



Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes for April 27, 2026

The Town Council regularly scheduled meeting was held on Monday, April 27, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers at Town Hall, 30 S. Main Street, Weaverville, N.C.

1. Call to Order

Mayor Gary D. Lawrence called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Town Council Present: Gary D. Lawrence, John Chase, Peter McGuire, Jennifer Young, Phil Barnett, Mark Endries.

Absent: Andrew Nagle.

Staff Present- Town Attorney Michael Frue, Town Manager Scottie Harris, Assistant Town Manager Jennifer Jackson, Finance Director Tonya Dozier, Planning Director James Eller, Public Works Director Angela Reece, Assistant Public Works Director Eric Cutshall, Water Treatment Plant Superintendent Randall Wilson, Town Clerk Tamara Mercer, Planner Graham Crawford, Community Center Manager Mike DeSerio, Police Chief Somer Oberlin, Fire Chief Ray Canafax, and A/V Coordinator Lauren Ward.

2. Approval/Adjustments to the Agenda

Councilmember Barnett requested to remove the MSD appointment from the consent agenda.

Motion to approve the agenda with the removal of the MSD appointment from consent agenda.

Moved by: Jennifer Young

Aye: Peter McGuire, Dee Lawrence, John Chase, Mark Endries, Jennifer Young, and Phil Barnett

Carried Unanimously. 6-0

3. Public Hearing- Updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Mayor Lawrence reviewed the public hearing procedure and opened the public hearing for the proposed updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

Planning Director Eller reviewed the Comprehensive Land Use Plan process and updates thus far, and pointed out page 5, updated adoption date, and recent growth area map attachment C which is included in the record of the proceedings.

In response to Councilmember Barnett's request to enlarge the legend and maps, it was noted that would be addressed and revised for publication.

Darla Letourneau [Note: Ms. Letourneau's email addressing the CLUP update was also provided to Town Council], a Weaverville resident, complimented the reporting and staff research included in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and she commented on the tools addressing growth pressures and suggested utilizing this progress in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Ms. Letourneau was concerned with

increased growth, funding town services, zoning, walkability, and lack of access to connectivity, and implementing the Active Weaverville Plan into an actionable timeline.

All public comments submitted on-line were provided to the Town Council as follows:

Dominic Lopez provided comments regarding land use, natural resources, transportation, speed limits and expanding multimodal options, community facilities and was in support of infrastructure policy to protect floodplains, streambank stabilization, stormwater upgrades, slopeside requirements, and improved emergency access in hillside communities.

Jasmin Welter addressed trail construction urgency, multi-use connectivity to the Blue Ridge Parkway, Hamburg Mountain Road improvements, regional network integration, and inclusion of the Reems Creek Greenway in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. She further provided comments in favor of a comprehensive indoor facility and aquatic fitness center, and was concerned with town buildings and backup power, and land use.

No one else elected to speak, and Mayor Lawrence closed the public hearing.

4. Public Hearing- Code Amendment to Chapter 20- Crypto-Mining/ Data Centers

Mayor Lawrence opened the public hearing for the proposed Code Amendment to Chapter 20- Crypto-Mining/ Data Centers

Darla Letourneau, a Weaverville citizen stated she was concerned with electricity usage and higher bills, sound and noise abatement, cooling drones, and crypto mining and/or data centers impacts to hospital growth.

Public comment submitted on-line was provided to the Town Council as follows-

Rebecca Withrow provided comments stating an opposition to crypto mining and data centers.

No one else elected to speak, and Mayor Lawrence closed the public hearing.

5. Fire Chief Ray Canafax Pinning Ceremony

Town Manager Harris welcomed Weaverville's new Fire Chief Ray Canafax. The Canafax family proceeded to pin Chief Canafax's uniform and he thanked the community for welcoming him to Weaverville.

6. Conflict of Interests Statement

Mayor Lawrence stated it is the duty of Town Councilmembers to avoid both conflicts of interest and appearances of conflicts. No member had any known conflict of interest or appearance of conflict with respect to any matters on the agenda for tonight's Town Council meeting.

7. Consent Agenda

Town Manager Harris reviewed as the consent agenda items.

Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Moved by: John Chase

Aye: *Peter McGuire, Dee Lawrence, John Chase, Mark Endries, Jennifer Young, and Phil Barnett*

Carried unanimously. 6-0

- A. February 9, 2026 Town Council Workshop Minutes (Joint Meeting with Planning Board) - *approved as presented*

- B. February 23, 2026, Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes- *approved as presented*
- C. March 9, 2026, Town Council Workshop Minutes- *approved as presented*
- D. March 23, 2026 Town Council Meeting Minutes- *approved as presented*
- E. Monthly Tax Report, Refunds/Releases- *approved as presented*
- F. Police Department Budget Amendment - *approved as presented*
- G. [MSD appointment removed] Tree Board Appointment/Re-Appointments- *approved as presented*
- H. Annual Report on Town Manager Delegated Policies- *approved as presented*
- I. Reimbursement Resolution – Vehicle, Equipment, Fire Apparatus- *approved as presented*
- J. National Public Works Week Proclamation- *approved as presented*
- K. Dry Ridge Museum Quarterly Report- *approved as presented*

8. Town Manager's Report

Town Manager Harris reviewed the following projects, events, and reported updates:

