

**TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2020
TOWN OF SAWMILLS REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
6:00 PM**

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Johnnie Greene
Keith Warren
Clay Wilson
Joe Wesson
Melissa Curtis
Rebecca Johnson

STAFF PRESENT

Chase Winebarger
Julie A Good
Terry Taylor

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Johnnie Greene called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00pm.

INVOCATION: Jeff Lambert gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Johnnie Greene led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOTION TO AMEND AGENDA: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to amend the March 17, 2020, agenda to include Agenda Item 9C: Remote Participation Policy for Meetings of Town of Sawmills Council.

Rebecca Johnson made a motion, and Clay Wilson seconded, to amend the March 17, 2020, agenda to include Agenda Item 9C: Remote Participation Policy for Meetings of Town of Sawmills Council. All were in favor.

ADOPT AGENDA: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to adopt the March 17, 2020 agenda.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Keith Warren seconded, to adopt the March 17, 2020 agenda. All were in favor.

APPROVE FEBRUARY 13, 2020 BUDGET RETREAT MEETING MINUTES: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to approve the February 13, 2020 budget retreat meeting minutes.

Joe Wesson made a motion, and Rebecca Johnson seconded, to approve the February 13, 2020 budget retreat meeting minutes. All were in favor.

APPROVE FEBRAURY 18, 2020 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to approve the February 18, 2020 regular meeting minutes.

Rebecca Johnson made a motion, and Clay Wilson seconded, to approve the February 18, 2020 regular meeting minutes. All were in favor.

APPROVE MARCH 5, 2020 SPECIAL MEEETING MINUTES: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to approve the March 5, 2020 special meeting minutes.

Clay Wilson made a motion, and Joe Wesson seconded, to approve the March 5, 2020 special meeting minutes. All were in favor.

APPROVE MARCH 5, 2020 SPECIAL MEETING CLOSED SESSION MINUTES: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to approve the March 5, 2020 special meeting closed session minutes.

Clay Wilson made a motion, and Keith Warren seconded, to adopt the March 5, 2020 special meeting closed session minutes. All were in favor.

APPROVE MARCH 5, 2020 BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to approve the March 5, 2020 budget workshop minutes.

Clay Wilson made a motion, and Rebecca Johnson seconded, to approve the March 5, 2020 budget workshop minutes. All were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked if anyone had any questions or comments at this time.

Rebecca Johnson wanted to ask if Public Works could get a list together of any elderly people, that need checking on during this pandemic, that we could give out to Department of Social Services?

RECOGNITIONS:

RECYCLE REWARDS WINNER: Mayor Johnnie Greene announced Tiffany Rayle, as the March Recycle Rewards winner. A credit of thirty-two dollars (\$32.00) will be added to the current sanitation bill.

No Council action was required.

FINANCIAL:

HUDSON AMERICAN LEGION POST 392 DONATION REQUEST: Mayor Johnnie Greene stated that the Hudson American Legion Post 392 had requested a donation in the

amount of two hundred dollars (\$200.00).

Clay Wilson made a motion, and Rebecca Johnson seconded, to give a donation in the amount of two hundred dollars (\$200.00) to the Hudson American Legion Post 392. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION:

PROPOSED LONGEVITY PAY: Mayor Johnnie Greene stated that during the February 13, 2020 budget retreat meeting, Town Manager Chase Winebarger spoke about the current Town of Sawmills longevity pay policy. Town Manager Chase Winebarger also spoke to Council about allowing current local government and state employees that become employed by the Town of Sawmills to be able to include the employees' years of service, that the employee had prior to employment at the Town of Sawmills, into the proposed longevity scale.

Clay Wilson made a motion, and Joe Wesson seconded, to adopt the proposed longevity pay schedule and allow current local government and state employees that become employed by the Town of Sawmills to be able to include the employees' years of service, that the employee had prior to employment at the Town of Sawmills, into the longevity pay effective July 1, 2020. All were in favor.

PROPOSED VACATION ACCRUALS: Mayor Johnnie Greene stated that during the February 13, 2020 budget retreat, Town Manager Chase Winebarger spoke about the current Town of Sawmills vacation accruals. Town Manager Chase Winebarger suggested to Council that the Town of Sawmills match the State of North Carolina accrual rate for vacation time.

Clay Wilson made a motion, and Joe Wesson seconded, to approve the Town of Sawmills matching the State of North Carolina accrual rate for vacation time effective July 1, 2020. All were in favor.

