

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE BOARD OF ALDERMEN
Regular Meeting
June 23, 2020

THE WAYNESVILLE BOARD OF ALDERMEN held a regular meeting on Tuesday, June 23, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. 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 6:30 pm with the following members present:

Mayor Gary Caldwell
Mayor Pro Tem Julia Freeman
Alderman Anthony Sutton
Alderman Jon Feichter
Alderman Chuck Dickson

The following staff members were present:

Rob Hites, Town Manager
Amie Owens, Assistant Town Manager
Eddie Ward, Town Clerk
Town Attorney William Cannon
Ben Turnmire, Finance Director
Jeff Stines, Interim Public Services Director
Lt Chris Chandler
Lt. Tyler Trantham
Lt. Brandon Gilmore
Assistant Fire Chief Chris Mehaffey
Byron Hickox, Land Use Administrator

The following media representatives were present:

Becky Johnson, The Mountaineer

1. Welcome/Calendar/Announcements

Mayor Caldwell welcomed everyone. He reminded everyone that the first meeting of the Homelessness Task Force will be held by Zoom on June 25th from 6:00 – 7:00 pm. He mentioned that he was very happy to see Main Street busy once again.

2. Adoption of Minutes

A motion was made by Alderman Anthony Sutton, seconded by Alderman Julia Freeman, to approve the minutes of the June 9th, 2020 Regular Meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

Town Attorney William Cannon asked if there were any public comments.

**Jon Lynn McDermott
183 Mill Street
Waynesville, NC 28786**

Ms. McDermott stated that she felt the many business and residents and residential properties are being affected by discarded used needles. She said she was speaking for approximately 273 citizens who are concerned about the large number of needles that are being found in several areas of the Town. Ms. McDermott asked the Mayor and Aldermen to consider options to stop the problem, and she referred them to the pictures of the May 2, 2020 clean up that had taken place in Frog Level.

**Peggy Hannah
268 Hemlock Street
Waynesville, NC 28786**

Ms. Hannah addressed the issue of supporting the Waynesville Police Department by funding Career Track in the FY 2020-2021 Budget. She said this would keep qualified officers and allow them to advance in their career. She said the Police Department serves every citizen and she felt that some of the appropriations needed to be looked at and adjusted to accommodate the Police and put the citizens first.

She addressed the number of used needles that are being found in areas of Waynesville. Ms. Hannah said this problem needs to be resolved, and she asked the Board to form a Community Watch program. She stated that she had spoken with a lot of people who are interested in getting things done for the Town.

**Jean Parris
Drugs in Our Midst**

Ms. Parris explained to the Board that she is partnered with North Carolina Harm Reduction and addressed the syringe issue. She said that when her group went out looking for the needles, they found very few. She said the proper procedure to follow was to call the Police Department and inform them that dirty syringes have been found, and they will handle them appropriately. It is very dangerous to be picking up needles without the proper PPE. Ms. Parris said she did not condone users or dirty needles, and she asked for people who see these needles to tell her so it can be handled properly. She asked that the right thing to be done.

**Jesse Lee Dunlap
28 Georgia Avenue
Waynesville, NC 28786**

Ms. Dunlap gave statistics that contribute to the housing shortage in Haywood County. She said that short term rentals made up 98% of rentals in the County, and that meant only 17 long-term rental options for people who reside in the County and over 1,400 for tourists. With COVID-19 the options changed even further which has pushed people out on the streets with no place to stay. Increases in homelessness relates to an increase in overdoses. She asked the Board to address the issue of housing in the Town with more affordable housing.

**Patricia Meyer
194 Meadow St
Waynesville, NC 28786**

Ms. Meyer expressed her concerns about areas in her neighborhood where homeless are staying in run down houses and garages. She said she is concerned for her safety and her grandchildren's safety. Ms. Meyer said that Pathways is being advertised outside the County as a homeless shelter and she feels that this should only be for Haywood County residents.

