

**TOWN OF NORTH WILKESBORO
COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MONTHLY
MEETING AUGUST 3, 2021**

5:30 p.m.

HELD AT THE NORTH WILKESBORO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS BOARD ROOM

Zoom online platform:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87037393317>

And YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7NdWfFjwMjbLuarfqHDemg>

THERE WERE PRESENT: Robert L. Johnson, Mayor
 Andrew Palmer, Commissioner/Mayor Pro-Tem
 Angela Day, Commissioner
 Debbie Ferguson, Commissioner
 Bert Hall, Commissioner
 Michael Parsons, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT: Wilson B. Hooper, Town Manager
 Debra Pearson, Town Clerk
 Daniel Johnson, Town Attorney
 Meredith Detsch, Town Planner
 Connie Bauguess, Finance Officer
 Interim NWP Chief Rob Thornburg

CALL TO ORDER

I. II. III. Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and delivered the Invocation. Mayor Johnson asked Interim Chief Rob Thornburg to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda- *There was one amendment to the agenda, Item B. Surplus Property Disposal Resolution. This has been updated and submitted for approval in place of the original Resolution ..*

V. Approval of Agenda- Mayor Johnson called for a motion to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Palmer and seconded by Commissioner Day. Motion unanimously carries.**

VI. Public Comments- *Mayor will acknowledge no more than 5 speakers. Speakers have five-minute limit.* There was no one that wished to speak.

VII. Consent Agenda -*All consent items may be approved in one motion. Items requiring further discussion will be pulled and voted upon separately.*

A.) Approval of Meeting Minutes – July 22, 2021 Second Monthly Meeting and July 22, 2021 Closed Session Meeting Minutes

B.) Amended 2021-11 Resolution Declaring Certain Property Surplus and Authorizing It Be Disposed of By the Town Manager

Motion to approve Item A.) July 22, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes, and July 22, 2021 Closed Session Minutes and B.) Resolution 2021-11 Declaring Certain Property Surplus and Authorizing It Be Disposed of By the Town Manager was made by Commissioner Parsons, and seconded by Commissioner Hall, motion unanimously carries. See attachment B. Resolution Authorizing Disposal of Surplus Equipment.

VIII. Town Manager's/Attorney's Report-

Town Manager's and Town Attorney's Reports as needed- Town Manager Hooper introduced a new addition to our staff. Mary Elizabeth Campbell will be working as an LFNC Fellow with the Town of North Wilkesboro for the next year. She is a 2021 graduate of Davidson College and was chosen from over 100 applicants to serve as an LFNC Fellow. She began her work here August 2, 2021 and will work on various projects associated with the town. *The definition of an LFNC Fellow is one who serves the citizens of North Carolina and works to gain an understanding and appreciation for local government, learning to identify and resolve pressing community issues.* Department Heads are meeting with Mary Elizabeth and will be taking her out to different sites to familiarize her with the town. The Board and staff welcomed Mary Elizabeth and we are pleased to have her here.

Smoot Park and other town parks were again a topic of the board. Commissioners would like to see a report from Manager Hooper on the improvements to Smoot Park. Commissioner Palmer stated we should revisualize what a park should be with all efforts focused on Smoot Park. He said it should be maintained at a high level. He added that Highland Park was an area with a less than favorable reputation. He would like to see something done about it. Commissioner Ferguson said “we are working with a small budget”.

Town Attorney Johnson had nothing to report at this time.

IX. Policy-

C.) Comprehensive Financial Policy First Discussion: *Preamble and Objectives* – August 3-Purpose and Objectives. Town Manager Hooper asked the Board to list items or goals of most importance to them.

- Commissioner Palmer listed a healthy fund balance, watching the “debt load”, cutting costs and being thrifty with the town dollars.
- Commissioner Day states keeping fund balance as high as possible, is important, to be able to see any projects going on and where the money is going, and to be thrifty.
- Commissioner Ferguson says watch fund balance, pay staff competitively, prioritize and keep goals of town and staff, buildings and maintenance are important.

- Commissioner Hall sees the Police and Fire Departments as a priority, a healthy fund balance, projects like the pool and mural are important and says “we will do what we can”.
- Mayor Johnson says he is in agreement with the board to pay as we go, keeping fund balance in order and to pay staff competitively.
- Commissioner Parsons wants a written policy with hard numbers on the fund balance so that citizens know what the town is trying to do. Explore income sources. He states “we got lucky with the ARP funds”, and we need to make hard choices. He asked “how are we going to bring money in to the town”? Stay mindful of sidewalks, sewer and water. Make grant sourcing a priority. “We have folks to help us go after grant dollars”. Stay on task with expenditures, pick projects and stick to them.

This is a first discussion of six that Manager Hooper will conduct with the Board. The next discussion will come at the August 26, 2021 second monthly board meeting.

D.) Increasing Employee Vaccination – Town Manager Hooper presented a draft “Resolution to Grant Personnel Policy Authority to North Wilkesboro Town Manager” in regard to the state of emergency powers relating to personnel during the duration of the Wilkes County State of Emergency as declared on March 13, 2020 due to Coronavirus/COVID-19. The Personnel Policy authorization would allow adoption of amendments to the policy such as compensation policy, workplace safety requirements, etc. Manager Hooper reports that only 34% of Wilkes residents are fully vaccinated. Manager Hooper would like to develop a workplace safety policy, create a lottery and give cash incentives to those having taken the vaccine and those choosing to get the vaccine within a time frame yet to be decided. One incentive proposed would be to award \$500.00 to each vaccinated employee (must show proof of vaccination), and each employee participating would be entered into a lottery with the amount undecided at this time. Another caveat of the resolution would be his authority to change the town’s safety policy to require masks be worn and other actions as necessary.