REMOTE PARTICIPATION POLICY FOR MEETINGS OF TOWN OF SAWMILLS TOWN COUNCIL: Mayor Johnnie Greene stated that the purpose of the Remote Participation Policy is for a Council member who cannot be at a meeting, but wants to attend the meeting, and there is a quorum to vote, that a Council member can participate remotely if the quorum votes to allow the remote participation.

Melissa Curtis made a motion, and Rebecca Johnson seconded, to approve the Remote Participation Policy for Meetings of the Town of Sawmills Town Council. All were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked if anyone had any questions or comments at this time.

No one wished to speak.

UPDATES:

MARCH CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT: Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that there are nine (9) code enforcement cases open:

- Carolyn Bray/Robyn Brittan, owner 2570 Baker Circle. Abandoned Mobile Home/Garbage and Rubbish. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he is working with Town Attorney Terry Taylor to abate the property. Town Planner Hunter Nestor also stated that he will treat this as a Junk and Debris and not minimum housing. If so, the Town can proceed to abate after thirty (30) days of notice. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he got a quote that will demo entire trailer and haul off all debris including our equipment, labor and fees. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the quote is four thousand one hundred dollars (\$4,100.00). Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that staff plans to abate this in the current budget year, in the spring of 2020;
- Timberline Lumber Company, 4221 US Highway 321A. Overgrown Vegetation/Property Maintenance. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he received a complaint on July 2, 2019, and original NOV letter was sent July 16, 2019 and no response or no progress as of August 8, 2019. Second NOV letter was sent on August 8, 2019. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he never received any response from owner, but some progress had been made. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he received a telephone call complaint about the property and the individual was informed that a written complaint would need to be submitted to investigate the property. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he received the written complaint on February 18, 2020;
- Debra Rose, 4284 Trojan Ln. Dangerous Dog/Animal Creating a Nuisance. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he received a complaint on November 26, 2019 about multiple dogs running around with no leash in a neighborhood. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the complaint stated that the dogs were digging holes, habitual barking, howling and whining through the night and creating a physical threat to neighbors and other animals. NOV letter was sent on December 3, 2019, with a deadline of December 19, 2019. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that there was no response from the owner. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he received another complaint and a second NOV letter was sent out on January 16, 2020 with a deadline of January 28, 2020. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that Caldwell County Animal Control has been notified. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the property is a rental and he has spoken to Mrs. Rose and she informed Town Planner Hunter Nestor that she has spoken with her tenants. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the original complainant had submitted videos to town staff of the habitual barking. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he will work with Caldwell County and Town Attorney for further action;
- Teresa Annas Compton, 4486 Sawmills School Road. Abandoned Mobile Home/Garbage and Rubbish. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated he received a

complaint on January 13, 2020. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that a NOV letter would be sent out on January 23, 2020 with a deadline of February 10, 2020. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the trailer is not finished and located on the same property as the Compton house that the Town abated in 2018. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that staff will investigate and work with attorney for possible courses of abatement. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that one (1) of Ms. Compton's sons is scheduled to meet with staff in late February to work towards getting the property in his name and get the property cleaned up;

- Dwayne K and Bridget E Mann, owners 4353 Eli Ln/Fancy Pl. Garbage and Rubbish/Property Maintenance. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that he received a complaint on January 2, 2020, and a regular NOV letter and a certified NOV letter was sent on January 2, 2020, with a deadline of January 20, 2020. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the certified NOV letter was returned for being unclaimed, but the regular letter was not returned. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that a second NOV letter was sent on February 13, 2020. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the property has junk/garbage all over the property. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that if there is no response after the second NOV letter, staff can enforce fines and possible abatement;
- Jerry Michael and Camille Hawn, 4491 Loye Ln. Garbage and Rubbish/Property Maintenance. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that a complaint was received on January 28, 2020. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the complaint addressed two (2) separate properties and possible violations. A NOV letter was sent on February 13, 2020, with a deadline of March 4, 2020 for the Miller property. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the Miller property is in violation for having high grass/vegetation and junk and garbage located around the property. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the Hawn property is not in violation as brush pile was picked up on January 31, 2020. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that complainant states that Mr. Hawn has more brush scattered throughout the property, but staff did not find any evidence;
- Dale E and Debra Miller, 4434 Jess Dr. Garbage and Rubbish/Property Maintenance. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that a complaint was received on January 28, 2020. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the complaint addressed two (2) separate properties and possible violations. A NOV letter was sent on February 13, 2020, with a deadline of March 4, 2020 for the Miller property. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the Miller property is in violation for having high grass/vegetation and junk and garbage located around the property. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the Hawn property is not in violation as brush pile was picked up on January 31, 2020. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that complainant states that Mr. Hawn has more brush scattered throughout the property, but staff did not find any evidence;
- Denise Dotson/William S Annas, II, 4095 Gatewood Dr. Abandoned Mobile Home/Minimum Housing. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that a complaint was received on March 5, 2020, and a regular NOV letter and a certified NOV letter was sent on March 5, 2020, with a deadline of March 23, 2020. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that the mobile home has been sprayed painted and has an apparent