C. PRESENTATION

3. Southwestern NC Home Consortium- Cooperation Agreement – For Home Investment Partnership Act

- Sarah Thompson, Executive Director Southwestern Commission

SOUTHWESTERN NC HOME CONSORTIUM

The HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) provides formula grants to States and localities that communities use – often in partnership with local nonprofit groups – to fund a wide range of activities including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance to low-income people. HOME is the largest Federal block grant to state and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households.

HOME funds are awarded annually as formula grants to participating jurisdictions. The program's flexibility allows States and local governments to use HOME funds for grants, direct loans, loan guarantees or other forms of credit enhancements, or rental assistance or security deposits.

HOME funds can be used in a variety of ways to support a consortium's homeownership activities: home-owner occupied rehabilitation programs, direct homebuyer assistance (down payment and/or closing costs), development of for-sale housing and low-income rental housing, rental assistance, or for other reasonable and necessary expenses related to the development of non-luxury housing including site acquisition or improvement, and demolition of dilapidated housing.

The eligibility of households for HOME assistance varies with the nature of the funded activity. For rental housing and rental assistance, at least 90% of the benefitting families must have incomes that are no more than 60% of the HUD-adjusted median family income for the area. In rental projects with

five or more assisted units, at least 20% of the units must be occupied by families with incomes that do not exceed 50% of the HUD-adjusted median. The incomes of households receiving HUD assistance must not exceed 80% of the area median. HOME income limits are published each year by HUD.

Generally, units of local government form consortia to access direct formula allocations of HOME funds to support housing activities and programs. States are automatically eligible for HOME funds and receive their formula allocation or \$3million, whichever is greater. Local jurisdictions eligible for at least \$500,000 under the formula also can receive a direct allocation. The formula allocation considers the relative inadequacy of each jurisdiction's housing supply, its incidence of poverty, its fiscal distress, and other factors.

Those communities that do not qualify for an individual allocation under the formula can join with one or more neighboring localities in a legally binding consortium whose members' combined allocation would meet the threshold for direct funding.

Those communities who do not receive a direct allocation or who are not part of a consortium can participate in HOME by applying for program funds made available by their State. In North Carolina the HOME program funds are made available through the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA). It should be noted, that the same communities that receive direct allocations and those that receive allocations through a consortium can also access the NCHFA programs.

Under current funding levels the proposed consortium would have funding of approximately \$670,000. The net funding level after deducting administrative fees used to run the program would be approximately \$600,000.

There are two match requirements both of which potentially will not require local jurisdiction participation: During the first year of the program a new consortium must meet the difference between its formula allocation (approximately \$670,000) and the first-time participation threshold of \$750,000, with local funds and/or non-federal funds. The Southwestern Commission is working with the Dogwood Health Trust's Leverage Fund, which will provide the initial \$80,000 match for the region.

There is also a 25% on-going match requirement on all funds drawn from the consortium's HOME Investment Trust Fund treasury account in that fiscal year. The 25% non-federal match can be in the form of cash, assets, labor or other services valuable to the HOME program. The 25% match will be the responsibility of the recipient accessing the funds on a project by project basis. No money is required from local governments to join the consortium.

Forming a consortium enables local governments to work together to develop collaborative approaches to local and regional housing needs that cross town and county lines. Prior to receiving HOME funds every consortium must develop a three to five-year consolidated plan that will describe community needs, resources, priorities, and proposed activities to be undertaken with the HOME program funding.

The proposed consortium will consist of the seven counties and seventeen towns representing Region A in southwestern North Carolina: the counties of Cherokee (including the towns of Andrews and Murphy), Clay (including the town of Hayesville), Graham (including the towns of Lake Santeetlah, Fontana Dam, and Robbinsville), Haywood (including the towns of Canton, Clyde, Maggie Valley and Waynesville), Jackson (including the towns of Dillsboro, Forest Hills, Sylva and Webster), Macon (including the towns of Franklin and Highlands) and Swain (including the town of Bryson City).

