



**Town Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 15, 2024 – 9:30 a.m.**

Mayor O’Cain called the Regular Council Meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. on October 15, 2024, in person at Town Hall, 441 White Pine Drive, Laurel Park, NC 28739 and electronically through Teams 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 Manager Cara Reeves
- Town Clerk Tamara Amin
- Public Works Director Brandon Johnson
- Crew Leader Matthew Pearce
- Parks Operation Coordinator Bryan Hensley
- Kaitland Finkle- Land of Sky
- Town Engineer- Will Buie

Attended via Teams Platform:

- Police Chief Bobbie Trotter

Absent:

- Finance Officer Kirk Medlin
- 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 was none.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Bridges 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

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

EMAIL TRANSITION FROM .ORG TO .GOV

Town Manager Reeves said this project would be adding the new .gov domain to the current Office 365 tenant and then reconfiguring email profiles to point to the .gov. This process would also entail updating the local Active Directory/Azure sync connect in O365 and working with each user to test/confirm the reconfigured profiles.

Per Town Council’s request, Mr. Travis Bonnema looked at the quote and gauged the necessity. His determination was that it doesn’t have to happen now, especially at that rate. If the Town minimizes or stops using VC3, the cost should be significantly lower.

Council decided not to move forward with the cost for the email transition from .org to .gov.

WXZ PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT GUARANTEE EXTENSION

Town Manager Cara Reeves said because WXZ Inc. has completed some but not all of the roads and infrastructure, the Town wants assurance that the surety bond remains in the full amount in case they need to finish the project. These subdivision regulations commonly include installation of adequate water and sewer, construction and dedication of subdivision streets that meet Town or NCDOT standards, and provision of parks and recreation space.

“To assure compliance with these and other ordinance requirements, the ordinance may provide for performance guarantees to assure successful completion of required improvements.” (NCGS § 160A-372; 153A-331). If such guarantee is required the developer may choose a performance bond, a bank-issued letter of credit, funds held in escrow, or other financial assurances. A performance guarantee could ensure improvements regardless of whether they will be dedicated to the public or remain private.

Staff suggested extending the performance improvement guarantee to February because of the winter months and not much landscaping can be done, which is needed for the CO’s.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen asked if the Town could require headwalls.

Town Engineer Buie said he will look to see what the Town approved of with Ms. Reeves and Ms. Finkle.

Commissioner Banta asked if the Town could increase the bond. Ms. Finkle said the only way to increase the bond is to prove the bond is not enough.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to approve the performance improvement guarantee extension for WXZ Inc. to complete all infrastructure related to public utilities by December 31, 2024, but the

Town will look into how much the cost will be to complete the work without WXZ Inc. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Council asked staff to have Mr. Swindell’s supervisor attend either the November or December meeting and hold him to his words.

NEW BUSINESS

HURRICANE HELENE UPDATE- ROADS, LANDSLIDES AND CULVERTS

Mrs. Reeves and Mr. Buie, in addition to town staff, drafted the map, reports and presentation for Town Council’s viewing. This map is not the final product, as the Town will likely stumble upon additional damage in the coming months. Mr. Buie has worked tirelessly on giving the Town a head start on where and what we are facing.

- a. Damage Assessment Map - The aforesaid map is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 1.
- b. Damage Assessment Summary- The aforesaid summary is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 2.

Mr. Buie said Storm practically every road in Laurel Park was impacted in some way (trees over roads, culverts washed out/damaged, landslides). Henderson County received over 20” of rain from September 25 –27. The public works and police departments were on site and working before noon on Friday, September 27th to clear roads and provide access and assistance to our residents.

WGLA began assessing roads and stormwater facilities on the afternoon of September 27th. So far, we have recorded:

- 27 total landslide affecting Town roads and facilities
- 18 “major” slides and 9 “minor” slides
- 24 culvert failures or washouts
- 13 “major” failures and 11 “minor” washouts

Next Steps:

Projects are being divided into two categories

- Step 2 Projects – Public Safety Concerns
 - Step 2 projects can proceed very quickly without formal bidding; however, some level of design is required for many of the projects.
- Step 3 Projects – No Immediate Public Safety Concern
 - Step 3 projects will proceed as formal bid projects since immediate public safety is not a concern.

