



**Town Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2024 – 9:30 a.m.**

Mayor O’Cain called the Regular Council Meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. on March 19, 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
- Police Chief Bobbie Trotter
- Fire Chief Tim Garren
- Public Works Director Brandon Johnson
- Chuck McGrady

The following were absent:

- Interim Zoning Administrator/Code Enforcement Officer Kaitland Finkle

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 two.

Mr. David Combs spoke about changing the Laurel Park Highway name. He said changing the name will not make a difference. He said, “Don’t change the name, enforce the law.” He recommended a sign that said, “Welcome to Laurel Park, Please adhere to our 25 mph speed limit or get a ticket.”

Town Clerk Amin read an email from Mr. Michael Leach, of 3767 Laurel Park Highway.

- a. Leach Email - The aforesaid email is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 1.

Police Chief Trotter joined the meeting at 9:33 a.m.

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

- b. February Monthly Report - The aforesaid report is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 2.
- c. Arbor Day Proclamation - The aforesaid proclamation is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 3.

Commissioner Dunn 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

ABC MERGER DISCUSSION

The Town has been requested to consider merging the ABC Board with the Hendersonville ABC Board. The intent is to provide greater efficiency and greater purchasing power. A draft merger agreement (attached) was put together by Chuck McGrady with input from the Hendersonville and Laurel Park ABC store managers.

Commissioner Banta suggested the attached Amendments be added to the contract. However, the Hendersonville City Council went ahead and voted to approve the agreement without amendments.

Suggested wording to be added to the current ABC draft of January 24, 2024:

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.

- d. McGrady Email - The aforesaid email is attached to, and made part of, these minutes as Appendix 4.

The council reviewed and discussed the ABC Board merger agreement and amendments. This law would supersede our contract. The council decided that Mayor O’Cain, Commissioner

Banta, and Town Manager Carmichael would meet with Mr. McGrady and the City of Hendersonville to iron out the contract.

The council asked Mr. McGrady to get this approved before the end of the fiscal year and to schedule the meeting.

Mr. McGrady left the meeting at 9:46 a.m.

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE UPDATE

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen presented a list of things the Centennial Committee was looking at doing and asked the Council to look it over and let him and Commissioner Dunn know if anything needs to be added or changed.

Commissioner Bridges asked to add Chamber music for the unveiling of the bear.

Mayor O’Cain would like the Committee to consider leasing a huge tent in the park for the whole year and use it for a venue all year.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen said he will talk to the tent company.

NEW BUSINESS

CONTRACT FOR NEW PAYROLL SOFTWARE

Finance Officer Kirk Medlin said our accounting software provider (Edmunds GovTech) is ending support for their current payroll package. They are moving their customers to an in-house option called MCSJ. There is no way to continue with Edmunds without making this change. The costs will be as follows:

- One-time fees of \$8,000 are required for implementation and conversion. This cost will be split between FY 24 (\$6,000) and FY 25 (\$2,000).
- Yearly fees of \$6,800 are for the annual subscription, support, and hosting services. The entirety of this amount will be paid in FY 25.

The net increase in our yearly fees will be \$3,560.

The council reviewed and discussed the contract with Edmunds GovTech.

Commissioner Bridges moved to approve the contract for the payroll software conversion. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

LAUREL PARK HIGHWAY SURVEY RESULTS

Town Clerk Amin said we received 78 responses to the Laurel Park Highway Survey. The following is a breakdown of the results:

- 54% No change
- 12% Laurel Park Trail
- 12% Laurel Park Drive
- 8% Laurel Park Way
- 0% Laurel Park Parkway
- 1% Echo Mountain Trail
- 1% Concourse
- 3% Depends on Costs

The council reviewed and discussed the survey results. Mayor O’Cain said this pretty much settles it and the people have spoken. Mayor O’Cain asked staff to send out another notice thanking people for their vote and that the Town will not make a change.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Town Manager Carmicheal said the sales tax is \$12K higher than expected. Sales tax will drop for January and February.

Mr. Carmichael said the Town has hired two new employees. Shelby Greene will be the part timer and will start on April 5. Cara Ferrell will be the Zoning Administrator/Assistant to the Town Manager and will start on April 22.

Mayor O’Cain asked about the status of the budget.

