



**Town Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 19, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.**

Mayor O’Cain called the Regular Council Meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. on December 19, 2023, in person at Town Hall, 441 White Pine Drive, Laurel Park, NC 28739 and electronically through Zoom platform.

The following attended in person at Town Hall, 441 White Pine Drive, Laurel Park, NC 28739:

- Mayor Carey O’Cain
- Mayor Pro Tempore A. Paul Hansen
- Commissioner George W. Banta
- Commissioner Kristin Dunn
- Commissioner Deb Bridges
- Town Clerk Tamara Amin
- Finance Officer Kirk Medlin
- Police Chief Bobbie Trotter
- Interim Zoning Administrator/Code Enforcement Officer Kaitland Finkle
- Dave Swindell- Ecusta Crossing Representative
- Mike Anderson Carolina Engineering

The following attended via ZOOM Platform:

- Town Manager Alex Carmichael

The following were absent:

- Fire Chief Tim Garren

Mayor O’Cain opened the Regular Meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor O’Cain asked if there was any public comment; there were none.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to approve the agenda. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Town Clerk Amin said there was a discrepancy in the budget ordinance. The new ordinance is in the Council’s green folders.

- a. November Monthly Report - The aforesaid report is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 1.
- b. Audit Contract- The aforesaid contract is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 2.
- c. Amended Ordinance 2024-4 Amendment # 3- The aforesaid ordinance is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 3.

Commissioner Banta moved to approve the consent agenda. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

OLD BUSINESS

ECUSTA CROSSING FINAL PLAT

Town Manager Carmichael said Council directed Staff to postpone the final plat discussion until the December 19, regular meeting to allow the developer time to produce a final plat that showed individual setbacks.

Council reviewed and discussed the Final Plat for the Ecusta Crossing with Mr. Swindell.

Interim Zoning Administrator/Code Enforcement Officer Kaitland Finkle explained to Mr. Swindell that the plat needs to show setbacks outside of the easement.

Commissioner Hansen asked Staff to contact Mr. Todd to get copies of all surveys for the Ecusta Trail and get this straightened out.

Interim Zoning Administrator/Code Enforcement Officer Kaitland Finkle explained to Mr. Swindell that he needed to reidentify the easement and move 25 feet north from that point.

Mr. Swindell asked the Council if he could come back in an hour with the correct final plat.

Council agreed to have Mr. Swindell fix the problem and come back before adjourning the meeting.

Mr. Swindell and Mr. Anderson departed the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Mayor O’Cain said the first order of business is to review the 2024 Town Council Schedule of Meetings/ Holidays.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to approve the Town Council Schedule for 2024. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Mayor O’Cain said the second order of business is to review Board Representatives for the upcoming 2024 year.

Commissioner Bridges asked if she could be the liaison for the Board of Adjustment. Mayor O’Cain said she could sit in the audience but cannot participate.

Commissioner Dunn moved to approve the amended Board Representatives of making Commissioner Bridges the liaison for Friends of Laurel Park and allowing her to sit in the audience for the Board of Adjustment meetings and report back to Council. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Mayor O’Cain said the third order of business is to review the Budget Calendar. Commissioner Banta said he will not be able to attend on May 16 and asked it be changed to May 21 for the Budget Workshop.

Commissioner Banta moved to approve the amended Budget Calendar. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Lastly, the Mayor called for the selection of the Mayor Pro-Tempore. The Mayor Pro-Tempore fulfills the duties of the mayor when he is not available; chair meetings, meeting with other groups or individuals, making public appearances, and signing documents when required.

Commissioner Banta moved to appoint Commissioner Hansen as Mayor Pro Tem for the year 2024. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

LGCCA ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED ON JANUARY 16, 2024

Mayor O’Cain said the Town of Laurel Park is hosting the Local Government Committee for Cooperative Action (LGCCA) on Tuesday January 16th. Staff asks for agenda items from the Council.

Council discussed LGCCA items to be discussed on January 16, 2024. Mayor O’Cain asked Mayor Pro Tem Hansen to join the meeting on the 16th of January.

Council decided the LGCCA meeting would be a great place to discuss sidewalks and who will be involved in contributing.

Town Manager Carmichael said he was waiting to hear back from the City about paying for the sphere of influence. It is the gap between Westbrook and Glasgow. It is their ETJ but our Sphere of Influence.

