



**Town Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 16, 2024 – 9:30 a.m.**

Mayor O’Cain called the Regular Council Meeting to order at 9:29 a.m. on April 16, 2024, 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 Manager Alex Carmichael
- Town Clerk Tamara Amin
- Finance Officer Kirk Medlin
- Interim Zoning Administrator/Code Enforcement Officer Kaitland Finkle
- Police Chief Bobbie Trotter
- Public Works Director Brandon Johnson
- Crew Leader Matthew Pearce
- Town Engineer Will Buie

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.

Mayor O’Cain said Town Manager Carmichael lost his dad this morning and would suggest cutting the meeting short so he can get on the road.

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

- a. March Monthly Report - The aforesaid report is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 1.
- b. Police Week Proclamation - The aforesaid proclamation is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 2.
- c. Public Works Week Proclamation - The aforesaid proclamation is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 3.
- d. Town Clerk Week Proclamation - The aforesaid proclamation is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 4.
- e. World Bee Day Proclamation - The aforesaid proclamation is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 5.
- f. Wildfire Community Preparedness Day Proclamation - The aforesaid proclamation is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 6.

Town Clerk Amin said a revised Wildfire Community Preparedness Day Proclamation was in the council's folders.

Mayor O'Cain asked to add an Earth Day Proclamation.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to approve the amended consent agenda adding an Earth Day Proclamation and approving the revised Wildfire Proclamation. Mayor O'Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

OLD BUSINESS

ROADS UPDATE

Town Engineer Will Buie said WGLA Engineering has reviewed the most recent road study from 2021 that identified priorities. Based on that review, they have identified the list of the next priorities.

- g. 2024/2025 Paving Priorities List - The aforesaid list is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 7.

At the February budget retreat, the Town Council indicated plans to allocate approximately \$720,000 for paving and drainage improvements beginning July 1, 2024. With the Town Council's direction, WGLA would:

- Visit each of the roads on the list and assess both the drainage improvements and paving improvements required
- Determine the funds that will likely be remaining from the previous paving and drainage project
- Prepare a recommendation of priorities for both drainage and paving improvement
- Update the estimate cost for this work.

Based on the 2021 road study, the estimated cost for resurfacing of the roads on the priority list was roughly \$600,000.00. Keep in mind this cost does not include escalation, design, bidding assistance, construction administration or culvert repairs/replacement that will be needed. In addition to the planned allocation of funding, there will also be funds remaining from the previous paving and drainage project. For example, the Lake Drive (north of Laurel Park Drive) drainage and paving project will not take place until easements can be secured for this work. Those funds could be redirected to the 2024/25 project.

To complete the paving work this fall, the drainage improvements would have to be completed prior to paving taking place. To be able to expedite this work, the Town may consider adding any drainage improvements identified to the current Austin Construction contract through a change order.

With WGLA's current workload, it will likely be June before they can present recommendations to the Town Council. If the Council chooses to add the drainage work to the Austin Construction contract, that work could be approved as a change order likely in July with the work taking place later in July and August. That would allow the paving project to go to bid in July with Council making an award in August with paving taking place September through November.

Mayor O'Cain was concerned with the construction trucks using cut throughs. He suggested having a preconstruction conference, so they are aware of which roads to use and not use.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen asked about Pisgah Drive. Mr. Buie said that is a state road. Mayor Pro Tem Hansen recommended adding striping to the contract.

Council also asked Staff to get an update on the hydrants in Fleetwood from the City of Hendersonville.

Mayor asked about Ransier Road. Mr. Buie said that is also a DOT road, the only part is the cut through that is the Town's responsibility. Mr. Buie recommended contacting Mr. Troy Wilson from the DOT office in Mills River to fix the roads in Town. Mayor O'Cain asked Commissioner Banta to bring the issues up at the TAC meeting and have them do the whole loop.

Mr. Buie said he will be back in June to let the Town know what bids to go out for.

Commissioner Banta said the Paving Priorities list should say Echo Lane not Echo Circle.

Will Buie departed the meeting at 9:48 a.m.

