

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
Regular Meeting
October 28, 2025

THE WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL held a regular meeting on Tuesday, October 28, 2025, at 6:00pm in the Town Hall Board Room located at 9 South Main Street Waynesville, NC.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Gary Caldwell called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm with the following members present:

Mayor Gary Caldwell
Mayor Pro Tempore Chuck Dickson
Councilmember Jon Feichter
Councilmember Anthony Sutton
Councilmember Julia Freeman

The following staff members were present:

Rob Hites, Town Manager
Jesse Fowler, Deputy Manager
Candace Poolton, Town Clerk/Assistant to the Manager
Martha Bradley, Town Attorney
Luke Kinsland, Recreation Director
Beth Gilmore, DWC Director
Elizabeth Teague, Development Services Director
Alex Mumby, Land Use Administrator
Ricky Bourne, Public Services Director
Hutch Reese, Deputy Director of Operations
Fire Chief Chris Mehaffey
Police Chief David Adams
Page McCurry, Human Resources Director

The following members of the media were present:

Paul Nielsen, The Mountaineer

1. Welcome/Calendar/Announcements

Mayor Gary Caldwell welcomed everyone and announced that the next Special Called Council meeting is November 18th and Treats On the Streets is this Friday, and Hazelween is Saturday.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jane Stamey- Ms. Stamey thanked Council for the donation to Little League and Dutch Fisher field.

Kae Livsey- Ms. Livsey said that her trash is inconsistently picked up. She said she met with staff and it still has not been resolved.

C. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Freeman, to add to the agenda, "Agreement to Renovate Dutch Fisher Athletic Field", "Resolution Authorizing the Submission of a SRF Loan/Grant for the Browning Branch Pump Station and Canton/Clyde/Waynesville Water Interconnect", "Budget Amendment to purchase two HVAC units for Town Hall", and "Adoption of revised rules for the Waynesville Recreation Center" and approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

D. CONSENT AGENDA

All items below are routine by the Town Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless a Councilmember so requests. In which event, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered with other items listed in the Regular Agenda.

2.
 - a. Motion to approve the October 14, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes
 - b. Motion to approve the Budget Amendment for the Fire Department
 - c. Motion to approve the Budget Amendment for the Waynesville Public Arts Commission-DWC
 - d. Motion to approve the Budget Amendment for the Waynesville Public Arts Commission-HCAC
 - e. Motion to approve the Budget Amendment for the Fire Department
 - f. Motion to recommend to Haywood County Commissioners to appoint Noah Ball to the Waynesville Planning Board ETJ seat.
 - g. Motion to adopt the proposed revisions to the *Town of Waynesville Boards and Commissions Manual* as presented.
 - h. Motion to approve the Budget Amendment for Police Department
 - i. Motion to approve the grant contract with the State Historic Preservation Office

Fire Chief Chris Mehaffey reported that the Fire Department received a grant from FEMA to purchase 29 radios that are waterproof and allow first responders to speak across every frequency.

A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Agreement to Renovate Dutch Fisher Athletic Field
 - Town Attorney Martha Bradley

Town Attorney Martha Bradley presented a draft agreement between the Town and Mountain Little League to renovate Dutch Fisher girls' softball field which was destroyed by Helene. Ms. Bradley explained that, following NCGS, Mountain Little League will be required to disclose their financial records to the town. She said the Little League plans to start the project immediately after execution of the agreement and that the

Little League’s goal to complete the project within this fiscal year. She added that the Town will be responsible for post-construction maintenance, just as it was before the flood.

Councilmember Feichter said they approved the \$50,000 for the project, as well as using the \$50,000 grant from Dick’s Sporting Goods, but the budget is showing a budget of \$110,000 total. Ms. Bradley clarified that the Mountain Little League has donations lined up, which would account for the additional money.

Council thanked everyone involved, including the Mountaineer Little League and Ashely and Richie for being excellent role models.

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Freeman, to approve the agreement with the Mountaineer Little League to renovate Dutch Fisher Field. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilmember Dickson asked what will be done with the Vance Park Field. Mr. Kinsland said FEMA is barely reimbursing the design fees, so they plan on revisiting and bidding it out in house and separating the project out per contractor specialty.

E. PROCLAMATION

4. National First Responders Day Proclamation

- Mayor Gary Caldwell

Mayor Caldwell read the Proclamation, proclaiming October 28th as National First Responders Day.

F. PRESENTATIONS

5. Adoption of Amendments to Tree Ordinance

- Kay Kirkman, Environmental Sustainability Board

Kay Kirkman, on behalf of the Environmental Sustainability Board, presented a proposed update to the Town’s Tree Ordinance. The proposed amendments were to increase protection of the existing tree canopy, establish a long-term plan to encourage the planting of trees within the Town, establish a “Tree Board” to provide policy guidance to the Council, and establish an action plan to raise public awareness of the importance of a vibrant tree canopy within the Town. She said the Tree Board would be comprised of up to seven citizens and one member of ESB and Public Works director. She explained the economic and environmental benefits to enacting the local tree ordinance.

Councilmember Sutton emphasized that this tree ordinance would apply to public property, not private property. Councilmember Freeman asked if the staff member who would be in charge of enforcing this ordinance has agreed to do so. Mr. Hites said that the town’s horticulturalist, Bill Skelton, is training to become a certified arborist and Thomas Woltz has offered to consult with the ESB. Councilmember Dickson said they also received guidance from the Deputy Director of Sustainability.

