

**Commissioners Work Session**  
**Thursday, September 26, 2019**  
**Commissioners Room**  
**5:30 p.m.**

**Members present:** Mayor Robert Johnson, Commissioner Joe Johnston, Mayor Pro-tem Angela Day, Commissioner Debbie Ferguson, Commissioner Bert Hall and Commissioner Junior Goforth.

**Absent:** None

**Staff present:** Town Manager Wilson Hooper, Clerk Debra Pearson, Finance Officer Connie Bauguess, NW Fire Chief Jimmy Martin, Planning Director Meredith Detsch, Tourism Director Crystal Keener, North Wilkesboro Police Chief Joe Rankin and Public Works Director Dale Shumate.

- Call to Order- Mayor Robert Johnson
- Invocation- Mayor Robert Johnson
- Pledge of Allegiance- NW Police Chief Joe Rankin

**V. Approval of Agenda-** Mayor Robert Johnson called for a motion to approve the September 26, 2019 Agenda-Setting Work Session. **Commissioner Hall made the motion to approve and Commissioner Johnston seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carries.**

**VI. Action Items:** One item was brought before the board to take action on at the September 26, 2019 work session.

- 1.** That item was **Approval of the WFBH/Wilkes Medical Center Sublease.** WFBMC CEO Chad Brown presented a power point to the board regarding the status of the hospital's new governance structure, financial position, performance rankings, community programs and plans for the future, noting the importance of keeping patients local. He highlighted the new Physicians that have begun their practices here in North Wilkesboro. The sublease is from Wilkes Regional Medical Center Operating Corporation, d/b/a Wilkes Medical Center. This sublease allows the Wilkes County Emergency Medical Services to lease the 8500 square foot building on the grounds of the medical center. Since the Town is the owner of the hospital facility, our consent of the lease is required. **Mayor Johnson called for a motion to approve the hospital sublease. Commissioner Ferguson made a motion to approve hospital sublease. Commissioner Hall seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carries.** At that time the Mayor signed the sublease agreement and Town Clerk Debra Pearson attested the documents, signatures, and stamped all with the town seal. Original copies were given to the hospital and an original copy is kept here at Town Hall.

**VII. Work items: the following items were presented to the board for approval at the October 8, 2019 Commissioners' board meeting.**

2.) **Update on Wilkes County Schools within town limits:** This item is not placed on the October 8 regular board meeting agenda. It was requested by the board for the work session only. Wilkes County Schools Superintendent Mark Byrd Manager Hooper spoke to the board regarding the status of the two in town public schools, North Wilkesboro Elementary and CC Wright Elementary Schools. He reported on performance of the two schools and informed the board that North Wilkesboro Elementary enrollment is up twenty-one (21) more students than anticipated and CC Wright was up twelve (12) more students than anticipated at the beginning of the school year and that both schools were on target according to their school letter grades Superintendent Byrd says both of these schools are winning in this grading program. Superintendent Byrd commended the North Wilkesboro Police Department on their presence in the schools, noting that the officers are there merely for presence, not necessity, and that they have good rapport with the children, and are a positive presence there.

3.) **North Wilkesboro Fire Department Safer Grant:** Fire Chief Jimmy Martin presented informed the board that a four- year grant has been awarded to the North Wilkesboro Fire Department. The grant amounts to \$527,250.00 with no matching dollars required. This grant will help fund 12 part-time positions and training for those positions within the fire department. All new employees will be certified first responders. A letter from Virginia Foxx was sent to Christopher Logan, Acting Assistant Administrator for Grant Programs/FEMA in Washington DC in support of the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant application submitted from the North Wilkesboro Fire Department. Her letter stated she urges Mr. Logan to fund the request. A letter of appreciation will be drafted and sent to Mrs. Virginia Foxx thanking her for her support and correspondence with Mr. Logan.

