

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE BOARD OF ALDERMEN
Regular Meeting
April 14, 2020

THE WAYNESVILLE BOARD OF ALDERMEN held its regular meeting on Tuesday, April 14, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in the board room of Town Hall, 9 South Main Street, Waynesville, NC.

A. CALL TO ORDER REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Gary Caldwell called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm with the following members present:

Mayor Gary Caldwell
Alderman Anthony Sutton

The following Board members and staff attending by Zoom

Mayor Pro Tem Julia Freeman
Alderman Jon Feichter
Alderman Chuck Dickson
Town Attorney Bill Cannon

The following staff members were present:

Rob Hites, Town Manager
Eddie Ward, Town Clerk
Ben Turnmire, Finance Director
Jeff Stines, Interim Public Services Director
Julie Grasty, Asset Services Manager
Lisa Burnett, Purchasing Supervisor

The following media representatives were present:

Becky Johnson, The Mountaineer
Cory Valliancort, Smoky Mountain News – by Zoom

1. Welcome/Calendar/Announcements

Mayor Caldwell welcomed everyone. There were no upcoming events because of cancellations due to the Coronavirus.

2. Adoption of Minutes

A motion was made by Alderman Anthony Sutton, seconded by Alderman Julia Freeman to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2020 regular meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

B. PRESENTATION

3. Presentation by Dr. Peter Bates, Forest Stewards

- Dr. Peter Bates, Western Carolina University

Dr. Peter Bates, Associate Professor of the Department of Geosciences and Natural Resources at Western Carolina University (WCU) provided an update regarding Forest Management activities in the Waynesville Watershed. He included key accomplishments for the FY 2019/2020, and proposed activities for 2020/2021. He told the Board that many of these were reviewed during a stewardship tour of the Watershed conducted in July of 2019 in which Town Staff, representatives from Southern Appalachian Conservancy, and local media attended.

Dr. Bates thanked the board for the time to provide the update and related some highlights of the monitoring water quality in the watershed.

- Monitoring within the watershed began in March 2007 and has continued to the present time. It is now one of the most intensively monitored watersheds in North Carolina – with turbidity measurements and suspended sediment samples being analyzed over the past 12 years.
- Water quality in the watershed is excellent.
- Preliminary analyses show that forest treatments have not affected water quality within the watershed. More detailed analyses are currently underway, and depending on current events, and will be finished by the end of the summer.
- Future monitoring will continue to focus on a site along Lower Allen Branch downstream of an area of selected timber harvest, and on Old Bald Creek, downstream of ongoing and planned timber treatments.

Dr. Bates told the Board that the water quality was always monitored to see if anything that was done in the watershed had any impact on water quality. He added that there had been no effects on water quality to date.

He explained that monitoring and treatment of non-native invasive plant species continues throughout the watershed. Most occurrences have been in areas around the reservoir that were heavily disturbed during the construction of the reservoir. He presented highlights of this monitoring as follows:

- Non-native invasive plant species are most abundant at lower elevations near the dam and surrounding the reservoir
- We believe that non-native invasive plants cannot be eradicated for the watershed, but they can be managed where they pose the greatest threat to regeneration of canopy tree species.
- Forest Stewards has been monitoring and working to control the spread of non-native invasive plants by conducting annual surveys in the white pine dominated areas surrounding the reservoir and working to check the spread of the most threatening species.

- We propose that before any future timber harvest in other areas of the watershed, a pre-harvest inventory be done for the presences of non-native invasive plants, and treatments applied as appropriate.

Dr Bates told the Board that nearly a century of fire suppression has resulted in many fire-adapted and fire-tolerant (pines, oak, and hickory) species being replaced by fire intolerant species (maples and birches) which changes the overall forest structure and species composition. He said that fire suppression has created a built up of forest fuels that could create dangerous wildfire conditions. He indicated that because of this, he feels it would be wise to begin the process of conducting prescribed burns in the areas where fire adapted communities once existed. These are drier sites typically found on ridges and south and west facing slopes. The North Carolina Forest Service has a program that would allow them to conduct prescribed burns at no cost to the Town.

