



**Town Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 21, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.**

Mayor O’Cain called the Regular Council Meeting to order at 9:29 a.m. on March 21, 2023, in person at Town Hall, 441 White Pine Drive, Laurel Park NC 28739 and electronically through Zoom platform.

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

- Mayor Carey O’Cain
- Mayor Pro Tempore A. Paul Hansen
- Commissioner George W. Banta
- Commissioner Deb Bridges
- Commissioner Kristin Dunn
- Town Manager Alex Carmichael
- Assistant to the Town Manager Jordan Jones
- Police Chief Bobbie Trotter
- Public Works Director Brandon Johnson
- Fire Chief Tim Garren
- Denise Layfield

The following were absent:

- Town Clerk Tamara Amin

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 one.

Town Manager Alex Carmichael read an email from Katie L. Swain of 428 Spruce Pine Lane.

- a. Katie L. Swain Public Comment - The aforesaid public comment is attached to and made part of these minutes as Appendix 1.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to direct Staff to investigate condemnation of 1932 Laurel Park Highway. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor O’Cain wished to add Cistern Water Rights to the Agenda as item 7A.

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.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

- b. February Monthly Report - The aforesaid report is attached to and made part of these minutes as Appendix 1.

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

NEW BUSINESS

CISTERN WATER RIGHTS

Town Manager Alex Carmichael provided information. He said the property owner is closing today and needs an answer on Cistern Water Rights.

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

EMERGENCY OPERATION PLAN

Chief Bobbie Trotter discussed with Council the Emergency Operation Plan. The proposed Emergency Operations Plan is a multi-discipline, all-hazards plan that establishes the single, comprehensive framework for the management of significant events, either planned or spontaneous, within the cooperate limits of the Town. The plan meets the requirements of FEMA planning guidance, Civil Preparedness Guide (CPG) CPG 1-8, CPG 1-8A, National Response Framework (NRT) NRT-1 and the legal responsibilities identified in North Carolina Statutes, Chapter 166-A. It provides all the necessary elements to ensure that local government can fulfill its legal responsibilities for emergency preparedness.

Council asked Staff to add partnerships in the document.

Commissioner Bridges moved to approve the Emergency Operation Plan as amended. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

AMENDMENTS TO THE STRATEGIC OPERATING PLAN AND CORE VALUES

At the February 21st, 2023 Regular Meeting, Council asked staff to prepare an update to the Strategic Operations Plan and Core Vales to include Non-partisanship in the list of Core Values. The amended list would include the following:

- **Quality** - To ensure all activities and services meet excellence.
- **Community** - Foster a feeling of fellowship within our town, as to facilitate and strengthen common attitudes, interests, and goals.
- **Prestige** - To be the example for our citizens, neighbors, and region.

- **Sustainability** - To provide sustainability for the town, through its environment, culture, and finances.
- **Transparency** - To foster trust between government and citizens through active, honest communication.
- **Non-Partisanship** - To provide Non-Partisan leadership and service to Town and its Citizens

Council discussed amending the Town Value to add non-partisan.

Commissioner Dunn moved to add the phrase “non-partisan leadership and service to the Town and Citizens” to the Town’s Core Values. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

STORY MAP PROPOSAL

Town Manager Alex Carmichael presented to Council a Story Map Proposal. Staff reached out to the Land of Sky Regional Council of Governments (L.O.S.) for help with consolidating and communicating a master plan. The L.O.S. proposed creating a “story map,” aggregating various Town data and turning into a presentation that is understandable.

The projects and initiatives to include in the story map are:

1. Annual Budget
 1. Updated each year
2. Road Infrastructure
 1. Town-Maintained roads
 - i. Create an interactive map where users can see roads prioritized for improvements (paving and planned culvert replacements) over the next few years.
 - ii. Include images of current road conditions.
 2. Hwy 64
 - i. Share any available DOT maps of planned roundabouts on NC-64
 - ii. Discuss NC-64’s important role in creating commercial areas
3. Water/Sewer Infrastructure
 1. Share map with existing water/sewer infrastructure
 2. Share data on failing septic systems (these systems will not be mapped in order to avoid privacy concerns)
4. High Speed Internet/Broadband
 1. Share map council obtained showing possible underground fiber optic cable addition
 2. Create map sharing current internet and cable TV infrastructure using existing NCDIT data
5. Parks/Greenways/Walking Trails
 1. Create map with existing trails
 2. Include Ecusta Trail path and possible additions, like new bathrooms, that could be prioritized as the Ecusta Trail develops
6. Town Hall
 1. Share images and narratives highlighting how town hall is at/past capacity
 2. Focus on how town hall’s limitations impact the Laurel Park Police Department
7. Growth & Development

1. Create map showing vacant lots
 2. Create narrative using statistics and archival images highlighting town's growth over time
8. 2019/2021 Survey results

The estimated hours and costs are:

- Jon – 5 days (\$80/hour) – ArcGIS mapping, revisions, communication with town/LOS personnel
- Paul – 10 days (\$60/hour) – coordinating/communicating with town personnel, collecting media (archival and new photos, video, statistics, possible interviews, etc), story map development, revisions
- 1-2 trips to interview, take photos, videos, etc

Total cost to complete based on staff time: \$8,000

Mayor O’Cain suggested all Council Members need to come in and review the Strategic Plan by April’s Town Council Work Session.