ABC MERGER M.O.U

Town Manager Carmichael said at the March 19th Regular Meeting, Council discussed an ABC merger agreement drafted by Chuck McGrady. Council directed Mayor O'Cain, Commissioner Banta, Attorney Alexander and Manager Carmichael to meet with representatives of the City. Specifically at issue were two amendments proposed by Commissioner Banta:

12. Distribution of Profits – (c.) At the completion of the merger, all commercial accounts currently being serviced by the City or Town shall remain with their respective divisions. New commercial accounts that are established within the City or Town limits will reside within that respective division. New commercial accounts being established outside City or Town limits shall be credited to the nearest store and division.

13. Location of ABC Stores – (b.) Profits derived from a newly created or relocated store and having a negative impact on either division shall be allocated proportionally to offset any loss in net profit to the affected store or division.

At a meeting held on April 10, Laurel Park representatives met with Hendersonville representatives and agreed to the following:

- New commercial accounts that are established within the City or Town limits will reside within that respective division. New commercial accounts being established outside City or Town limits shall be credited to the nearest store and division.
- Profits derived from a newly created or relocated store east of Highway 25 shall be allocated on a 50/50 basis between the Laurel Park and Hendersonville divisions.
- Each division shall indemnify the other in any lawsuits derived from actions/incidents before the merger.
- The General Manager will hire the 1st Assistant General Manager after interviewing candidates for the position with one ABC Board member appointed by the Town of Laurel Park and one ABC Board member appointed by the City of Hendersonville.

Attorney Sharon Alexander (Laurel Park) is currently working with Attorney Angela Beeker (Hendersonville) to finalize the language of the agreement. The agreement will be provided as a supplement to this agenda packet at a later date.

Commissioner Banta said there would be more diversity, less overhead, and more product. He said the City of Hendersonville has given us everything we asked of them.

Commissioner Bridges moved to approve the ABC Merger M.O.U. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

STATE OF THE TOWN DINNER UPDATE

Mayor O’Cain said the State of the Town Dinner is usually held annually in June or July. It is traditionally held at the Hendersonville Country Club. Due to the construction, the Hendersonville Country Club can allow the Town to have the dinner on Thursday, October 3, 2024 for a price of \$25 with a cash bar with wine and beer. Council approved the date and time to be 6 to 8 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor O’Cain asked Staff if a check was presented for the full amount of a bench. The Town will cover the cost of concrete and setting to commemorate Ms. Vicky’s husband.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Carmicheal said he had nothing further to report.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Director Johnson said the department is still working on brush and helping Bryan with Laurel Green Park. The department is also working on shoulders then they will start mulch.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen said the pavers at the park look great. He asked if the department could add cleaning up and brushing street signs on their list of to-dos.

Town Manager Carmichael said there is still no official date to open the park. The castle repair has been completed but other items are still pending. Council asked staff to expedite the opening of the park due to complaints from residents.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen asked Staff to plant live stakes at Rhododendron Lake Nature Park. Mr. Johnson said he planted stakes on sections that were repaired. Town Manager Carmichael said Baker Construction delivered live stakes.

FIRE

Fire Chief Tim Garren was not present.

ADMINISTRATION

Town Clerk Amin said Mr. Ryan Canaan called on Friday and said he will move the boat tomorrow. The department is excited to have Shelby Greene; she started on April 5 and Staff has been training her. Ms. Cara Ferrell will join us on April 22, 2024.

Town Clerk Amin reminded Council of the LGCCA meeting happening later today, the Arbor Day celebration at Canal Park on April 27, the Volunteer Gardening Day at a Rhododendron Lake Nature Park today at 2 p.m., Bee Presentation on Thursday at Flat Rock Cinema at 6:30 p.m., Roadside Cleanup Day for Earth Day at 9 a.m. on Saturday and that the newsletter will be going out at the end of the month.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen asked about the status of the website. Town Clerk Amin said she recommended putting up the website as is while Mr. Chris Burns works on the roads portion. Council asked Staff to get an update on the website from Mr. Burns.

POLICE

Chief Trotter said there were 16,126 events. Chief Trotter said the Laurel Park Police Department has been utilizing a speed sign for some time now. She set the Offenders to record from 6 above the 25-mph limit, so anyone over 31 mph to 99 mph. This would allow the Department to see the fastest record speed.

