

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Town of Sylva Board of Commissioners
August 27, 2020

The Town of Sylva Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on August 27, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. hosted in the Board Room of Municipal Hall, 83 Allen Street, Sylva, N.C. and held electronically by Zoom meeting.

PRESENT: Lynda Sossamon, Mayor
Barbara Hamilton, Vice-Mayor
Mary Gelbaugh, Commissioner
Ben Guiney, Commissioner
Greg McPherson, Commissioner
David Nestler, Commissioner

Michael Morgan, Interim Town Manager
Amanda Murajda, Town Clerk
Eric Ridenour, Town Attorney

ABSENT:

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

STAFF PRESENT: Lynn Bryant (Finance Officer), Chris Hatton (Police Chief) and Jake Scott (Public Works Director).

VISITORS: Melissa McKnight (Jackson County Health Department).

AGENDA: *Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to amend the agenda and add an ordinance amendment for outdoor sidewalk dining in the B-1 Main Street district. Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.*

CONSENT AGENDA: *Commissioner Hamilton made a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Christine Taber addressed the board about CDC guidelines on wearing masks during the pandemic and added that businesses needed to abide by the rules.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Sossamon reminded everyone to participate in the 2020 Census as it was very important to funding in communities.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT: Commissioner Gelbaugh noted that she sympathized with parents during the virtual school classes students now have. Commissioner Nestler commended WCU on their response to racial acts on campus. He would like to request the District Attorney's office do a presentation on an upcoming agenda. He also requested a discussion be added to the next agenda regarding the CARES Act funding. Commissioner McPherson noted that he was proud of WCU for their stance on the racial acts that occurred on campus. Commissioner Guiney echoed Nestler and McPherson on WCU. He thanked Mike Morgan for talking with Main Spring about the use of bicycles at Pinnacle Park and Black Rock Creek. He requested that the Town look at umbrellas for the newly installed tables around town. Commissioner Hamilton reminded everyone to continue donations to the Community Table and to visit Harold's Supermarket. She thanked the police department for their work.

MANAGERS REPORT: Interim Manager Mike Morgan reported that North Carolina is 37th in the nation with census response and stands to lose significant funding. Jackson County is 98th in the state of 100 counties in response rate. Sylva has a response rate of 46.8% and is 365th out of 551 municipalities. He reminded everyone to please participate in the 2020 census. Morgan added that tables have been added to Bridge Park and the pocket part on Allen Street to assist businesses with outdoor dining.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT: Jake Scott reported that he was looking at purchasing water barricades and fencing panels to assist with events. The 2019-2020 Solid Waster report will be submitted in the next week. Scott

will be working with the Chamber and Rotary Club on a volunteer day. He is waiting on design estimates for repairs on Allen Street.

POLICE DEPARTMENT: Chris Hatton reported on department statistics. The department received new respirators that were greatly needed.

PLANNING BOARD REPORT: The August meeting was cancelled because of the virus.

TWSA REPORT: Commissioner Nestler noted that TWSA extended their policy on disconnections.

NEW BUSINESS

JACKSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT—CORONAVIRUS UPDATE: Melissa McKnight gave an update to the board on the Coronavirus Pandemic both locally and at the state level.

RESOLUTIONS FOR EVENT STREET CLOSURES

- (A) **EVENT RESOLUTION—WALK FOR HOPE:** A request has been made by the Sylva Police Department to close Main Street for the purpose of having a Walk for Hope celebration for breast cancer awareness on October 10, 2020. *Commissioner Hamilton made a motion to approve the temporary street closure. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.*
- (B) **EVENT RESOLUTION—TREAT STREET:** A request has been made by the Main Street Sylva Association to close Main Street for the purpose of having a “Treat Street” festival for Halloween on October 31, 2020. *Commissioner Guiney made a motion to approve the temporary street closure. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.*
- (C) **PARADE RESOLUTION—VETERAN’ DAY PARADE:** A request has been made by the local Veterans chapter to close Main Street for the purpose of having a parade on November 7, 2020. *Commissioner Hamilton made a motion to approve the temporary street closure. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.*
- (D) **PARADE RESOLUTION—CHRISTMAS PARADE:** A request has been made by the Main Street Sylva Association to close Main Street for the purpose of having a Christmas parade on December 6, 2020. *Commissioner Gelbaugh made a motion to approve the temporary street closure. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.*
- (E) **EVENT RESOLUTION—GREENING UP THE MOUNTAINS:** A request has been made by the Main Street Sylva Association to close Main Street for the purpose of having the Greening Up the Mountains festival on April 24, 2021. *Commissioner McPherson made a motion to approve the temporary street closure. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.*

ZONING REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS—UPDATE TO THE TOWN OF SYLVA ZONING AND SUBDIVISION ORDINANCES: Mike Morgan reported that the Town received 2 proposals for the project. Withers Ravenel submitted a proposal for \$25,250 with a 6-month time frame and J Turner Consulting submitted a proposal for \$57,300 and a 1-year time frame. The Planning Department has reviewed both and recommends using Withers Ravenel. *Commissioner Hamilton made a motion to approve the resolution and accept the recommendation of Withers Ravenel and authorize the Town Manager to enter into contract with them. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

ORDINANCE AMENDMENT SECTION 30-14; STREETS AND SIDEWALKS ALLOWING SIDEWALK DINING: Mike Morgan explained that this amendment is temporary and for the use of restaurants in the B-1 district. *Commissioner Guiney made a motion to approve the ordinance amendment. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.*

DISCUSSION OF JACKSON COUNTY’S ACTION ON THE REMOVAL OF CONFEDERATE STATUTE: Commissioner Nestler commented that the statute is a safety concern and the town should take a stand for public safety. He believes that Chapter 19 of the NCGS explains nuisances and that the town should declare it as

so. Nestler added that he had a proposed resolution that he would like considered. Commissioner McPherson added that he would support the nuisance idea. Commissioner Guiney noted that he believes it does meet the definition of a nuisance. Commissioner Hamilton explained that she is still against the removal but does not like the safety issues. Commissioner Nestler read his proposed resolution to the board and will forward to staff to review for the next board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: *Commissioner Guiney made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 a.m. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.*

Lynda Sossamon
Mayor

Amanda W. Murajda
Town Clerk