

Town of Walden  
Meeting Minutes  
September 12, 2023  
6:30 PM

**MAYOR'S PROCLAMATION TO EAGLE SCOUT JACKSON LOCKERY AND TROOP #60 WITH TROOP LEADER JASON LOCKERY**

Mayor Lee Davis read the proclamation for Eagle Scout Jackson Lockery, who led the reconstruction of the Mabbitt Springs Trail bridge. The crowd responded to the proclamation with a standing ovation.

**PUBLIC HEARING – BEER BOARD APPLICATION – KAREN STONE, WALDEN'S RIDGE CIVIC LEAGUE**

Ms. Karen Stone summarized the reason for this application – a two-day barbeque event featuring music and family activities. This event will be held on September 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023. There were no questions or comments from the public.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION FOR A BEER PERMIT BY WALDEN'S RIDGE CIVIC LEAGUE, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

**PUBLIC HEARING – BEER BOARD APPLICATION – BARBARA WOMACK – ROCK THE RIDGE**

Ms. Barbara Womack summarized this application – an environmental festival called "Rock the Ridge." It will be held on 09/16/2023 at the Walden's Ridge Civic League. There were no questions or comments from the public.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION FOR A BEER PERMIT FOR THE "ROCK THE RIDGE" FESTIVAL, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

**PUBLIC HEARING – ORDINANCE #2023-357, AMENDING TITLE I, CHAPTER 1, SECTION 1-103, GENERAL RULES OF ORDER**

Mayor Lee Davis opened the public hearing to amend the general rules of order and invited the audience to speak. There were no questions or comments from the public. The public hearing was adjourned.

**PUBLIC HEARING ORDINANCE #2023-358, AIR POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD**

Mayor Lee Davis opened the public hearing regarding the Air Pollution Control Board. Attorney Jack Benson highlighted a letter from the State of Tennessee, which requires this update. Mayor Davis invited the audience to speak. There were no questions or comments from the public. The public hearing was adjourned.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO TAKE NEW BUSINESS ITEM #1 OUT OF ORDER, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT THEN MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2023-358, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

### CALL TO ORDER OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

Mayor Lee Davis called the regular monthly meeting of the Town of Walden to order.

The following interested citizens joined their neighbors for the regular monthly meeting: Lynn Whisman, Stuart Bush, Mark and Mardi Longley, Joe and Margha Davis, Dawson Wheeler, Kristin Allen, the Lockery family (Jason, Kim, Jackson, and Mackenzie), Richard and Wilma Lockery, WL Goodman, Joye Wessells, Arthur Wessells, Lawrence Sparks, John Argo, Steven Bush, Bill and Jean Trohanis, Linda Collins, Winston Robbins, Kirby Yost, Jason Farmer, Mickey Robbins, Karen Stone, Carrie Ashton, Kristie Barnes, Jack Benson, Alan Frazier, Joe Robbins, Jr., Thomas Gallant, Barbara Womack, Bill Thornton, and David Schmidt.

### PRAYER AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

Town Recorder Stacy Stewart opened the meeting with a prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Eagle Scout Jackson Lockery.

### ROLL CALL

Town Recorder Stacy Stewart called the roll and noted the presence of Mayor Lee Davis, Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt, and Alderwoman Angela Cassidy. Town Attorney Sam Elliott was also present.

### APPROVAL / CORRECTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Mayor Lee Davis opened this item for discussion or a motion to approve. Alderwoman Angela Cassidy voiced her concerns regarding recorded statements made by the Walden Planning Commission (WPC) Chairman at the August 8, 2023 regular meeting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. These comments were relative to whether or not the WPC should also serve as the Design Review Board for a period of one year. Specifically, on page 3 of the minutes, it is stated that "Tim Hancock, Chairman of the WPC, was asked to speak. He noted that the WPC voted unanimously at their last meeting to recommend the resolution the Board is considering today." Alderwoman Cassidy verified that she has revisited the minutes of the WPC for the previous two months, and no formal motion or vote on this matter was taken. Mayor Davis suggested that concerns regarding this discrepancy be brought to the next WPC meeting.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 8, 2023, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

### REPORTS

Prior to beginning the reports, Mayor Lee Davis suggests that New Business Item #2 be moved up on the agenda due to the large number of attendees who are interested in this issue alone.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO TAKE NEW BUSINESS ITEM #2 OUT OF ORDER, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

NEW BUSINESS ITEM #2: CONSIDERATION OF FIRST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2023-359, AMENDING THE EXISTING WALDING ZONING ORDINANCE FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEFINING ADDITIONAL TERMS, AMENDING THE SPECIAL USES PERMITTED IN THE R-1 RESIDENTIAL ZONE, AMENDING THE USES PERMITTED AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR THE C-1 COMMERCIAL ZONE, ESTABLISHING THE TOWN CENTER BOUNDARY, AND ESTABLISHING REGULATIONS FOR THE

NEW TOWN CENTER-RESIDENTIAL (TC-R) AND TOWN CENTER-MIXED USE (TC-MU) ZONES AS RECOMMENDED BY WALDEN PLANNING COMMISSION.

