

Town of Walden
Meeting Minutes
May 10, 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: Joe Durek, Winston Robbins, Margha and Joe Davis, Werner Slabber, Ellen Young, Tony Wheeler, Carol Bishop, Karen Stone, Linda Collins, Ted Tumelaire, Jeannie Siegel, Kristin Allen, Scott Allen, Angela Cassidy, Bill Thornton, Katy Murphy, Lee Behar, Jon Cook, and Ryan and Victoria Davis.

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, Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt, and Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie. Town Attorney Sam Elliott was also present.

APPROVAL / CORRECTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 19, 2022, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

REPORTS

1. ROADS

Kristen Allen reported for the Roads and Safety Committee, stating they had met with Mack McCarley, the town's engineer. The committee is seeking to place a stop sign and crosswalk at the intersection of Spring, Lake, and Ivory Avenues – creating a four-way stop. The committee is investigating putting stop bars at several stop signs, adding a crosswalk on Key Hulse at the Signal Mountain Christian School, and placing an additional stop sign at the triangle intersection of Ivory and Chestnut. Engineer McCarley is also looking into slide-abatement measures on Anderson Pike just above the W Road. These measures may include installation of a guardrail and / or “grooving” of the pavement. In closing, the town is ordering additional “Speed Limit” signs for Walden roads. Mayor Lee Davis asked for a timeline on the crosswalk and sign projects, and Ms. Allen noted her hope that they would be completed within the current fiscal year.

2. POLICE

No report.

3. FINANCIAL

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

4. CODES ENFORCEMENT

Mayor Lee Davis reported on behalf of Codes Officer Dan Maxwell. The report is attached as an exhibit to these minutes. Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie requested a copy of the survey that has reportedly been completed at 201 Clegg Street.

5. WRES

Bill Thornton reported for the Walden's Ridge Emergency Services (WRES). During the month of April, WRES responded to 29 calls: 13 emergency medical, 12 fire-related, and four assist-to-citizen.

The WRES will be hosting an "Autism Awareness" day on an annual basis each April. The purpose of this open-house-type day will be to allow special needs children to become acquainted with the WRES volunteers and equipment. Therefore, in the event of an emergency situation involving one of these children, the response will not be so frightening.

WRES has added a new board member – Walden resident John Hagan. Mr. Thornton also reported a "great turnout" for the town-sponsored training in the use of our new "EZ-Ject" injectors, purchased to fight the woolly adelgid and save Walden's hemlock trees. In closing, it was stressed that WRES is always looking for new volunteers. Please reach out if interested.

At this time, Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt invited Ryan Davis to speak to the audience. Mr. Davis resides on Wilson Avenue and is a member of the Roads and Safety Committee. He stated that just last week his dog was hit by a car and killed, and this was witnessed by two of his children. He pleaded with the Board to take action to discourage the traffic "cut through" and speeding on his street. Mayor Lee Davis asked Mr. Davis what his top priorities / suggestions would be for traffic calming on Wilson. Mr. Davis suggests increased police presence and issuance of speeding citations. He also recommends speed bumps and possibly reconfiguring the streets.

Mayor Lee Davis suggested that a public meeting be held with the Roads and Safety Committee to collect feedback from Walden citizens as to the pros and cons of having speedbumps installed. Town Attorney Sam Elliott also recommended communicating with our insurance provider, Public Entity Partners, to discuss any possible liability that could arise from such an installation. Ms. Kendall Drumm suggested that the town consider adding shoulders to many streets to allow for safer pedestrian traffic.

6. BACHMAN COUNCIL

Katy Murphy reported for Bachman Community Center (BCC). She reported that BCC is seeking some new board members, and asked anyone who might be interested to let her know. The next board meeting will be May 16, 2022, at 7:00 PM.

7. MCCOY FARM & GARDENS

The McCoy Farm and Gardens (MFG) reported was presented by Joe Davis. He invited everyone to attend the Memorial Day Picnic on May 30, 2022, from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Food will be available, and entertainment will consist of bluegrass and patriotic music, a blacksmith demonstration, craft and plant booths, and the showing of a raptor.

8. CIVIC LEAGUE

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

9. DOG PARK

No report.

10. PUMPKIN PATCH

No report.

NEW BUSINESS

1. FIRST READING BY CAPTION OF ORDINANCE #2022-345, ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET AND TAX RATE FOR FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2022, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2023.

ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING BY CAPTION OF ORDINANCE #2022-345, AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF WALDEN, TENNESSEE, ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET AND TAX RATE FOR FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2022, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2023, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

Mayor Lee Davis invited interested citizens to visit the Walden Town Hall if they wanted to examine the full budget.

2. FIRST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2022-346, AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF WALDEN, TENNESSEE, EXTENDING THE MORATORIUM ON THE ISSUANCE OF BUILDING PERMITS IN A DESIGNATED AREA OF THE TOWN OF WALDEN ESTABLISHED BY ORDINANCE #2021-341.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2022-346, AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF WALDEN, TENNESSEE, EXTENDING THE MORATORIUM ON THE ISSUANCE OF BUILDING PERMITS IN A DESIGNATED AREA OF THE TOWN OF WALDEN ESTABLISHED BY ORDINANCE #2021-341, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

Town Attorney Sam Elliott clarified that this Ordinance will extend the moratorium until the regular monthly meeting date in October of 2022.

3. RESOLUTION #2022-560, A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION'S PARTICIPATION IN THE TENNESSEE CONSOLIDATED RETIREMENT SYSTEM IN ACCORDANCE WITH TENNESSEE CODE ANNOTATED, TITLE 8, CHAPTERS 34-37.

Mayor Lee Davis introduced this resolution, stating that participation in the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS) will enhance the town's ability to attract qualified employees.

ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE PARTICIPATION IN THE TENNESSEE CONSOLIDATED RETIREMENT SYSTEM, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

4. RESOLUTION #2022-561, A RESOLUTION TO ALLOW A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE TO CONTRIBUTE TO A TAX DEFERRED RETIREMENT PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH TENNESSEE CODE ANNOTATED, TITLE 8, CHAPTERS 34-37.

Mayor Lee Davis introduced this resolution, clarifying that this resolution is the selection of the actual TCRS plan **type**.

ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #2022-561, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

5. RESOLUTION #2022-562, REPLACING TOWN OF WALDEN PERSONNEL POLICY.

Mayor Lee Davis noted that the Walden personnel policy was last updated in 1999. City Administrator Mariah Prescott worked with MTAS to update the policy. The Board of Mayor and Aldermen, as well as Town Attorney Sam Elliott, have all reviewed and approve of the recommended new policy.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #2022-562, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

6. CONSIDERATION OF HIRING FULL-TIME OFFICE EMPLOYEE.

Mayor Lee Davis noted that one of the current part-time office positions is being considered for movement to a full-time position in the next fiscal year.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE ADDITION OF A NEW FULL-TIME POSITION FOR THE TOWN OF WALDEN, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

7. CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF TRAILER TO PURCHASE UP TO \$5,500.

City Manager Mariah Prescott noted that the acquisition of a trailer would allow our maintenance crew to haul off limbs and larger items, and also to transport a tractor or Bobcat as needed.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF A TRAILER, UP TO \$5,500, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

8. CONSIDERATION OF LINE-ITEM TRANSFERS

Mayor Lee Davis introduced the following line-item transfers:

- A) \$8,000 from 41000-111 "Contract Labor" to:
 - i) \$7,000 to 43100-940 "Capital Outlay Equipment" for trailer, chainsaw, air compressor
 - ii) \$1,000 to 41000-931 "Capital Outlay Office Equipment" for office laptop
- B) \$4,377 from 41000-999 "Miscellaneous" to:
 - i) \$1,500 to 45200-437 "Parks and Recreation" to replace for hazard tree removals
 - ii) \$1,700 to 45200-436 "Dog Park Maintenance / Utilities" for gravel and utilities for the rest of the fiscal year
 - iii) \$1,000 to 43100-342 "Signage, Purchase, Inst, Repair" to cover the rest of the fiscal year
 - iv) \$177 to 43100-269 "Emergency or Snow Clearing" to cover overage

C) \$16,000 from 41000-252 “Legal Expenses” to:

- i) \$7,000 to 43100-298 “Consulting-Engineering SSA” to cover the rest of the fiscal year for Town Engineer
- ii) \$9,000 to 41000-290 “Professional Planning-Development” to cover coverage and the rest of the fiscal year for Common Ground and KCI

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE EACH LINE-ITEM TRANSFER AS WRITTEN ABOVE, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

9. DISCUSSION ON PAVING LIST AND FAIRMOUNT CULVERT.

City Administrator Mariah Prescott noted that inclusion of this topic on the agenda is primarily because the cost has increased since it was last discussed. For example, the cost of culvert repair has increased at least \$20,000. Town Engineer Mack McCarley will put the paving priority list out for bids.

10. DISCUSSION ON T-DEC GRANT.

Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt noted that Walden has received a non-competitive grant in the total of \$685,682.61 – which must be allocated to address water-related issues, such as storm water or drinking water. Vice Mayor Schmidt is working with Walden’s Ridge Utility District (WRUD) to determine the best utilization for these funds, and she is hopeful that they may be used to actually replace the Fairmount Culvert instead of just repairing it. There is a 40% money-match requirement for the town, and the grant must be spent by December of 2026. Vice Mayor Schmidt stressed that this money is completely separate from the ARPA funds received previously.

Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie asked if it was correct that the money-match percentage would decrease if Walden submitted jointly for a competitive grant with WRUD. Vice Mayor Schmidt confirmed that it would. She also noted that the Town of Signal Mountain is interested in connecting to the WRUD system at some point in the future, and this project may be funded from a competitive grant.

11. DISCUSSION ON SHORT-TERM VACATION RENTALS.

Mayor Lee Davis introduced this discussion, noting that is a topic of high interest in Walden. Walden Citizen Lee Behar stated his concern that short-term vacation rentals, although extremely limited by an ordinance, are already occurring, albeit illegally. His opinion is to change the ordinance to allow for such rentals. Town Attorney Sam Elliott stated that our ordinance does allow for bed-and-breakfast rentals, but only with a special permit in commercially-zoned (C-1) areas. Mayor Davis invites feedback from Walden citizens regarding this issue. Citizens are encouraged to email their opinions to: info@waldentn.gov

12. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE.

City Manager Mariah Prescott introduced this agenda item, noting that the Environmental Committee is new. It was formed as the issues of stormwater and septic have become more urgent in Walden. Please email Mariah Prescott (mprescott@waldentn.gov) if you are interested in participating. Tony Wheeler also spoke, noting the participation of Mary Beth Sutton and Katherine Colby on this committee.

13. ANY OTHER NEW BUSINESS.

There is no other new business.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. ANY OTHER UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

There is no other unfinished business.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITIZENS

There were no communications from the citizens.

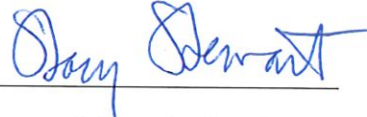
The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Davis.

6/14/22

Yea: 2

Nay: 0

Absent: 1



Respectfully submitted:
Stacy Stewart



Approved: 
Mariah Prescott, ~~Town~~ Administrator



Approved:
Lee Davis, Mayor