

**Minutes of the
Mineral Springs Town Council
Regular Meeting
May 11, 2023 – 7:30 p.m.**

The Town Council of the Town of Mineral Springs, North Carolina, met in Regular Session at the Mineral Springs Town Hall located at 3506 Potter Road S, Mineral Springs, North Carolina, at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 11, 2023.

Present: Mayor Frederick Becker III, Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Countryman, Councilwoman Valerie Coffey, Councilwoman Janet Critz, Councilwoman Lundeen Cureton, Councilwoman Bettylyn Krafft, and Councilman Jim Muller.

Absent: None.

Staff Present: Town Clerk/Zoning Administrator Vicky Brooks, Attorney Bobby Griffin, and Administrative Assistant/Deputy Town Clerk Sharelle Quick.

Visitors: None.

1. Opening

With a quorum present at 7:30 p.m. on May 11, 2023, Mayor Becker called the meeting to order.

Councilwoman Critz delivered the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Public Comments

None.

3. Consent Agenda – Action Item

Councilwoman Coffey motioned to approve the consent agenda containing the April 13, 2023 Special Meeting Minutes, the April 13, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes, the March 2023 Union County Tax Report, and the March 2023 Finance Report and Councilman Muller seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft, and Muller. Nays: None.

4. Evaluation of the Nonprofit Letters of Funding Request – Action Item

Mayor Becker pointed out there were two nonprofit letters (Council on Aging and Turning Point) in the agenda packet. Mayor Becker asked if the council had the opportunity to read them over and if they were satisfactory. Mayor Becker stated he would entertain a motion to accept those requests for consideration next month.

Councilwoman Critz asked if any of the nonprofits that had submitted letters wanted to attend a meeting.

Ms. Brooks responded that Red Cross wanted to attend the meeting next month.

Councilwoman Cureton asked if anybody that wanted some money could come.

Mayor Becker responded this was not new money, it was the people that the town normally has. It is Council on Aging, Turning Point, Red Cross, and Catawba Lands Conservancy.

Councilwoman Cureton asked if anybody else could ask.

Mayor Becker responded that anybody could ask, it was an ongoing thing, but it is not a guarantee that the council would [donate].

Councilwoman Critz reminded Councilwoman Cureton the council had gotten to a point where they were donating, and they wanted a guideline. It was for organizations that were active over the entire community, instead of one spot here and one spot there.

Councilwoman Krafft motioned to accept these two and move on to next month on these and Councilwoman Cureton seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft, and Muller. Nays: None.

5. Consideration of the Municipal Election Filing Fee – Action Item

Mayor Becker noted his memo was self-explanatory and referred to the letter in the agenda packet from the Board of Elections with an announcement of the filing period and a provision under the law that the filing fee is \$5.00 unless the governing board of the town wanted it to be something different, which could be up to one percent of the salary. The Board of Elections has never brought this to the attention of the town before, so Mayor Becker felt he needed to ask the council if they wanted to change it.

Councilwoman Critz motioned to remain the same \$5.00 and Councilwoman Cureton seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft, and Muller. Nays: None.

6. Consideration of Adopting an Ordinance Amending the Budget – Action Item

Mayor Becker explained the budget needed to be amended under “street lighting” by adding another \$100. Mayor Becker also recommended taking \$15,000 from “inter-governmental” and putting it under “office”, so it can be used in the facility maintenance category.

Councilwoman Critz motioned that we adopt the budget amendments for street lighting, which is FY2022-2023 and for the office accommodation and the additional expenditure for the office at \$15,000 and the street lighting at \$100 and Councilwoman Krafft seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft, and Muller. Nays: None.

O-2022-06 is as follows:

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
TOWN OF MINERAL SPRINGS

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET OF
THE TOWN OF MINERAL SPRINGS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023
O-2022-06**

WHEREAS, NC G.S. 159-15 authorizes a municipal governing board to amend the annual budget ordinance at any time after the ordinance's adoption;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the Town of Mineral Springs, North Carolina, the following:

SECTION 1. Appropriations and Amounts. Amendment #2022-01:

INCREASE		DECREASE	
Street Lighting	\$100	Contingency	\$100
Office	\$15,000	Intergovernmental	\$15,000
Total	\$15,100	Total	\$15,100

SECTION 2. **Effective Date.** This ordinance is effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this 11th day of May, 2023. Witness my hand and official seal:

Frederick Becker III, Mayor

Attest:

Vicky A. Brooks, CMC, NCCMC, Town Clerk

7. Consideration of Authorizing Maintenance Expenditures

Mayor Becker explained this agenda item brought the council to possibly spending some of the \$15,000.

Ms. Brooks stated she thought the council was going to take a walk; "we're going on a field trip."

Mayor Becker clarified that the council was still in session.

