

**TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2015
TOWN OF SAWMILLS REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
6:00 PM**

COUNCIL PRESENT

Trena McRary Kirby
Joe Wesson
Jeff Wilson
Johnny Wilson
Gerelene Blevins

STAFF PRESENT

Seth Eckard
Julie Good
Terry Taylor

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION: Councilman Joe Wesson gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPT AGENDA: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked for a motion to adopt the agenda with the addition of Agenda Item 7B: Easement for Streets and Sidewalks for Town Hall.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Jeff Wilson seconded, to adopt the agenda with the addition of Agenda Item 7B: Easement for Streets and Sidewalks for Town Hall. All were in favor.

APPROVE MARCH 17, 2015 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked for a motion to approve the March 17, 2015 regular meeting minutes.

Johnny Wilson made a motion, and Joe Wesson seconded, to approve the minutes. All were in favor.

APPROVE MARCH 17, 2015 CLOSED SESSION MINUTES: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked for a motion to approve the March 17, 2015 closed session minutes.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Jeff Wilson seconded, to approve the minutes. All were in favor.

APPROVE MARCH 12, 2015 BUDGET RETREAT MINUTES: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked for a motion to approve the March 12, 2015 budget retreat minutes.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Jeff Wilson seconded, to approve the minutes. All were in favor.

APPROVE APRIL 2, 2015 BUDGET RETREAT MINUTES: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked for a motion to approve the April 2, 2015 budget retreat minutes.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Johnny Wilson seconded, to approve the minutes. All were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked if anyone had any questions or comments at this time.

No one wished to speak.

RECOGNITIONS:

RECYCLE REWARDS WINNER: Town Administrator Seth Eckard announced Cameron Joyce and Callie Messer as the April Recycle Rewards winners. A credit of twenty-eight dollars (\$28.00) will be added to their sanitation bill and their certificate will be available at the Town Hall for pick up.

No Council action was required.

EASEMENT FOR STREETS AND SIDEWALKS FOR TOWN HALL: Town Administrator Seth Eckard explained that the Town had to sign an easement for the property that it owns for the US Highway 321A sidewalk grant.

Jeff Wilson made a motion, and Johnny Wilson seconded, to sign the easement for streets and sidewalks for Town Hall. All were in favor.

PUBLIC HEARING: PARKS TEXT AMENDMENT PROPOSAL:

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked for a motion to open the public hearing.

Joe Wesson made a motion, Johnny Wilson seconded, to open the public hearing. All were in favor.

STAFF COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS: Town Planner Elinor Hiltz stated that parks are allowed in every zoning district in Town but R-20. On February 17, 2015, the Planning Board unanimously recommended approval of the text amendment to allow parks in every zoning district.

Town Planner Elinor Hiltz also stated that the Sawmills Comprehensive Plan wants to expand parks and greenways.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked if anyone wished to speak on the parks text amendment proposal.

The question was asked if all other areas are zoned for parks except R-20?

Town Planner Elinor Hiltz replied that was correct.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked for a motion to close the public hearing.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Jeff Wilson seconded, to close the public hearing. All were in favor.

COUNCIL ACTION: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby stated that “Parks are usually beneficial for the community as a whole.”

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Johnny Wilson seconded, to recommend approval because the Comprehensive Plan wants to expand recreational opportunities in Sawmills. All were in favor.

PUBLIC HEARING: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT:

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked for a motion to open the public hearing.

Joe Wesson made a motion, Johnny Wilson seconded, to open the public hearing. All were in favor.

STAFF COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS: Lisa Helton, with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments, stated that in March 2013, the Town of Sawmills received a Small Business Entrepreneurial Assistance (SBEA) Grant for two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00) to assist The Haystation, LLC, to purchase equipment and create ten (10) new, full-time jobs. Since this approval, the company has withdrawn its request to use these funds.

In January 2015, A. McGee Wood Products, in Granite Falls, expressed interest in participating in the project. The EDC and WPCOG continued to pursue employers within the Town. While a few business in the Town expressed interest in the program, no other company is willing to commit to the required job creation, or has other issues prohibiting the company from being eligible.

A. McGee Wood Products would use the CDBG funds to purchase equipment and pledges to create ten (10) new jobs.

There is no local funding in this project.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked if anyone wished to speak on the Community Development Block Grant.

The question was asked could these funds be used for a business to start

Town Administrator Seth Eckard replied that this grant was only for existing businesses to purchase equipment and add local employment. This program is no longer available and if the EDC and WPCOG cannot find a business that can use the funds, then the money goes back to the State.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked for a motion to close the public hearing.

Johnny Wilson made a motion, and Jeff Wilson seconded, to close the public hearing. All were in favor.

COUNCIL ACTION: Joe Wesson made a motion, and Johnny Wilson seconded, to amend the CDBG project to reflect that the CDBG SBEA go to A. McGee Wood Products and not The Haystation, LLC. All were in favor.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

UPDATE TOWN OF SAWMILLS PROJECT BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR THE 2012 DUFF DRIVE SEWER PROJECT AND AMENDED AGREEMENT FOR THE SAME: Town Administrator Seth Eckard stated that the original amount on the Town of Sawmills Budget Ordinance for the 2012 Duff Drive Sewer Project was seven hundred eighty-seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$787,500.00). The new amount is one million eighty-seven thousand one hundred one dollars and eighty-nine cents (1,087,101.89).

