

**MINUTES**  
**Special-Called Meeting**

**Town of Weaverville**  
**State of North Carolina**

**Town Council**  
**Tuesday, June 11, 2024**

The Town Council for the Town of Weaverville held the Special-Called Meeting of the Budget Workshop on June 11, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers, 30 S. Main Street, Weaverville, N.C.

Councilmembers present: Vice Mayor John Chase and Council members Doug Jackson, Catherine Cordell, Michele Wood, Peter McGuire and Dee Lawrence.

Attending via Zoom but absent from the vote: Mayor Patrick Fitzsimmons

Staff members present: Town Manager Selena Coffey, Town Attorney Jennifer Jackson, Finance Director Tonya Dozier, Planning Director James Eller, Town Clerk Tamara Mercer, Police Chief Somer Oberlin, Fire Chief Scottie Harris, Public Works Director Dale Pennell, Water Plant Supervisor Randall Wilson.

**1. Call to Order Vice Mayor Chase**

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

**2. Meribel 171 Monticello Road Water Commitment Renewal**

Public Works Director Pennell stated that the developer is requesting a renewal of the Meribel project water commitment as the previous year's allocation for the water commitment expired on April 4<sup>th</sup> of this year. Attorney Jackson explained that the original request was for 168 units but that the conditional district along permitted the project for 156 units. The request for renewal is for the reduced number of units. In response to Council member Cordell's question, Mr. Pennell replied that the water commitment date, if approved, would be for one-year beginning June of 2024.

*Council member Lawrence moved to approve the water commitment request for the Meribel Project located at 171 Monticello Road, to be extended for an additional year upon payment of the associated fees. The motion was approved unanimously. 6-0.*

**3. Proposed FY 2024-2025 Annual Budget**

Town Manager Coffey provided an overview of the proposed fiscal year 2024-2025 Annual Budget to Town Council. She noted the Finance Director will review the fund balance report and Manager Coffey will review the Enhanced Budget and revised Fee Schedule, such as the water rate changes and options for funding the additions in the Enhancements portion of the proposed budget.

Finance Director Dozier explained the timeline for the audit process and that Fund Balance is only calculated once a year on June 30<sup>th</sup> as part of the audit. She further explained all the factors that affect fund balance, such as excess revenues, unspent expenditures, and unfinished projects that carry into the next year and must be reappropriated. It is difficult to accurately predict fund balance before the audit.

Staff requested direction from Town Council if they are comfortable adding another \$200,000 to the budget, to which Vice Mayor Chase asked if there was still four months of operating budget and the Finance Director replied in the affirmative. There was further discussion regarding ad valorem property tax estimates, on-going projects and completion dates, the Buncombe County Tax administration reevaluation timeline for 2025, and Public Works Department equipment and sanitation truck costs.

Manager Coffey reviewed the budget enhancements item list and requested further feedback from Town Council as to the direction from Town Council on their goals for the fiscal year.

The proposed COLA and merit pay history chart was provided. The proposed budget includes 3% COLA and up to 2% merit in the personnel department budgets.

Manager Coffey highlighted the additional requests in the enhanced budget:

- Planning Department, code enforcement, strategic planner, urban designer
- DC electric vehicle fast charger
- Grapple truck with knuckleboom loader
- Main Street Nature Park upgrades
- Granicus software for STR tracking and monitoring
- New parking lot below Public Works Facility
- Eller Cover Watershed Trail system
- Public Works Assistant for quarter year
- Street Improvement Program
- Recreation Complex Pavilion/restrooms/storage
- Active Weaverville Committee request
- Florida Avenue upgrades or alternatives
- Part-time Recreation Assistant

Further Town Council discussion included: funding, short-term rental regulation enforcement costs, court cases and violations penalties, and administrative procedures allowed by the courts. Part-time recreation assistant, additional parking lot below Public Works facility, Manager Coffey recommends funding using additional fund balance. Eller Cove Trailways, Buncombe County and Open Space Parks grants, part-time Recreation Assistant and Assistant Public Works Director positions were also discussed. Street improvement plan is on-going and previously, Outdoor Recreation Complex upgrade costs and the Active Weaverville Committee planning were noted by Manager Coffey. Remote meetings were also discussed with software upgrades options and quote estimates provided.

Town Council decided to delay the Florida Avenue sidewalk project including street and lighting improvement until after the audit.

There was general consensus to exclude Granicus and code enforcement of short-term rentals from the budget, as Council member McGuire requested, since policy has not yet been established and budgeting is premature.

Splitting the Main Street Nature Park project into two projects was discussed.

Mr. Pennell answered questions regarding the procedures, safety issues, and how the grapple truck loader process works. The workers will not be feeding the chipper, which has been the leading cause of injuries with public work employees. There was general consensus from Town Council to include the purchase of the grapple truck in the budget.

Mr. Pennel suggested installing a gravel parking lot at Public Works to lower costs, and Council agreed.

There was brief discussion regarding the Town Manager's employment agreement resulting in Town Council consensus to talk about that further in closed session at Town Council's June 18 workshop.

Town Council requested that the following four enhancements be added to the budget:

- Grapple truck with knuckleboom loader
- Parking Lot below Public Works Facility
- Assistant Public Works position for a total of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the year
- Part-time Recreation Assistant position

#### **4. Adjournment**

There being no further business and without objection, Vice Mayor Chase adjourned the workshop at 6:59 p.m.

ATTEST:



Tamara Mercer