BUDGET AMENDMENT #4- LEGAL SERVICES

Town Manager Alex Carmichael said due to a larger than anticipated volume of necessary legal services this year, a budget amendment is necessary to maintain a balanced budget. Budget Amendment #4 appropriates \$5,000 additional general fund dollars.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to approve Budget Amendment #4. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Town Manager Carmichael updated Council on budget and provided Council an update on spam attacks.

Council asked about the Ecusta Trail meeting with Henderson County and suggested Staff talk with Mr. Christopher Todd.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Director Brandon Johnson said the Jump Off Rock improvements are complete. Public Works replaced a culvert and getting ready to replace another one this week.

FIRE

Fire Chief Tim Garren said cold snaps have kept them busy. The department is still waiting on the rating. Chief Garren also said that he has employees in fire academy.

POLICE

Chief Trotter said 17 people came to the community meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Hansen asked Chief Trotter to get an update on the speed limit changes for White Pine.

Ms. Layfield presented information to Council on Bee City and “No Mow May.” Commissioner Dunn moved to support “No Mow May” on Town right of ways. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Bridges – Commissioner Bridges said there is a meeting with Land of Sky tomorrow and asked Council to send information regarding any questions.

Commissioner Bridges said there is a two-day event at WNC Resiliency Synposition??? On April 11 and April 12 that are great training opportunities.

Commissioner Bridges said there is a Fire Safety National Event on Saturday, May 6.

Mayor O’Cain – Mayor O’Cain asked about the Historical posts being put up. He also said the architect is supposed to give a proposal preliminary program.

Mayor O’Cain asked Staff if paving bids were out. Town Manger Carmichael replied no.

Mayor Pro Tem Hansen – Mayor Pro Tem Hansen asked the status of Laurel Green. Town Manager Carmichael said they were supposed to start last week. He will contact them and see where they are.

Commissioner Dunn – Commissioner Dunn met with Representative Balcom and talked about money to be used for parks.

Commissioner Dunn said there are a lot of grants for parks and playgrounds.

Commissioner Banta – Commissioner Banta had no comments.

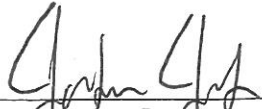
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Pro Tem Hansen moved to adjourn at 10:56 a.m. Mayor O’Cain asked for discussion; there was none. The motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST:



J. Carey O’Cain, Mayor



Jordan Jones
Assistant to the Town Manager

4/18/2023

Date

Tamara Amin

From: donotreply@form.govoffice.com
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 9:13 AM
To: Tamara Amin
Subject: Submit Public Comment (form) has been filled out on your site.

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.

Your Site has received new information through a form.

Form: Submit Public Comment

Site URL: www.laurelpark.org

Full Name: Katie L Swain

Physical Address: 428 Spruce Pine Ln

Comment or Question: Please address the dilapidated property on Laurel Park Highway.

Over the course of 2021-22 we spend over \$9000 on architect fees, landscape drainage plan fees, and zoning just get be able to speak at the adjustment meeting for Laurel Park to request to add an extension on our home as we raise our children in Laurel Park. The addition would have added beauty and value to our home and our surrounding neighborhood. Our request was rejected due to our properties proximity to a minimally maintained gravel road that is used as a driveway.

Meanwhile, during the same time period, across the street from us, on Laurel Park Highway there is a dilapidated dangerous home that the town of Laurel Park continues to do nothing about. We listen to it crack and pop as it caves in. We watch our children closer as we have heard it is used for squatters. We watch as it decreases the value of our neighborhood and becomes an ever increasing safety concern for our neighborhood children.

We are requesting/begging that you reevaluate your priorities for our neighborhood. We know many people are calling you about this dilapidated property. Please help us swiftly take action on this. Please at the core of your thought process as leaders of this town focus on improving our neighborhoods, not sticking by old outdated rules and regulations that are hurting our home and neighborhood value and function.

