

**Town of Pinetops
Board of Commissioners
Regular Monthly Meeting
March 4, 2025
Pinetops Town Hall**

A. Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Harrell called the meeting to Order.

B. Invocation

Commissioner Sugg led the Invocation.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Harrell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Proposed Agenda

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the proposed agenda. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve February 4, 2024, minutes as written. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

F. Public Comments

1. Craig M. Woodall/Drone Hance Solutions – 202 N. 4th St.

Mr. Woodall presented the Board with a written presentation that he had prepared explaining his drone business. He explained that he felt his business could be an asset to the town as it pertains to inquiring images of condemned houses that could be used for legal purposes. This process could be cheaper than having to hire an attorney to physically go out and inspect the properties slated for demolition. No prices were mentioned in the proposal submitted but Mayor Harrell stated that this could be discussed further at the budget workshop.

2. Bryan Conklin – 307 N. 3rd St.

Mr. Conklin appeared before the Board to introduce himself and his family. He informed the Board that he is the owner of the Event Center/Gym. He has also purchased another piece of property in town that he hopes to build a storage unit facility on. This piece of property used to be the old casket factory. This is his current 5-year plan; to expand businesses into Pinetops.

3. Suzanne Coker Craig – 201 N. 3rd St.

Mrs. Craig spoke on behalf of the Pinetops Community Development Advisory Board. She stated that their current committee members are dedicated to getting things done and she feels that they are now on the right track to make that happen. She went on to say that they would be presenting proposals to the Board if not at the April meeting, then at the May meeting.

G. Guests

1. Brice Gardner, Troop 961 – 103 Crestwood Circle

Brice presented the Board with a written presentation explaining his pantry box idea which also included three distinctive designs of the box that the Board could choose from. Brice originally presented this idea at the last meeting. At that meeting he explained that this was his "Life Scout Project." At the end of the presentation last month the Board asked him to produce a couple of designs for them to choose from and instructed him to go with the Public Works Supervisor to see where the best location for the pantry box would be. He met with Cody and the location decided on was between the big tree and steps across from the Post Office. He also informed the Board that he would like to name the pantry box "Little Bit Box" in honor of his grandfather. Commissioner Webb made a motion to allow Brice Gardner to install the pantry box in the location discussed above and to allow him to pick the design he thinks fits the location the best. The motion also allows him to name the pantry box "Little Bit Box". Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2. Rebekah Barr, Auditor – Present Audit Report for FYE 6/2024

Rebekah Barr appeared before the Board to present the Audit Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024. Prior to the March meeting, board members were emailed a draft of the report for review. The auditor briefly went through the audit report and gave the Board a chance to ask any questions they may have. She noted that the town had a good, sound fiscal year but there were a couple of items she needed to mention. She explained that she is required to submit worksheet data and performance indicators to the Local Government Commission along with the actual audit report. Items noted on the performance indicators were (1) Age of the water system infrastructure, (2) Late audit report submittal, and (3) Electric transfers to the General Fund. She apologized to the Board for the late submittal and explained that it was due to the lack of staff which she has tried to remedy on her end along with the implementation of new software.

Commissioner Sugg inquired as to how the debt margin/ceiling is figured for municipalities. The auditor explained that these numbers are based off a spreadsheet furnished through the LGC. She stated that she would email a copy of the spreadsheet to the Finance Officer. The Finance Officer mentioned that she has a telephone call with LGC scheduled for next Tuesday, March 11th at 9:00 to discuss the debt limit and when debt approval is needed.

H. Departmental Reports

1. Police Department: Chief Harrell read over the police report for the month of February 2025. The police department answered and/or initiated 1273 official police actions during the month. A detailed copy of the report is hereby attached to the minutes.

The BLET candidate graduated in March, once he completes his paperwork and receives his probationary certification then he will have to complete three months training with the department.

One full-time dispatcher is still out on medical leave.

Chief Harrell informed the Board that the police department has begun issuing civil citations for the 20-mph zone areas in town via ordinance. There were two of these citations written in the relevant timespan.

Commissioner Ransome asked if there was a way to make the citizens aware that the civil citations have been implemented in the 20-mph business zone.

Commissioner Bullock inquired as to whether other departments get additional pay for showing up to work when the Town Hall is closed, and the administrative staff is off due to adverse weather conditions but still paid. Commissioner Sugg replied that this issue would be discussed further at the upcoming budget workshop.