According to the data collected, while the sign was positioned lower Laurel Park Highway, (just below Hydrangea Drive) out of 936 drivers in a 24-hour period, 674 drove in excess of the posted limit 25 mph. This range consists of limits of between 26 mph and 41 mph. The average speed being 35 mph.

The data collected while the sign was higher on Laurel Park Highway (just past McCarson Drive) out of 253 drivers in a 24-hour period, 153 drove more than the posted limit 25 mph. This range consists of limits between 26 mph to 45 mph. The average speed being 37 mph. This data is based on a typical weekday. The timeframes of the heaviest traffic of course were in the a.m. going to work, and afternoon arriving home.

When looking at the data for weekends and events, there was not much of a spike in traffic and the speed limit was slightly lower. The last Music on the Rock and the day of the eclipse did not produce any influx of traffic and the speed limit was closely obeyed.

The officers know we have a speeding problem, but now we are more aware of the issues and the timeframe that the Department needs to put more efforts into. We have heard several residents state, "Our speeding problem is a police problem." Chief Trotter said she has always agreed with that statement. The residents and the council need to understand, most of the time we have one officer on patrol and only one officer certified in radar. We have calls for service, security checks, house checks, and investigations. Understand we cannot be everywhere all the time. Next plan of action: more traffic stops with citations.

Council asked Chief Trotter to get another sign that would cost the Department \$4200.

Chief Trotter reminded Council of the next Police Class on Ordinances.

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Bridges said she met with Valley Hill Fire Chief, Tim Garren. She said they have a budget, but it has not been approved yet by the County. The Fire tax will stay at 9 cents unlike others at 15 cents.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen was concerned about the additional trees that were cut on the Ecusta Trail. He recommended needing landscaping on trails before approving any agreement with the County.

There will be a concept planning meeting for Highway 64 on Thursday with Mr. Chad Meadows, Commissioner Banta, Mr. JJ Zanetta, Mayor Pro Tem Hansen and Town Manager Carmichael. Mayor Pro Tem Hansen recommended inviting Mr. Hunter Marks.

Mayor O’Cain said he will be meeting with Mr. Dave Swindell from WXZ on Thursday at 10 a.m. at the coffee house. Mayor Pro Tem Hansen and Interim Zoning Administrator Ms. Kaitland Finkle will attend.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen asked the status of the demolition of the new Town Hall site. Town Manager Carmichael said the contract was sent to the contractor on Friday with no response.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Dunn moved that the Council enter Closed Session at 10:21 a.m. pursuant to [N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a) (6)] To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, condition of appointment of a public officer or employee. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Bridges moved to reconvene the Council Regular Meeting at 10:52 a.m. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

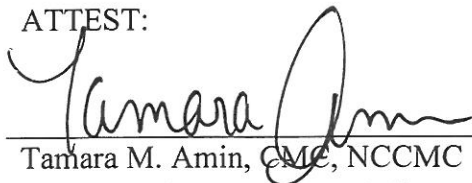
The following were present at Town Hall:

- Mayor J. Carey O’Cain
- Mayor Pro-Tempore A. Paul Hansen
- Commissioner Deb Bridges
- Commissioner George W. Banta
- Commissioner Kristin Dunn


ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to adjourn at 10:53 a.m. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The motion carried unanimously.

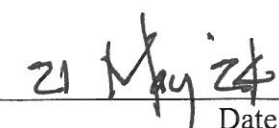
ATTEST:



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



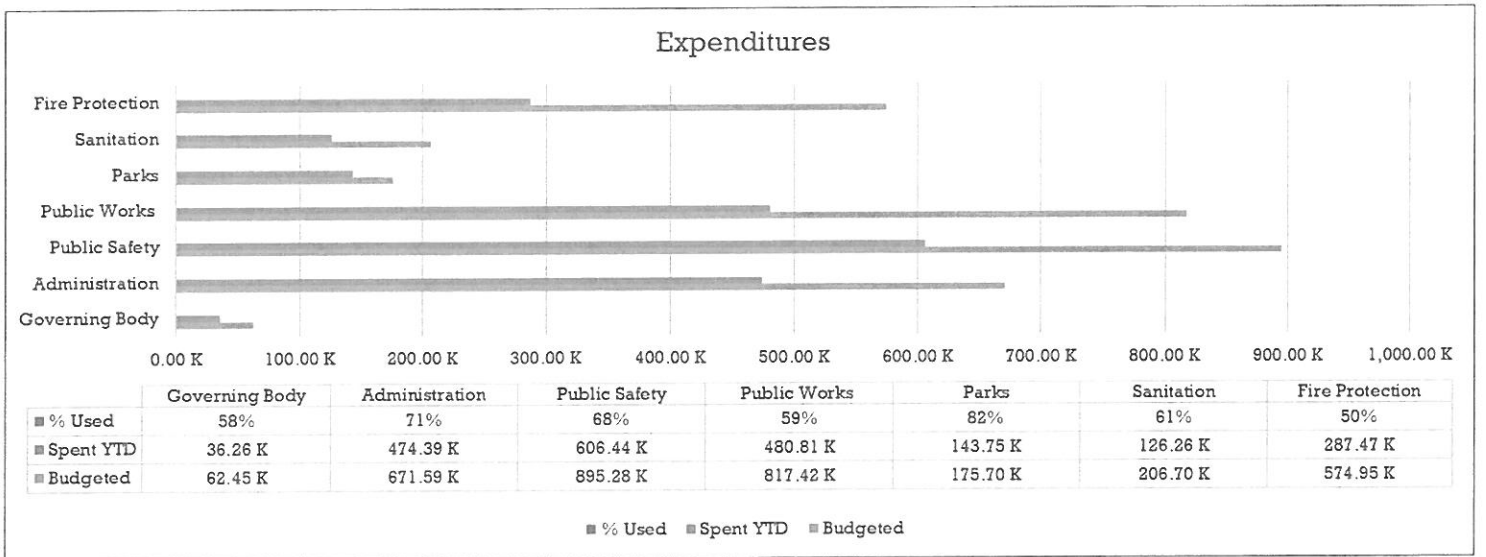
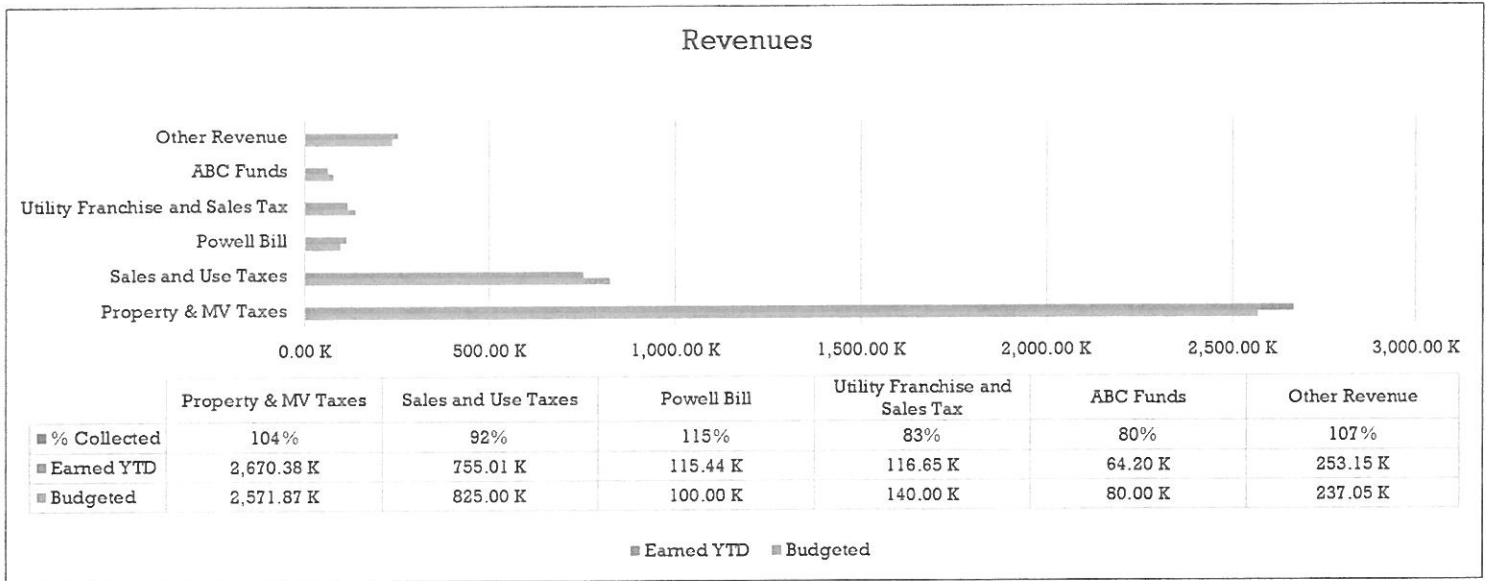
J. Carey O’Cain
Mayor



