

Town of Walden
Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2021

CALL TO ORDER OF THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE TAX RATE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2021 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2022

Mayor Lee Davis called the public hearing to order. Town Attorney Sam Elliott explained that the proposed tax rate (0.5315% per \$100 of assessed value) actually went down from the previous tax rate (0.60%) because the assessed property values went up. This will actually keep the taxes paid by homeowners the same. Mayor Davis invites public comments and questions, and there are none. The public hearing is adjourned.

CALL TO ORDER OF THE REGULAR 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, Wade Sorenson, Mike and Yvonne Harvey, Ellie Hill, Linda Collins, Eddie Lawson, Mickey Robbins, Winston Robbins, Jon Cook, Elizabeth Akins, Betty Julian, Karen Stone, Gary Smith, Mike and Angela Cassidy, Katy Newby, Kristin Allen, and Joe Davis.

Fern Lockhart opened the meeting with a prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Fern Lockhart called the roll and noted the presence of Mayor Lee Davis, Alderwomen Sarah McKenzie, and Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt. Town Attorney Sam Elliott was also present at the meeting.

APPROVAL / CORRECTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

ALDERWOMAN SARAH McKENZIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 10, 2021, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

ROADS REPORT

Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt introduced Kristin Allen as the new Roads and Safety Committee chairperson. Vice Mayor Schmidt noted that the speed-monitoring signs are currently not working right now, but she is coordinating with the manufacturers to get them operational once again. Once this occurs, the Roads and Safety Committee is looking to change the locations of the signs. Further, Officer Gregg Carson will begin working to enhance speed enforcement in Walden. Kristin Allen reported speaking with Officer Carson to confirm this enhanced public safety measure, which will begin in the next couple of weeks.

In deference to a visiting attorney, Mayor Lee Davis asked for a change of agenda order, advancing the meeting to Unfinished Business item #2.

POLICE REPORT

No report.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The financial report is completed and attached as an exhibit to these minutes.

CODES ENFORCEMENT

No report.

WRES REPORT

Bill Thornton reported for WRES, stating that the service responded to 35 total calls in the past 30 days. These included: two vehicle crashes, 16 emergency medical calls, five “assist to citizen” calls, and 12 fire-related calls (these were not all actual fires – some involved trees and / or power lines down).

Pending any changes in CDC guidelines, WRES is planning an open house for the new fire hall on Sunday, October 24, from 2:00 – 5:00 PM.

BACHMAN COUNCIL

Katy Murphy submitted a written report, which is attached as an exhibit to these minutes.

PUMPKIN PATCH

No report.

MCCOY FARM & GARDENS

Mickey Robbins reported that things continue to move ahead at McCoy Farm and Gardens (MFG). The new equipment shed is currently under construction, which will soon house the antique tractor, Bobcat, hay wagon, among other large items. There is also a new wildflower bed that is near the root cellar.

Kevin Calhoun, Assistant Forest Curator for the Tennessee Aquarium, will lead a bird-walk on September 26th, beginning at 8:00 AM.

The Halloween Festival, scheduled for October 23rd, has been cancelled due to COVID concerns.

Mr. Robbins closed his comments by reminding Walden residents that volunteers are always needed and welcome at MFG. Please sign up online if you are able to help.

DOG PARK

Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie reported that two large dead trees (one of which had already fallen) were successfully removed from the dog park area.

LAND USE STUDY COMMITTEE

Angela Cassidy reported that the Land Use Committee has begun meeting monthly at Walden Town Hall, at 5:00 PM on the first Tuesday. She invited any citizen with questions to speak with her personally. The final presentation from Common Ground will be on October 7, 2021 at Bachman.

WALDEN'S RIDGE CIVIC LEAGUE

The report, given by Karen Stone, is attached in writing as an exhibit to these minutes.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

No report. The next meeting will be October 7, 2021.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Mariah Prescott reported that the Parks and Recreation Committee had a very productive summer. There are four sub-committees: Mabbitt Springs, Falling Water Falls, Disc Golf Course, and Connectivity.

In the fall, there will be several workdays at Mabbitt Springs in order to spread wood chips, install a custom bench, and install new signage. At Falling Water Falls, the committee is working with the state to determine where they can obtain permission to place the bike rack and a new bench. In June, many volunteers assisted in a clean-up and restoration of the Disc Golf Course. The committee is also working to add updated signage at the course. Lastly, the Connectivity sub-committee is working to address easier walking access between existing public trails and parks in Walden. There will be two volunteer workdays this fall. More information will be posted on the Walden website.

ROADS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

See report above, under "Roads."

NEW BUSINESS

1. APPROVAL OF THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT LETTER AND SCOPE OF SERVICES WITH KCI FOR THE MULTIMODAL ACCESS GRANT APPLICATION – TOTAL LABOR FEE AND EXPENSES \$7,830.00.

Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie explained that, in August, the council approved for the Town to apply to T-DOT for a grant that would provide a shared bicycle and pedestrian path along Taft Highway – from Elberfeld to Fairmount. The fees and expenses would be for KCI to complete the grant application, project management meetings, and also the work itself if the grant is awarded to Walden. Alderwoman McKenzie further noted that, by paying an engineering firm to complete the application, this may increase the Town's chances at receiving the grant – which has been denied in at least two prior attempts. This particular grant is only approved for use beside state highways.

ALDERWOMAN SARAH McKENZIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT LETTER AND SCOPE OF SERVICES WITH KCI FOR THE MULTIMODAL ACCESS GRANT APPLICATION – TOTAL LABOR FEE AND EXPENSES \$7,830.00, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

2. APPROVAL OF REQUEST FROM THE CHATTANOOGA TRACK CLUB TO HOLD THE 45TH RUNNING OF THE SIGNAL MOUNTAIN ROAD RACE ON OCTOBER 23, 2021.

Mayor Lee Davis noted that the race will begin from Pruett's at 8:00 AM on October 23, 2021. All runners should be off of the roads by 9:15 AM at the latest. Local law enforcement and WRES will be on hand to assist with road closures and runners' safety.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVED THE 45TH RUNNING OF THE SIGNAL MOUNTAIN ROAD RACE ON OCTOBER 23, 2021, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN SARAH McKENZIE, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

3. ANY OTHER NEW BUSINESS.

There is no other new business.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE 2021-339, SETTING THE TAX RATE FOR TAX YEAR 2021 AT \$0.5315 PER \$100 OF ASSESSED VALUE ON ALL REAL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY.**

Mayor Lee Davis summarized the setting of the tax rate for 2021.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 2021-339 SETTING THE TAX RATE FOR TAX YEAR 2021 AT \$0.5315 PER \$100 OF ASSESSED VALUE ON ALL REAL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN SARAH McKENZIE, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

2. **RESOLUTION #2021-549, A RESOLUTION DISCLAIMING ANY INTEREST IN THE RIGHT-OF-WAY OF NORTHERN AVENUE BETWEEN SAWYER ROAD AND WILSON AVENUE.**

Mayor Lee Davis introduced Attorney Ellie Hill, representing the impacted homeowners of Northern Avenue. Attorney Hill asked the board to formalize the resolution to disclaim any interest in the right-of-way between Sawyer Road and Wilson Avenue.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO ACCEPT RESOLUTION #2021-549, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITIZENS

1. Karen Stone noted that many young children are using the walking trails from the Pumpkin Patch to McCoy, but they are riding bikes on the trail. Ms. Stone asks that bikes not be allowed on the walking trails, due to safety concerns for walkers and wear-and-tear on the trails.

The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Davis.

SES



Respectfully submitted:
Fern Lockhart, Recorder



Approved:
Lee Davis, Mayor