

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING HELD DECEMBER 12, 2022

Face coverings were optional for the December 12, 2022, Council meeting but all attendees were encouraged to wear face coverings, and to social distance from other attendees who are not members of the same household, regardless of vaccination status. Individuals in high-risk groups, individuals who are completing isolation or were recently exposed, and residents at risk of infection should continue to wear face coverings in all public indoor settings.

SPECIAL MEETING The Granite Falls Town Council held a Special Meeting on Monday, December 12, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Administrative Building.

PRESENT The following members of the governing body were present: Mayor Dr. Caryl B. Burns and Council Members Ritch Bolick, Larry Knight, Jim Mackie, Mike Mackie, Martin Townsend, and Tracy Townsend.

ABSENT The following member of the governing body was absent: None

STAFF PRESENT The following staff members attended the meeting: Town Manager Jerry Church, Town Attorney Bruce Cannon, Finance Officer Ashley Presnell, Town Planner Greg Wilson, and Assistant Police Chief Brine Branham.

VISITORS Western Piedmont Council of Governments Assistant Executive Director Sherry Long

NEWS MEDIA No news media attended the meeting.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER Mayor Dr. Caryl B. Burns called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present.

INVOCATION Councilmember Tracy Townsend led in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Councilmember Martin Townsend led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT Councilmember Jim Mackie read the Conflict-of-Interest Statement.

*In accordance with the State Government Ethics Act, it is the duty of every Council member to avoid both conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflicts. Does any Council member have any known conflict of interest or appearance of conflicts with respect to any matters coming before the Council today? If so, please identify the conflict or appearance of conflict and refrain from any undue participation in the particular matters involved.
(N.C.G.S. 14-234, N.C.G.S. 160A-479.11, & N.C.G.S. 160D-109)*

APPROVAL OF AGENDA Martin Townsend made a motion the Council approve the agenda as presented. Larry Knight seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2022 Tracy Townsend made a motion the Council approve the minutes from the special meeting held Tuesday, November 29, 2022 as presented. Larry Knight seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote.

TOWN ATTORNEY REPORT Town Attorney Bruce Cannon did not have a report.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD No one attended the meeting to speak during the Public Comment period.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PUBLIC HEARING ON REDUCING THE SPEED LIMIT ON ALL TOWN MAINTAINED STREETS THAT DO NOT HAVE ESTABLISHED SPEED LIMITS FROM 35 MILES PER HOUR TO 25 MILES PER HOUR (MPH) CALLED TO ORDER Mayor Dr. Caryl B. Burns called to order a public hearing on a proposed change to the Town Code of Ordinances to reduce the speed limit on streets that do not have established speed limits from 35 MPH to 25 MPH. Reducing the speed limit on these streets requires a change to the Town Code of Ordinances Title VII: Traffic Code, Chapter 72. Traffic Schedule IV, Speed Limits.(A) and (C) (3).

The public hearing was duly noticed by publishing a notice in the News Topic as required under NC General Statutes.

No one attended the public hearing to speak.

PUBLIC HEARING ON REDUCING THE SPEED LIMIT ON ALL TOWN MAINTAINED STREETS THAT DO NOT HAVE ESTABLISHED SPEED LIMITS FROM 35 MILES PER HOUR TO 25 MILES PER HOUR (MPH) CLOSED Mayor Burns closed the public hearing on reducing the speed limit on all Town maintained streets that do not have established speed limits from 35 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour.

PUBLIC HEARING ON ASSESSMENT AGAINST REAL PROPERTY OF OWNERS FAILING TO PAY INVOICES TO THE TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS CALLED TO ORDER Mayor Burns called to order a public hearing on the preliminary assessment roll against real property owners failing to pay invoices to the Town of Granite Falls for services and fines rendered by the Town to abate public nuisances on said real property. These abatement services consisted of mowing grass and/or removing refuse or solid waste and/or demolition of declared nuisance structures, and/or the issuance of fines for failure to abate nuisances, in accordance with Town Ordinances. At the public hearing, all real property owners of said property as well as other residents of the Town were allowed to speak.

The public hearing was duly noticed by publishing a notice in the News Topic as required under NC General Statutes.

No one attended the public to speak

PUBLIC HEARING ON ASSESSMENT AGAINST REAL PROPERTY OF OWNERS FAILING TO PAY INVOICES TO THE TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS CLOSED

Mayor Burns closed the public hearing on assessment against real property of owners failing to pay invoices to the Town of Granite Falls.