A consortium can organize and govern themselves as they choose, however, they must designate one jurisdiction as the “lead entity” and must execute a legally binding consortium agreement that formally organizes the consortium. The lead entity retains primary responsibility for ensuring consortium compliance with all HOME Program rules and reporting to HUD. The lead entity must have the capacity to administer program requirements either directly or jointly with another entity. The lead entity in the proposed consortium will be Haywood County.

As the lead entity, Haywood County will enter into a written agreement with the Southwestern Commission (Administrative Agent) to carry out most of the administrative responsibilities of the HOME program. The Administrative Agent will accept project recommendations from all HOME consortium members and will make final funding decisions consistent with the Consolidated Plan.

The consortium committee will have one representative from each member of the consortium and will meet quarterly to receive consortium updates and to review progress made towards consolidated plan goals.

The program start date for the consortium will be July 1, 2021 for the three-year period 2021 to 2024. The agreement will automatically renew for participation in successive three-year periods.

A motion was made by Alderman Jon Feichter, seconded by Alderman Anthony Sutton, to approve participation in the NC Home Consortium-Joint Cooperation Agreement – For Home Investment Partnership Act. The motion carried unanimously.

D. CALL FOR PUBLIC HEARING

4. Public Hearing to consider a Conditional Map Amendment for the Russ Avenue/Barber Boulevard Ingles.

- Byron Hickox, Land Use Administrator

Byron Hickox, Land Use Administrator, explained to the Board that the applicant, Ingles Market is requesting a Conditional District Map Amendment (Rezoning) for property located at 856 Russ Avenue - PINs 8616-22-9503 and 8616-33-7082), 135 Barber Boulevard (PIN 8616-32-2336), 259 Barber Boulevard (PIN 8616-32-8401), outparcels (PINs 8616-32-4011 and 8616-21-8928), and 75 Barber Boulevard (PIN 8616-22-6393) located in the Russ Avenue Regional Center Commercial District (RA-RC.)

This proposed project would expand the Ingles Shopping Center within the existing footprint of their conditional district designation and increase the overall size by adding the former Barber residence and orchard property. If approved, the Ingles Russ Avenue Regional Center Conditional District (RC-CD) would be expanded and amended specifically to the proposed Master Plan.

Mr. Hickox said that the creation and amending of Conditional Districts are handled in the same manner as a text or map amendment, in that the Planning Board holds a hearing and determines if the request is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and is reasonable and in the public interest. The Planning Board makes a recommendation to the Board of Aldermen, who then hold a second public hearing, adopt a statement of consistency, and then approve, deny, or approve the application with conditions.

In addition to the overall expansion of the Conditional District, the proposed Conditional District Map Amendment addresses four primary changes: (1) a reduction in the required permeability for some of the building facades; (2) an allowance for parking in front of some interior buildings; (3) a reduction in some landscaping standards to allow for underground stormwater retention; and (4) the addition of a second monument sign on the Russ Avenue frontage.

Mr. Hickox said that the Planning Board considered this Conditional District Map Amendment at the Planning Board meeting that was held on June 15, 2020 and determined that the request is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and is reasonable and in the public interest.

If approved, the site plan and CD designation will replace any conflicting regulations which would otherwise apply. The Board may therefore recommend “reasonable and appropriate conditions including, but not limited to the location, nature, hours of operation and extent of the proposed use.” Such conditions or additional standards of the Board “shall be limited to improving conformance with the existing ordinance and/or addressing expected impacts generated by the development and use of the site.”

A motion was made by Alderman Anthony Sutton, seconded by Alderman Jon Feichter, to call for a Public Hearing to be held on Tuesday July 28th, 2020, at 6:30 p.m., or as closely thereafter as possible in the Town Hall Board Room located at 9 South Main Street, Waynesville, to consider a Conditional Map Amendment for the Russ Avenue/Barber Boulevard Ingles - PINs 8616-22-9503 and 8616-33-7082), 135 Barber Boulevard (PIN 8616-32-2336), 259 Barber Boulevard (PIN 8616-32-8401), outparcels (PINs 8616-32-4011 and 8616-21-8928), and 75 Barber Boulevard (PIN 8616-22-6393) located in the Russ Avenue Regional Center Commercial District (RA-RC.) The motion carried unanimously.

