

Town of Walden
Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2023

AGENDA REVIEW SESSION

There was a general discussion of the agenda items for tonight's meeting. The discussion was led by Town Administrator Mariah Prescott and Mayor Lee Davis. There were no citizens present.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE 2023-353, TO REVISE PURCHASING LIMITS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATE LAW TCA 12-3-1212

Mayor Lee Davis asked Alderwoman Angela Cassidy to open the hearing. Alderwoman Cassidy introduced the public hearing for the final reading of an ordinance to revise purchasing limits in the Town of Walden. Attorney Sam Elliott further noted that the Tennessee Legislature recently updated purchasing limits, so this ordinance brings Walden's purchasing policies in line with those of the state. Mayor Lee Davis invites comments and discussion from attendees; there are none.

The public hearing was adjourned by Mayor Davis.

CALL TO ORDER OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

The regular monthly meeting of the Walden Board of Mayor and Aldermen was called to order by Mayor Lee Davis. The following interested citizens were present at the Walden Town Hall: Joe Robbins, Jr., Anthony Wheeler, Winston Robbins, Mickey Robbins, Lisa Kinsey, Kent and Maggie Kersten, John Bartry, Kristin Allen, Robert Clarke, Karen Stone, Ted Tumelaire, Joe and Margha Davis, Ed and Mary Catherine O'Kelly, Linda Collins, Sarah McKenzie, and Julian Chambers.

PRAYER AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

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

ROLL CALL

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott 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

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 14, 2023, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

REPORTS

1. POLICE

Deputy Julian Chambers gave the police report. He has currently been working the night shift for the Town of Walden, and he will begin bringing specific data to the monthly meetings in April.

2. FINANCIAL

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

3. CODES

Mayor Lee Davis noted several minor infractions that are being addressed by Codes Officer Dan Maxwell. Mr. Maxwell is in communication with Town Administrator Mariah Prescott, and he will continue to follow up on these issues.

4. WRES

There were 25 total calls for the month of February, 2023: 13 emergency medical calls, 7 fire-related calls, and 5 assist-to-citizen calls.

On Saturday, May 6, 2023, there will be a volunteer-recruitment open house from 9:00 AM until noon at the fire hall.

5. BUDGET COMMITTEE

Mr. John Barry reported for the Budget Committee, noting that \$4.5 million has been moved from low-interest savings accounts into two CDs with much greater interest returns (3.75% and 4.1%). Mr. Barry believes that these CDs will generate upwards of \$150,000 in interest income for Walden. Mr. Barry further stated that the committee recommends these funds be used to support non-profit organizations in the Walden community or special projects as determined by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Mr. Barry noted that the Budget Committee supports the updated purchasing policy. He further stated that all ARPA funds have been allocated as required, within the allowable timeframe. Mr. Barry also noted that Town Hall employees will soon be able to accept credit card and debit card payments.

Mr. Barry closed by stating that this will be his last report as chairman of the Budget Committee. Ms. Sarah McKenzie will be taking over as chairwoman, and she will be giving the reports beginning in March. Mayor Lee Davis thanked Mr. Barry for his service in leading the Budget Committee.

6. PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

No report.

7. WALDEN'S RIDGE CIVIC LEAGUE

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

NEW BUSINESS

1. PROPOSED ORDINANCE 2023-354 RE-ADOPTING THE ZONING ORDINANCE CERTIFIED BY THE WALDEN MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION.

Mayor Lee Davis introduced this item, noting that the Zoning Ordinance is being re-adopted after review by the newly-formed Walden Planning Commission (WPC). Town Attorney Sam Elliott stated that this is the existing ordinance, with "very minor tweaks" from the WPC and in consultation with the Southeast Tennessee Development District. Attorney Elliott further noted that the WPC will be considering some amendments to this ordinance in the coming months.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE #2022-354, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

2. PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2023-586 EXTENDING THE MORATORIUM ON BUILDING PERMITS IN DESIGNATION AREA OF WALDEN.

Alderwoman Angela Davis summarized this resolution, noting the need for an extension of the current moratorium until June 30, 2023, due to the recent creation of the Walden Planning Commission (WPC). Since the WPC is working to amend Walden's Zoning Ordinance, the moratorium should be extended until this ordinance is completed.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2023-586, SECONDED BY MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

3. PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2023-587 WALDEN PLANNING COMMISSION APPLICATION FEES.

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott noted that the application fees recommended for the Walden Planning Commission are the same fees charged by the Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency (RPA). Town Attorney Sam Elliott further stated that these fees are meant to recover any costs incurred by the Town for work that was previously completed by the RPA, an outside agency.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2023-587, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

4. PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2023-588 AMENDING RESOLUTION 2019-524 WALDEN PURCHASING POLICY.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2023-588, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

5. PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2023-589 ADOPTING DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY.

Mayor Lee Davis tabled this discussion and vote to the April meeting.

6. PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2023-590 WALDEN AS BEE CITY AND \$200 APPLICATION FEE.

Mayor Lee Davis tabled this discussion and vote to the April meeting.

7. APPOINTMENTS OF WALDEN PLANNING COMMISSIONER TERMS.

Mayor Lee Davis noted his appointment of the Walden Planning Commissioners for the following terms:

- Tom Bartoo – 2 Years
- Angela Cassidy – Aligns with her term as Walden Alderwoman
- Tim Hancock – 5 Years
- Joe Robbins, Jr. – Aligns with Lee Davis's term as Walden Mayor
- Werner Slabber – 4 Years
- Bill Trohanis – 3 Years
- Lou Ziebold – 1 Years

8. APPOINTMENTS TO ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE.

Mayor Lee Davis introduced three new appointments to the Environmental Committee: Mary Aho as a voting member, with Darcy Welch and Carolyn Guild as non-voting members.

