

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2014
TOWN OF SAWMILLS REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
6:00 PM**

COUNCIL PRESENT

Trena McRary Kirby
Joe Wesson
Jeff Wilson
Gerelene Blevins

STAFF PRESENT

Seth Eckard
Susan Nagle
Terry Taylor

COUNCIL ABSENT

Bob Gibbs
Johnny Wilson

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

INVOCATION: Pastor Rick Crouse gave the invocation.

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

ADOPT AGENDA: Mayor Pro-Tem McRary Kirby asked for a motion to adopt the agenda with the following changes: add Donation to Caldwell County Schools as agenda item 8C and remove agenda item 11 Closed Session: Personnel Matters (NCGS §143-318.11).

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Gerelene Blevins seconded, to adopt the agenda with changes. All were in favor.

APPROVE DECEMBER 17, 2013 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES: Mayor Pro-Tem McRary Kirby asked for a motion to approve the December 17, 2013 regular meeting minutes.

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

APPROVE JANUARY 2, 2014 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES: Mayor Pro-Tem McRary Kirby asked for a motion to approve the January 2, 2014 special meeting minutes.

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

APPROVE JANUARY 7, 2014 SPECIAL STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

MINUTES: Mayor Pro-Tem McRary Kirby asked for a motion to approve the January 7, 2014 special strategic planning session minutes.

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

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

Barbara Maneri spoke regarding the Town's sanitation fee.

RECOGNITIONS:

RECYCLE REWARDS WINNER: Town Administrator Seth Eckard announced Carolyn Brown as the January Recycle Rewards winner. A credit of twenty-eight dollars (\$28.00) will be added to Miss Brown's sanitation bill and her certificate will be available at the Town Hall for pick up.

No Council action was required.

SAWMILLS VOLUNTEER FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT AWARDS: Mayor Pro-Tem McRary Kirby, on behalf of the Town Council, presented plaques of appreciation to the following:

Firefighter of the Year: Brandon Wright

First Responder of the Year: Kyle Clontz

Officer of the Year: Keith Carver

No Council action was required.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW FIRE CHIEF: Mayor Pro-Tem McRary Kirby introduced David Price the New Chief of the Sawmills Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department.

Chief Price thanked all the Officers and First Responders for all the work that they do. Chief Price stated the Fire Department ran over 809 calls last year and at times will run 3-5 call per day, which can be anytime during the day & all hours of the night. This is all done on a volunteer basis and about 90% of the members work a full time job. Chief Price has over 30 years of service, which started in 1984. He has served as Captain, Assistant Chief and now Chief. The Sawmills Fire Department does fire, rescue, E.M.S., extrication, and has done swift water training, we just finished taking a dive class so we will be doing rescue diving, and more with continued training. They had over 4,000 hours of training last year. Chief Price thanked the Council stating he looks forward to a great working relationship with them so that the town and the Fire Department can grow together.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

NC DEPARTMENT of TRANSPORTATION MOWING CONTRACT RENEWAL:

Town Administrator Eckard stated the current contract with the NC Department of Transportation needs to be renewed. The renewal contract will cover the period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2017 with no changes from the original contract.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Gerelene Blevins seconded, to approve a renewal mowing contract with the NC Department of Transportation for a period of three years. All were in favor.

APPROVE UPDATE to BANK SIGNATURE CARDS: Mayor Pro-Tem McRary Kirby stated due to recent changes that have taken place within the Council, new signature cards need to be on file with the bank for Mayor Pro-Tem Trena McRary Kirby.

Jeff Wilson made a motion, and Joe Wesson seconded, to approve new signature cards on file with the bank. All were in favor.

