



TOWN OF WEBSTER
February 2, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes

The Webster Board of Commissioners met via Zoom on Wednesday, February 2, 2022, at 5:15 p.m. for the regularly scheduled monthly board meeting.

Members/Staff Present: Mayor Tracy Rodes; Vice Mayor Leigh Anne Young, Commissioners Dale Collins, Allen Davis, Kelly Donaldson, Danell Moses; Town Clerk Debbie Coffey; Town Attorney Will Morgan

Absent: None

Public Present: None

Call to Order/Ethics Statement: Mayor Tracy Rodes called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. and read the Ethics Statement. No board member expressed any conflict of interest.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Approval of Agenda:

MOTION: Commissioner Davis moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Donaldson seconded. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the January 5, 2022, Board Meeting were emailed prior to the meeting for review.

MOTION: Commissioner Young moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Davis seconded. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Financial Report:

December financial statements were provided prior to the meeting. January transactions currently include income of \$32,881.48 and expenses of \$4,060.63. Account balances as of today are:

\$203,104.46 - Elite Checking
\$ 85,519.73 - Elite Plus Money Market

MOTION: Commissioner Young moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Moses seconded. Motion carried.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mayor's Report:

- Major Shannon Queen with the JCSO has received an electronic speed sign for Webster from the Governor's Highway Safety Program grant. Steven Buchanan of NC DOT has been contacted to assist in choosing the best location according to DOT regulations. Chris Lee from NC DOT has been contacted for a determination on the classification and to request the encroachment agreement if necessary.
- Mayor Rodes and Attorney Morgan have discussed the need to organize ordinances on the Town website for a more user friendly experience. Commissioner



Young has assisted in reforming some of the links. Attorney Morgan will work on cleaning up the adopted ordinances to remove strike throughs to update the document.

- Mayor Rodes has emailed Barbara and Miller Jones who attended last month's meeting concerning their property. She suggested that they contact the county Tax Office with their concerns about their property valuation.
- Justin Woodard of Elite Landscaping has emailed his customers to be aware of a price increase for the coming mowing season.
- JCSO Officer Josh Yopp wrote seven citations during the month of January, six were speeding violations ranging from 45 to 53 MPH in a 25 MPH zone, and one for no operator's license. JCSO Officer Matt Hawkins has not turned in his January report yet.
- Mayor Rodes has removed the seasonal decor and noted that decorating for holidays would be a good volunteer opportunity for anyone wishing to serve in that capacity. She also reported that litter is still an ongoing issue along Webster Road.
- Commissioner Young reported a broken street light on North River Road, which Duke Energy repaired within 48 hours of the report.
- Jackson County reported one building permit issued for an accessory building in Webster for the month of December.
- The NCLM is offering on-demand ethics training for all recently elected officials. The town will reimburse the \$60 registration fee for everyone who takes the course.
- The TWSA Annual meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 1 via Zoom. Mayor Rodes also reported voting no in a recent meeting to remove several capital projects from the books based on not having enough information on a project listed for Webster.
- Covid wastewater reports from TWSA show cases have quadrupled in the past two weeks. Jackson County currently reports 8,542 total cases with 81 residents having died from the virus.
- At the Mountain Projects meeting for January, three additional affordable modular housing units were approved for Bethel Village in Haywood County, with two having been completed. The Jackson County project on 2nd Avenue has broken ground. A donation of 138 acres in the Fines Creek area was received by Mountain Projects. This property, estimated to be worth \$2 million can be liquidated, with proceeds from the sale used to fund additional affordable housing. It was also noted that Head Start programs are struggling with employment during the pandemic, and retention stipends were approved to help meet these needs.
- At the January RPO-TAC meeting, Tammy Germiller spoke about Municipal and School Transportation Assistance projects. They currently have a backlog of 16 school projects due to Covid/lack of staffing. Maggie Woods from the Institute for Emerging Issues addressed broadband grants for municipalities. At the Southwestern Commission Becca Scott has been promoted to Community & Economic Grant Writer. Ronnie Beale noted primary elections have been delayed until June 7th due to redistricting challenges.
- Mayor Rodes met with Ed Paulus, Daniel Manring of TWSA, and Commissioner Collins to view the Mill Creek erosion issues on the Paulus property. Commissioner Collins has agreed to assist Mr. Paulus in applying for a private grant to mitigate stream bank erosion.



- Following a citizen's concern about political signs, Commissioner Davis measured several and determined that they are within the 16 square foot requirements and are located 15 feet from the right-of-way.
- The Chamber of Commerce needs additional Historic Webster Walk brochures printed. Commissioner Donaldson agreed to work on getting quotes for the reprints.
- It was the consensus of the Board to have the Annual Work Session on Friday, March 18th from 1:00 until 3:00. March 25 was set for a backup date. Commissioner Moses offered a SCC classroom as a possible meeting venue if we opt to meet in person.
- Mayor Rodes had a conversation with County Commissioner Tom Stribling to familiarize him with our efforts and plans for a community pocket park and pavilion, and to ask for his support as our representative.

Council Members' and Clerk's Report

- Commissioner Young attended the January Parks and Greenways Committee meeting. A family bike event is scheduled for March 6th from 1:00 until 3:00 at the Greenway, and the Tuck Cleanup event is scheduled for April 23rd.
- Commissioner Collins noted that Trout Unlimited is planning a cleanup event for North and South River Road with the date yet to be determined.

OLD BUSINESS

- 1. Land Use Plan:** Planning Board Chair Sara Stahlman submitted the final draft for review last week. This is a culmination of many hours of work on the part of the Planning Board, who are commended for their dedicated efforts in completing the Plan. Commissioner Young received positive feedback from the Buchanan family on the level of community involvement. It was the consensus of the board to provide a thank you note with Baxley Chocolates until such a time as a picnic luncheon to celebrate the accomplishment of the Plan is feasible.

MOTION: Commissioner Moses moved to approve the Webster Land Use Plan, with allowances for corrections of grammatical and typographical errors. Commissioner Donaldson seconded. Motion carried.

- 2. ARPA Funding:** Final guidelines have been released from the Department of Treasury. Smaller municipalities may claim an one-time exemption of up to \$10,000,000 for lost revenue and use funds for capital projects that are not related to economic development. This may allow Webster funds to be used for the proposed park at the Board of Education ball field. Several points will need to be clarified before transferring funds for this use. Rusty Ellis responded to an email from Mayor Rodes that Jackson County Parks and Recreation would need to lease the land from the Jackson County Board of Education. He noted that he had a bottle filling station and swing set available, and other details, such as the location and construction of the pavilion will be addressed at a later date.
- 3. Jackson County Municipal Grant:** The grant was approved, and the tables and benches will be ordered within the next few days.



NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Electronic Speed Sign:** Discussed in Mayor’s Report.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Commissioner Moses moved to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 2, 2022, via Zoom Meeting at 5:15 pm.

Tracy Rodes, Mayor

Debbie Coffey, Town Clerk