Phone (Optional): (504)388-0073

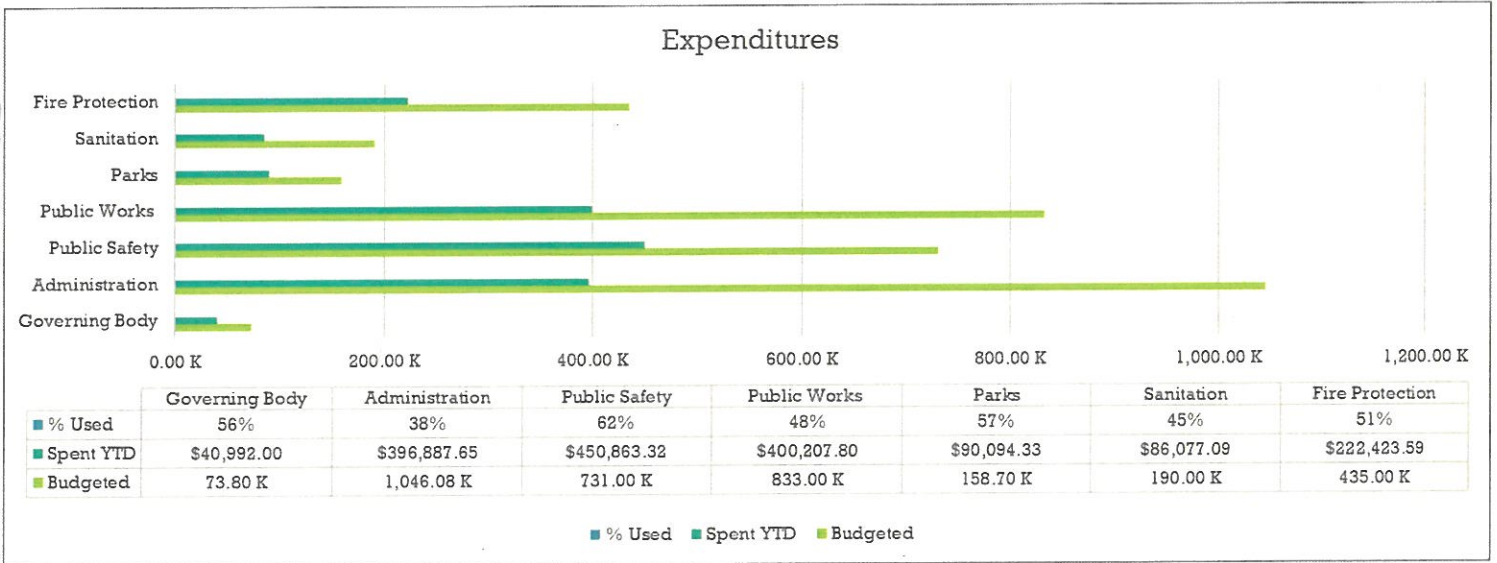
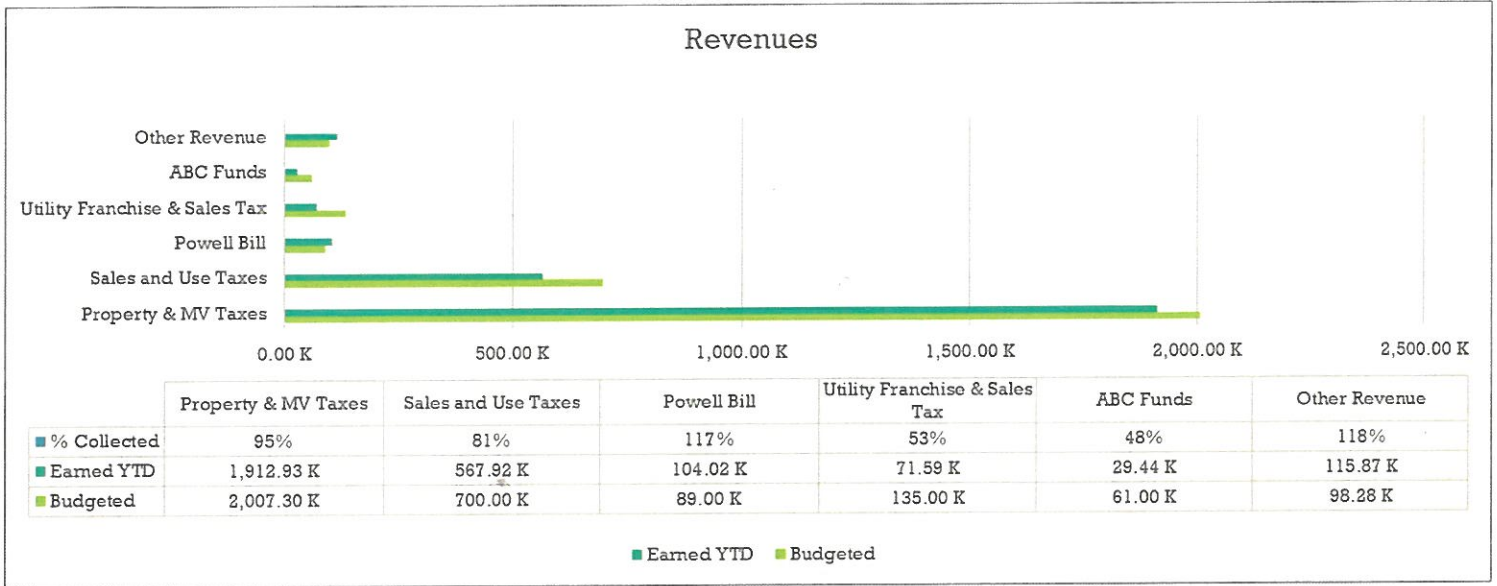
Email Address (Optional): katieswain@yahoo.com How would you like to be contacted?:

Either call or email me

Do Not Click Reply - This e-mail has been generated from a super form.



Appendix - 2 Monthly Report – February



Tax Collector's Report (February 28, 2023)-

For prior year taxes, a total of \$30,110.86 remains outstanding. The Town received \$33,819.73 from Henderson County for property taxes collected for August and a total of \$1,843,405.96 since the 2022 bills were mailed. The 2022 tax levy is \$1,867,476.57. The Town currently has a collection rate of 99.101%.



Planning & Zoning

Status of Single Family Residential Dwellings (SFRD)

PERMIT #	ADDRESS/LOT #/ZONE	OWNER/BUILDER	STATUS
2020-34	287 Alta Cir.	Traci Clark	NC
2021-13	3149 LP Hwy	Sigfrid Della Valle	NC
2021-19	212 Beechwood	Jennifer Yost	HCBP
2021-20	126 Elm Ln	Chris Brock	NC
2021-25	209 Sunny Ridge Rd	Walter Baker	UC
2021-40	276 Roberts Dr.	Chris Miller	NC
2022-23	74 Indian Woods Trl	Jon Skillman	HCBP
2022-31	10 Fawn Turn Ln	Sigfrid Della Valle	HCBP
2022-38	209 Ficker Cir.	Sarah Adams	HCBP
2022-44	945 Somersby Pkwy.	Matt Padula	HCBP
2023-4	PIN# 9558351987/Rowland	Loyd Alexander	LPZCP
2023-5	PIN# 9548467175/Clays Cv.	Josh Youngblood	LPZCP

Status Legend

LPZCP = Laurel Park Zoning Compliance Permit

HCBP = Henderson County Building Permit

UC = Under Construction

NC = Nearly Complete

Monthly Permits Other Than SFRD

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

**PROCLAMATION
ARBOR DAY 2023**

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 28, 2023 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

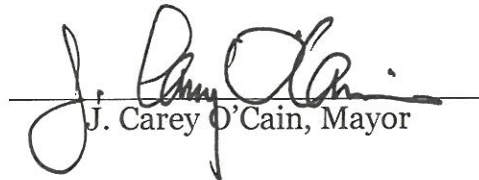
FURTHER, I urge all citizens to plant trees to gladden the heart and promote the well-being of this and future generations.

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 twenty-first day of March in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-three.

ATTEST:



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


J. Carey O’Cain, Mayor

Appendix -

Ord. 2023-5

Town of Laurel Park, North Carolina
Budget Ordinance Amendment

Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Amendment #4

To transfer funds from Fund Balance to the Legal Services account in the Administrative Department.

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

<u>Account</u>	Decrease	Increase
Legal Services (10-4120-1920)		\$ 5,000.00
	_____	_____
Total Changes		\$ 5,000.00

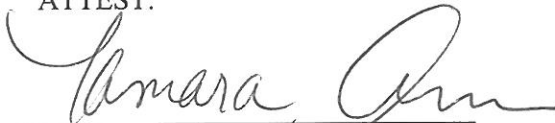
Section 2. To amend the General Fund (10), the revenues are to be changed as follows:

<u>Account</u>	Decrease	Increase
Fund Balance Appropriated (10-3070-0000)	\$ 5,000.00	
	_____	_____
Total Changes	\$ 5,000.00	
Grand Total Changes	\$5,000	\$5,000

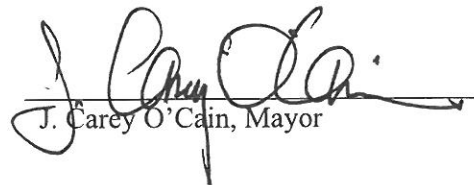
Section 3. Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk to the Town Council, and to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer for their direction.

Adopted this 21st day of March, 2023.

ATTEST:



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



J. Carey O' Cain, Mayor