Commissioner Day said she was surprised that the percentage of vaccinations was so low. She asked about publicize this figure and try to encourage folks to get vaccinated.

After discussion, it is the consensus of the Board to ask Manager Hooper to resubmit a resolution focusing on the vaccine cash incentive, the lottery and make changes to town policy for masks. **Motion to have Town Manager submit an amended proposed resolution was made by Commissioner Parsons and seconded by Commissioner Ferguson. Motion unanimously carries.**

X. Emerging Issues (formerly Mayor and Commissioner Topics)- Commissioner Parsons brought up the subject of closed meetings procedures that had been discussed at a previous meeting of the Board. The question of who can ask citizens to attend and who can be invited to attend closed session meetings was again discussed. Town Attorney Daniel Johnson says that the Town Manager, Council, and Mayor may invite citizens to attend a closed session meeting. The GS and policy must be followed to prevent conflict of interest. It is agreed that a 24-hour policy should be put in place to give other Board members and Attorney Johnson time to make a decision on whether the person invited to the closed session has a legitimate reason for attending the session. Commissioners

Palmer and Day agree that Attorney Johnson should look into a “24 hour” policy to “vet” the citizen the Manager, Board or Mayor may submit the name of to attend. **Motion to have Attorney Johnson come up with a proposal to vet possible attendees of Closed Sessions was made by Commissioner Day and seconded by Commissioner Palmer. Motion unanimously carries.**

XI. Closed Sessions-

At 6:20 p.m. Mayor Johnson called for a motion to go into Closed Session.to discuss an item according to GS 143-318.11 (a)(6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment... of an individual public officer. **Motion to go into Closed Session was made by Commissioner Day, seconded by Commissioner Palmer. Motion unanimously carries.** At 8:05 Mayor Johnson asked for a motion to come out of Closed Session. **Motion was made by Commissioner Parsons, seconded by Commissioner Hall. Motion unanimously carries.**

XII. Adjourn- With no other comments or concerns, Mayor Johnson called for a motion to adjourn. **Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Parsons, seconded by Commissioner Palmer. Motion unanimously carries, meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.**

Debra W. Pearson Town Clerk

Robert L. Johnson MAYOR

Approved: _____

Attachment B.

**RESOLUTION 2021-11 DECLARING CERTAIN PROPERTY SURPLUS AND AUTHORIZING IT BE
DISPOSED OF BY THE TOWN MANAGER**

WHEREAS, The Board of Commissioners of the Town of North Wilkesboro hereby declares the following property surplus and desires to dispose of certain surplus property of the Town;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners that:

1. The following described property is hereby declared surplus to the needs of the Town of North Wilkesboro:

- Ferris IS1500Z zero turn mower (parts only)
- Briggs and Stratton 3.5hp engine (model #2699L, unknown condition)
- Sewer drain snake machine 5hp (unknown condition)
- John Deere MX6 bush hog (parts only)
- 4 tier filing cabinet (1 of 4)
- 4 tier filing cabinet (2 of 4)
- 4 tier filing cabinet (3 of 4)
- 4 tier filing cabinet (4 of 4)
- GM 3800 series II engine (parts only)
- Northers Clipper 14hp concrete saw (unknown condition)
- Hydraulic lift gate
- Miscellaneous vehicle rear ends (2 total, parts only)
- Large Mufflers (2 total)
- Dump Bed
- Chain link fencing with poles
- John Deere Garden Tractor with scrape blade (unknown condition)
- Bolens Garden Tractor with scrape blade (unknown condition)
- Suzuki 250 4x4 4-wheeler with scrape blade (unknown condition)
- 1992 Ford F-9000 garbage truck (vin 1FDYW82A8NVA09962)
- 2003 Ford F-150 4x4 truck (vin 2FTPF18Z53CA71181)
- 2003 Chevy 2500 2wd truck (vin 1GCGC24U63Z214229)
- 1998 Ford Ranger 2wd truck (vin 1FTYR14U0WPB52548)
- 2001 Ford F-150 2wd truck (vin 2FTPX17Z81CA74829)
- Recycle roll off dumpster (1 of 2)
- Recycle roll off dumpster (2 of 2)
- Salt spreader (bad engine, rust)
- 2009 Dodge Charger, VIN#2B3KA43VX9H548585
- 2002 Ford Explorer, VIN#1FMDU75W82ZA82596
- 2002 Harley Davidson Motorcycle – VIN#1HD1FMW102Y653134

2. The Town Manager is authorized to dispose of the described property per G.S. 160A-266.

3. A city may discard any personal property that: (i) is determined to have no value; (ii) remains unsold or unclaimed after the city has exhausted efforts to sell the property using any applicable procedure under this Article; or (iii) poses a potential threat to the public health or safety.

4. The Town Clerk shall publish notice summarizing this Resolution in accordance with G.S. 160A-280.

Duly adopted this _____ day of August, 2021.

Robert L. Johnson, MAYOR

ATTEST: _____
Debra W. Pearson, TOWN CLERK