Alderman Chuck Dickson asked if there had been any controlled burns in the past that have gotten out of control. Dr. Bates said that to his recollection, there had never been any of the many controlled burns that the NC Forest Service participated in that had gotten out of control. He reiterated that there would be many personnel to conduct the burn and that weather conditions must be just right before they will do the burn.

Mayor Caldwell said that he would like to be able to have the entire Board present before any decisions were made about doing a controlled burn in the watershed. He thanked Dr. Bates for the work he is doing in the Waynesville watershed.

C. NEW BUSINESS

4. Bid submission for Street Paving for the Town
 - Lisa Burnett, Purchasing Supervisor

Lisa Burnett, Purchasing Supervisor, explained that in late February a street paving proposal was sent out, and this proposal is normally done every two to three years. She said that this year it had been sent to five contractors, and because of the way that the streets are paved in sections, it is better to use a smaller paving company rather than the ones that the NCDOT might use. There were three bids received, two of which are local. The lowest bid was WNC Paving, and they have done paving for the Town for twenty years or longer.

Ms. Burnette explained that the amounts in the Board packet are estimates, depending on the amount of paving that is done, and could be a smaller amount or a greater amount. She said she based the amounts on what has been spent over the last twenty years. She asked the Board to consider awarding the contract to WNC Paving with an option for an additional two-year renewal.

A motion was made by Alderman Anthony Sutton, seconded by Alderman Julia Freeman to award the annual contract for street paving to WNC Paving, Inc. in the amount of \$253,000.00, with the option for an additional two-year renewal. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Municipal Building Roof

- Julie Grasty, Asset Services Manager

Julie Grasty, Asset Services Manager, told the Board that the replacement of the Municipal Building Roof had been included in the 2020 Budget. She said she had contacted five (5) different roofing contractors, and all five were onsite and performed their own inspection of the roof. The Town received five (5) different proposals and they were evaluated by Preston Gregg, Town Engineer and Ms. Grasty. It was decided that ARS Construction Services of Candler offered the best solution for the Municipal Building Roof. ARS Construction services will furnish and install 50-mil Duro-Last custom pre-engineered roofing membrane with a 20-year warranty at a cost of \$29,950.00.

A motion was made by Alderman Anthony Sutton, seconded by Alderman Julia Freeman to award the bid for the Municipal Building Roof to ARS Construction Services, in the amount of \$ 29,950.00. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Pavement Condition Survey RFQ Results

- Jeff Stines, Interim Public Services Director

Jeff Stines, Interim Public Services Director, explained that Town staff solicited engineering firms in the form of RFQ (Request for Qualifications) to perform pavement condition ratings (PCR) on all town roads.

The RFQ resulted in a response of nine different firms:

- McGill & Associates
- Mattern & Craig
- Summit Engineering
- SEPI Engineering
- LaBella Associates
- Vaughn & Melton
- S&ME
- Infrastructure Consulting Group
- J.M. Teague

Mr. Stines said that all nine responses were adequately qualified; however, only five firms were “short listed” and evaluated further (McGill, Mattern & Craig, LaBella, Vaughn & Melton, J.M. Teague). Evaluations were based on the following criteria: local presence, experience, proposed project personnel and timeliness to complete the work.

LaBella Associates ranked the highest of the five “short listed” firms. LaBella has performed the Town’s pavement condition rating study in the past so town staff has previous working knowledge of the proposed project personnel. They also require little to no upfront assistance in order to start working immediately on the work; whereas, the other firms would require additional time and resources to start the project. Because of these reasons, staff recommends awarding the Pavement Condition Survey of all Town streets to LaBella Associates in the amount of \$17,400.00.

A motion was made by Alderman Julia Freeman, seconded by Alderman Anthony Sutton to award the contract to LaBella Associates in the amount of \$17,400. The motion carried unanimously.