21 May 24
Date



March Monthly Report



Tax Collector's Report (March 31, 2024)

For prior year taxes, a total of \$29,152.12 remains outstanding. The Town received \$9,597.09 from Henderson County for property taxes collected for February and a total of \$2,556,853.22 since the 2023 bills were mailed. The 2023 tax levy is \$2,571,273.38. The Town currently has a collection rate of 99.611%.



Planning & Zoning

Status of Single-Family Residential Dwellings (SFRD)

2021-19	212 Beechwood	Jennifer Yost	NC
2022-1	312 Daniel Dr.	Chris St. Onge	NC
2022-23	74 Indian Woods Trl.	Jon Skillman	NC
2022-31	10 Fawn Turn Ln	Sigfrid Della Valle	NC
2022-38	209 Ficker Cir.	Sarah Adams	NC
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 (9558262012)	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		0
Additions or Remodel	198 Birchwood Dr, 169 Echo Dr	2
Accessory Use or Structure	633 White Pine Dr	1
Total for January		3

Appendix-2

**PROCLAMATION
POLICE WEEK
May 12th THROUGH May 18th, 2024**

WHEREAS, the police officers of America have worked devotedly and selflessly in behalf of the people of this Nation, regardless of the peril or hazard to themselves; and

WHEREAS, these officers have safeguarded the lives and property of their fellow Americans; and

WHEREAS, by the enforcement of our laws, these officers have given our country internal freedom from fear of the violence and civil disorder.

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Laurel Park Town Council, do recognize the week of May 12th through May 18th, 2024 as

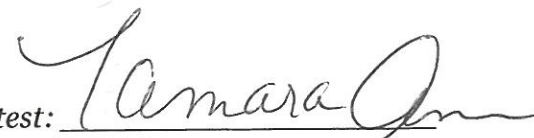
“POLICE WEEK”

and further recognize May 15th as Peace Officers Memorial Day in honor of the Federal, State, and Municipal officers who have been killed or disabled in the line of duty.

WITNESS my hand and seal of the Town of Laurel Park, North Carolina this 16th day of APRIL 2024.



J. Carey O' Cain
Mayor

Attest: 

Tamara Amin, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk

Appendix-3

PROCLAMATION

**PUBLIC WORKS WEEK
MAY 19TH THROUGH MAY 25TH, 2024**

WHEREAS, public works infrastructure, facilities, and services are of vital importance to the health, safety, and well-being of the residents of this community; and

WHEREAS, the support of an understanding and informed citizenry is vital to the efficient operation of public works systems and programs such as water, sewer, streets, snow removal, public buildings and grounds, parks, and fleet services; and

WHEREAS, the quality and effectiveness of these services and facilities, as well as their planning, design, and implementation is vitally dependent upon the efforts and skills of public works personnel.

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Laurel Park Town Council, do recognize the week of May 19th through May 25th, 2024 as

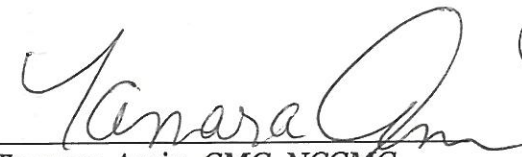
“PUBLIC WORKS WEEK”

and furthermore, call upon all citizens and civic organizations to recognize the contributions that public works officials make every day to support our health, safety, comfort and quality of life.