Mr. Buie thanked Officer Junger for all the drone footage.

Mayor O’Cain said he would like to rebuild better and would like to have headwalls put in to lend the town back to its character.

Ms. Finkle said the town can request a loan from the state for all the upfront costs until we get reimbursed from FEMA.

Town Manager Reeves said RFB’s will go out for smaller projects.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen asked Staff to put details in the newsletter and ask the community to contact Town Hall if any streets were missed on the list.

Mayor O’Cain asked Commissioners Banta and Hansen as well as Mr. Bryan Hensley and Mr. Hunter Marks to look at Crystal Springs, and Rhododendron Lake Nature Park to put into the mix. Mayor O’Cain said Specialist Heather Melet from Representative Chuck Edwards office can help with the costs. Mayor O’Cain asked Staff to contact First Bank to try and get a line of credit.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR TEXT AMENDMENTS TO SIGN CHAPTER 7

Open Public Hearing

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to open the public hearing at 10:25 a.m. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Staff Presentation

Ms. Finkle said the text amendment will include changes to UDO sections 7.3.8: Exclusions and 7.8.7: Signage Standards. Due to the storm, both Planning Board and Parks & Greenways were cancelled in October. NC General Statute 160D-604 (c) requires all proposed amendments to zoning regulations to be reviewed and commented on by the Planning Board. Since the Planning Board and Parks and Greenways meetings were cancelled, Staff asked to continue this discussion on the next scheduled regular meeting on November 19.

Council asked Staff to contact Ms. Ann McFadden to come up with regulations to commemorate individuals and historical markers. Currently there are no standards in the UDO. Mayor Pro Tem Hansen asked to make sure the standard conforms with the current historical markers.

Public Comment

Mayor O’Cain asked if there are any public comments. There was none.

Close Public Hearing

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to close the public hearing at 10:29 a.m. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Council Discussion

Mayor O’Cain asked if Council had any further discussion; there was none.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to open and continue the public hearing to the next regularly scheduled meeting on November 19th at 9:30 AM. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

CREATION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE STEERING COMMITTEE

Ms. Finkle said the existing Comprehensive Plan was adopted by Town Council on July 16, 2016, with a ten year horizon running through 2026. The existing plan suggests needing to be updated every 5 to 10 years in response to land use trends, changes in population, or any major events that may affect Laurel Park’s future. As a condition of adopting and applying zoning regulations, North Carolina General Statute 160D states that a local government shall adopt and reasonably maintain a comprehensive plan. While the statutes do not specifically define the time frame needed to reasonably maintain, the School of Government says in general, professional practice calls for plans to be updated every five to ten years.

Statute requires plans and any subsequent amendments to be adopted by the governing board as a legislative decision with the advice and consultation of the planning board. Some communities may decide to appoint a separate Steering Committee. In 2016 the Town created a Steering Committee, previously in 2005 the Plan update relied on the Planning Board. Additional support and input will come from Town Boards and Committees, stakeholder interviews, and public engagement sessions.

Council discussed the membership composition and said it shall include 12 members and 3 ex-officio members (Mayor, Commissioner, and Town Manager) who do not count as voting member maximum. Mayor Pro Tem Hansen would like to be on the Steering Committee. Commissioner Dunn said she would also like to be considered since she will not be on Council next year.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to approve Ordinance 2025-02 to form a Steering Committee for the Comprehensive Plan Update deciding on the number of members and any necessary ex-officio members (in 2016 this included the Mayor and Town Manager).

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Commissioner Bridges said Mr. Wesley Belew no longer lives in Laurel Park and should be removed from the boards list. Commissioner Banta said he would like to wait until next month and receive recommendations from each board.

Council decided to table this to next month's meeting.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Town Manager Reeves said free storm debris cleanup will be offered by the County. Ms. Reeves has been in contact with Marcus Jones to see how the debris management will be organized with the limited frontage residents have.

Ms. Reeves also cautioned residents on the different scams happening around the County.

Staff are working on figuring out Helene Fund or construction fee memorandum that states no fee on permits for people to rebuild. Staff will be putting the rebuilding permits in front of line before new building permits.