The council was led outside by Ms. Brooks to walk through the town park to look at the items addressed in the Tree Masters estimate, Blackmon's Landscaping, and the Tony Belk maintenance quote. The council returned to the meeting room at approximately 7:48 p.m.

Ms. Brooks began with the proposal from Tony Belk to clean the building, clean all the sidewalks, clean the parking lot, all the sidewalks in the downtown park, clean the benches, the picnic tables, and to re-stain the benches and picnic tables. The amount of the proposal was \$4,500.

It was clarified that all jobs would be coordinated appropriately, i.e., the cleaning would take place after all the other work was done.

Councilwoman Krafft mentioned that one of the benches looked like there was a piece of wood that needed to be replaced, and that should be looked at before the re-staining.

Mayor Becker responded that might get done by somebody in house if it needs it.

Councilwoman Krafft motioned to accept Tony Belk's proposal contract for the purpose of labor and cleaning up and washing the sidewalks and buildings, parking lot, as presented and Councilwoman Critz seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft and Muller. Nays: None.

Ms. Brooks referred to the Tree Masters report and stated it was a detailed report showing what the Tree Masters would be doing.

Councilwoman Critz mentioned that the Tree Masters quote named "Matt Humphreys" as the client and asked if he was the owner. The town should be the client.

Ms. Brooks explained that Matt Humphreys is like a general contractor that is working for no pay, he is coordinating these estimates for the town. Ms. Brooks noted Mr. Humphreys came to town hall and walked the property and he contacted these companies and met them out there.

Ms. Brooks referred to the second part of the Tree Masters proposal, which was for the tree pruning and lift for a separate price of \$1,725. Ms. Brooks explained Mayor Becker and herself spoke with Mr. Humphreys about that part today and he recommended the town hold off on that portion until the fall or maybe January or February of next year. Therefore, the Tree Masters agreement would be the \$3,000 now and the town will reach back out to them in the fall/winter to look at that tree for trimming it up.

It was clarified that tree was the one in front of the community center.

Councilman Muller commented that none of the estimates included replanting and he noticed the Tree Masters report showed that they did not remove stumps, which will interfere with whoever is going to come back in and replant.

Councilwoman Coffey motioned to move forward on the Tree Masters tree pruning and lift job for the \$3,000 price and Councilman Muller seconded. Councilwoman Critz made a friendly amendment of correcting the Town of Mineral Springs as the client. The motion with the friendly amendment passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft and Muller. Nays: None

Ms. Brooks stated there was some good news on this one. The original price given for the clean up was \$4,500, but it is now \$3,000.

Councilman Muller asked if he explained why.

Ms. Brooks responded it was Mr. Humphreys that contacted Blackmon's Landscaping; Mr. Humphreys, Mayor Becker, and Ms. Brooks had all agreed the price was kind of high.

Mayor Becker mentioned that Blackmon's Landscaping may be submitting a maintenance proposal for later also.

Councilwoman Krafft commented all of this was for around the town hall and asked about the town signs [the welcome signs on Highway 75].

Mayor Becker responded that the staff was just trying to tackle one thing at a time.

Councilwoman Krafft stated she was thinking the right person (Blackmon's Landscaping) was right here.

Mayor Becker responded that he might be, but the town might want to have them wait until the fall and do everything. Staff has just tried to take a "nibble" out of that lengthy list of ideas the council came up with; there will be a lot more that Mayor Becker promised to look in to and he has not gotten his work done yet.

Councilwoman Krafft felt that the entrance signs were almost more important than town hall because most people don't come to town hall, but they all see those signs driving through.

Councilwoman Coffey stated she would say "as important", you drive through a beautiful entry into the town and then you get to town hall, and it is a dump.

Mayor Becker commented he did see the entrance signs, but since you are driving by at 55 mph, they are not as horrible as town hall; they are tolerable, not beautiful. The signs could have something nice, so that is not off the radar.

Councilwoman Critz asked if the new total was \$4,600.

Mayor Becker responded, "yes."

Councilwoman Critz motioned to accept Blackmon's Landscaping, LLC at \$4,600 for their work here at the town hall area and Councilwoman Coffey seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft and Muller. Nays: None.

8. Consideration of the 2023-2024 Budget and Calling for a Public Hearing – Action Item

Mayor Becker explained the budget was before the council to be presented. The council would not be approving the budget tonight, but rather accepting it, calling for the public hearing on June 8, 2023, and directing the clerk to advertise it. Mayor Becker asked the council if they had read over the budget and if they had any questions for him; this is a good time to ask, so he can present something revised for the public hearing.

Councilwoman Critz commented that Mayor Becker gave the council a revised version.