Town Manager Carmichael said he is meeting with Department Heads and making other revisions to the budget revenue projections and will get a draft budget to Council on April 25.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Director Johnson said the department is doing lots of clean up, and road shoulder repairs. Mr. Johnson said the department has looked at a skid steer/widener and it will cost \$5k per month.

Mr. Johnson said bamboo is growing at the bunkhouse and Staff is doing an invasive removal and cleaning around the shop. The department has also bought wildflower seeds to be planted.

FIRE

Fire Chief Tim Garren said they have been busy with wildfire season. He said the best thing the

Town did was the No Open Burn Policy.

POLICE

Chief Trotter said their first Community Event will be Thursday on Civil vs. Criminal.

The department held a checkpoint with the Hendersonville Police Department on St. Patrick's Day.

Chief Trotter attended the Blue Ridge Community College Career Day for high school students. There were three classes, and they were packed with over 40-50 students each.

The sign that was placed on Laurel Park Highway has helped. Some residents did not realize they were speeding. Mayor Pro Tem Hansen asked Chief Trotter to print the results next time. Chief Trotter said the sign will be moved closer to Somersby for Yoga in April. Commissioner Bridges said she saw a sign that lights up when you are speeding in West Asheville and asked Chief Trotter to get prices.

ADMINISTRATION

Town Clerk Amin reminded Council of the Volunteer cleanup day at Laurel Green 5th Ave berm area on March 26 at 2, the March 28 Community Eco- Enviro Workshop at 1st Congregational Church from 1-3, and Town Offices being closed in observance of good Friday on March 29.

The department is excited to have Shelby Greene and Cara Ferrel join us.

The department is accepting mulch applications as well as reservations for the Bee City presentation on April 18 at 6:30 at Flat Rock Cinema.

In finance, Town Clerk Amin said AP is finally all caught up.

Finance Officer Kirk Medlin said he is working on real time updates for the budget internally.

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Bridges reminded the Council again of the workshop.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen said DOT is coming today at 1 p.m. to meet with him and Commissioner Banta about access underneath Daniel Drive.

Mayor O'Cain asked the Town Clerk when the ABC meeting was. Town Clerk Amin said Tuesday at 8:30 a.m.

Mayor O'Cain said Mr. Guy Lieri is looking to add a Bench at Laurel Green Park. Mayor O'Cain asked Staff to get the latest quotes. They are willing to pay up to \$2K. The Council agreed to pay the rest.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen said he spoke to Hunter about the landscaping around the Ecusta Trail. Mayor Pro Tem Hansen said the Town needs Mr. Todd's Ecusta Trail Proposal to also include landscaping.

Mayor O'Cain said the Town's Comprehensive Plan expires in 2026. The Town needs to start working on it. Commissioner Dunn said the Town needs the right facilitator. Town Manager Carmichael said he reached out to Land of Sky, but he thinks it will cost about \$20K.

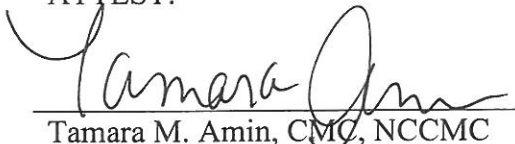
Mayor Pro Tem Hansen asked about the status of the Ecusta Crossing development. He said the uplift for sewer and electricity for the Ecusta Crossing has not even started. He said the Town needs to make him move forward. Town Manager Carmichael said he will draft a letter about the bond coming due. Mayor Pro Tem Hansen said the \$300k bond will not even come close to the things needed to be done. Town Manager Carmichael said he will have Ms. Finkle look at permits next week. He will also draft a letter about the bond and a letter to the developer. Mayor Pro Tem Hansen also said the DOT probably does not know there needs to be turn lanes into that development.

Mayor O'Cain told Council he had evaluations to give them for Town Manager Carmichael's evaluation.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Dunn moved to adjourn at 10:24 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

4/16/24

Date

TOWN OF LAUERL PARK

TC Reg Meeting

PUBLIC COMMENT SIGN-UP SHEET

MEETING DATE: 3/19/24

NOTE: ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED ON THIS FORM IS A PUBLIC RECORD

WE APPRECIATE OUR CITIZENS AND GUESTS EXPRESSING THEIR VIEWS ON THE FUTURE OF LAUREL PARK.

WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES FOR SPEAKING DURING PUBLIC COMMENT.

- COMMENTS WILL BE **LIMITED TO 3 MINUTES** IN AN EFFORT TO BE FAIR AND OFFER EVERYONE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK.
- ATTENDEES ARE REQUESTED TO DESIGNATE A SPOKESMAN FOR GROUPS SUPPORTING OR OPPOSING THE SAME POSITION. IF THE NUMBER OF PERSONS WISHING TO ATTEND THE COMMENT PERIOD EXCEEDS THE CAPACITY OF THE HALL, GROUPS ARE ASKED TO SELECT DELEGATES FROM GROUPS SUPPORTING OR OPPOSING THE SAME POSITION.
- PLEASE BE RESPECTFUL AND COURTEOUS IN YOUR REMARKS.
- PLEASE REFRAIN FROM PERSONAL ATTACKS AND FROM USING PROFANITY.
- **PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS PRIOR TO SPEAKING.**

PLEASE PRINT THE INFORMATION BELOW

	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>
1.	David L Combs	511 Sabine Dr	LP Hwy
2.	Michael Leach	3767 LP Hwy	LP Hwy
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

Appendix - 1

Tamara Amin

From: Laurel Park General Info
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2024 9:49 AM
To: michael leach
Subject: RE: Laurel park highway

Good morning

I will submit this as public comment tomorrow at the Council meeting.

Best Regards,

Tamara Amin

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

Member of NC Association of Municipal Clerks Member of the International Institute of Municipal Clerks

Town of Laurel Park
441 White Pine Drive, Laurel Park NC 28739
828.693.4840 (p) 828.696.4948 (f)
tamin@laurelpark.org | www.laurelpark.org

Pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes Chapter 132 Public Records, this electronic mail message and any attachments hereto, as well as any electronic mail message(s) that may be sent in response to it, may be considered public record and as such, are subject to request and review by third parties.

-----Original Message-----

From: michael leach <mleachatfla@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2024 10:18 AM
To: Laurel Park General Info <info@laurelpark.org>
Subject: Laurel park highway