tenant, however, the water meter has been pulled from the property. Town Planner Hunter Nester stated that staff will investigate and work with Town Attorney Terry Taylor for a possible course of action;

- Herman E and Julie Phillips, 2478 Annas Dr. Livestock. Town Planner Hunter Nestor stated that a complaint was received on March 5, 2020, and a regular NOV letter and a certified NOV letter was sent on March 5, 2020, with a deadline of March 23, 2020. Town Planner Hunter Nester stated that livestock may be pot belly pigs, which are not included in the livestock definition. Town Planner Hunter Nester stated that he would investigate further.

No Council action was required.

COUNCIL COMMENT: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked if anyone on the Council had any questions or comments at this time.

Melissa Curtis stated that with the pandemic going on that maybe we should look at some of our utility policies.

Joe Wesson wanted to thank Jo Ann Miller for coming to the meeting.

CLOSED SESSION FOR ATTORNEY CLIENT PRIVILEGE PURSUANT TO NCGS § 143-318.11 (a)(3): Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to go into closed session.

Clay Wilson made a motion, and Joe Wesson seconded, to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS § 143-318.11(a) 6 at approximately 6:25pm. All were in favor.

Clay Wilson made a motion, and Joe Wesson seconded, to come out of closed session at approximately 7:13pm. All were in favor.

TOWN MANAGER UPDATES: Town Manager Chase Winebarger stated that he had been in meetings all day regarding the COVID-19 virus. Town Manager Chase Winebarger stated that on March 18, 2020, the Town of Sawmills, along with the other municipalities in Caldwell County, were going to file a State of Emergency. Town Manager Chase Winebarger also stated that along with the State of Emergency, the Town Hall would be closed to the public. Customers can make their payments online or in the drop box, to limit contact with anyone who may have the virus.

Town Manager Chase Winebarger stated that, along with closing Town Hall, the town would not be disconnecting utility services to anyone in Town, that March late fees have already went on, but there would be no late fees in April, and Council would talk more about the pandemic and what needs to continue at the regularly scheduled April meeting.

Town Manager Chase Winebarger also talked about the leave policy for employees during

the pandemic. Town Manager Chase Winebarger stated that he intends to give any employee paid leave if they have the COVID-19 virus. Town Manager Chase Winebarger stated that during the meetings that he had been in about the COVID-19 virus, it has been talked about that if one (1) person in your household comes down with the COVID-19 virus, the whole house will be quarantined for up to three (3) weeks. Town Manager Chase Winebarger stated that most employees do not have one hundred twenty (120) hours to cover their pay for that time and he intends to compensate all Town employees, as long as this is not being abused. Town Manager Chase Winebarger stated that he will have a draft leave policy for Council at the next meeting.

Town Manager Chase Winebarger stated that he thought it would be a good idea to cancel the Town Easter Egg hunt at this time. Council agreed.

Town Manager Chase Winebarger also stated that he had a Farmers' Market meeting and that the biggest problem is the rules the Town has in place for the Farmers' Market. Town Manager Chase Winebarger stated that he is in the process of going through the rules, but if this is not resolved, then he thinks that there will not be a Farmers' Market.

Town Manager Chase Winebarger stated that as of Friday, March 13, 2020 that all Town Parks had been closed to the public. Town Manager Chase Winebarger also stated that all ball practices and games had been cancelled. Town Manager Chase Winebarger stated that all bathrooms had been open, but were being closed at 5:00pm, but the Town could close the bathrooms and put up port-a-johns for the public who wish to still go to the parks.

DECLARE STATE OF EMERGENCY: Mayor Johnnie Greene stated that the council would need to make a motion for the State of Emergency.

Clay Wilson made a motion and Keith Warren seconded, for the Town to declare a State of Emergency and the Town Hall to be closed to the public until further notice. All were in favor.

COUNCIL ADJOURN: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to adjourn.

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

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:53pm.

Johnnie Greene, Mayor

Julie A. Good, Town Clerk