

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE BOARD OF ALDERMEN
Special Called Meeting
February 21, 2022

THE WAYNESVILLE BOARD OF ALDERMEN held a Special Called meeting on Monday February 21, 2022, at 5:30 pm in the Public Services Conference Room located at 129 Legion Drive, Waynesville, NC.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Gary Caldwell called the meeting to order at 5:37 pm with the following members present:

Mayor Gary Caldwell
Alderman Anthony Sutton
Alderman Jon Feichter
Alderman Chuck Dickson

The following members were absent:

Mayor Pro Tem Julia Freeman

The following staff members were present:

Rob Hites, Town Manager
Jesse Fowler, Assistant Town Manager
Kathy Johnson, Deputy Clerk
Jeff Stines, Public Works Director
Misty Hagood, Finance Director
Willie Smith, Electric Department Superintendent

The following media representative was present:

Becky Johnson, The Mountaineer
Cory Vaillancort, Smoky Mountain News

The following guest speakers were present:

Louis Davis
Mike Brennan

1. Welcome

Mayor Gary Caldwell welcomed everyone and asked Town Manager Rob Hites to proceed with the presentation.

B. OLD BUSINESS

2. Presentation of Amended Solar Rate Schedule

- Rob Hites, Town Manager

Mr. Hites said during the last meeting he presented the Board with a combination rate rider with three utility company's rates. It was determined in that meeting to invite UTEK engineers to discuss NMNC (Net Meter North Carolina) and give an overview of how solar is handled in North Carolina. He introduced Mr. Lois Davis and Mr. Mike Brennan with UTEK engineering to proceed with the presentation.

Mr. Davis went over two examples of how renewable resources are handled by utility companies across the nation. He explained the first method of permitting customer generated energy is Buy All/Sell All. In this scenario the Town is made whole and there is no impact to the Town Budget. The second method is Net Metering where the customer can bank excess energy and utilize in months when there is no excess energy produced by the renewable energy source. In this scenario the town is not made whole resulting in possible lost revenue to the town.

Mr. Brennan went over examples of both scenarios including residential and commercial customers and the draft renewable energy purchase rate schedule. He explained there have been recent developments in Duke Energy Net Metering program and reviewed the program changes including minimum monthly bill, grid access fee, non-by passable charges, netting and exports, time of use/critical peak pricing rates. Legacy Net Metering customers would be required to go to this new structure by 2027 per statute. The DEC and DEP are proposing a longer transition period with steps to ease the transition.

Mr. Brennan and Mr. Davis answered questions from the Board and citizens.

Board member Anthony Sutton expressed his agreement with Net Metering.

Board member Jon Feichter spoke on climate change and the Towns renewable energy resolution. He said EV is a wave of the future and if we could come up with a rate that would provide a net metering solution while maintaining the Towns fiscal responsibilities, he feels the Town should be in Net Metering.

Board member Chuck Dickson said he recommended doing a Net Metering system with an appropriate base fee that would help cover the cost of maintaining the grid. He recommended offering reduced electric rates for elderly, disabled and people on SSI. He said there needs to be more discussion on infrastructure investment and charging stations.

Mr. Caldwell asked Mr. Davis if he could come up with a draft formula to fit the Town of Waynesville for Net Metering. Mr. Davis agreed to present the Board with a draft at the March meeting.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was much discussion between Board members and citizens on concerns, benefits, and cost of renewable energy and how the Town could benefit from charging stations. Grants and solar incentives were discussed.

D. OTHER BUSINESS

No other Business.

E. ADJOURN

With no further business, a motion was made by Alderman Anthony Sutton, seconded by Alderman Jon Feichter, to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 pm. The motion was approved unanimously.

ATTEST:

Robert W. Hites, Town Manager

Gary Caldwell, Mayor

Kathy Johnson, Deputy Clerk