

Town of Walden
Meeting Minutes
August 9, 2022

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 were present at the Walden Town Hall: Rudy Walldorf, Stuart Bush, Lynn Whisman, Karen Stone, Kristin Allen, Bill Thornton, Winston Robbins, Mickey Robbins, Hannah Lynch, Cierra Paulson, Tony Wheeler, W. L. Goodman, John Nelson, Casey Powell, Lynn Anderson, Aaron and Jeannie Siegel, Kirby Yost, and Werner Slabber.

Mariah Prescott opened the meeting with a prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Town Attorney Sam Elliott.

ROLL CALL

Mariah Prescott called the roll and noted the presence of Mayor Lee Davis and Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt. Town Attorney Sam Elliott was also present. Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie was absent.

APPROVAL / CORRECTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 14, 2022, SECONDED BY MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

REPORTS

1. POLICE

No report.

2. FINANCIAL

The financial report, given by Mariah Prescott, is attached as an exhibit to these minutes.

3. CODES ENFORCEMENT

The Codes Enforcement report, given by Mayor Lee Davis, is attached as an exhibit to these minutes.

4. WRES

Bill Thornton reported for WRES, noting 51 total calls for the month of July: 7 service calls / trees down, 18 fire / rescue calls, 19 emergency medical calls, and 7 assist-to-citizen calls.

5. BACHMAN

No report.

6. MCCOY FARM AND GARDENS

Mickey Robbins reported for McCoy Farm and Gardens (MFG), noting an increase in events at MFG, including weddings, birthdays, and anniversary celebrations. The MFG Board is grateful to all of the

visitors and volunteers who come to MFG, including five interns during the month of July. These interns assisted in improving the barn, pulling invasive plants, and completing research on MFG history.

Mr. Robbins further stated that the Emerald Ash Borer infestation is impacting the trees at MFG. There will be a treatment day to combat the borers on Saturday, 09/13/2022 @ 9:00 AM. Volunteers are needed and encouraged to come help.,

Work on the new Welcome Station is going forward – there will be a kiosk in place which will include maps and info about MFG. In closing, two other projects are getting underway. The electrical lines are being moved underground, which will improve aesthetics at MFG, and a Mission Statement Workshop will occur later this month.

7. CIVIC LEAGUE

The Civic League report, given by Karen Stone, is attached as an exhibit to these minutes.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL

Catherine Colby reported for the newly-formed Environmental Committee. She noted several projects being undertaken by the committee. First, the “Dark Skies” project, which promotes protecting skies at night for the movement of migratory birds. Also, the “Bee City” project, which promotes the protection of pollinators. The main project for the committee will be stormwater control.

Ms. Colby noted that current stormwater measures are inadequate for the mountain’s topography, and she encourages the Town of Walden to be proactive in addressing these issues. She is concerned about possible gaps in the stormwater ordinance, including a lack of permitting needed if a land disturbance is less than an acre.

Walden is currently in an interlocal agreement with Hamilton County for stormwater management. There is a concern that the stormwater permits only last through the construction phase. Ms. Colby suggests creating a separate ordinance for post-construction stormwater control, and she also asked about the possibility of issuing our own MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) Permits.

Ms. Colby shared several photos which were indicative of stormwater issues. These included: exposed bedrock beside Taft Highway, homeowner runoff causing erosion, exposed tree roots, a fallen tree, loose sedimentation, erosion beside roads, and gully in a residential lawn due to a business expansion.

The Environmental Committee wants to promote the creation of rain gardens and other stormwater control options for businesses and homeowners. Other solutions include: storm cuts, plantings, and creation of a swale down the middle of a grassy space between parking areas. Mr. John Nelson asks for any other possible suggestions to control runoff, and suggests that links be placed on the Walden website to assist homeowners.

Mayor Lee Davis suggested that a special meeting be held for further education by Ms. Colby.

NEW BUSINESS

1. FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE #2022-348, AN ORDINANCE TO CREATE THE POSITION OF TOWN ADMINISTRATOR.

Mayor Lee Davis introduced the first reading of this ordinance, which would create the position of Town Administrator, to be held by Mariah Prescott.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE #2022-348, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

2. DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION #2022-565 REQUESTING THE HAMILTON COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE.

Mayor Lee Davis introduced proposed Resolution #2022-565. Mr. Stuart Bush asked if it was true that the proposed amendments to the zoning ordinance could never be changed. Mayor Davis stressed that this was not the case. Mr. Bush thanked the board for valuing his property.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING OF RESOLUTION #2022-565, SECONDED BY MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

3. PROPOSED RESOLUTION #2022-566 REQUESTING THE CHATTANOOGA HAMILTON COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY TO CONDUCT A ZONING STUDY FOR CERTAIN PROPERTIES LOCATED IN THE TOWN OF WALDEN.

Mayor Lee Davis introduced proposed Resolution #2022-566. Ms. Kirby Johnson asked if the Land Use Plan was counter-intuitive to Town of Walden guidelines. Town Attorney Sam Elliott noted that the Land Use Plan was not counter-intuitive, but instead was to spell out what we want the Town of Walden to look like in the future. He further noted that the Regional Planning Agency (RPA) would review any general changes to the zoning ordinance. For changes to specific properties, the RPA would submit a recommendation for zoning type. Ms. Johnson asked a clarifying question, noting whether or not we are telling the RPA / RP Committee what we want. Mayor Lee Davis stated that with the Land Use Plan, we are trying to create some flexibility to accommodate responsible growth in the future.

