

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
Town of Sylva Board of Commissioners  
September 27, 2018

The Town of Sylva Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on September 27, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room of Municipal Hall, 83 Allen Street, Sylva, N.C.

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Lynda Sossamon, Mayor	Paige Dowling, Town Manager
	Barbara Hamilton, Vice-Mayor	Amanda Murajda, Town Clerk
	Mary Gelbaugh, Commissioner	Eric Ridenour, Town Attorney
	Harold Hensley, Commissioner	
	Greg McPherson, Commissioner	
	David Nestler, Commissioner	

**ABSENT:**

Mayor Sossamon called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Rick Bryson (Asst. Police Chief), Tammy Hooper (Police Chief) and Jake Scott (Public Works Director).

**VISITORS:** George Brown, Kelly Brown, Jeannie Kelly, John Wermuth, Savannah Vining, Quintin Ellison and Holly Kays.

**AGENDA:** Mayor Sossamon requested an item be added to the agenda to discuss changing the time of the 2018 Christmas parade. *Commissioner McPherson made a motion to add the requested item and approve the agenda. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.*

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Jeannie Kelly addressed the board and discussed the Highway 107 construction project. She expressed concern about impacts to businesses and property owners along the project route as well as what she believes is a lack of action by the board. Kelly has also created a group called "Say No to the Road" comprised of individuals who will work with Jay Coward and his initiative to make changes.

Savannah Vining, a resident of Falls Circle, addressed the board and voiced concerns about a house in her neighborhood that is not complying with Town ordinances. She explained that trash, stray animals and junk cars litter the property. She would like the board to enforce the ordinances for property maintenance.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:** Mayor Sossamon reminded everyone of Walk for Hope and added that she had been helping with the planning.

**COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:** Commissioner Gelbaugh has noticed that the crosswalks in town seem to be more visible and she thanked the Police Department for their diligent work in reminding citizens of the importance of stopping for pedestrians. Commissioner Nestler reminded the board of an important meeting TWSA will be scheduling for their police committee to address possible changes to aid businesses that are required to move because of the Highway 107 construction project. Commissioner McPherson added that he had noticed the crosswalk campaigns and the flashing speed limit sign seemed to be working. McPherson would like to see a donation made to municipalities on the coast of North Carolina who were damaged by Hurricane Florence. *Commissioner McPherson made a motion to instruct staff to look at the possibility of donating \$500 to this cause. Staff will research viable options. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.* Commissioner Hamilton is also involved in the planning of Walk for Hope and encouraged everyone to attend. She thanked the Police Department for doing security checks on homes and businesses in town.

**MANAGERS REPORT:** Manager Dowling reported the following:

- The Town of Sylva is hosting the NCLM Regional Roundtable at Town Hall on Tuesday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. This is an opportunity to meet with NCLM staff and nearby communities to discuss challenges facing municipalities.
- Treat Street will be held October 31<sup>st</sup> from 5:30-7:30 p.m. The street will close at 5:00 p.m.
- The Public Art Committee met September 26<sup>th</sup> and discussed a sculpture loan program, possibility hosting a winter event and creating a donation box.
- The NCLM CityVision Annual Conference was rescheduled due to hurricane damage in other areas of the state. The new dates for the NCLM Conference are May 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

- Walk for Hope is Saturday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. It will start at the fountain.
- Jay Coward, along with individuals from the Department of Corrections will be working on trails at Pinnacle Park Monday, October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT:** Jake Scott reported that the solid waste report had been submitted for the year and 799 tons of solid waste was collected annually. He reminded the board that every bit of the 799 tons was put by hand in the trash truck by Public Works Department employees. He is working on getting crosswalk paint and materials and will hopefully by fall begin putting it down. Scott told the board that Steven Woodard had resigned to take another job and the position had been posted. The 2018 Tree City application has been started. Scott also shared with the board that the Wednesday trash route is increasingly not in compliance with trash ordinances. He will be delivering reminder notices in the near future to residents. Fall décor will be put up Friday, September 28<sup>th</sup>.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT:** Tammy Hooper reported that the department responded to 697 calls for service in August. Hooper thanked those who were helping with Walk for Hope and also noted that the fire departments would be having a fire prevention parade immediately following Walk for Hope. The department recently participated in an active shooter drill at Skyland Care Center.

**PLANNING BOARD REPORT:** The Planning Board will meet Thursday (today) at 5:30 p.m. to discuss R5600. Rose Bauguess and Manager Dowling will review designs with the members and begin discussing ordinances that will need to be examined and how the Town can be as business friendly as possible throughout construction and right-of-way.

**TWSA BOARD REPORT:** Commissioner Nestler reported that TWSA was a collection site for water donations to be taken to Hurricane Florence victims.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **DISCUSSION TO RESCHEDULE TIME OF 2018 CHRISTMAS PARADE:**

Mayor Sossamon explained her reasoning why the time of the 2018 Christmas Parade needs to be changed. The Dean of the College of Fine and Performing arts, George Brown, contacted her and made her aware of the fact that when the parade was moved to Sunday it was at same time as annual event Sounds of the Season. He asked her if anything could be done to accommodate both events. Sossamon commented that she had checked with Manager Dowling and Chief Hooper and they said the possibility could be looked at to move it 1 hour back and the College could move their event 1 hour later so that people had time to attend both.

