

Town of Walden
Meeting Minutes
May 9, 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.

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 joined the others at Walden Town Hall: Mike Cassidy, Tony Wheeler, Joe Robbins, Jr., Winston Robbins, Joe and Margha Davis, Betty Julian, Linda Collins, Lance Pope, and Kim Rackel.

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.

PROCLAMATION FOR ELIZABETH AKINS

Mayor Lee Davis introduced the resolution for former Mayor, Elizabeth Akins, who passed away on December 10, 2022. Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt read the resolution, which is attached as an exhibit to these minutes.

APPROVAL / CORRECTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 11, 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. From April 9 through May 9, 2023, the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) had 51 total calls for service. There were eight misdemeanor arrests, two felony arrests, six were misdemeanor citations, two warrant arrests, and one DUI arrest. There were also 31 verbal warnings, six written warnings, and 11 citations issued during traffic stops.

2. FINANCIAL

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

3. CODES

No report.

4. WRES

No report.

5. BUDGET

No report.

6. PARKS AND RECREATION

Lance Pope reported for the Parks and Recreation Committee. Mr. Pope highlighted several projects on which the committee is working. These include:

- Mabbitt Springs – A workday was held recently, spearheaded by Larry Skaggs. Boy Scout Troop #60 also assisted with this work on the trail. The committee continues to keep an eye on the bridge that crosses the creek.
- Falling Water Falls – Mr. T. Cohen is consistently in contact with the State regarding the FWF trails, and the State has been responsive in cleaning up downed trees that were on their property. New lines have been painted in the lot to assist cars with proper parking. Temporary chains have been installed to discourage parking along the roadside. This temporary fix has been somewhat helpful, but they are often knocked over and therefore go unseen.
 - Because of this, the Parks and Recreation Committee is requesting an allocation of \$1,129.54 to purchase approximately 25 stones from Stone Sales and Service in Dunlap, TN, to assist with discouraging roadside parking. Mr. Pope noted that this is well within the budget afforded to the Parks and Recreation Committee.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THIS EXPENDITURE REQUEST, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

- Disc Golf Course – The committee is working on maintenance of the course, which was originally built as an Eagle Scout Project. Bo Chamberlain is the committee leader for this work, and Karen Stone is also assisting with budgeting for this project. The project will include a course map, individual signage for each hole, and cleaning of the existing benches on the course.
- Lastly, the committee is working on the small, wedge-shaped area (part of the North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy) near the junction of East Brow Road and Altura Drive. The intent is to work on cleaning up and developing what currently exists, and potentially installing some native plants and flowers. Alderwoman Angela Cassidy thanked the committee for their work on this area.

7. BACHMAN

Bachman Director, Kim Rackel, gave the report for Bachman Community Center (BCC), noting that the center is thriving. The consignment shop continues to bring in money for BCC. Since the last report, there has been increased focus on facility and program enhancements at BCC. Conversion to LED lighting is nearly 25% complete, and the plumbing system has been improved as well. Necessary tree work, arising from storm damage, has also been completed, and an arborist has confirmed that all remaining trees on the BCC property are healthy. Many new classes and summer programming have been added at BCC – see website for details.

NEW BUSINESS

1. FIRST READING BY CAPTION OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2023-355, ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET AND TAX RATE FOR FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2023, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2024.

Mayor Lee Davis introduced this item and asked Alderwoman Angela Cassidy to summarize the ordinance. It is noted that the tax rate (.5315) for the upcoming fiscal year has not changed.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE #2023-355 BY CAPTION, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

2. FIRST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2023-356, GRANTING THE APPROVAL OF ABANDONMENT OF UNOPENED BLOCK OF BRANTLEY LN. AS RECOMMENDED BY THE WALDEN PLANNING COMMISSION.

Mayor Lee Davis introduced this agenda item. Alderwoman Angela Cassidy, also a member of the Walden Planning Commission, noted the commission's approval of this requested abandonment. The property owners who border this unopened block are in approval of this abandonment as well.

Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt asked who would own this property if the abandonment was approved. It was confirmed that this unopened block would then be "split down the middle" between the bordering properties. Both property owners have agreed to take on the additional tax responsibilities.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE #2023-356 AS WRITTEN, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

3. PROPOSED RESOLUTION #2023-591, UPDATING THE PERSONNEL POLICY.

Mayor Lee Davis summarized this item, noting that this is only a technical update on the newest policy. Mayor Davis also recommended putting the updated policy on the Walden website.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #2023-591, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

4. PROPOSED RESOLUTION #2023-592, CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE BY-LAWS.

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott noted that these by-laws are necessary since all of these advisory committees are relatively new. Because of this, it is necessary to have a uniform policy for guidance and clarity by which all committees will abide. This was recommended by MTAS.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE BY-LAWS FOR THE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEES, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

5. CONSIDERATION OF PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE LIST.

Mayor Lee Davis noted that this vote has already been completed. See item #6 under "Reports."

6. CONSIDERATION OF JOINING "SLOW DOWN TN" CAMPAIGN AND CORRESPONDING EXPENDITURES FROM ROADS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE.

Mayor Lee Davis asked Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt to summarize this agenda item. Vice Mayor Schmidt noted that the Tennessee Department of Transportation began a campaign in April of this year to slow traffic throughout the state. As part of this campaign, TDOT is provided free signage to municipalities upon request. These yard signs, stating "Slow Down, TN," will be distributed at the McCoy Farm and Gardens' Memorial Day Picnic.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE ROADS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION THAT WALDEN JOIN IN THE "SLOW DOWN, TN" YARD SIGN CAMPAIGN, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

7. CONSIDERATION OF QUOTES FOR STRIPING.

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott noted that there is currently \$21,000 budgeted for the striping of roads. The only quote received was from Wright Brothers Construction, for \$18,702. Town Engineer Mack McCarley has given his approval of the quote and the roads already slated for striping. Wright Brothers has confirmed that they can complete this work before July 1, 2023.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE WRIGHT BROTHERS' QUOTE FOR STRIPING, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

8. ANY OTHER NEW BUSINESS.

There is no other new business.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There is no unfinished business.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITIZENS

Mr. Tony Wheeler noted that the state legislature has voted on a bill that will remove the state's rights for coal privacy, which would have allowed the state to have full authority over coal mining. The state determined that they could not afford the liability for this. There has been no coal produced in Tennessee for the past two years, yet many environmental hazards remain. It has been estimated that the state is \$33 million behind in remediation of these hazards. Mr. Wheeler also wanted to publicly express his support on the record for the content of a recent letter submitted to the Walden Planning Commission by Catherine Colby. Mayor Lee Davis clarified that this letter contained concerns that the Environmental Committee has regarding the planning process for Walden land use.

Mr. Winston Robbins noted his support for the Controlled Substances Act and all drug legislation at the local and state levels that will attempt to curb the current opioid and fentanyl crisis.

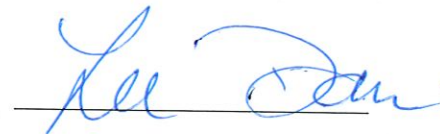
The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Davis.



Respectfully submitted:
Stacy Stewart



Approved:
Mariah Prescott, Town Administrator



Approved:
Lee Davis, Mayor