Mayor Becker responded this was the first time the council saw the budget, because all they had seen was the expenditures. Mayor Becker noted he was happy that the league's salary studies had been updated to 2021-2022, and he was able to do some comparables. Looking at what Ms. Brooks' job description as clerk was, because she obviously has much more administrative work than a clerk normally would, he compared that role for that halftime job with an assistant city manager for a town between 2,500 and 4,000, which is a small town like Mineral Springs, and she still fell just around a little bit lower than the average for the peer municipalities in the League survey. With that compared to what the proposal was and if you made up for the two years of lower-than-average cost of living increases, it all fell into place. Mayor Becker stated he appreciated all the input the council gave him last month on how to present that and the comparables to see if it all fit together and he was pleased with how it fell into place. With those adjustments, it looks like the salary structure is good and everything else was in there. Mayor Becker thought he had to tweak the employee overhead by a couple hundred above what it was in last month's appropriations, but that was going to add to make the numbers add up. The prior years' data and this goes in for a budget document and the council would see that they are highlighted and that reflects the budget amendment that was just made tonight. Mayor Becker noted he highlighted those amendments because the council had not adopted them yet. Mayor Becker commented that the good news was that the town would not be raising taxes again.

Councilwoman Coffey motioned to accept the budget and call for the public hearing and authorize Vicky to advertise for it to be held June 8, 2023 for the 2023/2024 budget and Councilwoman Cureton seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft, and Muller. Nays: None.

9. Consideration of Comprehensive Transportation Plan Resolution – Action Item

Mayor Becker referred to the modified PowerPoint that Bjorn Hansen put together in the agenda packet and explained this was the route Mineral Springs was pushing the CRTPO and Mr. Hansen to consider in 2018, but it fell on deaf ears. Now, all of a sudden, they are looking at this movement of that proposed alignment about 2000 feet east. Mayor Becker stated he had gone to online meetings with Union County, Waxhaw, CRTPO, and NCDOT officials and they all seemed to think this is a good alignment to change it to.

Mayor Becker explained this project is up to \$72,000,000 now. In 2018, it was much lower in the \$30,000,000 range on the longer distance, but it did not score high enough to make it into the Strategic Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP); it may not make it into the STIP again this time, because it is not considered (statewide) as high of a priority as some of the locals in Waxhaw want it to be. If it makes it into the STIP, then you are talking about 10 years plus, so the resolution is more of a formality than anything. Mayor Becker stated he was happy to see it move further from the Mineral Springs border, because this type of an intersection at Highway 75 is likely to spawn big box development. The further it is from the Mineral Springs border the better it is for Mineral Springs citizens, and it does not tear up Collins Road and impact those neighborhoods. Mayor Becker stated it was his feeling that the resolution was worth adopting.

Councilwoman Critz responded, "absolutely", and reminded the council that some of their constituents, as well as Mayor Becker and herself, went and spoke to the Department of Transportation at a couple of their meetings and presented what they felt was the stand that Mineral Springs took as far as the impact in the Mineral Spring community, so this is a big win.

Councilman Muller asked if there had been any reaction from the treehouse people.

Mayor Becker responded that they had sold their property and moved, but they had been very passionate about the project. The new owner is less concerned, because he was not using the property for that type of farm; he raises horses.

Councilwoman Krafft clarified they were raising lots of dogs.

Mayor Becker responded, “dogs too”, Councilwoman Krafft’s mother hears them. Mayor Becker stated he thought he had mentioned that wasn’t as much of a factor, but the impact with it going through the backyards of half of Saddlewood, there was a lot of response from them too. The other good thing is that they are calling for the proper public hearings in the CRTPO process, which for some reason they did not in 2017 or 2018; it sort of blindsided everybody.

Mayor Becker stated [this alignment] is much better for Mineral Springs to keep this focused on where the cause of the need for this road is - Waxhaw - so let it all just be closer to them. Interestingly enough, their engineer said they did an origin destination study, and Mayor Becker had said this five years ago, but he did not have engineering or traffic evidence to back him up, anecdotally, when you turn left onto Highway 75 in Waxhaw and go down Highway 75 and come to the fork at the Circle K, everybody is bearing right, very few people are going down Highway 75, so they found that the vast majority of the traffic was going just the way Mayor Becker said. This is a Waxhaw-centric project and where it meets Highway 75 with that little loop, Mayor Becker thought NCDOT was proposing something like they did at the MLK overpass on the way to Monroe. Where it is showed white on the PowerPoint slide, it is no longer white, it is yellow or green, because that area was annexed by Waxhaw and they have some high density projects planned for that already. Mayor Becker stated, “let that serve that and we can call it a day and we see that Collins Road can be its little Collins farm and you know it’s a little rural area around us for a little while longer, we hope.”

Councilwoman Critz motioned that we adopt the transportation plan resolution (R-2023-01) authorizing Union County to initiate the comprehensive transportation plan amendment process for the Waxhaw Parkway and Councilman Muller seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft, and Muller. Nays: None.