Mayor O’Cain asked staff to get a visual ready to display on screen at the LGCCA meeting.

BOA RULES OF PROCEDURE

Town Manager Carmichael said the Board of Adjustment (BOA) has been working with staff and Chad Meadows, our zoning consultant, for many months to update the board's Rules of Procedures.

Council reviewed and discussed the BOA's proposed Rules of Procedures.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to approve the adoption of the Board of Adjustment's Rules of Procedures. Mayor O'Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

BEE CITY SIGN

The Bee City Committee has worked with The Mad Sigtist to design a street sign for the Town of Laurel Park. The Committee would like to order two signs for a total of \$135+tax. The money is budgeted as part of the Parks and Greenways Capital Outlay line in the Parks budget. The Committee would like to place one sign at the intersection of Laurel Park Highway and White Pine Drive, and the other either on Highway 64 East, or Hebron.

Council reviewed and discussed the proposed Bee City Sign. Council said the signs were too big and needed to be the same size as the Tree City Signs. Mayor O'Cain would like the Bee Committee to revise and resubmit.

Commissioner Banta moved to approve the placement of the Bee City signs that are amended to be the same size as the Tree City signs on Laurel Park street signposts. Mayor O'Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF WESTERN CAROLINA AND DOGWOOD TRUST GRANT DISCUSSION

Town Manager Carmichael said Staff reached out to the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina and the Dogwood Health Trust to discuss grant funding for the renovation of Little Laurel Green into an inclusive, accessible playground.

The Community Foundation responded by saying, "at this time we are not accepting grant applications for playgrounds. This program is really set up to fund projects that fall under one of the following broad categories: pedestrian/multi-modal improvements; beautification; infrastructure; or economic activities."

Though the playground may not be an eligible project, we may want to revisit the Community Foundation for partnerships with our Highway 64 plans.

Dogwood Trust referred me to their website, where there is an online application for grants. Although Playgrounds are not specifically listed, they may fit into their strategic priority of Health and Wellness.

Commissioner Dunn said we could definitely find projects that are \$50K or less to get that \$10K.

Commissioner Bridges spoke about the State Grant Funding. The deadline for those is March 2024. Council asked Commissioner Dunn to reach out to Mr. Christopher Todd to get the budget for the Jackson Park project and to report back at the January Meeting.

Commissioner Bridges said Ms. Amy Siegler from LimbTech may be able to help. Town Clerk Amin said the Special Needs Sports representative, Mr. Donnie Jones, was a big part of the Jackson Park project that helped raise money for it.

Council discussed a couple of options where the money could be used for grants like Highway 64 project, and possibly the sidewalks project,

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Carmicheal thanked Council on behalf of Staff for the Employee and Board dinners. He said they were both successful nights.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Director Johnson said the department is still working on leaves. They are currently working on Laurel Park Highway, and it will be awhile to get the whole mountain done.

Mayor O'Cain asked Mr. Johnson to pull the post by the Henderson Country Club.

FIRE

Fire Chief Tim Garren was not present.

POLICE

Chief Trotter said there were 12,624 events. Four disturbances, 1 intoxication, and two juvenile calls were all reported from the same house. Chief Trotter hopes to rectify the situation today.

Officer Murray has finished his time on the radar.

Council asked about the radar machine. Chief Trotter said it was ordered but has still not come in.

ADMINISTRATION

Town Clerk Amin thanked Public Works Staff for installing the little brochure boxes outside Town Hall for the pathway maps and bike maps. Ms. Amin thanked Council for the wonderful board appreciation dinner and employee dinner.

Ms. Amin said the office will be closed Monday-Wednesday next week. She said the staff is happy to welcome Ms. Finkle on board. Staff are working on the website in hopes of presenting it to Council during the February retreat as well as working on end of year reporting.

She wished everyone a happy and safe holiday.

Finance Officer Medlin said all outstanding items for the Audit have been sent to the Auditor and they are getting down to the last steps.

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Dunn- Commissioner Dunn said the Christmas lights around Town Hall look great.

Commissioner Bridges- Commissioner Bridges thanked Town Clerk Amin for a job well done with both dinners.

