



TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT March 2026

Mayor/Council,

Main Street Nature Park Stormwater Project

Land of Sky Regional Council staff has assisted the Town by submitting a 2026 NC Land and Water Fund Restoration Grant application requesting an additional \$135,700 in grant funding for this project.

MPO Grant for Updated Reems Creek Greenway Feasibility Study

We are told that the Town's application for grant funding to update the Reems Creek Greenway Feasibility Study was not awarded by the French Broad River MPO. Town staff will continue to look for ways to advance the greenway projects as they are important to the community.

Clock Lot and Butterfly Update

The Butterfly was installed at the Clock Lot on the north side of the Clock on Monday March 9th. Public Works has worked hard to refresh this area so that it can be used by the public for some needed outdoor dining and a gathering space. The Garden Club is working on the garden beds getting them ready for Spring.



Fire Chief Hired

There were about 35 applications received for the Fire Chief position and 12 were invited for a multipart first phase that took place on Feb 24th & 25th. The first phase consisted of a written assignment and virtual interview. Five (5) candidates were selected to move to the next phase of the process that occurred on March 10th which consisted of a budget presentation, HR personnel role play scenario, and Q/A session. We were very fortunate to have very qualified applicants from the local area and from out of state. Chief Ray Canafax, a retired Deputy Fire Chief out of Huntington WV Fire Department, has accepted the job and will start on April 20th. Press release attached.

Public Works Certifications

Several employees tested this month and are now certified

- David Fisher received his Class C Water Distribution Certification
- Thomas Riggio received his Class C Surface Water Certification
- Clayton Haler received his Class C Surface Water Certification
- Josh Evans received his Physical Chemical 1 Certification
- Jeremy Hyatt received his Stormwater Inspection and Maintenance Certification

Invasive Plant Workday in Main Street Nature Park

Weaverville is hosting its 2nd Invasive Plant Workday in the Main Street Nature Park on March 25 from 8:30 to noon. Through a generous anonymous donation through the WNC Community Foundation, the Town has engaged an arborist to remove invasive plants from the Main Street Nature Park and teach the public about the proper handling of certain invasive plants through hands-on work. Volunteers can either sign up through GreenWorks or just show up. Either way, volunteers are asked to park at the Clock Parking Lot and to dress in appropriate outdoor gear and work boots for hillside work..

Arbor Day Program

The Tree Board has been working on the program for Arbor Day and the public is invited to attend this program on Thursday, April 16th at 10:00 a.m. The event is rain or shine and will be held on the southside of Lake Louise (inclement weather location is at the Community Center). We will re-plant our tree canopy with a Carolina Silverbell, native to the southeastern region. We will also celebrate the creativity and talent of our local youth as we showcase the poetry and artwork of the North Buncombe Middle and High School students. Student artwork and poetry will be displayed at the Community Center all through the month of April. The program is attached.

Countywide Fire Tax District

As mentioned previously, the County is planning to move forward with a single wide tax district that will apply to our North Buncombe Fire District. This will impact our tax revenue and operations. There was a presentation to the County Commissioners on March 17th. Property owners should start receiving notices of Public Hearing. The public hearing and proposed vote by the Commissioners will be on April 21st at their regular meeting.

Upcoming Town Meetings/Events

April 1 – Tree Board Meeting at 6pm
April 3 – Good Friday - Town Offices Closed
April 6 – Planning Board Meeting at 4pm
April 6 – Board of Adjustment Meeting at 6pm
April 13 – Town Council Regular Workshop Meeting – Budget
April 22 – Earth Day/Butterfly Dedication at 12pm
April 24 – Arbor Day Event at 10am (Lake Louise and Community Center)
April 27 – Town Council Regular Meeting



**Respectfully submitted,
Scottie Harris, Town Manager**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fire Chief Ray Canafax Welcomed as Weaverville's New Fire Chief

Weaverville, NC – March 17, 2026 – The Town of Weaverville is pleased to announce the appointment of Ray Canafax as the new Fire Chief. Chief Canafax will bring more than 32 years of fire service experience and over 20 years of fire-related training to Weaverville.

Scottie Harris, Weaverville's Town Manager, has stated: "With an advertisement that went nationwide we were very fortunate to end up with several highly qualified candidates from Western North Carolina and other states for the position of fire chief. The interview process consisted of multiple rounds using internal and external assessors evaluating the candidates and I am pleased to say Chief Ray Canafax rose to the top. Chief Canafax will bring not only leadership and operational experience, but a strong background in grants and professional development of others. He will be an instrumental part of the team as our fire department and Town grows."

Chief Canafax previously served at the City of Huntington Fire Department in West Virginia where he worked his way up from firefighter/engineer to Deputy Fire Chief, the position that he retired from in 2024. Currently he is working with Grayson Volunteer Fire Department, a position that he took in 2025. He also served as adjunct instructor at the West Virginia University Fire Service Extension for 19 years and continues to deliver important fire training across several states. In addition to proven leadership skills, Canafax brings experience working with grants and budgets, purchasing fire apparatus, expanding a department into multiple fire stations, and engaging with the public. In addition to an Associate's Degree in Occupational Development earned at Mountwest Community and Technical College in Huntington, West Virginia, Canafax holds many fire and rescue training certificates.

Chief Canafax: "I am honored to be named the next Fire Chief for the Town of Weaverville. I look forward to working alongside the dedicated members of the department and the Town's leadership team to build upon the strong foundation already in place while continuing to provide the highest level of emergency services to our community."

Weaverville's Police Chief, Somer Oberlin, participated on the selection panel and has stated: "I'm excited to welcome Fire Chief Canafax to the team. This is an exciting moment for our community, and we look forward to building a strong partnership. As our town continues to grow, the collaboration between our police and fire departments becomes even more important. Together, we will continue to enhance public safety, support one another in the field, and provide the highest level of service to the residents we are proud to serve."

The Town of Weaverville looks forward to welcoming Chief Canafax to his new role beginning on April 20.



Media Contact:

Scottie Harris, Town Manager

Town of Weaverville

P.O. Box 338, Weaverville, NC 28787

Phone: (828)645-7116

Email: sharris@weavervillenc.org



ARBOR DAY PROGRAM

2026 Arbor Day Celebration 'Planting Trees at Lake Louise' April 16th at 10:00 a.m.

[tree planting & program location is southside of Lake Louise, knoll across from the waterwheel]

- I. Welcome Remarks Mayor Dee Lawrence
- II. Arbor Day Storyteller Jill Totman
- III. Public Works Tree Planting David Fisher
- IV. Tree Board presents Tree Sapling
Give-away! Chair Russ Kantner
- V. Young Artists' Competition- winner
announcements Mayor Dee Lawrence
- VI. Art & Poetry Display at Community Center

LAKE LOUISE & COMMUNITY CENTER

Program is rain or shine, IF thunder & lightning, we will relocate to the Community Center overlooking Lake Louise.