Town of Walden
Board of Mayor and Aldermen
Regular Monthly Meeting
December 09, 2025

CALL TO ORDER OF THE REGULAR MEETING

The regular monthly meeting of the Walden Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BMA) was called to order by Mayor Lee Davis at 6:30 PM. The sign-in sheet listing interested citizens in attendance is attached as an exhibit to these minutes (Appendix A).

PRAYER AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

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

ROLL CALL

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott called the roll, noting the presence of Mayor Lee Davis, Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt, and Alderwoman Angela Cassidy. Town Attorney Sam Elliott was also present.

APPROVAL OR CORRECTION OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 11TH, 2025

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 11TH, 2025, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

REPORTS

POLICE

Hamilton County Sheriff's Deputy Chad Faulkner gave the report for all of District 2, noting the following statistics from November 1, 2025 through November 30, 2025: 58 total calls for service, 16 calls for support, one assist to another agency, two juvenile calls, three misdemeanor arrests, 17 traffic stops, and 32 residents added to the watch list due to holiday travels.

FINANCIAL

The Financial Report was given by Town Administrator Mariah Prescott and is attached as an exhibit to these minutes (Appendix B).

WRES

No report.

BACHMAN COMMUNITY CENTER

Ms. Kim Rackel gave the report, noting record numbers of total visitors to the center in 2025.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. UPDATE ON TAFT HWY PROPERTY PURCHASE

Mayor Lee Davis summarized the current standing of public opinion, noting that there no longer seemed to be any interest in the town purchasing the property in partnership with Hamilton County. He then opened the subject to discussion for the BMA.

Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt noted her concern about purchasing the property without a clear plan for its use, stating that this seemed fiscally irresponsible.

Alderwoman Angela Cassidy noted that she feels strongly about purchasing the property in order to have control over possible future development. Alderwoman Cassidy also noted that she has spoken to Keith Covington, who recommended that another consultant – with experience involving both private and public land – be contacted. Mr. Covington also suggested forming a steering committee to further pursue the possibility of this purchase.

Mayor Davis asked Town Administrator Mariah Prescott to put this item back on the agenda for further discussion at the January meeting of the BMA.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE 2025-388 AMENDING THE WALDEN MUNICIPAL CODE, TITLE 20, CHAPTER 1, WHICH CHAPTER IS KNOWN AS "THE WALDEN AIR POLLUTION CONTROL ORDINANCE," BY PROVIDING FOR INCREASED PERMIT AND CERTIFICATE FEES**

Town Attorney Sam Elliott verified that this is a required county-wide update.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 2025-388, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

2. **CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2025-639 SETTING A FEE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION PURSUANT TO THE TOWN'S DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS**

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott noted that this resolution is necessary to comply with the law, which requires explanation for any municipal fees exceeding $250.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-639, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

3. **CONSIDERATION OF FULL-TIME PUBLIC WORKS POSITION TO START IN EARLY 2026**

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE AUTHORIZATION FOR TOWN ADMINISTRATOR MARIAH PRESCOTT TO HIRE AN ADDITIONAL PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEE TO START IN EARLY 2026, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

4. **CONSIDERATION OF HIRING INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF ARBORICULTURE CERTIFIED TREE PERMIT SPECIALIST**

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott noted that this hire will align with the Walden Landscape Ordinance and Tree Ordinance. This certified specialist will review and approve or deny applications for trees, primarily in the Town Center zones.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE HIRE OF A CERTIFIED TREE PERMIT SPECIALIST, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

5. **CONSIDERATION OF THREE QUOTES FOR NATIVE PLANT INSTALLATION AND EDUCATION PROJECT IN THE HAMILTON COUNTY PARKS GRANT**

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott summarized that this project will utilize funds from the Hamilton County Parks Grant. In answer to a question from Alderwoman Angela Cassidy, Administrator Prescott verified that she has spoken to the original Environmental Committee chairperson and also the current chairperson regarding these projects. Administrator Prescott's recommendation is for Waterways to complete the projects at a cost of $24,525.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE CONTRACTING WITH WATERWAYS FOR THESE PROJECTS, SECONDED BY MAYOR LEE DAVIS AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

6. **CONSIDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL TRAIL WORK FOR TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN THE HAMILTON COUNTY PARKS GRANT**

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott noted that Southeast Conservation Corps is a sole-source agency, and she recommends contracting with this agency utilizing the budget of $88,000 from the Hamilton County Parks Grant. The four areas that will be addressed are: Mabbitt Springs Trail, Falling Water Falls Trail, Walden's Ridge Park, and a connecting trail from McCoy Farm and Gardens to the Pumpkin Patch.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE THIS EXPENDITURE FROM THE HAMILTON COUNTY PARKS GRANT, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

7. **CONSIDERATION OF THREE QUOTES FOR HAND RAILING INSTALLATION IN THE HAMILTON COUNTY PARKS GRANT**

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF CHAMBERS WELDING AND FABRICATION FOR REPLACEMENT OF HANDRAILS ON THE SIDE OF THE TOWN HALL BUILDING UTILIZING FUNDS FROM THE HAMILTON COUNTY PARKS GRANT, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

8. **EMPLOYEE HOLIDAY BONUSES**

Mayor Lee Davis stated that the holiday bonus would be the equivalent of one-week's pay for all full-time and part-time employees for the Town of Walden. He verified that this tradition has been in place for several years.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE EMPLOYEE HOLIDAY BONUSES FOR 2025, SECONDED BY MAYOR LEE DAVIS AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS

Mr. Jack Kruesi asked for clarification on the Mabbitt Trail work, as he owns a majority of the land in question. Town Administrator Mariah Prescott noted that there were two different projects, both on state-owned property. The proposal does not include an interconnector over land owned by Mr. Kruesi. In

closing he asked for clarification on where his liability ends and Walden's begins. Mayor Lee Davis promised to have the full project proposal sent to Mr. Kruesi.

Mr. Joe Robbins, Jr. referenced an article he read recently, where a member of leadership from another small municipality has recommended applying for a TDEC Parks Funding Grant to purchase property. He suggested this as a possibility for purchasing the land in question.

Ms. Amanda Creighton, a Signal Mountain resident, suggested that the BMA establish contact with the "Thrive" organization in reference to the potential property purchase by the town. "Thrive" has completed extensive bio-mapping of this entire region, which may be beneficial in the decision-making.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Lee Davis adjourned the meeting at 7:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted:
Stacy Stewart, Town Recorder

Approved:
Mariah Prescott, Town Administrator

Approved:
Lee Davis, Mayor