MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
Regular Meeting
October 27, 2026

THE WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL held a regular meeting on Tuesday, October 27, 2026, 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 6:05 pm with the following members present:
Mayor Gary Caldwell
Mayor Pro Tempore Chuck Dickson
Councilmember Jon Feichter
Councilmember Anthony Sutton

The following staff members were present:
Rick Howell, Interim Town Manager
Page McCurry, Assistant Town Manager & HR Director
Jesse Fowler, Deputy Town Manager
Martha Bradley, Town Attorney
Candace Poolton, Town Clerk/Assistant to the Manager
Cody Parton, Assistant Fire Chief
Olga Grooman, Interim Development Services Director
Alex Mumby, Land Use Administrator
Laura Yonkers, Deputy Director of Public Works-Sustainability
Charles Dills, Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent
David Adams, Police Chief

The following members of the media were present:
Paul Nielsen, The Mountaineer

1. Welcome/Calendar/Announcements

Mayor Gary Caldwell welcomed everyone and announced that Treats On the Street is this Saturday, First Friday is November 6th, and the next Council meeting will be November 10th. Mayor Caldwell also announced Hazelween on Friday and Saturday, November 7th is the Energy Fair at the Rec Park. He reminded everyone to vote on November 3rd.

He announced that Council has hired a new Town Manager, Amie Owens.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

C. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Feichter, to remove item 9. "Personnel Policy Update" and not to return it to Council for review until the new town manager reviews the policy. 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 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 October 13th, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes.
   b. Motion to call for a Public Hearing for November 10, 2026, to consider text amendments related to findings of fact, conditions, and consistency statement requirements for major site plans and preliminary plats for major subdivisions, LDS sections 15.8.2 and 15.9.3.
   c. Motion to call for a public hearing to consider a text amendment to the glazing and transparency requirements for commercial uses, Land Development Standards Section 5.10.3- Ground Level Detailing, for November 10th, 2026.
   d. Motion to approve the resolution to appoint a Deputy Finance Officer
   e. Motion to approve the budget amendment for the LEO Bonus
   f. Motion to approve the Rotary Spring Fling Special Event Permit
   g. Motion to approve the Mountain Valley Mile Special Event Permit
   h. Motion to approve the Visit Haywood Ice Block Party Special Event Permit
   i. Motion to approve the Treats On the Street updated Special Event Permit

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

E. PROCLAMATION

3. National First Responders Day Proclamation
   - Mayor Gary Caldwell

Mayor Caldwell proclaimed October 28th National First Responders Day and thanked Waynesville's first responders for their dedication and service.

F. PRESENTATIONS

4. Recognition of Officer Michael Whitley's promotion
   - Chief David Adams

Police Chief David Adams announced Michael Whitley's promotion to Seargent.

5. A presentation regarding historic signs created by the Historic Preservation Commission.
   - Alex Mumby, Land Use Administrator

Land Use Administrator Alex Mumby reported that the Historic Preservation Commission created three new informational signs to be displayed at the Haywood County Courthouse on Main Street, Sulphur Springs Hotel, and Historic Hazelwood. He presented the signs and explained that the sign for Sulphur Springs was funded through a grant in partnership with Haywood Waterways for improvements at Sulphur Springs Park and the other two signs were funded through the Development Services budget.

Councilmember Sutton asked if the signage complies with the recently approved sign ordinance update. Town Attorney Bradley said that it does.

6. FOG Management Program - Approval, Implementation & FY2027 Funding
   - Laura Yonkers, Deputy Director of Public Works-Sustainability Division

Deputy Director Laura Yonkers reported that staff requests Council approval and implementation of the Town's Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) Management Program under the authority of the Town's existing Sewer Use Ordinance, together with the additional FY2027 Sewer Fund appropriation necessary for implementation. She said besides making the Town in compliance with NCDEQ, having a FOG program would help address the 360+ calls regarding sewer blockages over the past year, and the negative impact it has on wear and tear on the treatment plant. She requested an additional $150,000 from the Sewer Fund that would help pay for a new staff person, a vehicle, potential contract work, materials, gas, and training. She explained that the existing Sewer Use Ordinance already establishes applicable FOG discharge prohibitions, grease-control authority, and compliance and enforcement mechanisms. The proposed action formalizes implementation of the Town's existing regulatory requirements and provides the administrative and financial resources necessary to conduct education, inspection, recordkeeping, compliance monitoring and enforcement under existing authority.

WWTP Superintendent Charles Dills explained that not having a FOG program causes costly emergencies. He said the proposed FOG program is designed to prevent costly sewer blockages and overflows by keeping grease out of the sewer system. Mr. Dills reiterated that this is not a new regulatory requirement- it is currently in the existing NCDEQ permit. He said their approach will be focused on education, inspections, and lastly, enforcement, with the goal of compliance and prevention. Mr. Dills said that in the first 6 months of implementation, staff will track inventory of FOG devices in restaurants and educate owners and staff on the program, then do baseline inspections of those restaurants. He said after the first year, they will encourage corrective action.

Councilmember Dickson asked about the additional $20,000 for contractual services. Ms. Yonkers said there are biochemical treatments that companies can add to the manholes to help control FOG until some of the restaurants that need more time can get into compliance. Mr. Howell said the FOG control systems are not expensive, but Council may want to instill some fees to help offset the program.
Town Attorney Martha Bradley said she will have to work on an ordinance that allows staff access to the restaurants for inspections.