DONATION TO CALDWELL COUNTY SCHOOLS: Town Administrator Eckard stated that a donation to the Caldwell County Schools in the amount of \$14,000.00 covers on behalf of the Town one third of the cost of a School Resource Officer to be placed at Sawmills Elementary School. Council as a General Fund budget amendment approved the amount of this donation during the January 2, 2014 Special Council meeting.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Gerelene Blevins seconded, to donate \$14,000.00 to the Caldwell County Schools for the placement of a School Resource Officer at Sawmills Elementary School. All were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Pro-Tem McRary Kirby asked if anyone wished to speak during public comment.

There were no comments or questions.

UPDATES:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT MONTHLY STATUS REPORT:

Administrator Eckard stated the enclosed monthly status report for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) shows that all requirements are on schedule for the Haystation, LLC. Administrator Eckard stated there has not been a lot of activity with the Haystation grant so he will meet with Nancy Coley, with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments, and the business owner with the Haystation to see what the status is on this project. The Haystation has hired some drivers but is having a hard time retaining them.

No Council action was required.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT SEWER PROJECT UPDATE AND MONTHLY STATUS REPORT: Administrator Eckard stated Lisa Helton, Program Administrator with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments has enclosed an update on the Community Development Block Grant Sewer Project.

The enclosed monthly status report for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Sewer Project shows that all requirements are on schedule for the Duff Drive Area Sewer Project. Administrator Eckard stated West Consultants is doing survey work right now and should be getting information to Attorney Terry Taylor soon with regards to easements.

No Council action was required.

CODE ENFORCEMENT MONTHLY REPORT: Administrator Eckard stated the enclosed report shows an update of the progress made throughout the Town by Planner Elinor Hiltz.

No Council action was required.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Administrator Eckard made the following announcements:

- A special meeting "Coffee with the Council" will be held at the Sawmills Town Hall on Thursday, January 23, 2014 at 6:00 pm. Administrator Eckard stated that this would be a good opportunity to get some public input on budget and service ideas before starting the budget season.
- Baseball sign-ups start in February. Registration will be held at the Sawmills Municipal Park on Baird Drive each Saturday from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm. The Optimist Club has not finalized registration fees at this time and will let the town staff know when they have. Administrator Eckard will post the fees on the town's website and Facebook page as soon as they let him know what those fees are.
- The state has changed the rules on applying for Community Development Block Grants for infrastructure. With the new changes up to three active grants are now allowed, the thresholds to reach low income questions have been lowered and the cap has been raised from seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars to a total of three million dollars.
- The Annual Council Budget Retreat will be held on February 11, 2014 from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm at the Caldwell County Chamber of Commerce instead of the Caldwell County Economic Development Commission (E.D.C.).

- The Newly Elected Officials class will be held on February 19 and 20, 2014 in Hickory.
- Crack-sealing is complete in the Doe Run Subdivision, on Freedom Lane and on Stamey Road.
- Administrator Eckard attended an E.D.C. Board meeting on January 14, 2014. The E.D.C. reported the local economy unemployment rate for November 2013 is down to 7.5%. In November 2012, the unemployment rate was near 11% and in November 2010, the rate was approximately 14%.
- Administrator Eckard met with Sawmills Elementary School Resource Officer Deputy Hawn on January 21, 2014. Deputy Hawn stated that he is going to talk to Principal Rogers and the NC Department of Transportation to discuss a change in the flow of traffic on Sawmills School Road in order to help alleviate problems with the current traffic flow. Deputy Hawn will propose that no left turns into the school be allowed between 2:00 – 3:00 pm. He is proposing those wishing to make a left turn into the school continue straight on Sawmills School Road until they can safely turn around and turn right to enter the school. He also parks his car closer to the road now so that it is more visible to traffic.

COUNCIL COMMENT: Mayor Pro-Tem McRary Kirby asked if anyone on the Council wished to speak.

Councilman Joe Wesson welcomed Ms. Maneri to Sawmills and encouraged all citizens to attend Town Council meetings and give their input.

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

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Gerelene Blevins seconded, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.

Susan Nagle, Town Clerk

Bob Gibbs, Mayor