



**Town Council
Work Session Minutes
June 13, 2024 – 9:30 a.m.**

Mayor O’Cain called the Work Session Council Meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. on June 13, 2024, in person at Town Hall, 441 White Pine Drive, Laurel Park, NC 28739.

The following attended in person at Town Hall:

- Mayor Carey O’Cain
- Mayor Pro Tempore A. Paul Hansen
- Commissioner George W. Banta
- Commissioner Deb Bridges
- Commissioner Kristin Dunn
- Interim Town Manager/Zoning Administrator Cara Reeves
- Town Clerk Tamara Amin
- Finance Officer Kirk Medlin
- Police Chief Bobbie Trotter
- Public Works Director Brandon Johnson
- Crew Leader Matthew Pearce
- Parks Operation Coordinator Bryan Hensley
- Fire Chief Tim Garren
- Joshua Painter- Maybin’s Representative
- Wes Hedrick0 Maybin’s Representative

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor O’Cain requested to add Closed Session after Agenda Review. Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to approve the amended agenda. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

NEW BUSINESS

SOLID WASTE COLLECTION PROPOSALS

Interim Town Manager Cara Reeves said at the Town Council’s regular meeting in May, Town Manager Carmicheal brought up the solid waste contract as it is set to expire at the end of this fiscal year (June 30). Our current hauler, Waste Pro, provided a contract renewal, showing an overall monthly increase of 113%. In addition to that percentage, they will amend the amount to reflect the CPI each year. Waste Pro’s new proposal reflects a \$26.00 + CPI + a varying fuel cost per household, per month. For reference, our current figure is \$10.50 per household. Finance Director Medlin figured that is a \$210,000.00 yearly increase.

As these costs would significantly impact our operating budget, staff requested additional bids. As a result, we have two additional bids for the Council to consider. CWS and Maybin's responded to the Town's request. Finance Director Medlin created the table comparing the three upcoming fiscal year prices for CWS and Maybin's for review.

Ms. Reeves said she contacted Ms. Hannah Morgan at the Henderson County Transfer Station. She informed Ms. Reeves that the prices have not gone up in six years.

Mr. Painter, a representative from Maybin's, said they serve nine municipalities and have a local office on Asheville Highway. Their price is a lump sum and have provided Staff with the 96-gallon and the 65-gallon options. After driving around Laurel Park, Mr. Painter believes the 65-gallon is better suited for our area. There would be no charge for the bins and each household is allowed a 2-bag limit on blue recycling bags. Maybin's said for narrow driveways and special operations they would bill those households directly.

Commissioner Bridges moved to approve a contract with Maybin's for the Town of Laurel Park's residential waste removal and recycling services for services beginning July 1, 2024.

BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

Open the Public Hearing

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to open the public hearing at 9:47 a.m. Mayor O'Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Mr. Painter and Mr. Hedrick left the meeting at 9:47 a.m.

Staff Presentation

Finance Officer Medlin went over the Budget Highlights which included:

The Draft budget includes the following:

- \$500,000 (general fund) plus \$120,000 (Powell Bill) for roads
- \$30,000 for the Highway 64 project
- Remaining balance of stormwater funds from ARPA* (estimate) plus stormwater collection fee funds
- COLA of 2.5%
- Merit up to 3%
- New retirement contribution rates of 13.67%
- No appropriation for the YMCA
- No changes to dependent care coverage
- No new autos
- \$25,000 in Parks for the playground
- A \$611,807 fund balance appropriation

- Council:
 - \$9,000 for new historical markers
- Administration:
 - Increased software support
 - \$50,000 for Centennial events
 - \$30,000 for Comp Plan update
 - Increased property and liability insurance
- Police and Fire:
 - \$30,000 for dispatch services
 - Increased software support
 - Capital outlay including AED, radios, vests, rifles, pistols, and speed sign
- Public Works and Sanitation:
 - Invasive vine removal
 - Half of new employee
 - Capital outlay for Caterpillar 420 Backhoe
 - 30-50% increase in sanitation cost (vendor costs estimated and vendor approval required)
- Parks:
 - Half of new employee
 - Capital outlay including backhoe attachment for Kubota, grapppler attachment for Kubota, materials for board walk repairs in RLNP
 - Full Parks and Greenways Board request

FUND BALANCE

- \$611,807 fund balance appropriation
- Increase from prior budgets due to sanitation services
- The average increase projected from the two bidders is 40%; this number is added to the budget

Finance Officer Medlin explained the budget and asked if anyone had any questions. There were no questions.

Mayor O’Cain asked Staff to adjust the sanitation budget to \$270k instead of \$290K.

Mr. Medlin said he is still waiting for property tax information from the County. The fiscal year actual is for April and Staff stopped updating those numbers because they were fluctuating.

Commissioner Banta reiterated that the numbers lack three months in spending. Commissioner Banta asked Timbercreek Representatives to correct misconceptions and misinformation.

Mayor O’Cain said there is no tax increase. The Council only adjusts taxes during reevaluation years. The next reevaluation year is 2028. The Council strives to keep this plan in place but major commitment on roads. There will be an additional \$600K every year until the Town is all caught up on roads.