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott opened the discussion by recommending that this item be tabled until the October meeting. Specifically, it is suggested that a public workshop be held with the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and Ashley Gates from the Southeast Tennessee Development District (SETD).

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO DEFER DISCUSSION ON ZONING AMENDMENTS UNTIL OCTOBER MEETING, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

Mayor Lee Davis clarified for the citizens that a public workshop would be held at 5:30 PM, prior to the October meeting. The purpose of this meeting is for the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to receive and discuss updates and recommendations from the SETD. This workshop will be open to the public, but public comments will not be taken during the workshop.

Following the workshop, a public hearing will occur. During this hearing, anyone wishing to share an opinion with the Board will be allowed to do so. Mayor Davis invited brief public comments.

A resident of the unincorporated portion of Hamilton County on the mountain asked if this rezoning has anything to do with the "Smart City" project. Mayor Davis clarified that this was not a Walden project. Hamilton County is involved with this, and Chip Baker is leading it.

Kristy Barnes asked why non-Walden residents are given an opportunity to speak. Mayor Davis noted that the entire mountain-top is part of a community, and he feels it is important to hear from all neighbors. Joye Wessells asked if even residents living in the city of Chattanooga would be allowed to speak, and this was affirmed. Walden resident Jared Anders also shared his concerns about non-Walden residents being heard.

1. POLICE

Hamilton County Sheriff's (HCS) Deputy Julian Chambers gave the report. From 08/12/2023 through 09/12/203, the HCS Office responded to 81 calls for service. Ten arrests were made. 36 traffic stops were recorded, resulting in eight written citations, one written warning, and 27 verbal warnings. Deputy Chambers closed by noting the automobile accidents were down this past month.

2. FINANCIAL

The financial report, given by Stacy Stewart, is attached as an exhibit to these minutes

3. WRES

Mr. Bill Thornton, Chairman of the WRES Board, gave an update on emergency calls for the month of August. There were 40 total calls: 22 emergency medical, 6 fire, and 12 assist to citizens. Mr. Thornton reminded the audience to pay attention to the first fires burned in home fireplaces and to be aware of the dangers of chimney fires. He also reminded the citizens to change the batteries in their smoke detectors.

4. BACHMAN COMMUNITY CENTER

Ms. Kim Rackel reported for the Bachman Community Center (BCC). Ms. Rackel noted several announcements and ongoing successes for BCC, including:

- The thrift store at BCC has expanded and is continuing to be a financial success.
- The shed behind BCC is open 24/7 for collection of donations for the thrift store.
- The annual Holiday Open House will be on November 10, 2023.
- The annual Children's Shopping event will be on December 9, 2023.
- BCC's participation in the TN-127 yard sale was a record-breaking success this year.
- Please consider following BCC on social media or on their website.
- A reminder that the Mountain Opry is held at BCC on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of every month.
- There will be an open-mic night from 6:00 – 8:00 PM on 09/17/2023.
- The BCC Fall Festival will be on October 20, 2023.
- BCC will serve as the election location for the Fairmount Voting Precinct in 2024.

#### **5. WALDEN'S RIDGE CIVIC LEAGUE**

The Walden's Ridge Civic League report, given by Ms. Karen Stone, is attached as an exhibit to these minutes.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **1. CONSIDERATION OF THE FIRST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2023-358, AIR POLLUTION CONTROL BUREAU.**

(As noted at the bottom of page 1 of these minutes.)

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT THEN MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2023-358, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

#### **2. (SEE PAGES 2 AND 3 OF THESE MINUTES FOR SUMMARY OF NEW BUSINESS ITEM #2.)**

#### **3. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION #2023-597, MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH HAMILTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR THE USE OF OVERTIME POLICE.**

Mayor Lee Davis shared his recent discussion with Sheriff Austin Garrett and the HCSO's attorney. Currently, Walden has earmarked \$15,000 to pay for additional Sheriff's Deputy patrols. Sheriff Garrett is concerned that the cost to pay deputies for overtime would quickly drain these available funds. His recommendation is that Walden research using this money for traffic-calming devices instead.

#### **4. CONSIDERATION OF OCTOBER 10<sup>TH</sup> TOWN HALL MEETING DATE CHANGE.**

The regular October meetings would be on October 10<sup>th</sup>, but this Tuesday is during Fall Break for Hamilton County Schools. It is recommended to move the meeting to October 17<sup>th</sup> as a Special Called Meeting.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO CHANGE THE DATE FOR NEXT MONTH'S BOARD MEETING TO OCTOBER 17, 2023, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

#### **5. DISCUSSION ON FIREWORKS WITH TOWN LIMITS.**

Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt began this discussion, noting that she had asked for this issue to be placed on the agenda following a request from her neighbor. The neighbor noted several days of fireworks being

set off before and after holidays, and even late into the evenings. Attorney Sam Elliott noted that – while it is possible to create a much stricter ordinance to address the issue – it would be virtually unenforceable.

6. ANY OTHER NEW BUSINESS.

There is no other new business.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE #2023-357, AMENDING TITLE 1, CHAPTER 1, SECTION 1-103, GENERAL RULES OF ORDER.

