

**Town of Pinetops
Board of Commissioners
Regular Monthly Meeting
Minutes
April 2, 2024
Pinetops Town Hall**

A. Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Harrell called the Meeting to Order. All Board Members were present.

B. Invocation

Mayor Pro-Tem Taylor led the Invocation.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Harrell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Proposed Agenda

Commissioner Sugg requested the proposed agenda be amended to include the load management units owned by the City of Wilson be added under Items for Discussion. Commissioner Sugg made a motion to approve the proposed agenda as amended. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Taylor made a motion to approve the March 5, 2024, Minutes as written. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

F. Guests

1. Dashina Manning – 340 E Cobb St.

Dashina Manning appeared before the Board to speak on the recently changed street sign that was previously known as Deputy David Sean Manning. She acknowledged she knew the main reason for the name change was due to residents along that street not receiving packages and mail. She had suggested an honorary "Memorial Sign" be erected back onto the sign it was removed from at the corner of First/Hamlet Street. She continued by stating that the street name was much more than just a street sign it was her son's legacy and a way to honor him especially since the area in question use to be a racial divide within town. She ended by stating that the options the mayor had mentioned to her were not an acceptable compromise as far as she and her family are concerned. She asked to tentatively meet with the Board so both sides could produce a mutual agreement.

Commissioner Sugg agreed with Dashina Manning that this is an emotional and complicated issue but hopefully she and the Board can sit down together and produce an alternative way to honor her son that is acceptable for both sides.

G. Public Comments

1. Alexander Paschall – 2024 State Senate Candidate

Mr. Paschall appeared before the Board to introduce himself since he is running for the NC 2024 State Senate. He stated as a candidate for the 5th District (Edgecombe/Pitt Counties) he is extremely interested in the small towns and would love to be a voice to elaborate on what their individual needs are.

2. Sasha Williams – 602 E. Hamlet St.

Sasha Williams was present for the meeting via zoom. Before the meeting the Board was presented with an email that Ms. Williams put together with suggestions, she felt would help the community as well as town leadership as times are changing. A copy of the email is hereby attached to the minutes. She stated that she felt the town's Facebook page and website are both outdated. Suggested creating a You Tube page, hiring a part-time grant writer, and having the maintenance department inform citizens with weekly updates of scheduled improvements.

3. Phyllis Arrington – Pinetops Community Development Advisory Board Quarterly Update
Phyllis Arrington appeared before the Board on behalf of the Pinetops Community Development Advisory Board. She was hoping to provide the Board with a map and some handouts explaining what the advisory board has been working on during the last quarter. In order to go after any Economic Development Grants there needs to be a designated business district. This is just one way to help bring in new businesses to town.

H. Departmental Reports

- 1. Police Department:** Chief Harrell read over the police report for the month of March 2024. The police department answered and/or initiated 1037 official police actions during the month. A detailed copy of the entire police report is hereby attached to the minutes. The current report shows the staffing as follows: (7) full-time officers, (6) Radio Communicators (3 full-time & 3 part-time).

Commissioner Sugg asked Chief Harrell if the town had a sufficient number of cameras in use. Chief Harrell replied that the old cameras are being replaced with new ones as funding becomes available.

- 2. Public Works Department:** Cody Lancaster, Public Works Supervisor presented the water and wastewater totals report for the month of March 2024. The total water produced was 6.48 million gallons and the total wastewater was 7.85 million gallons.

There were 0 electrical outages for the month of March 2024. Asplundh Tree Experts started trimming lines on March 18th and should be here until April 4th.

There were two water leaks. One leak was on the 100 Block of E. Hamlet and the other was at the Pinetops Community Garden on Sally Jenkins St.

Lift Station pump on S. 2nd Street experienced pump failure and had to be pulled for repair. The repair has been quoted at \$4,082 for a pump build.

Cody and Carlos completed the classroom portion of the B-Distribution class. The test is scheduled for May 30th.

Cody received a quote of \$4244 from Chanler Electric to install and wire the exit signs at the Event Center. He told the Board that he is waiting on a 2nd quote from Carolina Wiring Services.

Commissioner Sugg asked for an update on the backup generator for the Town Hall/Police Department. Cody stated he would try to get an estimate from Chanler Electric but as far as he knows the previous vendors who provided quotes have backed out.

Cody told the Board he has begun the interview process for the vacant public works maintenance position.

3. **Fire Department:** Chief Burress presented a copy of the fire report for the month of March 2024. There were 5 service calls for the month. A detailed copy of the fire report is hereby attached to these minutes. There were 4 cemetery lots sold for the month of March. A detailed copy of the cemetery report is attached.