E. CONTINUED BUSINESS

5. Continuation of discussion of Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget

- Ben Turnmire, Finance Director

Finance Director Ben Turnmire informed the Board that he did not have any presentation for the meeting but would be happy to entertain questions from the Board. He asked to clarify a statement made during public comment related to special appropriations. The requested amount from various organizations was \$218,500; however, the total amount granted was capped at \$75,000. The special appropriations were cut by 35% from the previous year.

Board members discussed whether to consider a budget to include the career track program or to approve the budget originally presented at the June 9 meeting with the few modifications such as the elimination of a second police captain position, which would have been a reclassification; and the decrease in the advertising budget in the Recreation Department to the total of \$5,000. These modifications were made to both budgets; the career track is an additional appropriation from fund balance.

Comments made by the Board related to the inclusion of career track in the budget, even though not recommended from a revenue perspective, included support for the employees and their continued career path goals with the Town of Waynesville; and the necessity to provide them with a reward for their hard work and diligence. The goal is to retain well trained and professional employees and prevent them from leaving the town's employment. The proposed classification and compensation study was included in both budgets and should yield information for the Board to consider additional salary modifications in the future.

Mr. Turnmire noted that the budget with career track would require a fund balance appropriation of \$1,450,910. The total of the adopted budget from all funds would be \$33,017,020. The breakdown of the funds are as follows:

General Fund	\$15,750,580
Water Fund	\$ 3,644,830
Sewer Fund	\$ 3,523,815
Electric Fund	\$10,097,795

Alderman Jon Feichter asked if there could be a delay in funding the career track for three to six months and adopt the originally proposed budget. Alderman Chuck Dickson responded that he would rather fund the career track from the beginning rather than risk potentially not having the funds later. The Board agreed by consensus.

Alderman Anthony Sutton made a motion, seconded by Alderman Julia Freeman to adopt Budget Ordinance O-09-20 for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 to include career track and to adopt Resolution R-02-20 Financial Operating Plan for Two Internal Service Funds and, to adopt the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget.

Alderman Chuck Dickson asked to amend the motion to include \$25,000 for the Homelessness Task Force. Finance Director Turnmire responded that it would be better from a financial entry

perspective to adopt the budget and then complete a budget amendment at the next meeting as at this time, funds could not be appropriated from the current year's budget.

Alderman Dickson asked to withdraw his amended motion.

The original motion on the floor remained as there was a motion and second to adopt Budget Ordinance O-09-20 for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 to include career track and to adopt Resolution R-02-20 Financial Operating Plan for Two Internal Service Funds.

The motion carried unanimously.

F. COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF

6. Manager's Report

- Manager Rob Hites

Manager Hites gave updates on the Plott Heights project and the Municipal building renovation.

7. Town Attorney Report

- Town Attorney, Bill Cannon

Town Attorney Cannon had nothing to report

G. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR AND BOARD

Alderman Jon Feichter asked if there was any way to provide information in the form of signage to business owners related to the three W's – Wear a Mask, Wait six feet apart and Wash your hands. Mr. Hickox explained that he and Assistant Town Manager Amie Owens had been in discussions with Haywood County related to such communications. Mr. Hickox spoke with Assistant Emergency Management Director Zack Koonce and Development Services Staff will be placing signage in conspicuous public areas within Waynesville. The information on the signs is available via electronic format and can be shared with business owners so that they can post in their businesses.

H. ADJOURN

With no further business, a motion was made by Alderman Jon Feichter seconded by Alderman Anthony Sutton, to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST:

Gary Caldwell, Mayor

Robert W. Hites, Jr. Town Manager

Eddie Ward, Town Clerk