WITNESS my hand and seal of the Town of Laurel Park, North Carolina this 16th day of APRIL, 2024.



J. Carey O'Cain
Mayor

Attest: 

Tamara Amin, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk

Appendix - 4

PROCLAMATION
53rd ANNUAL MUNICIPAL CLERKS WEEK
May 5th THROUGH May 11th, 2024

WHEREAS, the Office of the Municipal Clerk, a time honored and vital part of local government exists throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, the Office of the Municipal Clerk is the oldest among public servants; and

WHEREAS, the Office of the Municipal Clerk provides the professional link between the citizens, the local governing bodies, and agencies of government at other levels; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal Clerk serves as the information center on functions of local government and community; and

WHEREAS, Municipal Clerks continually strive to improve the administration of the affairs of the Office of the Municipal Clerk through participation in education programs, seminars, workshops and the annual meetings of their state, province, county and international professional organizations; and


WHEREAS, it is most appropriate that we recognize the accomplishments of the Office of the Municipal Clerk.

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Laurel Park Town Council, do recognize the week of May 5th through May 11th, 2024 as

“MUNICIPAL CLERKS WEEK”


and further extend appreciation to our Municipal Clerk, Tamara M. Amin and to all Municipal Clerks for the vital services they perform and their exemplary dedication to the communities they represent.

WITNESS my hand and seal of the Town of Laurel Park, North Carolina this 16th day of April 2024.



J. Carey O'Gain
Mayor

Attest:



Tamara M. Amin, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk

Appendix- 5

**Town of Laurel Park
PROCLAMATION
WORLD BEE DAY May 20, 2024**

WHEREAS, most of the 25,000 to 30,000 species of bees (Hymenoptera: Apidae) are effective pollinators, and together with moths, flies, wasps, beetles, and butterflies, they make up the majority of pollinating species; and

WHEREAS, Pollination is a keystone process, critical for food production and human livelihoods, making bees and other pollinators critical to ensuring the global safety of the food supply chain. A third of all food produced in the world, i.e. every third spoon of food, depends on pollination; and

WHEREAS, bees also serve as sentinels for emergent environmental risks, signaling the health of local ecosystems. Without their service, many interconnected species and processes functioning within the ecosystem would collapse; and

WHEREAS, Beyond food, pollinators also contribute directly to medicines, biofuels, fibers like cotton and linen, and construction materials; and

WHEREAS, Studies of United Nations and the International Union for Conservation of Nature show that bee populations have significantly decreased, due to numerous factors including intensive agriculture, widespread use of pesticides and pollution caused by waste, loss of habitat, exposure to new diseases and pests; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Laurel Park manages parks, public landscaping, and other public lands that may include greenways and wildlife habitats; and

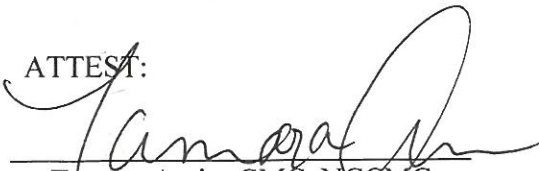
WHEREAS, the Town of Laurel Park of Henderson County, North Carolina, USA, provides recommendations to developers and residents regarding landscaping to promote wise conservation stewardship, including the protection of pollinators and maintenance of their habitats; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, J. Carey O’Cain, Mayor of the Town of Laurel Park, do hereby proclaim the May 20, 2024, as our municipality’s observance of


World Bee Day

And, as Laurel Park is an affiliate of **Bee City USA®**, do urge all citizens to recognize this observance.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of Laurel Park, NC, to be affixed this 16th day of April, 2024.

ATTEST:


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



J. Carey O'Cain, Mayor

**PROCLAMATION
WILDFIRE COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS
DAY**

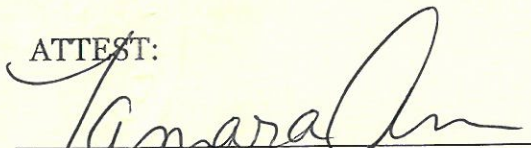
WHEREAS, on May 4th, 2024, "Wildfire Community Preparedness Day", we recognize the residents, communities, and neighborhoods in Laurel Park who engage in wildfire mitigation activities, as they work together with our Emergency Services, Town of Laurel Park Public Works Department, and others to create communities that are more resilient and safer from loss due to wildfires.