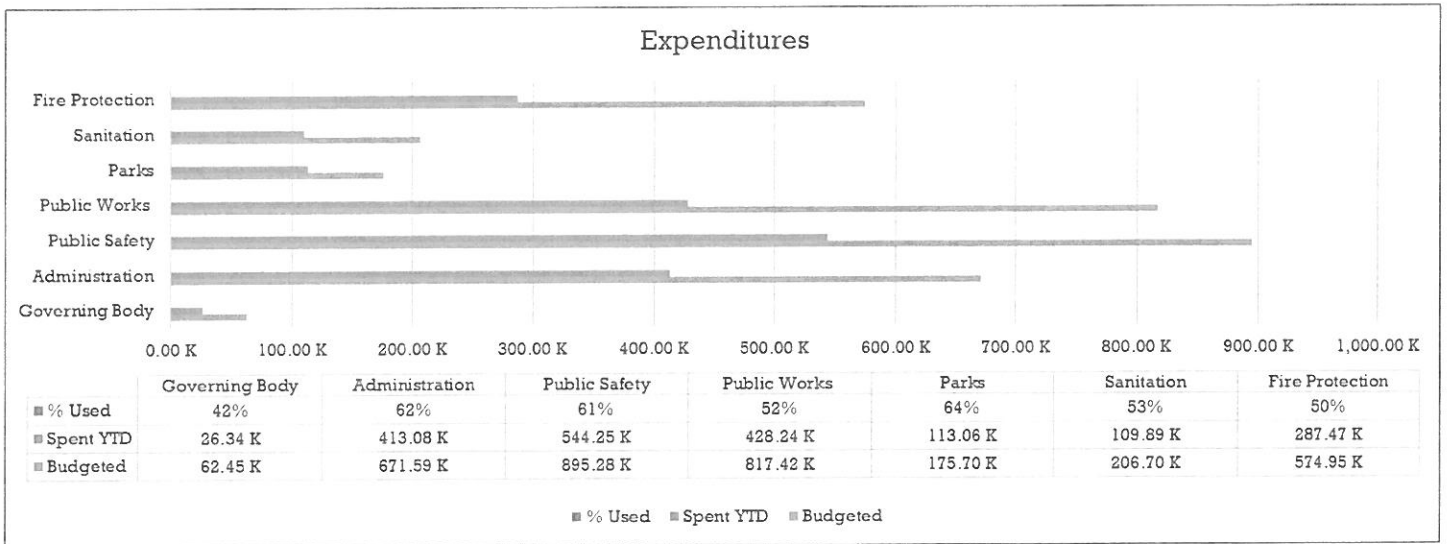
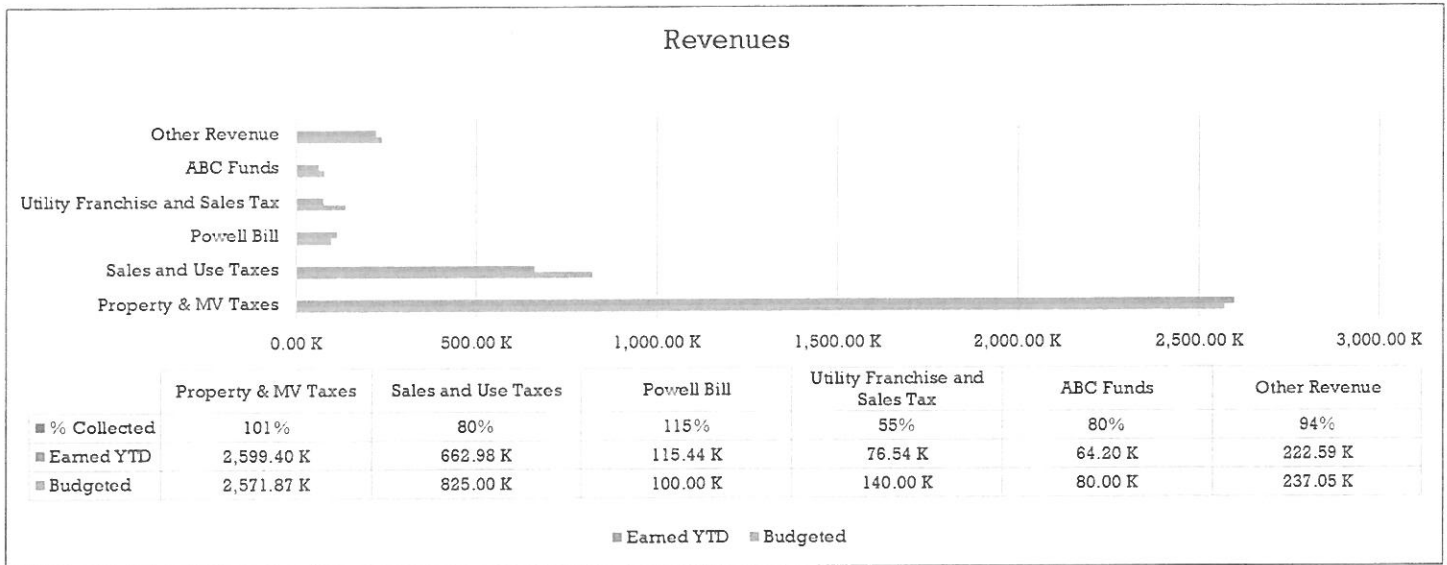
Be Advised: This email originated from outside of the Laurel Park network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To the mayor and council members please don't waste any of our resources changing the name of laurel park highway.
Thank you Michael Leach 3767 Laurel Park Highway Sent to from my iPhone



Appendix - 2

March Monthly Report



Tax Collector's Report (February 29, 2024)

For prior year taxes, a total of \$29,226.73 remains outstanding. The Town received \$6,646.106 from Henderson County for property taxes collected for February and a total of \$2,547,256.13 since the 2023 bills were mailed. The 2023 tax levy is \$2,571,273.46. The Town currently has a collection rate of 99.256%.