Ms. Kirby Yost asked if the intent of the Board was for the zoning study and the zoning change to "track simultaneously." Mayor Lee Davis stated that the RPA acts before the RPC, and that the study will ultimately go to the RPC.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING OF RESOLUTION #2022-566, SECONDED BY MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

4. TDEC ARP GRANT DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF PROPOSED GRANT EXPENDITURE LIST.

Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt summarized the proposed project list utilizing the TDEC ARP funds. This project list is attached as an exhibit to these minutes. Vice Mayor Schmidt recommended funding an extensive stormwater audit with these funds.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED GRANT EXPENDITURE LIST, SECONDED BY MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

5. PROPOSED RESOLUTION #2022-567 TDEC NON-COMPETITIVE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND GRANT ADMINISTRATION SERVICES.

Mayor Lee Davis introduced proposed Resolution #2022-567. This resolution will allow 6% of the total TDEC ARP funds to be used towards technical assistance and grant administration services.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #2022-567, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

6. PROPOSED RESOLUTION #2022-568 TDEC ARPA TRANSFER TO THE TOWN OF SIGNAL MOUNTAIN.

Mayor Lee Davis introduced this proposed resolution, which will transfer \$60,000 from the TDEC ARP funds for Walden to the Town of Signal Mountain. Since Walden does not operate its own water or wastewater system, these funds will be used for any necessary improvements to Signal Mountain's water systems that will benefit Walden and Signal Mountain.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #2022-568, SECONDED BY MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

7. PROPOSED RESOLUTION #2022-569 TO DELEGATE REVIEW AUTHORITY FOR ELIGIBLE SUBDIVISION PLATS TO THE HAMILTON COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY.

Town Attorney Sam Elliott noted that this resolution, if approved would basically remove the RPC from the reviewing process.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #2022-569, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

8. CONSIDERATION / APPROVAL OF GARRETT TATE FOR FULL TIME PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEE TO START SEPTEMBER 1, 2022.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF GARRETT TATE AS A FULL TIME PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEE FOR THE TOWN OF WALDEN, SECONDED BY MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

9. CONSIDERATION / APPROVAL OF TOWN HALL SECURITY SYSTEM UPGRADE.

Stacy Stewart summarized the three quotes received for an upgrade to the security and camera systems at Walden Town Hall. The requested quotes include an improvement to the alarm system by moving to cellular monitoring, and also the installation of ten (10) security cameras. The three quotes were:

Verkada Security (San Mateo, CA) - \$16,369.50 plus \$282.00 for shipping and handling of equipment

Preventia Security (Ft. Oglethorpe, GA) - \$7,046.00 plus \$35 for monthly monitoring

Dependable Security (Ringgold, GA) - \$6,425.00 plus \$30 for monthly monitoring

Ms. Stewart noted that she utilizes Dependable Security at her own residence. Even though they are the least expensive bid, she confirmed that they are a reliable company with high-tech equipment.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH DEPENDABLE SECURITY FOR SECURITY SYSTEM UPGRADES AT WALDEN TOWN HALL, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

10. CONSIDERATION / APPROVAL OF TREE CONTRACTOR QUOTES FOR W ROAD DEAD TREE REMOVAL.

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott introduced this item, addressing the removal of dead ash trees in the curves at the top of W Road. Hamilton County will take care of five trees that are below the curves. Ms. Prescott recommends approval of the quote from Paden Tree People for \$16,000.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF PADEN TREE PEOPLE, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

11. ANY OTHER NEW BUSINESS.

There is no other new business.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. DISCUSSION ON STORMWATER INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT.

This discussion was held during the Environmental Committee report.

2. DISCUSSION ON ADDING TWO ALDERMAN POSITIONS TO THE TOWN OF WALDEN, TENNESSEE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

Mayor Lee Davis asked to delay this discussion until Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie can be present.

3. ANNOUNCEMENT ON SHORT-TERM VACATION RENTALS MOVE TO SEPTEMBER MEETING FOR CONTINUED DISCUSSION.

Mayor Lee Davis made the announcement that further discussion on short-term vacation rentals in Walden will be moved to the regular monthly meeting on September 12, 2022. Mayor Davis noted that he will allot "plenty of time" during the September meeting for this discussion. A model ordinance regarding short-term vacation rentals will be placed on the Walden website (waldentn.gov) for review.

4. ANY OTHER UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

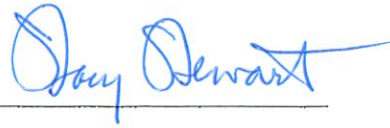
There is no other unfinished business.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITIZENS

Ms. Jeannie Siegel asked for an update on construction of the pool house at 201 Clegg Street. Mayor Lee Davis noted that the property owners had received approval from Hamilton County Groundwater and also by the Walden Codes Officer. Further, a survey of the property has been completed, and the survey showed that the setbacks had been appropriately met. Walden has approved the construction, and the owners have submitted an application to Hamilton County Building Inspections for a permit.

Mr. W. L. Goodman inquired about the status of the grocery store. Mayor Lee Davis responded that grocery store was not going to be discussed at this meeting. Mr. Goodman asked when the grocery would be discussed, and Mayor Davis noted that the grocery store had been discussed for many years. Mr. Goodman stated that this was his first meeting, and asked when he would be allowed to talk about it. Mayor Davis reminded Mr. Goodman that public commentary on this issue had been welcomed for the past five years, and that the Town takes no position on the grocery store.

The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Davis.



Respectfully submitted:
Stacy Stewart



Approved:
Mariah Prescott, Town Administrator



Approved:
Lee Davis, Mayor