WHEREAS, let us recognize that each of us can do our part to prepare for wildfire emergencies by taking steps to make effective changes to our landscapes and homes, and better ensure people have the necessary resources and knowledge to help protect themselves from wildfire losses. Together, we can remain strong and resilient if we work together.

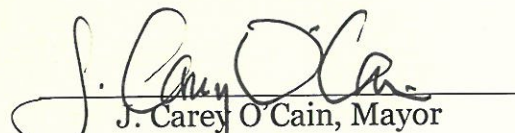
NOW, THEREFORE, I, J. Carey O'Cain, Mayor of Laurel Park, North Carolina, by virtue of the authority vested in me, do hereby proclaim May 4, 2024, as "Wildfire Community Preparedness Day" in Laurel Park. I encourage all residents to recognize the importance of wildfire prevention efforts and work together to enhance our resilience and readiness.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the Town of Laurel Park, North Carolina, on this sixteenth day of April in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-four.

ATTEST:



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



J. Carey O'Cain, Mayor

***TOWN OF LAUREL PARK
PROCLAMATION
NATIONAL EARTH DAY***

WHEREAS, the global community now faces extraordinary challenges such as environmental and climate change, food and water shortages, and global health issues; and

WHEREAS, all people regardless of race, gender, income, or geography; have a moral right to a healthy, sustainable environment; and

WHEREAS, it is understood that the citizens of the global community must step forward and take action to create positive environmental change to combat these global challenges; and

WHEREAS, a sustainable environment can be achieved on the individual level through educational efforts, public policy, and consumer behavior changes; and

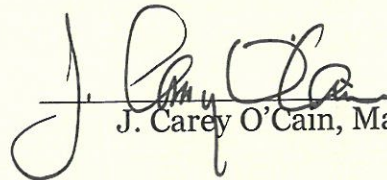
WHEREAS, it is necessary to broaden and diversify the environmental movement to achieve maximum success.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Karen Darch, President of the Board of Trustees for the Village of Barrington, Cook and Lake Counties, Illinois, do hereby proclaim April 22, 2024, as

NATIONAL EARTH DAY

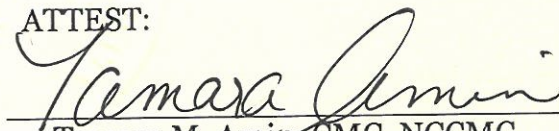
in the Village of Barrington, and hereby pledge to use this Earth Day as a reminder of our duty to serve the best interests of our constituents by supporting environmental initiatives in our Town, and to encourage others to undertake similar actions.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the Town of Laurel Park, North Carolina, on this sixteenth day of April in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-four.



J. Carey O'Cain, Mayor

ATTEST:



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

Appendix-7

Town of Laurel Park 2024/25 Paving Priorities

Road	Location
Beechwood Circle	Remaining portion of the road (middle section)
Sweetgum Trail	Entire Road
Roberts Drive	From Rowland Drive to Laurel Park Highway (upper section)
Park Drive	Entire Road
Essawah Drive	From Central Drive to Park Drive
Elm Lane	Entire Road
Robinson Lane	From Laurel Park Highway to Sabine Drive
Mimosa Way	Entire Road
Nandina Lane	Entire Road
Hyacinth Lane	Entire Road
Camella Way	From Hyacinth Lane to Jasmine Place
Echo Drive	Entire Road
Echo Circle Lane	Entire Road
Old Laurel Drive	Entire Road
Smith Drive	Entire Road
Cliff Drive	Entire Road
Grayling Lane	Entire Road
Woodland Trail	Entire Road
Hydragea Drive	From Laurel Park Highway to Spruce Pine Lane
Woodbyne Avenue	From Laurel Park Highway to Woodbyne Lane
Woodbyne Lane	Entire Road (paved section)
Lake Drive	From Kermit Edney Drive to Rustic Drive
North Park Place	Entire Road