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

PROCLAMATION ARBOR DAY 2024

WHEREAS, In 1872, J. Sterling Morton proposed to the Nebraska Board of Agriculture that a special day be set aside for the planting of trees, and

WHEREAS, this holiday, called Arbor Day, was first observed with the planting of more than a million trees in Nebraska, and

WHEREAS, Arbor Day is now observed throughout the nation and the world, and

WHEREAS, trees can reduce the erosion of our precious topsoil by wind and water, cut heating and cooling costs, moderate the temperature, clean the air, produce life-giving oxygen, and provide habitat for wildlife, and

WHEREAS, trees are a renewable resource giving us paper, wood for our homes, fuel for our fires and countless other wood products, and

WHEREAS, trees in our city increase property values, beautify our community, and enhance the economic vitality of business areas, and

WHEREAS, trees, wherever they are planted, are a source of joy and spiritual renewal.

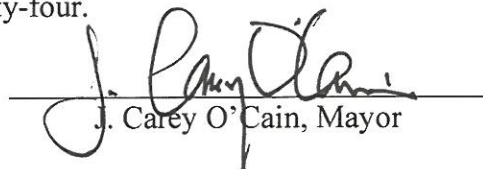
NOW, THEREFORE, I, J. Carey O’Cain, Mayor of the Town of Laurel Park, do hereby proclaim April 26, 2024 to be

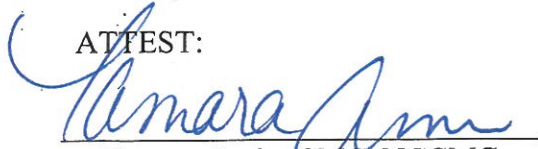
“ARBOR DAY”

In Laurel Park, North Carolina, and I urge all citizens to celebrate Arbor Day and to support efforts to protect our trees and woodlands, and

FURTHER, I urge all citizens to plant trees to gladden the heart and promote the well-being of this and future generations.

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 nineteenth day of March in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-four.


J. Carey O’Cain, Mayor

ATTEST:

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

Tamara Amin

From: Town Manager
Sent: Wednesday, April 3, 2024 1:55 PM
To: Tamara Amin
Subject: FW: S 527 (Fifth Edition)

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Cordially,

Alex Carmichael
Town Manager

Town of Laurel Park
441 White Pine Drive, Laurel Park NC 28739
828.693.4840 (p) 828.696.4948 (f)
Townmanager@laurelpark.org | www.laurelpark.org

Pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes Chapter 132 Public Records, this electronic mail message and any attachments hereto, as well as any electronic mail message(s) that may be sent in response to it, may be considered public record and as such, are subject to request and review by third parties.

-----Original Message-----

From: Chuck McGrady <chuckmcgrady@bellsouth.net>
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2024 9:20 PM
To: Carey O'Cain <mayor@laurelpark.org>; Town Manager <TownManager@laurelpark.org>
Cc: Paul Hansen <phansen@laurelpark.org>; George Banta <gbanta@laurelpark.org>; Debra Bridges <dbridges@laurelpark.org>; Kristin Dunn <kdunn@laurelpark.org>; John Connet <jconnet@hvlnc.gov>
Subject: S 527 (Fifth Edition)

Be Advised: This email originated from outside of the Laurel Park network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I saw the proposed amendments to the ABC merger agreement. One of them relates to legislation presently pending in the General Assembly.

S 527 [SBC Omnibus 2023] includes a provision that would allow a mixed beverage permittee to purchase spiritous liquor from any ABC store operating in the same county as the permittee. Section 6(a) pages 9-10. This bill has already passed the NC Senate is awaiting passage in the House. Sen. Moffitt is a primary sponsor of the bill as is managing it.

He told me that he expects to pass the bill early in the upcoming Short Session. If it gets bogged down, his intent is to strip the bill of any controversial provisions and pass the bill. This provision is not viewed as controversial.

I only bring this up because, if this bill clears the House, it will run counter to one of the proposed amendments to the draft agreement approved by the Hendersonville City Council. The commercial customers would get to choose where they buy their distilled spirits. While I'm no longer a licensed attorney, my guess is that it would preempt any provision in the merger agreement assigning commercial customers to one store or another. I guess the new state code section would theoretically allow a commercial customer from Hendersonville or Laurel Park to buy their distilled spirits from the Fletcher ABC.

I have no comment on the second proposed amendment other than to say Hendersonville ABC has not discussed any expansion to somewhere else in the City or County, and it also has discussed any relocation of any of its present stores.

I'm going to try to make your meeting tomorrow. As chance would have it, the Hendersonville ABC board meets tomorrow in the late morning.

Chuck

,