

TOWN OF WEBSTER
January 10, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes



The Webster Board of Commissioners met at Webster Town Hall, located at 1411 Webster Rd., on Wednesday, January 10, 2024, 5:30 p.m. for the January Commissioners Meeting.

Members/Staff Present: Mayor Tracy Rodes, Commissioners Leigh Anne Young, Brandon Core, Dale Collins and Allen Davis, Town Attorney Will Morgan, and Town Clerk Stephanie Gibson.

Members/Staff Absent: Commissioner Danell Moses

Public Present: Billie Jo Bryson, Rick Fulton, Bob Cochran, Neal Morgan, Brad Reisinger and Julie VanLeuven

Call to Order/Ethics Statement: Mayor Tracy Rodes called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and read the Ethics Statement. No board member expressed any conflict of interest.

Approval of Agenda:

MOTION: Vice Mayor Young moved to approve the agenda, Commissioner Core seconded. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for December 6, 2023 were emailed prior to the meeting for review.

MOTION: Commissioner Davis moved to approve the December Minutes as presented. Commissioner Collins seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Financial Report: Financial statements for December were emailed prior to the meeting for review. December transactions currently include income of \$42,318.68 and expenses of \$9,112.32. ARPA funds remaining as of December 31, 2023, are \$0.00. Account balances as of December 31 are:

\$126,905.86 - First Bank Business Essentials

\$307,110.04 - First Bank Money Market

MOTION: Commissioner Davis moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Core seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. BOA Reappointment: Brad Reisinger

MOTION: Vice Mayor Young moved to appoint Brad Reisinger to the Board of Adjustments, Commissioner Core seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Oaths of Office for Board of Adjustment Members: Rick Fulton, Julie VanLeuven, Brad Reisinger, Bob Cochran, and Neal Morgan, were administered oaths of office by Mayor Rodes.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Proposed Short-Term Rental (STR) Draft Amendment: Vice Mayor Young read a letter from Planning Board Chair, Sara Stahlman, to relay that the Planning Board was in support of maintaining the language, reviewed and adjusted by our legal counsel, in the draft ordinance adjustments to address Short-Term Rentals in Webster. It was noted that the legal review resulted in minor adjustments, which they endorsed. The review indicates that the ordinance aligns with legal frameworks and maintains the intention of the board. The Planning Board is satisfied with the current language of the exemption provision concerning changes in property ownership. The board encourages the Town to continue the process of adopting this ordinance, including a community forum, without further delay.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER YOUNG moved to approve the draft STR zoning amendment. Commissioner Davis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Webster Signage: Mayor Rodes said that the proposed welcome sign is about 21 inches wider than the current sign and that DOT input is needed. Commissioners discussed challenges at the site of the existing sign near the Dept on Aging. The roadside site is located in a storm water drainage ditch that often has standing water and collects trash. There was discussion about alternate placement of the new sign and whether the signs should be printed on both sides. Consensus was to purchase two single sided signs, with painted backs, after receiving input from DOT. The quote for a single sided sign was estimated to be \$2,095./ea. installed.

MOTION: Commissioner Core moved to appropriate funds to purchase two single sided Webster welcome signs from Signs and Designs, to replace the two existing signs contingent upon DOT approval, for a total of \$4,190.12 plus the cost of two cypress posts if needed. Commissioner Collins seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Planning Board Topics: There was discussion about holding a joint meeting with the Planning Board to get their recommendations for input on budgetary items, and to review progress made regarding land use goals.

Mayor Rodes proposed holding a February work session to discuss potential plans and projects that could affect the upcoming budget. Potential topics to be discussed include legal needs, review of Town ordinances, potential partnerships, community events, and grant opportunities. Board members discussed possible dates for planning sessions and held dates open for the mornings of February 9th and February 16th. March 15th and March 22nd were discussed as potential dates for a budget planning session.

Mayor Rodes also suggested holding dates for a Budget planning meeting in March, consensus was to hold the mornings of March 15th and March 22nd and check with Commissioner Moses about her schedule.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mayor's Report:

- **SWCD (SCDC) Regional Center Closures:** Mayor Rodes said she had spoken with the SCDC Director, and said that there may be an opportunity for some type of partnership. Board consensus was for Mayor Rodes to continue those discussions and to explore potential partnerships, possibly with future assistance from the SWC.
- **Town Hall Property Management:** Mayor Rodes said that a new washer for the apartment was purchased by Blue Ridge Rentals to replace the broken one. They will deduct the cost of \$618

from future owner payments. She asked Stephanie to ask Bronwyn about financial accounting for the expense.

- **DOT Approval for Signage:** Mayor Rodes reached out to Steven Buchanan to touch base about the previous MOA paperwork submitted and asked if he had any idea where we were in that approval process as far as a projected timeline. Mayor Rodes also told him that we are considering replacing the Webster Welcome signs. She attached the proposal the board is considering, with dimensions, to see if he thinks the size will work. Mr. Buchanan said that he copied Chirs Lee's office, which handles the encroachment approvals. He said that his office did not have an issue with the pedestrian signs. He said that the welcome signs are not the typical type his office handles, however, as long as the signs are simply replacements and the District approves, his office does not have an issue.
- **Will Morgan:** replied that he could attend our rescheduled meeting on January 10th but would have to leave following the discussion of the draft STR because he had a previous engagement.
- **Bronwyn Burleson:** will plan to file our W2s and 1099s again this year. This is an additional service not included in the audit.
- **Cell Service:** We now have 5G service, but no significant increase in cell signal strength. Mayor Rodes will check with John Jeleniewski to see if the new cell tower is fully operational.
- **Traffic Update:** Mayor Rodes emailed the December speed sign data reports to be included in the Board agenda packets. Matt wrote 2 warnings last month and Josh wrote 2 state citations for speeding (53/25 and 48/25), 3 warnings for speed in November, and 2 warnings for speed in December.
- **Resident Concern:** Mayor Rodes had a discussion with an ETJ resident about development in the ETJ on North River Road. He thinks that the road setback isn't consistent with our ordinances, and said that 8 cabins have been permitted on a parcel smaller than 8 acres. Rodes will speak with county zoning enforcement about this concern.

Council Members' and Clerk's Report:

Traffic Safety Committee Report: The Traffic Committee did not have a meeting in December.

Historic Preservation Caroling Event: Mayor Rodes thanked Commissioner Core for his work and that of the Historical Preservation Society with Caroling event on December 16. Appreciation to Commissioner Young, and other volunteers, was also expressed for putting out luminaries for the event.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Commissioner Core moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Next Meetings: Public Hearing/Regular Meeting: Wednesday February 7, 2024, at 5:30 pm, Webster Town Hall, 1411 Webster Rd.

Tracy Rodes, Mayor

Stephanie Gibson, Town Clerk