7. N. C. Water Warn

- Jeff Stines, Interim Public Services Director

Mr. Stines explained to the Board that North Carolina Water Warn is a program within North Carolina that provides mutual aid in the event of a natural disaster or emergency related to the water or wastewater industry from various members across the state. He said that currently there are 112 members in North Carolina. This contract would also aid other Municipalities from the Town of Waynesville including staffing and materials if needed, depending on the severity of the emergency.

A motion was made by Alderman Anthony Sutton, seconded by Alderman Julia Freeman, to approve the Town of Waynesville to be a member of the North Carolina Water Warn. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Chestnut Walk Tank – Site Work Bid

- Jeff Stines, Interim Public Services Director
- Ben Turnmire, Finance Director

Mr. Stines explained to the Board that Phase II bid for the Chestnut Walk Tank is for the installation and site work to be constructed in accordance with McGill & Associates engineered plans and bid documents.

The project was advertised for three weeks and local contractors were solicited to bid. In order to be considered a qualified bidder for this project, a contractor must be licensed by the North Carolina Licensing Board for General Contractors. One bid was received from ACMI in the amount of \$187,540.

A motion was made by Alderman Anthony Sutton, seconded by Alderman Julia Freeman, to award the contract to ACMI in the amount of \$187,540 for site work and construction for the Chestnut Walk Water Tank. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Alderman Anthony Sutton, seconded by Alderman Julia Freeman, to approve the budget amendment in the amount of \$17,000 to completely fund the contract to include the site work. The motion carried unanimously.

D. COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF

9. Town Attorney Report
- Attorney, Bill Cannon

Attorney Bill Cannon stated the affidavit for the Hazel Street property had been advertised, and he hoped that someone would bid on it.

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

Manager Hites told everyone that Clark and Leatherwood Construction has started the work on the Municipal Building. August is the expected date for finishing the work.

At the last meeting the Board had approved the dehumidification system for the Recreation Center. Bolton Construction has completely removed the old system, and they are going to install the ductwork and install the new system while the Center is closed. There will be a waiting period for the condenser units that will be outside.

E. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR AND BOARD

Alderman Jon Feichter said that he had been in discussion with Manager Hites concerning how the Stay-At-Home Declaration is affecting the homeless in Frog Level. Because of the closure of bathroom facilities, they have nowhere to go to the restroom or wash their hands. This is causing a problem in the area, and a public health concern. He referred to guidelines from the Center of Disease Control on how to approach this problem during the pandemic. Alderman Feichter said he felt that the Town needed to provide portable toilets and handwashing stations in Frog Level. He would like to see the portable units be placed in the alley by the Open Door in Frog Level for the homeless to be able to use.

Manager Hites stated that he had contacted two vendors who supply these facilities, and Johnny on the Spot will provide two toilets with twice a week cleaning for \$210.00 per week, and another vendor will provide two toilets with the same service for \$100.00 per week and will also supply a handwashing station for \$70.00 per week.

Alderman Sutton said the alleyway was not leased by the Open Door, so the owner of the property would have to be contacted in order to place the facilities there.

Alderman Freeman said that she is one of the three property owners, and the porta john would not be placed in the alleyway. She said there was already a lot of problems with the homeless being in that area, and the Open Door had chosen to close their bathrooms

Manager Hites said that the only Town owned property where the porta johns could be placed would be in the paved parking lot. He said that from a control and lighting standpoint that would be a better place to put the units, and he wants to make sure that any encampments not be set up in the parking lot.

The consensus of the Board was to provide the porta johns in the Frog Level parking lot as an experiment and see how it goes, and if it does not work, the Board will discuss how to proceed.

F. ADJOURN

With no further business, Alderman Anthony Sutton made a motion, seconded by Alderman Julia Freeman, to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST:

Gary Caldwell, Mayor

Robert W. Hites, Jr. Town Manager

Eddie Ward, Town Clerk