Commissioner Gelbaugh commented that festivals take lots of planning. She believes that “safety is paramount as well as commerce; we represent the Town of Sylva on this board and our businesses that serve brunch need this business.” “As a board we need to be an advocate for business and community and I don’t want to make businesses struggle by shutting down streets early.”

Commissioner Hamilton commented that her concern was that by moving it back an hour the Public Works and Police Department’s might not have time to prepare. They have a lot that has to get done before the parade. She is concerned that pushing it back shortens the window for preparation.

Kelly Brown, chairman of the Main Street Sylva Association (MSSA), told the board that John Wermuth had worked hard to plan an eventful weekend and part of that has created a partnership with the WCU School of Music. Brown wants to be good community partners and agents with them and work to accommodate both events this year because he has children from his program in them. He told the board that the parade and the Sounds of the Season concert were significant family events and that this would only be one hour of consideration.

John Wermuth of the MSSA Promotions committee explained the weekend events of the kick off to Christmas season. Friday, November 30<sup>th</sup> there will be an official tree lighting where the WCU Chorale group and Geoff McBride will be performing on courthouse steps. Raffle tickets will be sold beginning October 1<sup>st</sup> for the opportunity to turn the switch on and light the tree. Students from SMHS are making a metal star for the tree. Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup> there will be Photos with Santa at Sassy Frass from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and a winter market in the parking lot next Humanite from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. On Saturday night there will be an adult version of Photos with Santa where Santa will visit pubs and breweries in town. Luminaries will also take place on Friday and Saturday night. Sunday will be the parade. Commissioner Hamilton thanked John for all his hard work.

George Brown, Dean of the Belcher College of Fine & Performing Arts, explained that they were very much in support of the shift in time for the parade. The Sounds of the Season event has been the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in December at 3:00 p.m. for 26 years. He explained that the shift for the parade is new and they understand the reasons for the change. However, funds raised off the concert are used for student scholarships in the school. When this situation came about Brown and WCU looked at other options to accommodate both events but if shifted any later they lose students because of the end of the semester and if shifted earlier they don't have availability in Bardo Center. Brown noted that the only solution was to move the concert 1 hour later if the Town can shift 1 hour earlier.

Commissioner McPherson asked Jake Scott, Public Works Director, if he could speak to the amount of time needed to prepare for the parade. Scott told the board the department would do what was necessary to accommodate the time change. Police Chief, Tammy Hooper, explained that their issue with the time change was that churches had not usually dismissed before 12:00 p.m. If streets are to be shut down at 12:00 p.m. then that will affect church traffic. She further explained that the department was trying to look out for the businesses and churches who have people that might need to leave. Commissioner Gelbaugh asked if there was a way to close the streets to incoming traffic but let others out. Hooper replied that they would try to do the best they could.

Manager Dowling explained that generally lineup starts at 1:00 p.m. for a 3:00 p.m. parade because it takes a full 2 hours and this year the line-up has moved to Mark Watson Park. Town employees will need to report to work around 11:00 a.m. and street closing needs to start at 12:00 p.m. Staff needs adequate time to hold a briefing meeting, set up the detour, close Main Street from parking, cone the street for the crowd safety, and block off Mark Watson Park for the line-up to start at 1:00 p.m. Dowling stated that staff would make whatever the Board decided work this year but the setup, parking changes, and lineup takes time. The new route will be involved for parade participants and volunteers.

Commissioner Gelbaugh asked what would be done in future years if we make this change for the 2018 Christmas Parade. Mayor Sossamon replied that the board could discuss it early for next year. She further explained that the main reason for Sunday is safety and that she agrees with that after seeing the children in the street running out behind cars last year.

Manager Dowling asked George Brown if, after this year, it would work going forward for WCU to do the Sounds of the Season concert at 5:00 p.m. so the parade could be held at 3:00 p.m. in the future. The 3:00 p.m. time has worked well for the Christmas parade for many years. He could not answer that question because he didn't know all the logistics that go into planning the event, but he would definitely explore the idea.

*Commissioner Nestler commented that for this year he thought it was fine to change the time. Commissioner Nestler made a motion to change the time of the 2018 Christmas Parade from 3:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.*

**CHRISTMAS PARADE-FLOAT DISCUSSION:** Commissioner reported that she and Commissioner Gelbaugh have been trying to come up something that is cost effective for a float so that they did not have to use money. Hamilton told the board that Curtis Allison had agreed to let the Town to use his wagon for the parade. It can be pulled by tractor or truck. Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion for the board to use Curtis Allison's wagon as a float in the Christmas parade. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.

**ADJOURNMENT:** *Commissioner Hensley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 a.m. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.*

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Lynda Sossamon  
Mayor

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Amanda W. Murajda  
Town Clerk