Town Administrator Seth Eckard also stated that the original amount on the Agreement between the Western Piedmont Council of Governments and the Town of Sawmills for the Provisions of Grant Management Assistance was sixty-nine thousand dollars (\$69,000.00). The new amount is seventy-nine thousand (\$79,000.00).

Johnny Wilson made a motion, and Joe Wesson seconded, to approve the updated Town of Sawmills Budget Ordinance for the 2012 Duff Drive Sewer Project in the amount of one million eighty-seven thousand one hundred one dollars and eighty-nine cents (\$1,087,101.89) and to approve the Amended Agreement between the Western Piedmont Council of Governments and the Town of Sawmills for the Provision of Grant Management Assistance in conjunction with the same in the amount of seventy-nine thousand dollars (\$79,000.00). All were in favor.

APPROVE PROPOSED CONTRACT RENEWAL WITH WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS: Town Administrator Seth Eckard stated that the current contract with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments for planning services will expire on June 30, 2015, and will need to be renewed.

The current contract is for eight (8) hours per week and the new contract is for twelve (12) hours per week. The extra four (4) hours are for the purposes of updating the Town's

Comprehensive Plan and will only be needed for this contract year. If renewed, the contract will be effective starting July 1, 2015, and ending June 30, 2016.

The amount of the contract will not exceed thirty-two thousand four hundred dollars (\$32,400.00) and will be billed in equal monthly payments. This expenditure is included in the FY 2015-2016 budget.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Johnny Wilson seconded, to renew the current contract with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments for planning services in the amount of thirty-two thousand four hundred dollars (\$32,400.00) for twelve (12) hours per week. All were in favor.

BAD DEBT WRITE-OFF: Town Administrator Seth Eckard stated that the Town had a list of 2011 accounts that have gone unpaid for Utility and Sanitation services. The Town does not expect to collect payment for these accounts and recommends that Council approve the write off of the accounts. The total amount of these accounts is three thousand eight hundred twenty-six dollars and ninety-one cents (\$3,826.91). Town Administrator Seth Eckard also advised Council that included in the list are twenty-four (24) accounts the Town has submitted to the NC Debt Setoff Program for Collection. Town Administrator Seth Eckard stated the Town had recovered three thousand seven hundred sixty-five dollars and ninety-eight cents (\$3,765.98) from previous years, and currently has collected three hundred ninety-four dollars and seventy-six cents (\$394.76), totaling four thousand one hundred sixty dollars and seventy-four cents (\$4,160.74). There are sufficient funds in the budget to cover this.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Jeff Wilson seconded, to approve staff to write off the 2011 list of bad debts accounts. All were in favor.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

RESOLUTION TO JOIN WESTERN PIEDMONT JOBS TRAINING CONSORTIUM: Town Administrator Seth Eckard stated that the Town is already a member of the Western Piedmont Jobs Training Consortium, but with the new Federal Workforce Legislation that was passed last summer, the Town will need to adopt the new Resolution to Join Western Piedmont Jobs Training Consortium in order to stay in the program.

Johnny Wilson made a motion, and Joe Wesson seconded, to adopt the Resolution to Join Western Piedmont Jobs Training Consortium. All were in favor.

STREET LIGHT POLICY: Town Administrator Seth Eckard stated that the new procedure for Street Light Requests is as follows:

- Requests for the addition of street light(s) shall be made in writing. The request(s) shall be forwarded to the Town Administrator who shall review the request(s) for conformance to the New Street Light Installation Policy. Requests need to be

submitted before February 20th of each year to be considered for the next fiscal year.

- If the request(s) are in conformance with the policy and approved within the budgetary process, the Town Administrator shall notify the requesting party in writing of the approval.
- If the Town Administrator determines that the request for street light(s) is not in conformance with the policy, he/she shall deny the request and notify the requesting party in writing of the denial.
- If the request is denied, the requesting party may appeal to the Town Council to reverse the decision of the Town Administrator within thirty (30) days of the Town Administrator's decision. Said appeal shall be in writing to the Town Council. All appeals shall be referred back to the Public Works Committee of the Town Council, who shall report back to the Town Council with a recommendation within ninety (90) days of receipt of the appeal. The Town Council shall act on the recommendation of the Public Works Committee within thirty (30) days of receipt of their recommendation. The Town Administrator shall notify the party filing the appeal of the final decision of the Council.