There were no questions or discussion regarding this final reading.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE #2023-357, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

2. ANY OTHER UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

There is no other unfinished business.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITIZENS

1. Mr. Tony Wheeler noted that he will be giving a short presentation regarding coal on the mountain at the “Rock the Ridge” event. He will also be setting up several podcasts in the future, discussing coal and stormwater sewage information, among other topics. The podcasts should be available at the end of October.
2. Ms. Melissa Nimon wanted to bring attention to the “Fiddles and Vittles” event, occurring at McCoy Farm and Gardens on 10/15/2023. The event will be from 4:00 – 6:00 PM, and tickets are available on the website for \$45. Tickets include dinner and two drink tickets.
3. Ms. Margha Davis asked for clarification regarding the October 17<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. Mayor Lee Davis noted that a workshop including technical assistance from SETD will occur at 5:30. This meeting is open to the public. Public comments will be welcomed at the public hearing, which will be called to order at 6:30 PM. The special-called meeting will occur immediately following the adjournment of the public hearing.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 PM by Mayor Davis.

## **Walden's Ridge Civic League Report to the Town of Walden**

### **September 12, 2023**

Thank you for the opportunity to report on activities at the Walden's Ridge Civic League, and thank you for the Town's generous support.

Two important events are scheduled for this month in addition to Scriptorium Hall's Shakespeare Day that featured reading of a play followed by a period meal and dances by high schoolers on September 8.

*Rock the Ridge – Celebrate the Wild* will be this Saturday, September 16 from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. There is no admission charge. Come and buy native plants from vendors from GA, NC and TN. Over 20 environmental organizations can answer all your questions. Four experts will speak on important environmental topics. There will be music all day and food and drink for purchase. A special children's tent will feature fun activities and rescued animals to see.

*Smoke on the Mountain*, featuring a BBQ contest and an "Anything But BBQ" contest is the third of four seasonal programs this year. This event on Friday, September 29<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup> offers something for everyone in the family - hayrides, games, face painting, s'mores by the bonfire and more for the children, while adults can listen to some of the best bluegrass music in the area, including: the Graysin Slade Band and the Owen Saunders Family Band Friday night, while on Saturday, Slow Fuze Blues, Blue Cumberland and Low Down Revival will play. The BBQ weekend starts at 5 PM Friday and closes at 9:30 PM Saturday.

"For an event of this scale, which last year attracted more the 500 attendees, we are always looking for volunteers and sponsors," says Co-chair JoDe Estes. "The WRCL is such an important part of Signal Mountain's history, and we love that events like this make it relevant to families making even more memories here."

Generous sponsors to date include Pruett's Signal Mt. Market, Walden Plumbing, Ascension Living Alexian Village, Superior Air Systems, Krispy Crunchy Chicken / Discount Smoke Shop & Grocer, H & H Flooring, and CMC Chris Martin Construction. There is still time to enter the BBQ contest. Contact Mark Dwyer by text at 423-402-6245 or by email at [bbqwrcl@gmail.com](mailto:bbqwrcl@gmail.com).

WRCL continues to share our parking lots with Wayside Presbyterian and Signal Mt. Christian School. The Soccer Shots program for small children uses the field Saturdays and Tuesdays, while other soccer teams practice for free on a first-come-first-served basis.

We are still working on rehabilitating the concession area located in what is known as the Mt. Opry Annex. Reconstruction of the structural members and floor is complete; safe GFCI electric outlets are installed, and we are researching shelving, countertops, and appliances. A new 3-compartment sink will be in place soon.

White oak lumber for residing the building is already being sawn and delivered to the property. Encapsulation of part of the basement is underway so the wood can be stored and dried inside. Once all the trees are harvested, and the wood is sawn and dried, the old, deteriorated wood shakes will be removed in stages. The building will be evaluated for any necessary insulation that will be added before house wrap goes up. Next comes the siding installation, and the historic building will finally be protected from the weather.

This is a very ambitious project, and we are grateful to the Town of Walden for providing the funds to accomplish it. We know you will want to watch and celebrate our progress.

The next quarterly membership meeting is Thursday, October 19 in the auditorium at 7:00PM. Join us for a free picnic, and greet Senator Bo Watson and Representative Patsy Hazelwood who will present the Civic League with a State Proclamation honoring the auditorium's Centennial. Stefanie Haire, of the Southeast TN Development District will update the membership on our application for National Register of Historic Places status. Members will also hear how Scriptorium Hall offers programing in the historic building. If you are not yet a member, you are invited to join when you attend an event or through the website [www.waldensridgecivicleague.org](http://www.waldensridgecivicleague.org). Election of officers is the most important part of the October meeting, and all members can vote. Nominations for officers are open now. Please consider running for office and supporting the Civic League.

Through working with others in the community, and presenting four special events each year, we are striving to fulfill our mission which is *"to preserve our history and continue traditional and new activities."* If you have any suggestions for programming or improvements, we are always glad to hear them.

Karen Stone, President



Respectfully submitted:  
Stacy Stewart



Approved:  
Mariah Prescott, Town Administrator



Approved:  
Lee Davis, Mayor