PUBLIC HEARING TO RECEIVE CITIZEN INPUT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) APPLICATIONS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Burns called to order a public hearing to receive citizen input in the development of CDBG applications for the upcoming year. CDBG funds may be used for a variety of different activities including Neighborhood Revitalization (NR), Economic Development (ED), and Demolition projects. Sherry Long, Assistant Executive Director with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG), attended the meeting to answer questions about the citizen input process and questions about the CDBG funds.

Ms. Long gave the Council information on the CDBG. She stated that this is the first public hearing of two needed. She will be presenting the projects at the next public hearing. The Town has tentatively been awarded the grant amount.

The public hearing was duly noticed by publishing a notice in the News Topic as required under NC General Statutes.

No one attended the public hearing to speak.

PUBLIC HEARING TO RECEIVE CITIZEN INPUT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) APPLICATIONS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR CLOSED

Mayor Burns closed the public hearing to receive citizen's input for the development of CDBG applications for the upcoming year.

NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

ORDINANCE #373 TO REDUCE THE SPEED LIMIT ON ALL TOWN MAINTAINED STREETS THAT DO NOT HAVE ESTABLISHED SPEED LIMITS FROM 35 MILES PER HOUR TO 25 MILES PER HOUR (MPH) APPROVED

The Council was requested to approve Ordinance #373 which reduces the speed limit on all Town maintained streets that do not have established speed limits from 35 MPH to 25 MPH.

Larry Knight made a motion the Council approve Ordinance #373 as requested. Martin Townsend seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of Ordinance #373 is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

ASSESSMENTS AND/OR DISCOUNTS FROM THE PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT ROLL APPROVED The Council was requested to approve the preliminary assessment roll, after determining whether or not to allow any discounts from the assessment roll, against real property of owners failing to pay invoices to the Town of Granite Falls for services rendered by the Town to abate public nuisances, or fines to abate nuisances, on said real property. These abatement services consisted of mowing grass and/or removing refuse or solid waste and/or demolition of declared nuisance structures, and/or the issuance of fines for failure to abate nuisances, in accordance with Town Ordinances.

Tracy Townsend made a motion the Council approve the preliminary assessment roll with no discounts as requested. Mike Mackie seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the preliminary assessment roll is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

CDBG NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION GRANT The NC Department of Commerce Rural Economic Development Division (REDD) has officially notified the Town that we have been awarded \$4,999,000 in CDBG funds for round two of the NR program. One of the stipulations is that the Town must hold two public hearings to obtain public input for this award. Sherry Long, Assistant Executive Director with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG), attended the meeting to answer questions about the CDBG NR funding.

FINANCIAL REPORT The financial dashboard for the five months ended November 30, 2022, was presented for the Council's review. This report represents 42% of the current 2022 - 2023 fiscal year budget. Also presented for Council review was an analysis of the current year's sales tax revenue and current property tax revenue versus prior year and budgeted revenues. Copies of the reports are attached and are hereby made a part of these minutes..

PROGRESSIVE ENGINEERING CONTRACT APPROVED The Council was requested to approve the Engineering Services Contract with Progressive Engineering Consultants, Inc. for the calendar year 2023 and to authorize the Town Manager to execute the contract on behalf of the Town. The contract establishes compensation, obligations, and insurance requirements, etc. The 2023 rates reflect a 10% increase from the previous year's rates which brings the average rate increase for the past 12 years to 2.45%. Note: there have been no rate increases for the past three years.

Mike Mackie made a motion the Council approve the contract and authorize the Town Manager to execute the contract on behalf of the Town as requested. Larry Knight seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the contract is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (NC DOT) RESOLUTION TO REDUCE SPEED LIMIT ON THE NC DOT PORTIONS OF WEST HIGHLAND AVENUE/GRANDVIEW STREET (SR 1108) FROM 35 TO 25 MILES PER HOUR (MPH) APPROVED On October 17, 2022, the Council approved Ordinance #370 which amended the Town Code of Ordinances and reduced the speed limit on West

Highland Avenue/Grandview Street, including the NC DOT portions of these streets, from 35 MPH to 25 MPH. The NC DOT requires the Town to complete a Municipal Certification for NC DOT approval before the reduced speed limit becomes effective for the NC DOT portions of these streets.

Martin Townsend made a motion the Council approve the NC DOT Municipal Certification as requested. Jim Mackie seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the certification is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

PROPERTYROOM.COM FOR ONLINE AUCTION PLATFORM AND SERVICES FOR THE TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT APPROVED In 2010, the Council approved the use of govdeals.com (Gov Deals) to dispose of Town excess and obsolete Town property. The Town is still successfully using Gov Deals and has no plans to discontinue using Gov Deals, but Gov Deals does not provide services for the disposition of Town owned firearms and of evidence collected that is no longer needed by the Police Department. Police Chief Chris Jenkins requested the Council approve using PROPERTYROOM.com to dispose of these types of items mentioned above to expedite the disposition of these items while maintaining the “chain of custody” required by law.