Commissioner Dunn recommended putting debris on one side of the road.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Director Johnson said the department pre-Helene was working on road shoulders, bag notes, mowing, and painting the Town Managers office. While painting the Town Managers office mold was found and was sent out for testing. It came back with three species that cause health issues. Council asked Staff to go ahead and get someone out to rectify the situation.

Mr. Johnson said one of the trucks got hit by a tree, thankfully no one was hurt. Staff are looking into generator replacements and other equipment like grapple, and work lights for trucks. As for Hurricane Helene, Staff has been cutting trees, cleaning culverts, and equipment maintenance.

Council thanked Public Works for all their hard work.

POLICE

Chief Trotter said the department has been training, having community meetings, and meeting with the ABC Board. This Storm was a wake-up call for the department needing more Staff and equipment. Starlink and charging stations were helpful in this storm. Ms. Trotter thanked Town Manager Reeves and her husband for all their hard work. She also thanked all the residents who are passionate about Laurel Park and said she was blessed because it was more positive than negative.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen thanked Officer Junger for all his pictures.

FIRE

Fire Chief Tim Garren was not present.

ADMINISTRATION

Town Clerk Amin said the LGCCA meeting is cancelled for today.

Town Clerk Amin reminded Council of the State of the Town dinner on October 3rd that was postponed, but we don't have a date yet. Ms. Amin said she contacted the Hendersonville Country Club and they said any day after January 15th. Council decided to wait on the Centennial Committee and combine the Gala and the Dinner together for March 1st. Council would like to table this for next meeting.

Town Clerk Amin asked about suspending Brush and Leaf Collection. Council agreed as well as suspending any new reservations for weddings at Jump Off Rock. Council asked Staff to include information on Wildfire Season in the Newsletter and let residents know that Laurel Park is not a crisis zone and therefore through FEMA's eyes will not be priority one. Town Clerk Amin said the Town budgeted for \$75,000 coming in for taxes but got \$95,680 which is great. Ms. Finkle said there are no structures damaged in the monthly zoning report.

Town Clerk Amin said the Employee holiday dinner is still confirmed at the Echo Mountain Inn on Friday, December 6 and more information is to come.

Staff is currently working with employees on open enrollment.

Staff did get a list of all the ETJ residents, and Town Clerk Amin has sent them to the County Clerk who will send a letter out to all ETJ residents after the Hurricane work dies down a little.

Town Clerk Amin reminded everyone about the Trunk or Treat on October 26 at 5 pm and the upcoming newsletter that will go out on November 1st.

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

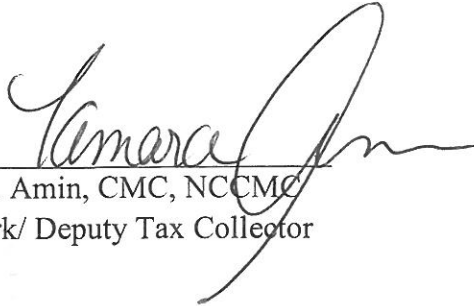
Commissioner Banta asked Staff to contact AT&T and ask about the status of connecting the rest of the Town to fiber.

Commissioner Dunn and Commissioner Bridges thanked everyone and were excused at 11:15 a.m. on motion by Mayor O'Cain.

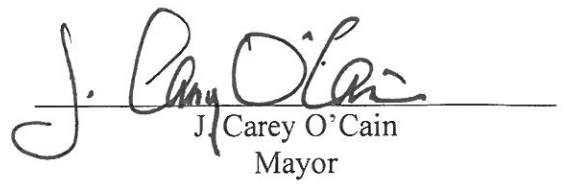
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to adjourn at 11:16 a.m. Mayor O'Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST:



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



J. Carey O'Cain
Mayor

11/19/24
Date

Appendix - 2

**Town of Laurel Park
Summary of Hurricane Helene Damage
10/10/24**

**Slide Areas and Washouts
Step 2 Projects (Public Safety Concern)**

NCLP-FD#1S – Fairway Drive

Major slide with impact to roadway and impact to golf course below.

NCLP-FD#2S– Fairway Drive

Major slide with possible impact to roadway shoulder and roadway.