4.) **Broadway Water Write-off:** Manager Hooper and Finance Officer Bauguess informed the board this is due to non-collection of water and sewer fees over the last twenty (20) years by Broadway Water Association. Due to the age of the bills and lack of collecting customer information the debt is uncollectible at this point. Broadway Water is asking a write-off totaling \$3,530.26. This Resolution to charge off water/sewer debt is set to be decided at the October 8, 2019 regular board meeting.

5.) **Business Revolving Loan Fund Award, program review and budget amendment:** George Smith, owner of the Copper Barrel Distillery in North Wilkesboro has been recommended by the Revolving Loan Committee for a business loan of \$15,000.00 to expand his business by incorporating a sports lounge and cocktail lounge, and therefore increasing business and providing and opportunity to hire additional staff. This needs more work before it is ready to be put into action. Attorney Vannoy and the Loan Committee will be working out details. The Commissioners will be asked to approve the award and budget amendment at the October 8, 2019 regular board meeting.

6.) **Budget Amendment to fund Planning and Inspections Dept. Operations:** At the time the budget was approved the needs of the Planning and Inspections Department weren't known. The Planning Director position had not been filled and there were no professional development funds allocated for this. The budget didn't reflect or support the need for funds for the contract with N-Focus for code enforcement services negotiated and signed after the approval of the current year budget, and funds to pay HCCOG for providing planning services during the transition between the former planning director and the new hire for that position. The Town Manager proposes that \$29,000.00 will provide the department with adequate funds to cover responsibilities for the

remainder of the year. This Budget Amendment is set for approval at the October 8, 2019 board meeting.

7.) **Zoning Ordinance Review and update project:** It has been brought to the attention of the Planning Board and the Commissioners that several references in the Town's Zoning Ordinance were outdated with the state statutes. The Planning Board requested that the HCCOG put together a proposal to review and update the ordinance for the Planning Board. This proposal was heard at their June 13, 2019 meeting and the request was heard by the Commissioners to enter into a contract to update the Zoning Ordinance. HCCOG is charging a fee of \$2,400.00 for this service. Authorization to allow Town Manager Hooper to sign the contract will be requested at the October 8, 2019 regular board

8.) **Voluntary annexation proposal:** Planning Director Meredith Detsch presented a request to call for a public hearing to allow a voluntary annexation to be made on property owned by Mr. William Hamby and Mrs. Jennifer Hamby. This is a satellite annexation and meets the five standard for undertaking a satellite annexation. The property is in the town's ETJ and is zoned (HB) Highway Business. **Mayor Johnson called for a motion to approve call for public hearing. Commissioner Ferguson made a motion to approve and Commissioner Day seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carries.**

9.) **Updated Splashpad agreement:** Manager Hooper gave an update on the current progress of the Smoot Park Splashpad. Contractor Buster Mastin is waiving \$8,000.00 in additional labor costs and is to have the project completed within six (6) weeks of the execution of the updated agreement set to be approved at the October 8, 2019 board meeting. The updated agreement along with a budget amendment for \$40,000.00 from the town's contingency fund to cover costs for remaining materials to complete the job is requested to be approved at the October 8, 2019 meeting.

10.) **Discuss November Meeting Schedule:** Town Manager Hooper asked the board to consider changing the regular monthly board meeting from November 12, 2019 to November 7, 2019. The original date would have been November 5<sup>th</sup>, but due to that day being election day, the meeting was moved to November 12<sup>th</sup>. Since then, Manager Hooper has been scheduled for out of town career development training. The Town Clerk will be out of town for training that week as well. The monthly board work session normally held on the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) Thursday would be moved to November 21, 2019 due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. The board was in agreement to move the meeting to November 7, 2019 and November 21, 2019 respectively, and will take action on this item October 8, 2019.

With no other items or concerns to be discussed, Mayor Johnson called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Hall and seconded by Commissioner Goforth. Meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

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TOWN CLERK

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Robert L. Johnson, Mayor

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_