R-2023-01 is as follows:

TOWN OF MINERAL SPRINGS
RESOLUTION TO INITIATE COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AMENDMENT
PROCESS FOR THE WAXHAW PARKWAY
R-2023-01

WHEREAS, the Waxhaw Parkway is a future road connecting NC 16 and NC 75 northeast of Waxhaw, in western Union County; and

WHEREAS, this road is designated as a boulevard and included in the current Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO) Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP); and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) recently completed a feasibility and cost estimation study for the proposed road, which recommended a new alignment; and

WHEREAS, the current Waxhaw Parkway traverses Mineral Springs, Waxhaw, and unincorporated Union County; and

WHEREAS, the CTP amendment process requires public input and endorsement of changes by affected jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO) is responsible for approving and submitting amendments to the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mineral Springs Town Council authorizes Union County staff to initiate the CTP amendment process to consider a new alignment for the Waxhaw Parkway.

Adopted this 11th day of May, 2023.

Frederick Becker III, Mayor

Attest:

Vicky A. Brooks, CMC, NCCMC, Town Clerk

10. Staff Updates

Councilwoman Critz asked for clarification on the date for the movie night.

Ms. Brooks responded it was Friday, June 30th at 8:45 p.m.

Councilwoman Critz asked if there were things being done before the movie.

Ms. Brooks responded that the library would be here, and she had tried to get in touch with the boy scouts but had not had any luck.

Councilwoman Critz asked if there was a solidified date for the festival.

Ms. Brooks responded it was September 9th.

Mayor Becker noted that the after school Social-Emotional Readiness Program was wrapping up the first half of their program this month and Dr. Delice Coffey was having another student wrap-up in the afternoon of May 24th if the council would like to drop by. The program will reopen in the fall for the second half of the program. Mayor Becker thought it would be slightly different and they would have a little more kids, because the kids have been through it, so there will be some of the actual students there [at the student wrap-up].

11. Other Business

Mayor Becker commented that he remembered this year to recognize the fact that last week was the 54th Annual Professional Municipal Clerks Week. The proclamation does not require a council vote, but Mayor Becker did want to honor the Mineral Springs Municipal Clerk for her work as a municipal clerk, which is a crucial profession for municipal government.

Councilwoman Critz mentioned the new deputy clerk and stated, "we're glad to have her on board."

Councilwoman Cureton noted that she had been approached about the speed limit on her street and asked if there was anything that could be done to "slow these people down from flying through there." There had been three people that were nearly in an accident.

Mayor Becker suggested Councilwoman Cureton get a neighborhood petition together and send it to NCDOT; that is how other neighborhoods get the speed limit reduced.

Councilwoman Krafft questioned a speed limit sign that appeared out of nowhere on Nablus Road that said it was a subdivision sign, which is not a subdivision, it is a street.

Councilwoman Critz responded it was not enforceable and then suggested Councilwoman Cureton contact Sheriff Cathey at the Sheriff's Department (on behalf of the town) to see if they could send some deputies out there. If you stop one or two of them, it might send a message.

Councilwoman Coffey stated she did not think the council should have anyone moving on such an item on behalf of the town, but Councilwoman Cureton could call NCDOT, but not on behalf of the town.

Mayor Becker explained there was a process to lower the speed limit to 25 mph and then they would put those signs up, but that does get initiated by the neighborhood. Ultimately, the town will end up having to adopt a concurring ordinance if NCDOT agrees to do it.

Councilwoman Critz mentioned the town having participated with the information transmission for Steeplechase and asked if everything went better this year as far as the problems they had with communications.

Mayor Becker responded that was just a small piece of the puzzle, but he did listen to the radio broadcast [1620] as it was going on and there was no traffic backup at the time he was going [to Steeplechase].

Councilman Muller offered that his personal observation was that he did not lose his WiFi and he did not see any complaints on Facebook.

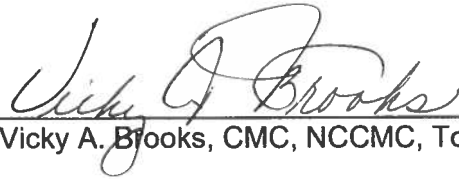
Mayor Becker noted there was a combination of things. Steeplechase worked hard and Mayor Becker thought it was a much better situation and it was a bigger turnout. Mayor Becker still thought they had fewer traffic problems across the board.

12. Adjournment – Action Item

At 8:23 p.m. Councilwoman Critz motioned to adjourn the meeting and Councilwoman Coffey seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Coffey, Countryman, Critz, Cureton, Krafft, and Muller. Nays: None.

The next regular meeting will be on Thursday, June 8, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. at the Mineral Springs Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted by:



Vicky A. Brooks, CMC, NCCMC, Town Clerk



Frederick Becker III, Mayor