NCLP-FD#3S – Fairway Drive

Major slide with impact to roadway and impact to property below.

NCLP-PD#1S – Panaroma Drive

Major slide with impact to gravel road and impact to property below.

NCLP-LPH#1WO – Laurel Park Highway

Wash out of shoulder to depth of 4 – 5 feet and loss of rip rap stabilization. Utilities exposed.

NCLP-OLD#1S– Old Laurel Drive

Major slide with washout of retaining wall with impact to upper and lower roadway. Retaining wall will be required based on limited area between roads.

NCLP-OLD#2S– Old Laurel Drive

Slide area on the upper side of Old Laurel Drive that has impacted drainage swale and culverts. Material must be removed from ditches, shoulder and roadway.

NCLP-WD#1S– Westwood Drive

Major side with impact to roadway and stream below.

NCLP-DM#1S– Davis Mountain Road

Slide area on the lower side of Davis Mountain Road that has impacted the road way and damaged homes below.

NCLP-HR#1S – Hebron Road

Slide area on lower side of Hebron Road above the Poplar Lodge that has impacted the shoulder and will impact the roadway.

NCLP-HR#2S– Hebron Road

Major slide on lower side of the road with impacts to the roadway and stream below.

NCLP-HR#3S – Hebron Road

Major slide on lower side of the road with impacts to the roadway, utilities and stream below.

NCLP-HR#4S– Hebron Road

Major slide on lower side of the road with impacts to the roadway, utilities and stream below.

NCLP-RD#1S – Roberts Drive

Major slide at the intersection of Roberts Drive and Rowland Drive below the road with impacts to the road and utilities.

NCLP-SR#1S– Sunny Ridge Road

Slide affecting the road and blocking a culvert creating an impoundment of water. Culvert will likely have to be replaced.

NCLP-OC#1S – Orchard Circle

Slide affecting the road and blocking a culvert creating an impoundment of water. Culvert will likely have to be replaced.

NCLP-LPH#2S– Laurel Park Highway

Major slide both above and below the road affecting the ditch line and culvert with possible impact to the road.

NCLP-WH#1S – Winter Holly Lane

Major slide affecting the roadway and utilities.

NCLP-WL#1S – Woodbyne Lane

Major slide on lower side of the road with impacts to the roadway and property below.

NCLP-WL#1WO – Woodbyne Lane

Major washout of the gravel road affecting shoulders, road surface, etc.

Slide Areas and Washouts

Step 3 Projects (No Immediate Public Safety Concern)

NCLP-LPH #1S – Laurel Park Highway

Multiple slide areas on the upper side of Laurel Park Highway that has impact drainage swales and culverts. Material must be removed from ditches, shoulder and roadway.

NCLP-OC#2S– Orchard Circle

Slide above the road that has blocked a culvert and affected the road.

NCLP-TC#1S – Tower Circle

Slide and evidence of slope instability on Tower Circle between Orchard Circle and Toms Drive.

NCLP-LPH#3S– Laurel Park Highway

Slide above the road blocking inlet and affecting the road.

NCLP-LPH#4S– Laurel Park Highway

Slide above the road blocking inlet and affecting the road.

NCLP-PC#1S– Pinewood Circle

Slide above the road blocking inlet and affecting the road and ditch line.

NCLP-PC#2S – Pinewood Circle

Slide above the road blocking inlet and affecting the road ditch line.

NCLP-PC#3S– Pinewood Circle

Slide above the road blocking inlet and affecting the road and ditch line.

NCLP-BC#1S– Beechwood Circle

Slide above the road blocking inlet and affecting the road and ditch line.

Culverts

Step 2 Projects (Public Safety Concern)

NCLP-DM#1C – Davis Mountain Road

Culvert at intersection of Davis Mountain Road and Old Orchard Drive has partially washed out. The culvert will have to be replaced and the road repaired.

NCLP-DM#2C – Davis Mountain Road

Culvert between Azalea Ridge Road and Country Ridge has washed out affecting the road and utilities. Culvert will have to be replaced and the road repaired.

NCLP-WL#1C – Woodbyne Lane

Culvert washout with impact to the road at the intersection of Woodbyne Lane and Sliver Springs Drive. Culvert will have to be replaced and road repaired.

