

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Special Called Meeting**  
**March 4, 2026**

**THE WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL** held a special meeting on Wednesday, March 4, 2026, at 6:00pm in the Municipal Conference Room located at 16 S. Main Street Waynesville, NC.

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Gary Caldwell called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm with the following members present:

Mayor Gary Caldwell  
Mayor Pro Tempore Chuck Dickson  
Councilmember Jon Feichter (via Zoom, non-voting)  
Councilmember Anthony Sutton  
Councilmember Julia Freeman

The following staff members were present:

Rob Hites, Town Rob Hites, Town Manager  
Jesse Fowler, Deputy Manager  
Page McCurry, Human Resources Director  
Ian Barrett, Finance Director

1. Call to Order

Mayor Gary Caldwell Called the meeting to order.

2. Proposal to recruit and conduct an assessment center to recommend finalists for Waynesville's Town Manager

- Steve Straus, Developmental Associates

Mayor Caldwell called the Special Meeting to order. He introduced Dr. Steve Straus of "Developmental Associates" to discuss his proposal to recruit and conduct an assessment center to recommend finalists for Waynesville's Town Manager. Dr. Straus presented the firm's approach to recruiting municipal managers. They include interviewing individual Council Members, and Department Heads, to develop a profile of the position, develop a brochure and conducting a combination of direct mail and advertisement in trade associations. Development Associates will pre-screen the candidates and provide the Council with the candidates. The Council will choose fifteen semi-finalists. The firm will conduct a series of interviews and written exercises, grade them and present the results to the Council. With the help of the firm, the Council will choose 4-5 finalists which will be invited to attend a two-day assessment center held via zoom. The results will be reported to the Council. The Council and firm will choose to conduct interviews in person or zoom and then move toward the selection of a manager. Development Associates will schedule phone and zoom interviews with the individual council members and staff over the next week. The staff will send pictures of the Town to Development Associates to draft a recruitment brochure.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to engage Development Associates. The motion passed unanimously.***

Finance Director Ian Barret presented a budget amendment to fund the recruitment process.

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickon, to approve the presented budget amendment. The motion passed unanimously.***

Mayor Caldwell asked Finance Director Ian Barrett how much money was in the paving account. Mr. Barrett reported that the Town had over \$340,000 in restricted funds and this year's allocation of over \$400,000 in Powell Bill funds. The Council asked that the staff determine the need to mill Brown Street and to proceed with milling and paving Boyd Street as previously instructed.

3. Adjourn

***A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.***

ATTEST:

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Gary Caldwell, Mayor

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Robert W. Hites, Jr. Town Manager

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Candace Poolton, Town Clerk