Town Council Workshop - Minutes

The Town Council regularly scheduled workshop on Tuesday, June 17, 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

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

Absent: Mayor Patrick Fitzsimmons

Staff members present: Town Manager Scottie Harris, Assistant Town Manager Jennifer Jackson, Finance Director Tonya Dozier, Planning Director James Eller, Town Clerk Tamara Mercer, Police Chief Somer Oberlin, Fire Chief Michael Hunter, Public Works Director Dale Pennell, Water Plant Supervisor Randall Wilson, and Zoom Room Coordinator Lauren Ward.

2. Adjustment to the Agenda

In response to Town Manager Harris' question regarding how Town Council would like to go through the agenda, Vice Mayor Chase asked Staff to present the Fee Schedules, Position Classification and Pay Plan, and Personnel Policy amendments first, and then come back to the Annual Budget. Without objection this adjustment to the agenda was made.

3. Fee Schedule for FY2025-2026

Assistant Manager Jackson presented the fee schedules for the General Fund, Special Revenue Fire Fund, and the Water Enterprise Fund.

Councilmember Jackson requested an increase in the parking penalty for blocking a driveway. The current fee is $50 and there was a general consensus from the Town Council to increase the fine at $100.

Motion to adopt the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Fee Schedule Ordinance for the General Fund and the Fire Fund with an amendment to increase the parking fine for blocking a private driveway to $100.

Moved by: Dee Lawrence

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

Carried unanimously. 6-0

Motion to approve fiscal year 2025-2026 Fee Schedule for Water Enterprise Fund as presented.

Moved by: Catherine Cordell

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

Carried unanimously. 6-0

4. Position Classification/Pay Plan for FY2025-2026

Finance Director Dozier reviewed the Position Classification and Pay Plan. The plan includes a 3% cost of living adjustment. Manager Harris explained that the cost-of-living adjustment will be implemented equally for current employees with the same adjustment made for each employee. Merit increases for employees will be up to 2% and based on performance evaluations.

Motion to approve the fiscal year 2025-2026 Position Classification and Pay Plan as presented.

Moved by: Dee Lawrence

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

Carried unanimously. 6-0

5. Personnel Policy – Recommended Amendments

Manager Harris reviewed his recommended amendments to the Personnel Policy regarding the timing of transferring sick leave from another jurisdiction and adding paid maternity and paternity leave. Town Council discussed whether two weeks of paid maternity/paternity leave was enough and agreed to implement as written but reconsider the issue in the future.

Motion to adopt the Resolution amending the Town's Personnel Policy as presented.

Moved by: Catherine Cordell

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

Carried unanimously. 6-0

6. Budgets for FY2025-2026

Manager Harris reviewed the proposed fiscal year budget for the General Fund that included a 3-cent increase as directed by Council. He also noted that he was aware of further discussion by Council regarding a possible 4-cent tax increase.

Town Clerk Mercer noted that she had supplied the Town Council members with hard copies of on-line citizens' submissions received after the last Town Council meeting as follows: (1) Laura Lever in favor of a 4-cent property tax increase to support services; (2) Naomi King in favor of a 4-cent property tax increase to support services; and (3) Tom Slovenkay in favor of a 4-cent property tax increase to support infrastructure.

Council members further discussed the fund balance, a Weaverville tax increase versus the County's 3.2% tax increase, market factors such as tariffs and property revaluation, capital projects and capital improvements, economic external burdens on citizens, and population growth and housing stock. Councilmembers Jackson, McGuire, and Wood were in favor of the moderate 3-cent tax rate increase, while Vice Mayor Chase and Councilmembers Cordell and Lawrence were in favor of a 4-cent tax rate increase.

Without objection the vote on the General Fund and Special Fire Fund budget ordinance was pushed to the June 23 meeting so that the Mayor could break the tie.

Assistant Manager Jackson inquired about any questions or amendments to the proposed budget for the Water Enterprise Fund. There being none, Vice Mayor Chase entertained a motion.

Motion to adopt the Fiscal Year 2025-2025 Budget Ordinance for the Water Public Enterprise Fund.

Moved by: Peter McGuire

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

Carried unanimously. 6-0

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, and without objection, Vice Mayor Chase adjourned the meeting at 6:47 p.m.

P Fitzsimmons

Patrick Fitzsimmons, Mayor

Tamara Mercer

Tamara Mercer, Town Clerk