NCLP-PD#1C – Panorama Drive

Culvert washout with impact to the road. Culvert will have to be replaced and road repaired.

NCLP-RD#1C – Ransier Drive

Culvert and roadway completely washed out. Culvert will have to be replaced and road repaired.

NCLP-OLD#1C– Old Laurel Drive

Culvert and roadway partially washed out. Culvert will have to be replaced and road repaired.

NCLP-OC#1C– Orchard Circle

Culvert blocked due to shoulder slide on the road. Slide will have to be repaired and culvert will likely have to be replaced.

NCLP-HR#1C – Hebron Road

Culvert blocked due to slide area. Culvert will have to be cleaned out and assessed for replacement.

NCLP-HR#2C – Hebron Road

Culvert blocked due to slide area. Culvert will have to be cleaned out and assessed for replacement.

NCLP-HR#3C – Hebron Road

Culvert damaged due to slide area. Culvert will have to be replaced.

NCLP-HR#4C – Hebron Road

Culvert damaged due to slide area. Culvert will have to be replaced.

NCLP-SR#1C– Sunny Ridge Road

Culvert blocked due to slide area. Culvert will likely have to be replaced.

NCLP-CW#1C– Camillia Way

Culvert partially washed out. Area will have to be backfilled and repaired.

NCLP-BD#1C– Briarcliff Drive

Culvert washout with damage to roadway.

NCLP – LD#1C culvert – Lake Drive

Culvert washout with sink hole and damage to roadway.

Culverts

Step 3 Projects (No Immediate Public Safety Concern)

NCLP-WL#2C – Woodbyne Lane

Culvert is blocked with mud and other storm debris. Area will need to be cleaned up and culvert assessed for replacement.

NCLP-SS#1C – Silver Springs Drive

Culvert was partially washed out during the storm. Wash out area will have to be backfilled with stone and road repaired.

NCLP-PD#2C– Panorama Drive

Culvert partially washed out with minor impact to the road.

NCLP-LPH#1C – Laurel Park Highway

Culvert outlet impact by washout of runoff over the roadway. Culvert outlet and shoulder will have to be stabilized.

NCLP-SD#1C – Skyway Drive

Culvert damaged and sink hole beginning to form. Culvert will have to be replaced.

NCLP-PC#1C – Pinewood Circle

Culvert blocked and possibly damaged due to slide area.

NCLP-PC#2C – Pinewood Circle

Culvert blocked and possibly damaged due to slide area.

NCLP-PC#3C – Pinewood Circle

Culvert blocked and possibly damaged due to slide area.

NCLP-BC#1C– Beechwood Circle

Culvert blocked and possibly damaged due to slide area.

NCLP-CW#2C – Camilia Way

Culvert partially washed out with damage to the shoulder. Culvert will likely have to be replaced.

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-02

AN ORDINANCE CREATING THE TOWN OF LAUREL PARK
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

WHEREAS The Town of Laurel Park first adopted a Land Use Plan in 1988, with significant updates in 2005; and

WHEREAS Land use plans serve as the cornerstone for long-range planning efforts including establishing a vision and goals for the future and policy statements to guide future development and land uses within the community; and

WHEREAS North Carolina General Statute 160D states that a local government shall adopt and reasonably maintain a comprehensive plan as a condition of adopting and applying zoning regulations; and

WHEREAS The Town Council adopted a Comprehensive Land Use Plan in 2016 with a 10-year period of review; and

WHEREAS The adopted a Comprehensive Land Use Plan suggests needing to be updated every 5 to 10 years in response to land use trends, changes in population, or any major events that may affect Laurel Park's future meaning it is now time to update the Comprehensive Land Use Plan with new census and community data; and

WHEREAS The Town Council is looking for volunteers to be appointed to a new Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED THAT:

A. Purpose: The Town of Laurel Park utilizes active and informed citizen volunteers per the Vision Directions in the Town of Laurel Park 2016-2026 Comprehensive Plan, which reads: “We are a caring community working together. We have high levels of volunteerism, a strong sense of identity, and pride in our community’s story.” This ordinance exists to provide guidance, leadership, and standard operating policies and procedures to the Council-appointed Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee is a representative body created by the Laurel Park Town Council for the purpose of directing the development of the comprehensive plan and subsequent updates.