Mayor Comments- Mayor O’Cain congratulated Mr. Bonnema for running for Commissioner and asked Staff to get Mr. Bonnema a Town email address.

Mayor O’Cain said he worked on a draft survey for renaming Laurel Park Highway and gave it to Commissioner Bridges to get feedback.

Mayor O’Cain said the cable down on Echo Circle has been there since July and needs to go. Commissioner Banta suggested sending Optimum a letter from the Town.

Mr. Swindell rejoined the meeting at 10:41 a.m.

ECUSTA CROSSING FINAL PLAT

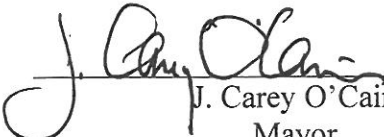
Mr. Swindell returned and presented Council with a new final plat that had the 35 feet setbacks they asked for.

Commissioner Bridges moved to approve the final plat for the Ecusta Crossings Subdivision as modified. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to adjourn at 10:45 a.m. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

ATTEST:



J. Carey O’Cain
Mayor

Tamara Amin

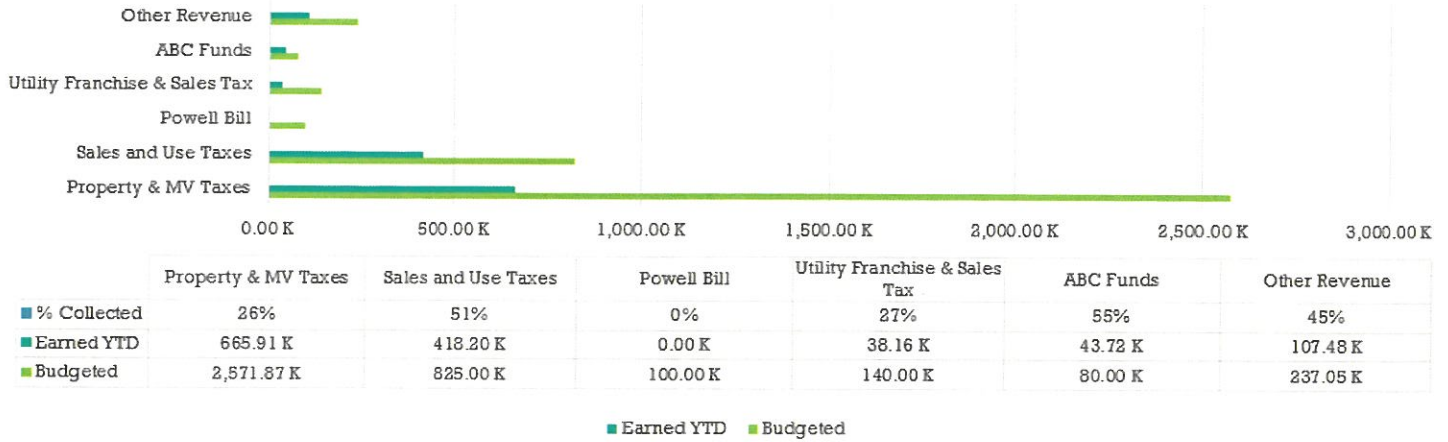
Tamara M. Amin, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk/ Deputy Tax Collector