9. DISCUSSION ON TRAFFIC AND SAFETY

Mayor Lee Davis opened the discussion, noting that traffic and safety issues are a priority for all Walden citizens and elected officials. Mayor Davis has had two meetings regarding this problem in the last month, one with Hamilton County Sheriff Austin Garrett. The Town of Walden is going to explore moving toward the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding in partnership with the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office (HCSO). This MOU would allow Walden to hire sheriff's deputies to carry out additional patrols for the Town on an overtime basis. The Roads and Safety Committee and the Walden Planning Commission will also be involved in the creation of a draft MOU. Mayor Davis invited all interested Walden citizens to attend future Roads and Safety Committee meetings to share their opinions.

The second meeting Mayor Davis held last month was with County Mayor Weston Wamp, County Commissioner Chip Baker, and Signal Mountain Mayor Charlie Poss. During this meeting, the primary topic of conversation was the unprecedented growth that is occurring – primarily in the unincorporated areas of Hamilton County, just outside of Walden. This growth has put strains on law enforcement and emergency personnel. Mayor Davis requested that Walden representatives be allowed at the table whenever such growth is being planned for this portion of the county.

10. DATE FOR FY:24 BUDGET WORKSHOP

The first suggested budget workshop date April 20, 2023 at 2:00 PM. This meeting is open to the public.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO HOLD THE FIRST BUDGET WORKSHOP ON APRIL 20, 2023, 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. FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE 2023-353 TO REVISE PURCHASING LIMITS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATE LAW TCA 12-3-1212.

Mayor Lee Davis introduced this agenda item, noting that this proposed ordinance was summarized during the Public Hearing held prior to the regular monthly meeting. Mr. John Barry also discussed this revision during his report from the Budget Committee.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO ADOPT ORDINANCE 2023-353, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

2. ANY OTHER UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

There is no unfinished business.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITIZENS

Lisa Kimsey, a resident of Walden, raised concerns about poor visibility on the roads, especially in the fog. She is particularly concerned for young drivers and school buses.

Walden's Ridge Civic League Report to the Town of Walden
March 14, 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.

To ensure that the funds donated to the Civic League are reserved for replacing the auditorium's deteriorated siding, treasurer Joe Clawson is placing \$51,000 in an account designated for that expenditure only. Facilities chair Mark Dwyer has presented a preliminary proposal to the Board of Directors outlining plans for acquiring the wood from regional suppliers, for using local sawyers, and for applying the siding using local craftsmen. Since the wood is still to be cut, sawn and seasoned, the siding effort will not be accomplished quickly. The Board is determined to take steps slowly and deliberately to adhere to requirements for achieving National Register of Historic Places status. What this means is that you will not see anyone tearing off siding immediately. That will come after all the materials are on hand and we are ready to complete the job once it is begun. We intend to replicate the look of the Civic League when it was constructed in 1921 using rough-cut, oak, board-and-batten siding.

On March 31, storytellers will return to the Civic League to present a concert, as storytelling in-the-round is called. Kids of all ages are invited to come and hear tall tales, jokes, legends, riddles, Jack tales and other family-friendly stories on the stage. The fun begins at 5:00 when the Clever Ale House food truck arrives. A bonfire will welcome all to make s'mores for dessert after sampling good eats from the newest restaurant on Signal Mt. Renowned storytellers of Cleveland and Chattanooga are back by popular demand from last year. The concert begins promptly at 6:30. When it wraps up at 8:30, the audience is encouraged to stay a bit and explore options for storytelling workshops to be organized later.

We are happy to announce a budding relationship with Scriptorium Hall, a program in classical education. They are renting the auditorium first on March 17. Approximately 20 students will hold "Shakespeare Day" when they will read and act out a Shakespeare play and eat a Renaissance snack. On Monday, April 3, 12:00-9:00 pm about 30 students will hold Scottish Highland Games and conduct a historic battle reenactment, followed by a potluck supper, Scottish/Celtic music performance, and folk dance. Thursday, May 11, 4:00-10:00pm is "Defense Day" with student end-of-year presentations, a short graduation ceremony for the seniors, a potluck supper, and folk dancing. Roughly 75 students and family members are expected.

As a reminder, the 200-seat auditorium, the soccer field, the pavilion, and the grounds are available to rent for activities of all kinds.

A volunteer bought us paint recently, and another volunteer undertook to paint the concession area. Unfortunately when he pulled out the cabinet to paint behind it, he found the floor badly damaged. Tonight, as we meet here, more volunteers are working to repair the floor and make improvements. Barbara and Clyde Womack were kind enough to give us a dishwasher. We are taking advantage of the floor repair to install the dishwasher and a new sink. These features, along with new countertops and storage units, will upgrade our concession area and make our place more attractive for tenants and more useful for our own activities. Donations are very welcome to help pay for all this activity.

The mission of the Walden's Ridge Civic League is to preserve its history and to continue traditional and new activities. Through working with others, and presenting four special events each year, we are striving to fulfill that mission. If you have any suggestions for programming or improvements, we are always glad to hear them.

Karen Stone, President

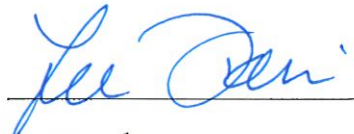
The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Davis.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stacy Stewart", written over a horizontal line.

Respectfully submitted:
Stacy Stewart

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mariah Prescott", written over a horizontal line.

Approved:
Mariah Prescott, Town Administrator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lee Davis", written over a horizontal line.

Approved:
Lee Davis, Mayor