

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
Regular Meeting
September 24, 2024

THE WAYNESVILLE TOWN COUNCIL held a regular meeting on Tuesday, September 24, 2024, 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 6:00 pm with the following members present:

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

The following staff members were present:

Rob Hites, Town Manager
Jesse Fowler, Assistant Town Manager
Candace Poolton, Town Clerk
Town Attorney Martha Bradley
Elizabeth Teague, Director of Development
Page McCurry, Director of Human Resources
Brittany Angel, Human Resources Coordinator
Chris Mehaffey, Assistant Fire Chief
Jeff Stines, Public Services Director
Luke Kinsland, Recreation Director
David Adams, Police Chief
Ian Barrett, Finance Director

Members of the Media:

Paul Nielson, The Mountaineer

1. Welcome/Calendar/Announcements

Mayor Gary Caldwell welcomed everyone and announced that Art After Dark will be October 4th and the next Town Council meeting will be held on October 8th.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

C. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to remove Item E. (3.) Appointment of Josh Schick to Assistant Chief of Police from the agenda. 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 so 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 the September 10, 2024 Regular Scheduled Meeting Minutes
 - b. Motion to approve the Hazelween Special Event Permit
 - c. Motion to approve the Axe and Awl Birthday Bash Special Event Permit
 - d. Motion to approve the Policies for Stormwater/ARPA Grant
 - e. Motion to approve the increase in part-time classification salaries for Parks & Recreation from \$11.00/hr minimum-\$13.00/hr maximum to \$11.50 minimum/hr-\$13.5/hr maximum for recreation aides.

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

E. PRESENTATION

3. Local Government Workplace Initiative (LGWI)
 - Clay Flemming, Local Government Workplaces Initiative (LGWI) Assistant Director

Clay Flemming with the LGWI reviewed the importance of surveying employees and defined Workplace Climate surveys as a holistic view of the organization, an assessment of both strengths and opportunities, and an opportunity to show employees you value their perspectives. He reported that the Town of Waynesville employee survey revealed high level results. He said it is important to act on the results of the survey.

Mr. Flemming said the employee response rate was 66%, which is higher than average. Mr. Flemming said that the areas that employees rated highly were Diversity Climate, Inclusion, and Team Climate.

Mr. Flemming said that the team dynamics are very strong, and some of the “hotspots” are typical for other organizations as well. He said that citizen incivility has been growing since 2020. He said that citizen incivility is the greatest contributor to employee exhaustion. He said that Supervisory Practices rated very positively.

Mr. Flemming outlined the following steps for staff to take:

- Create Focus Groups to get departmental feedback
- Have a Department Director Meeting with a Q&A session and brainstorming activity
- Department Directors will be working with Page and Brittany to develop SMART goals

Councilmember Sutton said that some of the results are contradicting, but he said overall it's what he expected. He said changes have already begun to be made, and that needs to continue. He said he doesn't want to be average and wants to know what Council can do to make employees feel better about their work and what they do. Councilmember Sutton agreed that citizen incivility is a problem and asked Mr. Flemming what can be done. Mr. Flemming suggested that Council and staff watch the UNC School of Government class about citizen incivility and to potentially create a policy that protects employees. Mr. Flemming also suggested creating a citizen academy where residents can tour different town departments and meet employees and learn about their jobs. Councilmember Feichter said he was surprised that the majority of staff did not have trust in the council and that Council considers staff in every one of their decisions. He said he also wants to develop plans to address the issues that have been found. Mr. Flemming recommended that Council waits to do another survey for 18 months to allow some changes to be made. it takes time to allow for changes. Mayor Caldwell emphasized that council has an open door policy and that Council should also pass along the positive feedback from the citizens to the staff, not just the complaints.

F. COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF

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

Town Manager Hites reported that there is potential for severe weather for Haywood County.

5. Town Attorney Report
 - Town Attorney, Martha Bradley

Nothing to report.

G. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Councilmember Dickson announced that all the lights in the Recreation Center are LED lights. He requested that fellow Councilmembers allow him to work with Rob, Ian, and Councilmember Sutton to create a format for financial statements to be placed on the agenda for review each month, to eventually be placed on the consent agenda. Council agreed that this was a good idea. Councilmember Feichter requested that the Folkmoot sculpture next to the police department gets moved. Assistant Town Manager Jesse Fowler said that the Public Arts Commission has already discussed it and Folkmoot would like the statue to be placed on their property. Mr. Fowler said he and Ms. Bradley will prepare an easement for the sculpture. Councilmember Sutton said the French Broad MPO is revising its understanding with municipalities, and he will be presenting the updates at a Council meeting each month. He said that their priority is to get South Main Street completed.

H. ADJOURN

***A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton, seconded by Councilmember Dickson, to adjourn at 7:31pm.
The motion passed unanimously.***

ATTEST:

Gary Caldwell, Mayor

Robert W. Hites, Jr. Town Manager

Candace Poolton, Town Clerk