B. Member Appointment and Terms: The ordinance intent is to engage a wide variety of citizen participation in local government by appointing members who represent community diversity. The town does not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, ethnic, or socio-economic background. The following rules apply:

1. Applications for steering committee membership shall be forwarded by the Town Clerk or Town Manager to the Town Council to evaluate and/or interview each applicant in a timely manner and shall then make appointments.
2. Each member is expected to serve for the duration of the Comprehensive Plan Update.
3. A non-resident of the town may be appointed when the Council presumes the service to be especially beneficial, including business owners.
4. A Council member may only serve in an ex-officio (see “Definitions”) capacity.
5. When the steering committee has completed its mission or is no longer functioning productively, the Town Manager may recommend to the Council that the steering committee be disbanded in its entirety after reasonable notification to the full steering committee.
6. Steering committee service is critical to how the town functions. Members sacrifice valuable time that could be devoted to their families, homes, hobbies, and other interests and they make significant contributions to our community.

C. Membership Composition: Membership shall include up to 12 members and 3 ex-officio members (the Mayor and Town Manager). Other ex-officio membership may be granted as approved by Council, but does not count toward the 0 voting member maximum.

D. Member Compensation: Steering committee members will not be compensated for their volunteer time while serving on the steering committee. In appreciation of the volunteered time, talent, knowledge, and efforts, steering committee volunteers will be recognized. All steering committee members will be invited to an annual volunteer appreciation event, as budgeted.

E. Steering Committee Duties and Responsibilities: Advise on all aspects of the comprehensive plan update including: long-range planning efforts, vision and goals, policy statements, future development, and recommendations for land use regulations.

F. Organization, Rules, Records, and Meetings

1. **Organizational Meeting:** A steering committee organizational meeting shall be held at the inception of the comprehensive plan update to elect officers and adopt a regular meeting schedule.
2. **Officers:** The steering committee shall have the following organizational structure: Chair, Vice-chair, and Secretary. An ex-officio member cannot serve as an officer. Each position is described as follows:
 - a) **Chair:** Responsible for setting steering committee agenda and organizing and running steering committee meetings and activities. The Chair shall provide an oral or written report to Council at each regular Council meeting.
 - b) **Vice-Chair:** Responsible for fulfilling the duties of the Chair if the Chair is unable or unavailable to fulfill the role.
 - c) **Secretary:** Responsible for taking required minutes of all meetings. If the Secretary is not available for a meeting, then it is the Chair's responsibility to delegate the role to ensure required minutes are completed.
3. **Minutes:** Minutes shall be taken of all meetings.
4. **Meeting Notice:** Each steering committee shall establish a regular meeting schedule noting meeting date, time, and location and make every effort to not deviate from the schedule. Additional meetings or changes to meeting dates shall be made at least two weeks in advance. Special meetings shall be utilized as little as possible and must be called at least three business days in advance, except in extraordinary circumstances. Notice of any additional or special meetings shall be forwarded to the Town Clerk and Town Manager as soon as possible after the meeting is called. The Town Clerk will post all meeting notices at Town Hall, on the Town's website, and will inform Council of all meetings.
5. **Meeting Conduct:** The steering committee shall make every effort to conduct its business in a professional and timely manner, that all representatives have the opportunity to contribute, and that all sides of an issue are investigated to the best of the steering committee's ability. Parliamentary procedure shall follow the *Suggested Rules of Procedure for Small Local Government Boards* (second edition) publication produced by the UNC School of Government's Institute of Government.
6. **Quorum:** Every effort will be made by members to attend all steering committee meetings. Virtual meeting participation may be allowed as long as the member participating remotely can hear and participate effectively. The minutes should reflect any remote participation.

If a steering committee member misses more than 25% of the regular meetings within any twelve-month period, the Chair will inform the Town Manager with a recommendation for either removal or continuance on the steering committee. Any request for removal must be in writing and cite dates missed along with any special circumstances pertaining to absences. The circumstances of each individual will be taken into account before a recommendation to remove is forwarded to Council.