The Town Administrator Seth Eckard stated that the New Street Light Installation Policy is as follows:

New street lights may be authorized by the Town Administrator to be installed on new or existing (town maintained or state maintained) streets within the Town of Sawmills, if:

- a) in the case of Town accepted roads, a written request is received by the Town Administrator, and if the location of the street light request(s) conforms to one or more of the following criteria:
 1. The request location is at the intersection of two (2) or more streets.
 2. No existing or proposed street light is within 450 feet of the requested location.
 3. The requested location is located at a horizontal or vertical curve of a street, which in the opinion of the Town Administrator, may be hazardous condition to vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
 4. The location is not on a privately maintained street.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Johnny Wilson seconded, to approve the Procedure for Street Light Requests and the New Street Light Installation Policy with the following changes:

- number 2 should read as follows: No existing or proposed Town street light is within 450 feet of the requested location;
- add number 5 to read as follows: The requested location is located at the end of a dead end street or cul-de-sac; and

- add b) to read as follows: street light request approvals are limited to available funding.

All were in favor.

PLANNING:

ANNUAL PLANNING BOARD REPORT: Town Planner Elinor Hiltz stated that in the Planning Ordinance Section 151.06 it is stated that: An annual report shall be prepared and submitted to the Town Council by May of each year. The report shall include a comprehensive and detailed review of the activities, problems and actions of the Planning Board as well as any budget requests and/or recommendations.

Town Planner Elinor Hiltz stated that the Planning Board has met five (5) times from July to April of this year. Town Planner Elinor Hiltz also stated that the Planning Board met in July and will meet again in May.

Town Planner Elinor Hiltz stated that she wrote thirty (30) zoning permits, met about four (4) subdivisions, wrote twelve (12) zoning verification letters and communicated by email to discuss seventeen (17) additional properties. Town Planner Elinor Hiltz also stated that she has researched house condemnations and cost sharing for paving non-town streets for the Town Administrator as well as gathered data for:

- CodeRed;
- The NC Demographer;
- The Census Boundary Annexation Survey; and
- The widening of Highway 321 Community Impact Assessment.

Town Planner Elinor Hiltz stated that there were twenty (20) Code Enforcement cases that have been completed.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Jeff Wilson seconded, to approve the Annual Planning Board Report. All were in favor.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN: Town Planner Elinor Hiltz stated that the counties and municipalities in the Unifour area bound together to make a regional hazard mitigation plan. All counties and municipalities are required to have a hazard mitigation plan by State and Federal Law. If the Resolution of Adoption for the Unifour Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan is adopted, it is good for five (5) years.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Jeff Wilson seconded, to adopt the Resolution of Adoption for the Town of Sawmills, North Carolina Unifour Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan with the change on page 2 of Town Manager to Town Administrator. All were in favor.

SIDEWALK PLAN: Town Planner Elinor Hiltz stated that the Town has indicated five (5) sidewalk projects that are priorities because they are close to the center of the Town and link

existing sidewalks and important destinations. Together the five (5) projects will take approximately ten (10) years to fund and build. The sidewalk plan discusses the benefits, obstacles, possible funding sources, and next steps for each project.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Jeff Wilson seconded, to adopt the Sidewalk Plan. All were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked if anyone had any questions or comments at this time.

The question was asked if there were a limited number of street lights that the Town can put up? Town Administrator Seth Eckard answered that there is no limit of street lights that an individual can put on their property and there is no limited number of street lights that the Town can install.

A citizen also suggested that the Town appoint a citizen group to go around the Town and make sure no Town street lights are out.

Councilman Joe Wesson suggested doing a CodeRed announcement to let citizens know that they can call in and let the Town know if a street light is out and the Town can get it fixed.

UPDATES:

CODE ENFORCEMENT MONTHLY REPORT: Town Administrator Seth Eckard stated Town Planner Elinor Hiltz has enclosed an updated status report of Code Enforcement cases for April 2015.

No Council action was required.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT: Town Administrator Seth Eckard made the following announcements:

- The Annual COG dinner is Thursday, April 23, 2015, beginning at 6:30 pm. Town Administrator Seth Eckard, Councilwoman Trena McRary Kirby and Councilman Jeff Wilson will be attending. The North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory will be speaking at 8:00 pm.
- Yard of the Month Committee has started meeting for the year.
- The Town has a new employee, Tony Beaver, April 21, 2015 was his first (1st) day.
- The Disc Golf Club built a shelter over the bridge on hole 11 of the disc golf course.
- The slope repair is now about 50% complete.
- The Duff Drive sewer project is underway. The contractor has started clearing trees and will begin laying pipe within the next two (2) months.

COUNCIL COMMENT: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked if anyone on the Council had any questions or comments at this time.

Joe Wesson stated that the Town needed to check on the bridge dedication for Richard “Chad” Settlemyre. Mr. Settlemyre’s father passed away last week and we need to see what is going on. Joe Wesson also wanted to thank everyone for coming.

Johnny Wilson wanted to thank everyone for coming.

CLOSED SESSION: ATTORNEY/CLIENT PRIVILEGE: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked for a motion to go into closed session.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Johnny Wilson seconded, to go into closed session at 7:07 pm.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Gerelene Jeff Wilson seconded, to come out of closed session at 7:45 pm.

COUNCIL ADJOURN: Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby asked for a motion to adjourn.

Jeff Wilson made a motion, and Johnny Wilson seconded, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.

Julie A Good, Town Clerk

Trena McRary Kirby,
Mayor Pro-Tem