Chief Burress told the Board that he took a field trip to Milledgeville, GA to tour the construction of the Mini Pumper they are looking into purchasing. The last price quote he received was \$329,000 which was on March 1, 2024. Commissioner Sugg remarked that he was concerned about the price increasing further and if it does where are the funds going to come from. Chief Burress stated that he was confident that the price would not go over \$335,000.

4. **Finance Department:** Ms. Keesler presented the financial report for the month of March 2024. The general fund had a loss of \$ 21,945.54. The electric fund had a gain of \$ 156,252.65 for the month. The water/sewer fund ended the month with a loss of \$65,716.98. A Paid Check Report and Budget to Actual Report was also presented for the month of March. The adjusted ending balance for the month of March is \$ 2,110,979.89. A detailed copy of the reports is hereby attached to the minutes.

The Finance Officer told the Board that as of the end of March the General Fund is over by 3.52% which means the town has exceeded expenditures over revenue received by \$46,406.

5. **Administrator Report:**

Commissioner Webb made a motion for the Town of Pinetops Board of Commissioners to tentatively approve a waiver of formal bidding requirements pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-129(g) for previously bid contracts by piggy-backing a previously bid Edgecombe County fire truck acquisition for a 2024 Mini-Pumper Fire Engine. This waiver and approval of the purchase of the fire truck is contingent on the Town receiving grant funding from the State of North Carolina. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion carried.

If session meets around the 10th of April hopefully, we will have verification of funding shortly after so the waiver of bid process notice can be published around the week of April 15th which will meet the 10 days prior to voting on the contract requirement. Then the town would be able to officially accept the contract, but all is contingent on the town receiving the State funding.

I. Items for Discussion.

1. Any Other Business

Commissioner Sugg had requested at the beginning of the meeting to amend the agenda to include the Load Management Units owned by the City of Wilson. He informed the Board that he had received numerous noise complaints because of the units being located in a residential area. The public works supervisor replied that he would reach out to his contact at the City of Wilson concerning this issue to see if there is anything that can be done to alleviate the noise, a way to muffle the sound.

J. Action Items/New Business.

1. American Legal Publishing – Ordinance Codification Proposal

The Finance Officer had included in the agenda packets a copy of a Codification Agreement between the Town and NCLM (North Carolina League of Municipalities) / ALP (American Legal Publishing). If the Board decides to enter into this agreement, then the Town's Code of Ordinances would be reviewed and brought into compliance with current State Laws & General Statutes. The base cost is \$7,500 plus \$1,250 to have them included online on the Publishers Website with a link to the municipality. This cost can be divided over two fiscal years. Once the process is complete and the ordinances have been on-line for a year then there will be a yearly fee of \$595 to keep the code on-line. The cost to have any new ordinances added to the book after the process has been completed will be \$22 per page. The entire process is scheduled to take approximately six months to complete.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the Codification Agreement offered by the League/ALP to perform the stated services at the price and upon the terms and conditions stated there within. Commissioner Sugg seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

2. BCBS Agent of Record Letter – Request to Change Provider

The Finance Officer informed the Board that she and the mayor met with Mercer Johnson Jr. with the Hilb Group concerning the benefits of changing the town's current group medical coverage for its employees in the upcoming fiscal year. The BCBS July rates have not been released yet but it looks like the increase is going to come in between 10% – 12%. The coverage his company offers is changing from the current BCBS 80/20 plan to a BCBS 70/30 and supplement the difference with a Medi-Bridge Gap plan. The gap plan would cover all the employees' deductibles, ER visits, and any co-pays. The only co-pay it will not cover is the prescriptions. If the Board elects to go this route, the town should see an annual savings of at least \$12,248. The savings could be even greater if any employees over the age of sixty-five come off the proposed plan and switch to a Medicare supplement option. The first step in implementing this is the town authorizing an Agent of Record letter that states the town is switching from its current BCBS Agent Representative to the Hilb Group. After that, the Board waits until the new BCBS rates come in for July, so the exact cost is known.

Commissioner Taylor made a motion to authorize the mayor to sign a Request to Change Provider letter on behalf of the Town of Pinetops. As stated above, the letter shows that the town is releasing its current BCBS Agent Representative from the First National Insurance Company and going with the Hilb Group of NC. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The newly elected members of the Board have decided they prefer to register for the Demand Webinar in order to complete the 2-hour ethics training requirement. The Finance Officer told the Board that she would register the members that need to take the course, but it would not be offered until June-October.

Commissioner Taylor told the Board that she has received some complaints from residents about the car parts, etc., that are being left outside by the storage buildings located behind the Town Hall, adjacent to the parking lot. She requested the Zoning Department be notified to see if anything can be done about this issue.

K. Adjournment

Commissioner Webb made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Ransome seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Date: 5/8/2024


Mayor Brenda Harrell

ATTESTED:


Finance Officer/Town Clerk Tammy Keesler