Public Comments

Mr. Travis Bonnema, of the Echo Mountain Inn said he understands actual but still needs to look at actuals. He also said the Town has spent nothing on snow removal but why did it go up to \$10k? Mayor O’Cain said that is for emergencies in case the Town gets a really bad snowstorm, it is better to be safe than sorry. Mr. Bonnema asked about the police dispatch of \$30K and why that was not negotiated. Commissioner Banta said the Town was approached by the City of Hendersonville to start paying for dispatch services. They originally asked for \$60K per year but the Council and Staff have negotiated it to \$30K. Mr. Bonnema asked about software costs. Commissioner Bridges said this is worthy to look into. Town Clerk Amin said the software cost is not just VC3. It includes many other software needs for the Town. Mr. Medlin said the new software for Payroll increased not just VC3.

Council asked Staff to look into the VC3 contract and ask the league what they are using.

Mr. Bonnema said increases of 4% and 13% in areas is not sustainable and the Town will eventually need to raise taxes.

Close the Public Hearing

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to close the public hearing at 10:20 a.m. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

ABC BOARD MEMBER APPOINTMENTS

Maor O’Cain said the Town of Laurel Park and the City of Hendersonville have joined ABC Boards. As of July 1, the ABC Board will be known as the Blue Ridge ABC. This would mean lower overhead, increase volume, more types of liquors, etc.

General Manager Jeff W. Nance attended both ABC Board meetings this past month and discussed this with all board members. He also distributed to all members the 2024- 2025 proposed budget for the Blue Ridge ABC Board for their review.

The NC ABC Commission and our local auditor, Terry Andersen, recommended that the Blue Ridge ABC Board have an initial special meeting on Monday, July 1st at 11:00am at 205 S. Church Street. Robbie Morgan, our CFO/ Asst. GM, will take and keep the minutes (unless there is a recommendation from someone else). As General Manager, he will make the public notices of meetings and he will also distribute the agenda three business days prior to each board meeting. Moving forward, he mentioned to all board members that they meet the fourth Tuesday of each month at 11:00am unless there is a conflict- they will discuss that at their initial meeting as well.

Composition of the Board- The Blue Ridge Alcoholic Beverage Control Board will have 5 members, with 3 members being appointed by the City Council and 2 members being appointed by the Town Council. The initial members of the Blue Ridge ABC Board shall be appointed and serve an initial term as follows:

- a) The City shall appoint an initial member to serve an initial 3-year term

- b) The City Council and the Town Council shall each appoint an initial member to serve a 2-year term
- c) The City Council and the Town Council shall each appoint an initial member to serve a 1-year term.

From and after the initial appointments, each member's seat shall be appointed by the original appointing Council for 3-year staggered terms. No member may serve for more than 2 consecutive terms at a time.

Staff has asked all three current members. Mr. Joey Allison would like to step down. The two remaining Board members would like to continue with the new Board, Mr. Paul Bakke and Mr. Mark Pace.

Commissioner Bridges moved to appoint Mr. Mark Pace to the Blue Ridge ABC Board for a term of 2 years ending in July 1, 2026.

Commissioner Bridges moved to appoint Mr. Paul Bakke to the Blue Ridge ABC Board for a term of 1 year ending in July 1, 2025.

AGENDA REVIEW FOR THE COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 18, 2024

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Public Comment**
- 4. Approval of the Agenda**
- 5. Consent Agenda**
 - A. May Monthly Report
 - B. Minutes for the May 16, 2024 Work Session
 - C. Minutes for the May 16, 2024 Closed Session
 - D. Minutes for the May 21, 2024 Regular Meeting
 - E. EOY Budget Amendment
- 6. Old Business**
 - A. Roads Update- Will Buie
 - B. Ecusta Crossing Performance Guarantee Expiration
- 7. New Business**
 - A. Hendersonville Country Club Fireworks
- 8. Town Manager's Report**
- 9. Department Head Reports**
 - A. Public Works
 - B. Fire Department
 - C. Police
 - D. Administration
- 10. Mayor and Commissioner Comments**
- 11. Adjournment**

Council asked Staff to include an announcement in the newsletter about Maybin's.

Staff said a Budget Ordinance will also be added to the agenda.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Bridges moved that the Council enter Closed Session at 10:27 a.m. pursuant to [N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a) (5)] Establish or instruct the staff or agent concerning the negotiations of the amount of compensation or other terms of an employment contract. Mayor O'Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Dunn moved to reconvene the Work Session Meeting at 10:54 a.m. Mayor O'Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

The following were present at Town Hall:

- Mayor J. Carey O'Cain
- Mayor Pro-Tempore A. Paul Hansen
- Commissioner Deb Bridges
- Commissioner Kristin Dunn
- Commissioner George Banta
- Town Clerk Amin

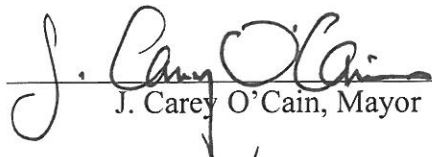
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Dunn moved to adjourn at 10:54 a.m. Mayor O'Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

ATTEST:



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



J. Carey O'Cain, Mayor

7/16/24

Date