Town of Walden
Board of Mayor and Aldermen
Regular Monthly Meeting
May 13, 2025

CALL TO ORDER OF THE PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2025-377, ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET AND TAX RATE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2025 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2026

The public hearing was called to order by Mayor Lee Davis at 6:30 PM. Mayor Davis confirmed that the tax rate for Walden is not yet changing this fiscal year – it remains at $0.5315 per $100. Town Attorney Sam Elliott noted that this may change due to the increased home-value appraisals. The tax rate must be revenue neutral, so it may ultimately be decreased.

There are no questions or comments from the audience.

CALL TO ORDER OF THE PUBLIC HEARING ON A SPECIAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE EXISTING LOTS OF RECORD ON ANDERSON AVENUE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ZONING ORDINANCE SECTIONS 3.03, 3.04, AND 8.01

The next public hearing was called to order by Mayor Lee Davis at 6:32 PM. Walden Resident Kevin Kana asked to speak, and noted his concern that the site plan needs more details, such as set-backs for any proposed home(s). He asked if the Special Use Permit could be passed with stipulations attached, and Attorney Elliott stated that it cannot. Mr. Garner, the co-property owner, stated that they hope to limit construction to two homes on the lots.

Ms. Glenda Anderson asked if this meant that the street will now be reopened. Mayor Davis stated that it would not. Mr. Randy Hennings stated his concern about a potential driveway opening to the woods behind his house. He asked for transparency and communication going forward.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Lee Davis adjourned the public hearings at 6:42 PM.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF TDOT YELLOW DOT PROGRAM AND PRESENTATION FROM JOHN COOPER

Mr. John Cooper, with TDOT, summarized the "Yellow Dot" program This is an initiative to protect drivers and passengers who may be injured in a traffic accident and unable to speak for themselves. Participants should place the yellow sticker on the driver's side of the rear window after completing the included questionnaire and placing it in the glove compartment. What information is shared is entirely up to the participant. The only requirement is that a photograph of each participant also be included with each questionnaire in the brochure(s). This is to ensure that the proper person(s) is / are being treated according to the information provided.

Mr. Cooper left several brochures for the audience to pick up if they so desired. More brochures can be delivered upon request.

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 6:49 PM. The sign-in sheet listing interested citizens in attendance 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 or Correction of the Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting, 04/08/2025

Alderwoman Angela Cassidy requested a clarification on the minutes from the April meeting. These minutes will be updated and brought back to the June meeting for approval / correction.

REPORTS

Police

Hamilton County Sheriff's Deputy Chad Faulkner gave the Police Report. In the last 30 days, there were 21 traffic stops, 14 arrests, 111 calls for service, 10 assists to other agencies, 10 auto accidents, one business check, and one new home construction check. These statistics reflect all of District 2, which includes the towns of Walden and Signal Mountain, and also 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

Mr. Bill Thornton gave the report for Walden's Ridge Emergency Services. In the last 30 days, 29 calls were received: nine fire-related, 11 emergency medical services, and nine assist-to-citizens. Mr. Thornton thanked the BMA for their continued partnership with Walden's Ridge Emergency Services.

Parks and Recreation

No report.

Bachman Community Center

No report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There is no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **CONSIDERATION OF FIRST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE #2025-377, ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET AND TAX RATE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2025 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2026**

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO ADOPT ORDINANCE #2025-377, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

2. **CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION #2025-625 GRANTING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE EXISTING LOTS OF RECORD ON ANDERSON AVENUE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ZONING ORDINANCE SECTIONS 3.03, 3.04, AND 8.01**

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION #2025-625, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

3. **CONSIDERATION OF CURB CUT APPLICATION FOR 1003 MCLEAN AVE**

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott verified that the Town's engineer recommended approval of this curb cut application.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE CURB CUT APPLICATION, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

4. **CONSIDERATION OF CURB CUT APPLICATION FOR 2309 EAST BROW ACCESS FROM ALTURA**

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott verified that the Town's engineer recommended approval of this curb cut application as well.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE CURB CUT APPLICATION, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

5. **CONSIDERATION OF QUOTE FOR CHAMP LIVE-STREAM SYSTEM UPGRADE**

Communications Director Ellen Young verified that "Champ" is a sole-source provider, so quotes are not necessary. This upgrade would allow for more autonomy in controlling the sound system, and Champ would live-monitor all meeting recordings / streaming. Champ would also be responsible for the time-stamping of all meetings.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE CHAMP LIVE-STREAM SYSTEM UPGRADE, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

6. CONSIDERATION OF ADVERTISING FOR BIDS FOR PAVING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026

Mayor Lee Davis summarized that the BMA is voting whether or not to approve advertising for bids for paving for Fiscal year 2025-2026.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE ADVERTISING FOR PAVING BIDS, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

7. CONSIDERATION OF ADVERTISING FOR BIDS FOR TDEC GRANT CAPITOL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE ADVERTISING FOR BIDS TO ADDRESS THE TDEC GRANT CAPITOL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

8. DISCUSSION ON REDUCING SPEED LIMIT ON TAFT HIGHWAY

Alderwoman Angela Cassidy summarized her concerns and volunteered to begin researching the process required for reducing the speed limit through Walden on SR-127 / Taft Highway.

9. UPDATE ON CEC COMPREHENSIVE STORMWATER AUDIT TDEC GRANT

Mayor Lee Davis verified that phases 1 and 2 have been completed. Walden is now waiting for our engineers to complete their recommendations and begin phases 3 – 5.

10. UPDATE ON LIGHTING ORDINANCE AND DARK SKIES INITIATIVE

Mr. Dan Reynolds, a member of the Environmental Committee, reported on this initiative. A draft of the Lighting Ordinance has been submitted to the WPC and they are still in the process of reviewing it. The Environmental Committee recommended that a consultant be hired to assist in completion of the ordinance. The committee has talked to "Dark Sky Consulting" and noted that they have worked with municipalities similar to Walden for creating such an ordinance.

11. ANNOUNCEMENT OF W-ROAD CLEANUP MAY 18TH

Due to concerns about continued rain, the W-Road cleanup for May 18th will be postponed. The new date will be advertised as soon as one is determined.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS

Mr. Dan Reynolds announced that there will be a demonstration of hemlock tree injector treatment on Saturday, 05/17/2025, from 10:00 AM until 12:00 PM at the Signal Mountain Pruett's. Mr. Reynolds also noted that over 16,000 hemlocks have been treated on Walden's Ridge in the past year.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Lee Davis adjourned the meeting at 7:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted:
Stacy Stewart, Town Recorder

Approved:
Mariah Prescott, Town Administrator

Approved:
Lee Davis, Mayor