A quorum shall be determined by dividing the total number of voting members minus any vacant positions in half (rounding down), then adding one. *Example #1:* a 12-

member committee with no vacant seats = $(12/2) + 1 = 6 + 1 = 7$, so 7 members are required for a quorum. *Example #2:* a 12-member committee with 1 vacant seat = $(12-1)/2 + 1 = 5 + 1 = 6$, so 6 members are required for a quorum.

G. Ethics and Conflicts of Interest: Each steering committee member is expected to act in a manner to maintain their integrity and independence yet be responsive to the interests and needs of the town, Council, and staff.

1. Steering committee members shall understand the steering committee's role as an advisory board and respect the decisions made by the Council and staff.
2. Steering committee members have legitimate interests (economic, professional, and vocational) of a private nature. Steering committee members shall not be denied, nor should they deny to other steering committee members or citizens the opportunity to acquire, retain, and pursue private interests, economic or otherwise, except when conflicts with their responsibility to the public cannot be avoided. Steering committee members must exercise their best judgment to determine when this is the case.
3. Steering committee members will understand that the actions of the steering committee may interfere with, or be counter to, the actions of another Town board. When this occurs, it is incumbent upon steering committee members to properly discuss the issues arising from such conflict and be willing to accept the decisions made by other Town boards, staff, and Council as acting in the best interest of the citizens of Laurel Park.
4. Steering committee members should conserve town resources in their charge and employ town equipment, property, funds, and personnel only in legally-permissible pursuits and in a manner that exemplifies excellent stewardship.
5. Steering committee members have a fiduciary duty (see "Definitions") to the town and steering committee, not their own or other private interests. Any possible fiduciary conflicts shall be disclosed to the steering committee, Town Manager, and Council.

H. Complaints Against Steering Committee Members: Steering committee members hold a position of trust and responsibility within the community. Complaints made regarding their actions or behavior must be made in writing with as much detail as possible about the circumstances of the complaint. Complaints will be reviewed by the Town Manager and reported to Council for further action.

I. Grounds for Removal of a Steering Committee Member: Steering committee members serve solely at the pleasure of Town Council and it reserves the right to remove any member from the steering committee at any time for any reason. The Town Manager may recommend removal of a member for Council's consideration. Examples that could lead to removal include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Excessive absences from regular steering committee meetings.
2. Verbally or physically abusive behavior toward the public, members, staff, or Council.
3. Inability to work for the common good of the steering committee and town.
4. Violations of the "Ethics and Conflicts of Interest" section of this ordinance.

5. Violations of any other section of this Steering Committee Ordinance or other town ordinances, policies, or procedures.
6. Past or present criminal charges, judgments, or professional misconduct actions.

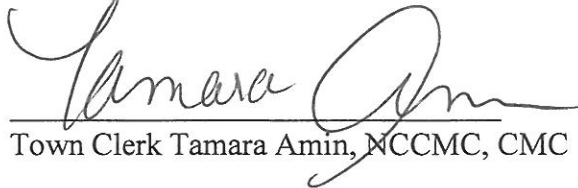
J. Definitions: For purposes of this ordinance, the following definitions apply:

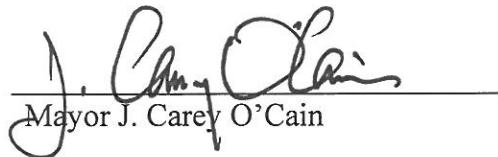
1. *Resident*: a Town of Laurel Park citizen who resides inside the corporate town limits or the extra-territorial jurisdiction.
2. *Ex-officio*: either a resident or non-resident appointed to a serve and offer input to the steering committee who doesn't have the full rights and privileges to vote on steering committee matters.
3. *Fiduciary duty*: a legal relationship between two or more parties that is highlighted by good faith, loyalty, trust, and a duty not to profit from their fiduciary position without express knowledge and consent; a fiduciary cannot act with a conflict of interest.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of Laurel Park, North Carolina that this ordinance serves to provide guidance, leadership, and standard operating policies and procedures to the Council-appointed steering committee and this ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after the date of its adoption.

Adopted and approved this 15th day of October, 2024.

Attest:


Town Clerk Tamara Amin, NCCMC, CMC


Mayor J. Carey O'Cain