Ms. Yonkers said the goal is to have a designated employee that's doing nothing but inspections, and once the FOG program is established, that staff member would also be in charge of the septic receiving station.

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Feichter, to adopt Resolution No. R-23-26 approving and implementing the Town of Waynesville Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) Management Program under the authority of the Town's existing Sewer Use Ordinance and authorizing the POTW Director, or authorized designee, to administer the program. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to adopt FY2027 Budget Ordinance Amendment No. O-53-26 appropriating an additional $150,000 in the Sewer Fund for implementation of the Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) Management Program. The motion passed unanimously.

G. PUBLIC HEARING

7. A public hearing to consider a text amendment to remove the screening requirement for Outdoor Storage.
   - Alex Mumby, Land Use Administrator

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Feichter, to open the public hearing at 6:42pm. The motion passed unanimously.

Land Use Administrator Alex Mumby reported that Staff received an application from Mr. Leatherwood for a text amendment to remove the screening requirement for outdoor storage yards in Commercial Industrial districts. He explained that currently, Outdoor Storage yards are only allowed within Commercial Industrial districts and these districts are already required to be screened from adjacent zoning districts, so this requirement to screen Outdoor Storage only adds screening within the district itself. Mr. Mumby said that staff has tailored the amendment to reflect that if the use were to be expanded to other districts in the future, that the screening requirement from adjacent properties would still be in effect. He reported that the Planning Board voted 7:1 to recommend the proposed amendment. The applicant explained that Commercial Industrial districts are the ones in which the internal architectural and landscaping requirements are not prioritized and so screening the property from adjacent Commercial Industrial properties is not necessary. Mr. Mumby added that this text amendment only proposes to eliminate the screening requirement between the properties within the same Commercial Industrial District. Councilmember Sutton asked if this would affect the stream buffer. Mr. Mumby said the proposed text amendment would not remove the stream buffer and that the requirement around the district would remain.

Mr. Leatherwood spoke in support of the proposed ordinance.

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to close the public hearing at 6:55pm. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to find the proposed amendment consistent with the 2035 Comprehensive Plan and is in the public interest in that it continues to

promote smart growth principles in land use planning and zoning and encourages infill, mixed-use, and context sensitive development. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to approve the proposed amendment to the Town Council. The motion passed unanimously.

8. A public hearing to consider a text amendment to remove parking minimums to be consistent with NC General Statutes.
   - Alex Mumby, Land Use Administrator

A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Feichter, to open the public hearing at 6:56pm. The motion passed unanimously.

Land Use Administrator Alex Mumby reported that with House Bill 162, the North Carolina State Legislature removed the ability for local governments from enforcing parking minimums. He explained that Waynesville already had low parking minimums for commercial and residential uses as well as waiving parking minimums downtown. He introduced the draft ordinance reflects changes to the parking chapter of the Land Development Standards to bring the Town of Waynesville's zoning into compliance with state law.

Mr. Mumby added that the new law does not prohibit standards associated with parking lots which are also included in the Land Development Standards, such as landscaping, screening the glare, and bicycle parking-those standards are not being removed and will continue to be enforced as part of the zoning standards. Staff said they aren't concerned about parking because developers generally incorporate enough, if not more parking to meet market demands.

There was no public comment.

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to close the public hearing at 7:07pm. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to find the proposed amendment consistent with the 2035 Comprehensive Plan and is in the public interest in that it continues to promote smart growth principles in land use planning and zoning, creates walkable and attractive neighborhoods and commercial centers, and encourages infill, mixed-use and context-sensitive development. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to approve the proposed amendment to the Town Council because it creates opportunities for a sustainable economy and encourages creatively designed, mixed-use, walkable centers and commercial districts that appeal to residents and visitors. The motion passed unanimously.

I. COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF

9. Manager's Report

- Interim Town Manager Rick Howell

Interim Town Manager Rick Howell reported that he has been working with the architect for Fire Station 2 and he will be bringing some updates on the environmental report. He said they are nearing the finish line on getting everything submitted for the audit, but the earliest Waynesville could get on LGCs agenda would be January, possibly February. Mr. Howell encouraged Council to implement policies to address transfers and cost allocation from utilities to the General Fund. He congratulated Council on the hiring of a new manager. Mayor Caldwell thanked Mr. Howell for his work.

10. Town Attorney's Report

- Town Attorney, Martha Bradley

Town Attorney Martha Bradley reported that the League of Municipalities has received funding to retain legal assistance to help oversee the Water Interconnect program that Council approved. Council agreed that Rob Hites should be the project manager. She said that Council needs to decide on who will be a part of the joint oversight committee. Ms. Bradley suggested that until the structure is finalized, Council should delegate an elected official and a staff member, most likely the Town Manager. Council authorized Parker Poe, an attorney that works with the NCLM, to move forward with providing legal support for the water interconnect project.

J. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Councilmember Feichter requested that Council waives the special event fees for the Toys for Tots run next month.

A motion was made by Councilmember Feichter, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to offset the special event fees for Toys for Tots. The motion died.

Mayor Caldwell, Councilmembers Sutton, Dickson, and Feichter said they will each pay $25 each to offset the special event fee, and Mr. Howell said he'd donate $100 to Toys for Tots.

K. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to adjourn at 7:24pm. The motion passed unanimously.

ATTEST:

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Gary Caldwell, Mayor Rick Howell, Interim Town Manager

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Candace Poolton, Town Clerk