Town of Walden
Regular Monthly Meeting
February 11, 2025

CALL TO ORDER OF THE PUBLIC HEARING ON FINAL READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2025-374 CORRECTING THE BUILDING CODES ADOPTION

The public hearing was called to order by Mayor Lee Davis at 6:30 PM. Town Attorney Sam Elliott clarified that the reason for this building codes correction was due to an accidental omission of a portion. Mayor Davis invited any communications or questions from the citizens in attendance. There were none.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Lee Davis adjourned the public hearing.

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. Several interested citizens were in attendance. The sign-in sheet is attached as an exhibit (Appendix A) to these minutes.

PRAYER AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

Town Recorder Stacy Stewart opened the meeting with a prayer, and Town Attorney Sam Elliott led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Town Recorder Stacy Stewart 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 / CORRECTION OF THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 14, 2025

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 14, 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 Police Report, noting the following statistics from the past 30 days: 59 traffic stops, 12 arrests, 13 assists to other agencies, and 132 calls for service. These statistics reflect all of District 2, which includes the towns of Walden and Signal Mountain, as well as the unincorporated portion of Hamilton County on the mountain.

FINANCIAL

The Financial Report, given by Town Recorder Stacy Stewart, is attached as an exhibit (Appendix B) to these minutes.

WRES – No report.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Mr. Lance Pope gave the report for the Parks and Recreation Committee (PRC), noting first that a workday is scheduled for Saturday, 03/01/2025, @ 9:00 AM. A local scout troop will join to assist in this work, which will include cleanup of the Falling Water Falls trail and also Griffiss Park. The PRC has had a focus on Griffiss Park recently, and Mr. Leslie Millwood has been contracted with to complete the necessary cleanup of trees at the park.

Mr. Pope noted that Falling Water Falls is designated as a State Natural Area, and it is managed by Mr. Travis Bow with TDEC. Because of this state management, there should be an MOU in place between the Town of Walden and the State of Tennessee. The PRC has completed a draft of this MOU that is ready to be submitted.

Mr. Pope further stated that the PRC wants to install a water fountain (with a dog bowl) at Griffiss Park. There is already a water source at the park in the form of a fire hydrant. Mr. Pope asked the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BMA) for permission to allocation $4,000 as follows from the PRC budget:

- $1,300 for connection to the water source by WRUD
- $2,500 for the necessary concrete pad and hookup

Mr. Pope also asked the BMA to consider assisting in the full purchase and installation costs, which could be up to $5,000.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE AN ALLOCATION OF $4,000 FROM THE PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGET, AND TO MOVE $5,000 FROM "MISCELLANEOUS" TO "CAPITAL OUTLAY – PARKS" TO ASSIST WITH THIS PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

Mr. Joe Robbins, Jr. asked if there would be an additional cost for a water meter and also a monthly charge. Mr. Pope clarified that the charge for the meter was include in the WRUD connection fee. Monthly charges should be minimal. Mickey Robbins voiced his concerns about addressing the wooly adelgid infestation that damages hemlock trees. Mr. Pope verified that the PRC would continue to monitor this. In closing, the PRC is also researching ways to address the water that drains from the top of the W Road.

BACHMAN COMMUNITY CENTER

Ms. Kim Rackel gave the report for the Bachman Community Center (BCC), first thanking the Walden's Ridge Emergency Service for their quick response to a faulty fire sensor.

Ms. Rackel noted that many updates are needed at BCC. For example, the kitchen is seeking "Commissary Status," which will require updated equipment. The septic system was pumped on 02/03/2025, and the cast iron pipes have replaced with PVC. The auditorium floors are being refinished, and should be completed by the end of March. In closing, Ms. Rackel noted her excitement about an Eagle Scout project overseeing beautification in front of the building.

PROCLAMATION TO MCCOY FARM AND GARDENS FOR ADMITTANCE TO THE NATIONAL HISTORIC REGISTRY

Susan Snow and Mickey Robbins, members of the McCoy Farm and Gardens' Board, and Melissa Nimon, McCoy Director, were present to receive the proclamation. The proclamation was read aloud by Alderwoman Angela Cassidy, and is attached as an exhibit to these minutes (Appendix C).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. CONSIDERATION OF FIRST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2025-374 CORRECTING ORDINANCE #2024-371 ADOPTING BY REFERENCE THE UPDATED PROVISIONS OF THE BUILDING, RESIDENTIAL, PLUMBING, MECHANICAL, FUEL GAS, FIRE, SWIMMING POOL AND SPA, ELECTRIC, ENERGY CONSERVATION, ANSI ACCESSIBILITY, NFPA LIFE SAFETY CODES, AND THE HAMILTON COUNTY ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING, GAS, MECHANICAL CONTRACTOR LICENSE SURETY BOND

