

MINUTES

**Town of Weaverville
State of North Carolina**

**Town Council Workshop
Tuesday, July 18, 2023**

The Town Council for the Town of Weaverville met for a regularly scheduled workshop on Tuesday, July 18, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers within Town Hall at 30 South Main Street, Weaverville, NC with remote access via Zoom.

Councilmembers present: Mayor Patrick Fitzsimmons, Vice Mayor Jeff McKenna and Councilmembers Doug Jackson, John Chase, Catherine Cordell, and Michele Wood. Councilmember Andrew Nagle was absent.

Staff members present: Town Manager Selena Coffey, Town Attorney Jennifer Jackson, Finance Director Tonya Dozier, Planning Director James Eller, Police Chief Ron Davis, Public Works Director Dale Pennell, Town Clerk Tamara Mercer, and Zoom Room Coordinator Lauren Ward.

Call to Order

Mayor Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Active Weaverville Committee

Mayor Fitzsimmons noted that at the June 26, 2023, regular meeting, Town Council approved the Active Weaverville Plan (Bike-Ped). Town Manager Coffey reviewed the options moving forward starting with member appointments to a steering committee, consideration of staffing and budgeting for the Plan's implementation, the prioritization of projects, the consideration of limited resources as well as the identification of a long-term priority project list.

Further discussion regarding NCDOT priority project list, funding, timeline schedules, site areas, segment phases, grant awards and partial costs by the town was noted. Councilmember Cordell who serves on the MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization), said there are fourteen greenway/pedestrian projects prioritized on that project list, with the sidewalk and greenway project from Lake Louis to Brown Street identified as a number one priority on the ten-year plan. Councilmember Cordell added that they are working within the rating and scoring system, and the Woodfin/Weaverville interconnectivity study and Reems Creek greenway study is underway. If granted by the NCDOT and recommended by the MPO, the town would be required to pay 20% of an 80/20 grant split.

Town Manager Coffey recommended that the Active Weaverville Plan be included within a new strategic plan developed by Town Council.

Mayor Fitzsimmons re-stated the consensus to create an Active Weaverville Steering Committee, potentially utilizing those members that were on the original bike-ped planning committee that gave input on the Active Weaverville Plan.

Future of Fireworks at Independence Day Event

Town Manager Coffey provided the Fourth of July report which included costs for the 2023 event and a five-year history of these expenditures. She pointed out that a comprehensive overview of all expenses includes the staff pre-planning and preparations such as placement of fire blankets on school building roofs, the light and sound systems, stage, tent, porta-potty

rental, etc. Manager Coffey shared that these expenses add up to approximately \$70,000 annually.

Manager Coffey researched alternative options to fireworks shows, due to current and past complaints regarding noise and environmental impacts. While the Town has requested the elimination of the 'salute' and 'pancake' booms from the vendor, Pyrotecnico, producing the show, the cost also increases every year. Manager Coffey shared research regarding the alternatives to traditional fireworks, to include laser shows and drone shows, along with associated expenses. She reviewed the logistic issues with the alternative productions such as required area square footage for drone shows, and fog in the air or backgrounds for guaranteeing a good laser show. Drone light shows are the most expensive as it requires at least 200 drones for a fair show, said Ms. Coffey. FAA regulations, vendors, infrastructure lighting and staging, weather and other regional events happening around Weaverville, were also discussed as well as an earlier music festival option instead of a firework show.

In response to Mayor Fitzsimmons' inquiry about complaints, Chief Davis responded that we do not have an exact number, as communication responders and dispatch at Buncombe County receives the calls. Mayor Fitzsimmons stated at the July 24, 2023 meeting, Council can receive public comments, as there may be a need to move away from fireworks in the future.

Food Trucks at Special Events

Town Manager Coffey stated that food trucks/mobile food vendors are permitted as per Section 20-3315 of the code. For special events the Town receives applications, and the application is processed. Mr. Eller reviewed the zoning regulation in the code and the site-specific areas in zoning districts. Ms. Coffey noted that if a food truck is permitted by the County Health Department, the town allows mobile food vendors at events when they submit a special event application for her approval.

Social Districts

Attorney Jackson reviewed 'Social Districts' legislation in the General Assembly and the background and status of the laws in North Carolina. Two years ago, the Town chose not to pursue implementing social districts but also to revisit the issue. The law allows for the creation of a social district in a jurisdiction by ordinance. Attorney Jackson explained the regulations and enforcement by the Weaverville Police Department. There was a lengthy question and answer period concerning events, ABC permits, alcohol consumption and signage, enforcement and security, and management procedures, with input by Police Chief Davis and Ms. Sarah Myers of the Weaverville Business Association.

Ms. Myers said the WBA and businesses also have concerns over security, participation, and costs. She suggested an Oktoberfest event in a small space to monitor control as a pilot event to gauge the voluntary participation from businesses. In response to Vice Mayor McKenna's question, Ms. Myers said the benefit is increased commerce and to bring people downtown is WBA's goal.

Councilmember Jackson requested the WBA to provide more statistics on social districts and the benefits to the Town before proceeding. Town Manager Coffey reiterated her concerns that the private sector pays for the event and not the Town, and to not allow volunteers but professional bartenders to ensure adherence to alcohol consumption laws.

Recreation Complex Bids

Attorney Jackson stated that at the June 26th meeting, Town Council approved the item to allow

the Town Manager to evaluate and award the bid to the lowest responsive bidder. One contractor submission was not complete and deemed not responsive, and the other two quotes were overbudget. Both the Town Manager and Public Works Director, recommend awarding the contract to JLS Company, LLC at \$391,199.

Attorney Jackson reviewed the recreation complex specs and project timeline thus far, as some monies were budgeted to transfer from the General Fund. There was a further question-and-answer period regarding the bathrooms, storage space, landscaping, fundraising ideas, grants and costs, and the contractor JLS Company, LLC. Vice Mayor McKenna volunteered to spearhead the committee and work with staff on the project. Town Manager added that Staff is comfortable working with the lowest bidder as Mr. Pennell attested, the contractor previously completed projects on time and produce good work.

Councilmember Doug Jackson made a motion to proceed with the Recreation Complex and adopt the Amended and Restated Capital Project Ordinance to award the bid for the Recreation Complex Project to JLS Company, LLC, and authorize the Town Manager to continue to negotiate with JLS and execute a contract that is acceptable to Town staff and consistent with the adopted budget established by the Amended and Restated Capital Project Ordinance. All voted in favor of the motion. Motion passed 6-0. unanimously

Adjournment

There being no further business and without objection, Mayor Fitzsimmons declared the meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tamara Mercer".

Tamara Mercer, Town Clerk