2. **Public Works Department:** Cody Lancaster, Public Works Supervisor presented the water and wastewater totals report for the month of February 2025. The total water produced was 5.42 million gallons and the total wastewater treated was 5.39 million gallons. A detailed copy of the report is hereby attached to the minutes.

There were zero electrical outages for the month of February 2025.

There was one main water line break during the month. The leak that occurred at Carr Farm Rd. caused customers to be without water for approximately 5 hours.

The Public Works are currently down one employee, applications are being taken for the street maintenance position.

Commissioner Taylor asked the Public Works Supervisor to check for any available grants for the purchase of a knuckle-boom truck. This request was made because currently the knuckle-boom truck is down and needs a new engine at an estimated cost of \$46,305.85.

Commissioner Ransome told the Public Works Supervisor that he could accept all the leaves picked up within town at his organic farm if that would help with disposal.

3. **Fire Department:** Chief Burress presented a copy of the fire report for the month of February 2025. There were 9 service calls for the month. A detailed copy of the fire report is hereby attached to these minutes.

Chief Burress stated that they still have not received the new mini pumper yet but hopefully will receive it by March 10th.

Chief Burress informed the Board that he has applied for a grant to purchase spotlights that could also be utilized by the utility department. If awarded, it would be a 100% grant and no cost to the town.

There were zero cemetery lots sold for the month of February 2025. A detailed copy of the cemetery report is hereby attached to the minutes.

4. **Finance Department:** Ms. Keesler presented the financial report for the month of February 2025. The general fund had a gain of \$ 1,249.76. The electric fund had a total gain of \$ 43,267.06 for the month. The water/sewer fund ended the month with a total gain of \$ 21,880.68. The adjusted end balance for the month of February is \$2,3071,726.13. A Paid Check Report and Budget to Actual Report was also provided for the month of February. A detailed copy of the reports is hereby attached to the minutes.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the Audit Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, as presented by the Auditor. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion carried.

I. Items for Discussion.

1. WWTP Revitalization Project

The Board of Commissioners were presented a copy of the original funding requested project cost plus the cost of the newly rescope project for review. The project is going to be discussed in more detail at the upcoming budget workshop. The Finance Officer informed the Board that due to the amount of the project the town would need the Local Government Commission's approval. She has a pre-application call scheduled with the LGC for Tuesday, March 11th at 9:00 a.m.

2. Viable Utilities Spring 2025 BUMP Training Reminder

Cody Lancaster, Commissioner Sugg and Commissioner Bullock will be attending a training course for distressed units on March 19, 2025, at the Wilson County Senior Center in Wilson. The course is scheduled from 9am – 5pm with check-in at 8:30am.

3. Message Board

Mayor Harrell told the Board that the Chamber of Commerce had contacted her to see if the town would be interested in a community message board. The board would be used for informing citizens of community events. This is a free-standing, outdoor message board with interchangeable letters for messaging. If the Board is interested in this idea, she will let the Chamber know, then if they receive funding the Board will need to decide on a location for the message board.

4. Any Other Business

Commissioner Taylor mentioned that the Board might want to consider drafting some type of agreement for individuals they allow to use the event center for free due to liability issues as well as holding them accountable for the appearance of the building.

J. Action Items/New Business.

1. Approval of the Electric Service Agreement between the City of Wilson and the Town of Pinetops

Commissioner Sugg made a motion to approve the 10-year Electric Service Agreement between the City of Wilson and the Town of Pinetops as written. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2. Approve Final Draft Economic Development Implementation Plan - FY 25-27

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the Final Draft Economic Development Implementation Plan – FY 25-27 as written. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Commissioner Taylor opposed the motion. Motion carried.

3. Approve Budget Amendment to include NC OSBM Grant – 12701/Mini-pumper purchase.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the Budget Amendment to include NC OSBM - 12701 for the purchase of a Mini-pumper Fire Truck. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4. Any Other Business

Reminder that the budget workshop will be held at the Event Center on Monday, March 10, 2025, from 8:00-12:00.

K. Executive Session.

1. Legal Matters

Commissioner Webb made a motion to go out of the Regular Session and into Executive Session to discuss legal matters. Commissioner Bullock seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to come out of the Executive Session and back into the Regular Session. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the town attorney's recommendation for the North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM) to pay \$750 at no cost to the town to a mediator for the Ronnie Whitley case to be dismissed. Commissioner Bullock seconded the motion. Motion carried.

L. Adjournment

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

Date: 4/11/2025


Mayor Brenda Harrell

ATTESTED:


Finance Officer/Town Clerk Tammy Keesler