1/16/24
Date

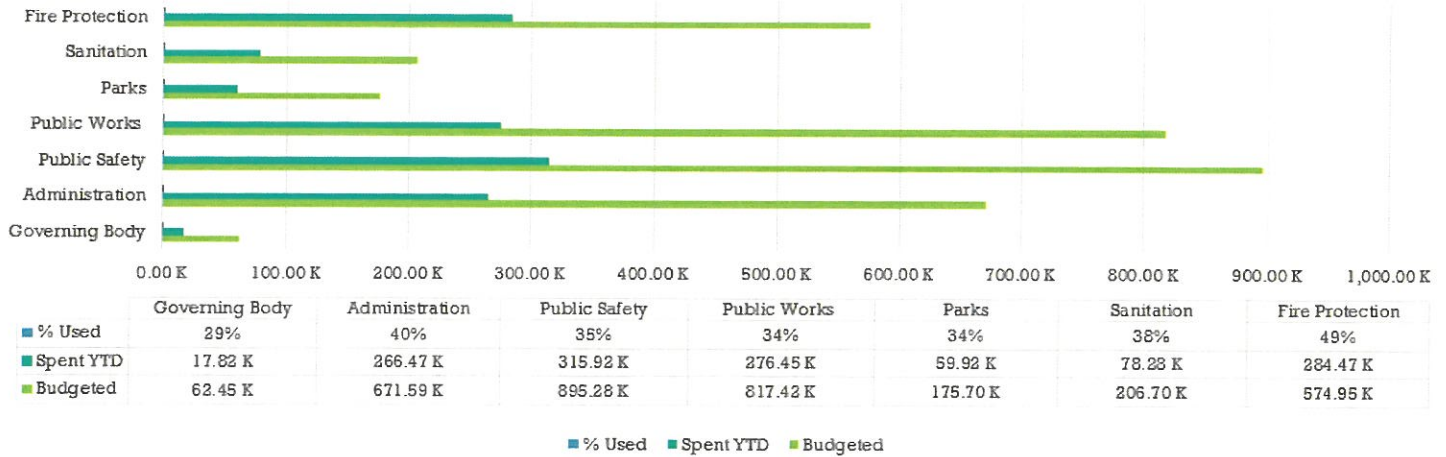


November Monthly Report

Revenues



Expenditures



Tax Collector's Report (November 30, 2023)

For prior year taxes, a total of \$30423.15 remains outstanding. The Town received \$864,102.88 from Henderson County for property taxes collected for August and a total of \$1,591,659.86 since the 2023 bills were mailed. The 2023 tax levy is \$2,571,274.43. The Town currently has a collection rate of 62.018%.



Planning & Zoning

Status of Single Family Residential Dwellings (SFRD)

2021-19	212 Beechwood	Jennifer Yost	UC
2022-1	312 Daniel Dr.	Chris St. Onge	UC
2022-23	74 Indian Woods Trl	Jon Skillman	UC
2022-31	10 Fawn Turn Ln	Sigrid Della Valle	UC
2022-38	209 Ficker Cir.	Sarah Adams	UC
2022-44	945 Somersby Pkwy.	Matt Padula	UC
2023-4	200 Rowland Dr.	Loyd Alexander	LPZCP
2023-5	PIN# 9548467175/Clays Cv.	Josh Youngblood	LPZCP
2023-29	PIN# 9558252937	Chris Brock	UC

Status Legend

LPZCP = Laurel Park Zoning Compliance Permit	HCBP = Henderson County Building Permit
UC = Under Construction	NC = Nearly Complete

Monthly Permits Other Than SFRD

Deck	0
Sign	0
Fence	1
Additions or Remodel	1
Accessory Use or Structure	0
Total for November	2

Whereas	Primary Government Unit Town of Laurel Park
and	Discretely Presented Component Unit (DPCU) (if applicable)
and	Auditor Burluson & Earley, P.A.

entered into a contract in which the Auditor agreed to audit the accounts of the Primary Government Unit and DPCU (if applicable)

for	Fiscal Year Ending	and originally to be submitted to the LGC on	Date
	06/30/23		10/31/23

hereby agree that it is now necessary that the contract be modified as follows.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Modification to date submitted to LGC	Original date 10/31/23	Modified date 01/31/24
<input type="checkbox"/> Modification to fee	Original fee	Modified fee

Primary (choose 1) Other (choose 0-2)

Reason(s) for Contract Amendment

- Change in scope
- Issue with unit staff/turnover
- Issue with auditor staff/workload
- Third-party financial statements not prepared by agreed-upon date
- Unit did not have bank reconciliations complete for the audit period
- Unit did not have reconciliations between subsidiary ledgers and general ledger complete
- Unit did not post previous years adjusting journal entries resulting in incorrect beginning balances in the general ledger
- Unit did not have information required for audit complete by the agreed-upon time
- Delay in component unit reports
- Software - implementation issue
- Software - system failure
- Software - ransomware/cyberattack
- Natural or other disaster
- Other (please explain)

Plan to Prevent Future Late Submissions

If the amendment is submitted to modify the date the audit will be submitted to the LGC, please indicate the steps the unit and auditor will take to prevent late filing of audits in subsequent years. Audits are due to the LGC four months after fiscal year end. Indicate NA if this is an amendment due to a change in cost only.