Jim Mackie made a motion the Council approve use of PROPERTYROOM.com by the Town of Granite Falls Police Department and approve Town Manager Jerry Church to execute all agreements required to contract with PROPERTYROOM.com on behalf of the Town. Ritch Bolick seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. Information on PROPERTYROOM.com is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

AGREEMENT FOR THE GRANITE FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT (GFPD) TO PROVIDE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO) TO GRANITE FALLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (GFES) APPROVED The Council was requested to approve an agreement between the Caldwell County Board of Education (School Board) and the (GFPD) for the GFPD to provide a School Resource Officer (SRO) for Granite Falls Elementary School (GFES). The School Board reimburses the GFPD for the cost of providing the SRO for GFES. The Council was also requested to authorize the Town Manager to sign this agreement on behalf of the Town. Note: The actual dollar amount of the contract can't be finalized until the GFES SRO is hired by the Town.

Martin Townsend made a motion the Council approve the agreement and authorize the Town Manager to sign the agreement on behalf of the Town. Jim Mackie seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the agreement is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

AMENDED EMPLOYEE JOB GRADES, CLASSIFICATIONS AND PAY RANGES FOR FISCAL 2022-2023 APPROVED Town Manager Jerry Church requested the Council to approve the amended attached schedule recommending employee job grades, classifications and pay ranges for fiscal year 2022-2023. Town Manager Church updated this schedule to include the addition of the SRO at GFES.

Martin Townsend made a motion the Council approve the amended schedule as requested. Jim Mackie seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the amended schedule is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

TOWN HOLIDAY SCHEDULE The Town of Granite Falls Administrative Office, the Recreation Center, and the Public Works and Electric Departments will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

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| Christmas | Friday, Monday, & Tuesday, December 23 rd , 26 th , & 27 th |
| New Year's Day | Monday, January 2 nd |
| Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day | Monday, January 16 th |

The Police and Fire Departments will be on duty as scheduled and employees that are not scheduled to get all holidays off will be paid holiday pay at their regular rate of pay for the holidays regardless of whether they work those days. The Water and Wastewater Facilities will be on duty as scheduled and those employees scheduled to work these holidays receive alternate time off with pay. Republic Services will pick up garbage and recycling on their regular schedule except for Christmas Day.

MANAGER UPDATE Town Manager Jerry Church updated the Council on the following:

- 1) Enclosed with the Council's agenda package was a calendar of events through the end of January 2024. Revisions since the last calendar were highlighted in yellow.

Note: Members of the Town Council may attend events that are, or are not, sponsored by the Town but there will be no Council business conducted at any of these events in instances where a quorum of the Council may be present.

- 2) An Open House for the Duke Street Cottages is scheduled for Friday, December 30th from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Lunch will be served at the Granite Falls Brewing Company following the Open House.
- 3) Manager Church informed the Council of the passing of former Councilmember Inez Clay. A donation will be made to Concord Baptist Church in her memory.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. WPCOG Policy Board
2. Caldwell County Railroad Policy Board
3. Sales Tax Reinvestment Committee
4. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Technical Coordinating
5. Caldwell County Economic Development Commission (EDC)
6. NC Municipal Power Agency # 1 Board of Commissioners
7. Caldwell County Manager's bi-monthly meeting

INFORMATION ITEMS/REPORTS

1. The Recreation Advisory Board will not meet in January.
2. The Merchants' Association will not meet in January.
3. The History Committee will meet on Tuesday, January 17th at 2:00 p.m. at the History Museum.
4. The Planning Board will not meet in December but will meet on Tuesday, January 24th at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Room.
5. The Board of Adjustment will not meet in December but will meet on Wednesday, January 11th at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Room.
6. The WPCOG MPO/RPO will meet on Wednesday, December 14th and on Wednesday, January 25th at 1:00 p.m. at the WPCOG.
7. The ABC Board will meet Monday, January 9th at 5:30 p.m. at the ABC Store.

COUNCIL GOES INTO CLOSED SESSION

Jim Mackie made a motion under N.C. General Statute 143-318.11 (3) the Council shall hold a closed session to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged. Larry Knight seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote.

COUNCIL GOES OUT OF CLOSED SESSION Mike Mackie made a motion the Council go out of closed session. Jim Mackie seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote.

MEETING ADJOURNED Mike Mackie made a motion the Council adjourn the meeting. Larry Knight seconded the motion, with a unanimous affirmative vote.