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to approve the new tree ordinance. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Waynesville Public Art Commission Presentation

- Candace Poolton, Town Clerk and George Kenney, WPAC Chairman

Town Clerk Candace Poolton presented an update on the Waynesville Public Art Commission and their upcoming mural. She explained that the mural was funded through fundraising, private donations, and grants, and will portray 1930s Main Street with the original arch. She said the mural should be completed by mid-April of 2026 and will be painted on the side of High Country Style on Main Street.

G. NEW BUSINESS

7. Approval of Proposal for HR Consulting Services with Lisa DeLane Huneycutt for a Compensation Study focused on Public Works Positions within the Water Treatment, Sewer Treatment, and Electric Divisions.

- Page McCurry, Human Resources Director

Human Resources Director Page McCurry presented a proposed consulting engagement with Lisa DeLane Huneycutt, HR Consultant, to conduct a targeted Compensation Study for key positions within the Public Works Department. She said the purpose of the study is to ensure that salaries and pay ranges for these positions are competitive with the external labor market to meet the Town's current and future business needs for attracting and retaining top quality employees, including positions like Senior Treatment Plant Operator, Chief Treatment Plant Operator (Sewer Treatment), Utility Maintenance Worker, Equipment Operator, and Electric Groundsman. She explained that this study is a critical need, as the Public Works Department has experienced a turnover rate of 39.76% in the current calendar year as of October 17, 2025. Several employees have cited "More Money" as their reason for leaving, She outlined the consulting proposal as follows:

- Total Hours: 80 hours
- Duration: 11 weeks (October 15, 2025 – December 31, 2025)
- Rate: \$125 per hour plus minimal expenses.
- Expenses shared among the Water Fund, Sewer Fund, and Electric Fund, since those are the departments that the study would be focused on.

Councilmember Feichter said it's frustrating to lose so many employees and agreed that if this is what the Town needs to do, then do it, because public works is vital to operations. He asked if they should do a full study to include all of the staff. Ms. McCurry said she and Mr. Hites met with the "Maps" group to discuss doing an organization wide pay study in the future. Councilmember Dickson asked how many vacancies Public Works currently has and Ms. McCurry stated nine. He thanked staff for the positive organizational changes.

A motion was made by Councilmember Feichter, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to approve the proposal for HR Consulting Services with Lisa DeLane Huneycutt for a Public Works Compensation Study, as attached, for a total estimated cost of \$10,000 plus minimal expenses to be divided equally among the Water Fund, Sewer Fund, and Electric Fund. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Formation of a 501(c)3 nonprofit as an extension of the Downtown Waynesville Commission
- Beth Gilmore, Downtown Waynesville Commission Executive Director

DWC Director Beth Gilmore presented the Articles of Incorporation for the formation of a 501(c)3 nonprofit, "Friends of Downtown Waynesville," as an extension of the Downtown Waynesville Commission.

A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to approve Articles of Incorporation prepared by Town Attorney Bradley for the formation of a 501(c)3 nonprofit, "Friends of Downtown Waynesville," as an extension of the Downtown Waynesville Commission. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Resolution Authorizing the Submission of a SRF Loan/Grant for the Browning Branch Pump Station and Canton/Clyde/Waynesville Water Interconnect.
- Town Manager Rob Hites

Town Manager Rob Hites reminded Council that they applied for a State Revolving Loan with 100% Loan Forgiveness for a water interconnect that links Towns of Canton/Clyde and Waynesville with an emergency water interconnect. He said that Canton and Clyde do not have the assets to apply, so Waynesville has been asked to sponsor the grant/loan due to its ability to have it approved by the Local Government Commission. He added that if the Town does not receive principal forgiveness for the loan, it may reject the offer.

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Freeman, to approve the resolution permitting the SRF application to be filed. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Budget Amendment for purchase of two HVAC units (Town Hall)
- Hutch Reece, Deputy Director of Operations

Deputy Director of Operations Hutch Reece reported that two HVAC units have failed in the Town Hall. He said the units service the Police Department and the second floor including the Council Chamber. Mr. Reece said the unit was installed in 2008 and has lost its ability to hold refrigerant. He said they looked into more efficient units, but he is awaiting more quotes. He added that it appears it will be roughly \$10,000 more for high efficiency units.

A motion was made by Councilmember Feichter, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to approve the budget amendment as amended to reflect the \$52,000 for the efficient units. The motion passed unanimously.

H. COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF

11. Manager's Report
- Town Manager, Rob Hites

There was nothing to report.

12. Town Attorney's Report

- Town Attorney, Martha Bradley

Town Attorney Martha Bradley proposed an update to the Rec Center's General Rules that allows a ban of a rec center attendee for any legal reason, at the Director's discretion.

A motion was made by Councilmember Feichter, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to approve the revised general rules as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

I. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Councilmember Dickson said that NC is suspending SNAP benefits and it would affect 10-15 Town employees. He suggested having some sort of a food pantry for employees.

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, that in the event that SNAP benefits are not paid for the month of November, that the HR Director and the Town Manager present a plan at the next meeting to establish and fund a food pantry for Town employees. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilmember Sutton reminded everyone that 74 will be closed near exit 27 November 2nd-6th. He explained that the rumors of a toll road between Waynesville and Asheville are untrue, and they are working on adding a HOV lane and a "freight vehicle" lane, for a total of six to seven lanes on I-40.

J. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Feichter, to adjourn at 7:30pm. The motion passed unanimously.

ATTEST:

Gary Caldwell, Mayor

Robert W. Hites, Jr. Town Manager

Candace Poolton, Town Clerk