The Town's Finance Officer left in January 2023. The Town was unable to find the permanent replacement until mid-July 2023. New to the position, the finance officer had to train and acclimate in his position with the town, in addition to prepare for the Town's audit. The Town has not historically filed late audits. Continuation below:

Additional Information


Please provide any additional explanation or details regarding the contract modification.

Additional time is required to finalize the audit fieldwork and the audit report. With the holidays, we included the extension of time requested to 1/31/24 to insure enough time to complete.

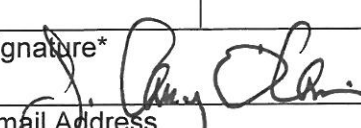
By their signatures on the following pages, the Auditor, the Primary Government Unit, and the DPCU (if applicable), agree to these modified terms.

SIGNATURE PAGE

AUDIT FIRM

Audit Firm* Burleson & Earley, P.A.	
Authorized Firm Representative* (typed or printed) Bronwyn S. Burleson CPA	Signature* 
Date* 11/27/23	Email Address bburleson@burlesonearley.com

GOVERNMENTAL UNIT

Governmental Unit* Town of Laurel Park	
Date Primary Government Unit Governing Board Approved Amended Audit Contract* (If required by governing board policy)	
Mayor/Chairperson* (typed or printed) J. Carey O'Cain	Signature* 
Date 19 Dec. 2023	Email Address mayor@laurelpark.org

Chair of Audit Committee (typed or printed, or "NA") N/A	Signature
Date	Email Address

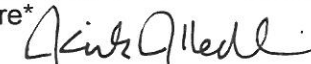
GOVERNMENTAL UNIT – PRE-AUDIT CERTIFICATE

ONLY REQUIRED IF FEES ARE MODIFIED IN THE AMENDED CONTRACT

(Pre-audit certificate not required for hospitals)

Required by G.S. 159-28(a1) or G.S. 115C-441(a1)

This instrument has been pre-audited in the manner required by The Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act or by the School Budget and Fiscal Control Act.

Primary Governmental Unit Finance Officer* Kirk Medlin	Signature* 
Date of Pre-Audit Certificate* 12/19/23	Email Address* finance@laurelpark.org

**SIGNATURE PAGE – DPCU
(complete only if applicable)**

DISCRETELY PRESENTED COMPONENT UNIT

DPCU	
Date DPCU Governing Board Approved Amended Audit Contract (If required by governing board policy)	
DPCU Chairperson (typed or printed)	Signature
Date	Email Address

Chair of Audit Committee (typed or printed, or "NA")	Signature
Date	Email Address

DPCU – PRE-AUDIT CERTIFICATE
ONLY REQUIRED IF FEES ARE MODIFIED IN THE AMENDED CONTRACT
(Pre-audit certificate not required for hospitals)

Required by G.S. 159-28(a1) or G.S. 115C-441(a1)

This instrument has been pre-audited in the manner required by The Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act or by the School Budget and Fiscal Control Act.

DPCU Finance Officer (typed or printed)	Signature
Date of Pre-Audit Certificate	Email Address

Ord. 2024-4
Town of Laurel Park, North Carolina
Budget Ordinance Amendment
Fiscal Year 2023-2024
Amendment #3

To record the addition of funds from the Town and from public contributions to provide additional funding for the Town's Invasive Vine removal project.

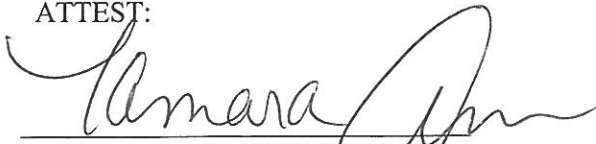
Section 1. To amend the General Fund (10), the appropriations are to be changed as follows:

<u>Account</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
Part-Time Salary (10-6130-1260)		\$ 20,000.00
Park Contributions (10-3833-8400)		\$ 15,000.00
Equipment and Supplies (10-6130-2940)	\$ 5,000.00	
	_____	_____
Total Changes	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 35,000.00


Section 2. Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk to the Town Council, and to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer for their direction.

Adopted this 19th day of December, 2023.

ATTEST:



Tamara Amin, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk/Deputy Tax Collector



J. Carey O'Call, Mayor