Minutes of Town Council Regular Meeting February 24, 2025 – *approved as presented*

B. Minutes of Town Council Regular Workshop Meeting March 18, 2025 - *approved as presented*

C. Monthly Tax Report, Refunds/Releases - *approved as presented*

D. Budget Amendment - Miscellaneous - *approved as presented*

E. Appointment of ADA Coordinator – *appointed as requested*

F. Interlocal Agreement with Buncombe County on Hazard Mitigation Grant Program - *approved as presented*

G. French Broad River MPO Memorandum of Understanding – *approved as presented*

H. Road Closure Ordinances for Music on Main and Fourth of July Celebrations– *approved and adopted as presented*

I. Proclamations for Arbor Day and Earth Day - *approved as presented*

7. Town Manager's Report

Interim Town Manager Harris provided his report which included updates or information on the following:

- US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) $4 million grant for waterline replacement/extensions
- Pickleball seasonal hours
- Fourth of July Celebration
- New Positions filled
- LDG Meribel Affordable Housing Project under construction
- Arbor Day Celebration program April 10th
- FEMA Disaster Recovery Center and Private Property Debris Removal Intake

8. Public Comment

Mary Hilton, a Town resident, said she also attended an ad hoc Community Center Committee. Ms. Hilton suggested that the Town of Weaverville should provide a 'visitors center' downtown.

Michele Rippon, a non-resident, spoke in support of a non-discrimination ordinance. Ms. Rippon addressed anti-discrimination state laws which protect employees.

Marcy Bergman, a Town resident, said she had concerns regarding the outdoor recreation center. Ms. Bergman commented on the operational hours, procedures and groups and player conflicts, daylight- and daylight-savings time, and other neighborhood issues.

Comments received on-line:

Janie Neely stated she was in favor of bi-weekly recycling. Mari Fox cited the Code of Ordinances noise ordinance, zoning ordinance, and was opposed to the noise at the outdoor recreation complex.

9. Discussion & Action Items

A. **Code Amendments- Ch. 20- Parking, Tree Conservation, Setbacks, and Multifamily Residential Regulations**

Planning Director Eller reviewed the proposed text amendments for parking regulations, tree preservation, setback requirements for certain lots, and multifamily residential development.

Public hearings have been held on these proposed Code amendments and staff recommended approval.

Motion to approve and adopt the ordinance amending the Weaverville Town Code Chapter 20 concerning Parking Requirements, Conservation Subdivisions, Measurement of Setbacks for certain lots, and Multifamily Residential as presented.

Moved by: Peter McGuire

Aye Peter McGuire, Doug Jackson, Dee Lawrence, Patrick Fitzsimmons, John Chase, Catherine Cordell, and Michele Wood

Carried unanimously. 7-0

B. **FY2026 Preliminary Budget Conversations/Input (continued from 3/18/25)**

Mayor Fitzsimmons reviewed the previous Town Council goals and budget conversation and noted Staff has requested Council members' direction and upcoming priorities.

Town Manager Harris stated we reached out to Buncombe County Board of Elections and the cost to hold the local elections on the odd year is approximately $44,500. *There was consensus to consider changes in municipal elections after the election this year and to have one day of early voting.*

Concerning the Curbie recycling services, additional information was shared with Council concerning the financial costs for recycle collections which are estimated to double if weekly collection is continued. *There was consensus to change to a bi-weekly collection of recyclables so that the customer cost is kept low and to align with other jurisdictions.*

Council member Jackson discussed remaining fiscally conservative which might mean a small tax increase to maintain the fund balance. He noted that he is against using the fund balance.

The cost of the fireworks and the Fourth of July Celebration was discussed.

Further discussion included growth and additional home building and housing inventory, State money and reimbursements, Federal funding and reimbursements, water plant costs, infrastructure and the water resiliency project.

Council member Wood addressed personnel and said she was in favor of an increased COLA and merit pay. Additional information will be shared on this topic.

Mayor Fitzsimmons summarized that with an uncertain economic year and or economic recession, it would be wise to remain fiscally conservative with the Town's savings. It may be appropriate to have a minor tax increase this year, although he noted the County may also have a tax increase.

C. **Quarterly Report – Public Works and Water**

Public Works Director Pennell provided a quarterly report on the operations of all of divisions of the Public Works Department. The report highlighted the activity, and service calls in water maintenance division. Water production included major leaks in December which affected usage, averages and available capacity, which include the future commitments, meter replacement, grounds maintenance, stormwater management, sanitation lowest tonnage and tipping fees, debris collections, and roadway improvements to Lake Louise Park, to the Public Works parking lot, and Town Hall parking lot, Nature Park and Town Hall water fountain repairs are completed.

Director Pennell answered question regarding the Federal grant for the water line replacements, Army Corp. of Engineer funding, applying funds to the waterline projects, Reems Creek connectors, and timeframes, and replacing the 4" water lines to 6" lines along Main Street, etc.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business and without objection, Mayor Fitzsimmons adjourned the regular meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Tamara Mercer, Town Clerk

Patrick Fitzsimmons, Mayor