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE FINAL READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2025-374, CORRECTING ORDINANCE # 2024-371, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

NEW BUSINESS

1. EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION

FIELD STAFF:

GERALD HENSLEY
BOBBY HIGGINS
DONALD LOCKHART

The public works crew of Gerald Hensley, Bobby Higgins, and Donald Lockhart were publicly recognized for their service to the Town of Walden. Town Administrator Mariah Prescott noted how hard this crew works to keep the roads and rights-of-ways in Walden clear and safe. Ms. Prescott also thanked the crew for actually sleeping at Town Hall during the most recent snow event in order to address snow and icy patches on Walden's streets. All three men received a gift bag and a card of appreciation from the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

2. CONSIDERATION OF BID APPROVAL FOR WALDEN PAVING 2025

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott stated that no bids were received in response to the RFP from the town. Mayor Lee Davis stated that he will reach out to two paving companies and striping company the town has used before. Attorney Sam Elliott stated that there is a specific process for this type of business. He will research this and get back in contact with Mayor Davis and / or town staff.

3. DISCUSSION ON CEC PROPOSAL FOR ADDITIONAL SERVICES OUTSIDE OF TDEC GRANT ALLOCATION

Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt summarized this proposal. She noted that $150,000 had been allocated from the TDEC Grant for a stormwater audit. In order to complete the full scope of work, $50,000 for additional services is needed.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MADE A MOTION TO MOVE $50,000 WITH A BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR THIS ADDITIONAL WORK, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

4. CONSIDERATION OF WRES FUNDING ADJUSTMENT TO FISCAL CALENDAR

Mayor Lee Davis reminded the BMA that – because WRES's fiscal year ends in December – they received a one-time contribution of $85,000 in December of 2024. They will begin on the June receipt schedule in 2025.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE WRES FUNDING ADJUSTMENT TO THE FISCAL CALENDAR, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

5. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION #2025-618 TO AMEND PARAGRAPH 5 OF APPENDIX 1 OF RESOLUTION #2024-609 TO CLARIFY THE SUBMITTAL DATES FOR REQUESTS FOR CHARITABLE DONATIONS

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO CHANGE THE CONTRIBUTION SUBMITTAL DATES FROM "JANUARY 1 TO MARCH 1" TO "MARCH 1 TO APRIL 1." SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

6. DISCUSSION ON POTENTIAL SUBDIVISION REGULATION AMENDMENT BY WALDEN PLANNING COMMISSION REGARDING PUBLIC SEWER AND DECENTRALIZED WASTEWATER SYSTEMS

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott stated that there were two possible paths for these decisions.

(a) Amend the zoning ordinance and add a special permit application and process which would come to the BMA for approval or denial.

(b) Have the Walden Planning Commission (WPC) draft a resolution to add the process to the subdivision regulations, which would be approved or denied by the WPC.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO FOLLOW THE FIRST PROPOSED PATH. THERE WAS NO SECOND SO THE MOTION FAILED.

Mayor Lee Davis asked for three examples of how this process was handled by other towns. Mayor Davis tabled this discussion for a later date.

7. DISCUSSION ON NEXT W ROAD CLEANUP DATE

Mayor Lee Davis announced that the next W Road cleanup date would be on Sunday, 04/06/2025. Volunteers are needed and should meet at McCoy Farm and Gardens at 8:00 AM on this date.

8. DISCUSSION ON MARCH TOWN HALL MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott clarified a change in the meeting time for March 11. A Special Called Meeting will come to order at 5:30 PM. A public hearing for the re-zoning request of 2315 Taft Highway will then occur at 6:30 PM.

9. PRESENTATION BY WSP FOR TDOT TAFT HIGHWAY CORRIDOR PLAN

Mariah Dekle presented and summarized this report, which can be found on the Walden website.

10. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION #2025-619 TO ADOPT THE TECHNICAL REPORT FOR THE TAFT HIGHWAY CORRIDOR STUDY

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VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED ADOPT THE TECHNICAL REPORT FOR THE TAFT HIGHWAY CORRIDOR STUDY, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITIZENS

Joe Robbins, Jr. asked a question regarding agenda item #6. How does this correlate to the recent project application for the Town Center? Mayor Lee Davis noted that the BMA would further discuss this at the March meeting.

Mr. Dave Chouinard, a resident of Forest Park Drive, stated that he loves living in Walden and he loves driving the W Road, but he is concerned that large trucks are ruining the historical nature and beauty of this road. He would like for the BMA to consider "hefty fines" for trucks attempting to traverse this road.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Lee Davis adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted:
Stacy Stewart, Town Recorder

Approved:
Mariah Prescott, Town Administrator

Approved:
Lee Davis, Mayor