- Relief from Satellite Annexation Cap
- Dry Ridge Historical Museum – Historic Main Street Tour
- County Approval of Apartment Complex for 10 Silverwood Farms Road
- Advent Health updates and Community Center Meeting May 18th
- Handicapped Parking Spaces on Main Street
- Town Manager Speaking Events schedule
- Dedication of Butterfly
- Main Street Nature Park – Summer Music Series
- LIFT Grant Application for Outdoor Pickleball Center
- Countywide Fire Tax District
- Arbor Day Program and Tree Planting at Lake Louise
- Lake Louise Paving Improvements update
- Upcoming Town Meetings and Events schedule

There was brief discussion regarding a live cut tree or an electrically lit holiday tree, tree location options, and coordinating with Reems Creek Nursery for planting a tree at Lake Louise and/or downtown. *Mayor Lawrence stated they will postpone action regarding the Clock Lot holiday tree display downtown until costs are provided.*

Motion to authorize the Public Works Director to coordinate with Reems Creek Nursery on the selection and location of a donated tree from Reems Creek Nursery for planting at Louise Lake Park and to report back to Town Council.

Moved by: John Chase

Aye: *Peter McGuire, Dee Lawrence, John Chase, Mark Endries, Jennifer Young, and Phil Barnett*

Carried unanimously. 6-0

9. Public Comment

Mayor Lawrence opened the public comments portion of the agenda and reviewed procedures.

Elizabeth Nagle, a Weaverville resident was in favor of preserving the Coleman pedestrian bridge and she provided the history of the bridge and historic value with regard to the local trolley line. She was in support

of improving the monument suggesting a fundraiser, as a State-owned bridge, the private landowners are not allowed to preserve, repair or remove the bridge for relocation.

Judy Craggs, a Weaverville resident and Dry Ridge Museum Director provided a report on the past year's programs and events and the upcoming events in celebration of the United States 250-year anniversary. Ms. Craggs addressed the difficulty in repairing the bridge over the years. She pointed out that the bridge in its current condition was replaced in the 1950s to replicate the original structure and she was in favor of preserving the monument as a link to the trolley and suggested the town plan a commemoration as a monument.

Louise Root, a Weaverville resident addressed upcoming events and invited citizens to tour the Dry Ridge Museum noting the new exhibits.

On-line comments received and provided to the Town Council:

Dan Olson addressed urban sprawl, housing developments and the Ivy River water shed and was concerned with water capacity and environmental impacts.

Mike Lightcap was opposed to traffic congestion and concerned with downtown parking.

Catherine Frederick was opposed to spending money on the elevated walkway near Reems Creek.

Alexa Layton addressed a park that is not located in the incorporated limits of Weaverville, Karpen Field.

Steven Goldstein was concerned with the shooting range noise from the Weaverville Police Department and safety in his neighborhood.

Avril Fabian was opposed to repairs to the Merrimon pedestrian bridge.

Kathleen Weigl was opposed to funding repairs to the pedestrian bridge and was in favor of a historic sign.

10. Discussion & Action Items

A. Coleman Pedestrian Bridge Update and Decision

The NCDOT maintained pedestrian bridge is scheduled for immediate removal due to hazard assessments by the District Engineer's deputy.

Councilmember Barnett addressed the Town's historical asset, the Coleman bridge, the easements and ownership complications, he suggested Town Council could authorize fundraising to salvage the artifact. Mr. Barnett said that WEDAC could address the \$37,000 estimate in fundraising to refurbish bridge. The Town could request delaying removal for another month from NCDOT.

Discussion regarding costs, liability risks and safety, delayed removal, preserving or salvaging the structure, historic preservation of the Reems Creek Mill wheel, fundraising, bridge materials and lead paint concerns. Councilmember McGuire supports repairing the bridge but was not in favor of the Town taking ownership due to the liability issues. He is in favor of WEDAC or the Dry Ridge Museum to raise money not using taxpayer funds.

Judy Craggs stated that no pieces of the structure are original as it was rebuilt in the 1950s. The original structure was from 1902 for purposes of the adjacent property owners to cross over the trolley lines.

Chuck Thorton, a Weaverville resident addressed ownership, costs, the Attorney General's office and engineer's report, traffic control, and costs to remove the materials.

Attorney Frue stated that the NCDOT engineers report stated they cannot transfer the materials to private ownership.

Jeff McKenna, a Weaverville resident said it worth preserving even if it is a copy of the original bridge as it is a historical marker or monument. He was in favor of a fund raiser.

Motion not to accept transfer of ownership, repair, or liability of Coleman pedestrian bridge traversing Merrimon Avenue.

Moved by: Peter McGuire

Aye: Peter McGuire, Dee Lawrence, John Chase, Mark Endries, Jennifer Young, and Phil Barnett

Carried unanimously. 6-0

B. Weaverville Watershed Property – Emergency Access/Fuel Load Reduction

Councilmember Endries reviewed the Weaverville Watershed Property noting that more than 175 acres of the 300-acre Eller Cove Road watershed has significant tree blowdown from the Hurricane Helene and this has resulted in a lack of emergency accessibility and increased fuel load. He has been working in partnership with EcoForesters and believes that the Town may be able to enter into a cost-neutral salvage harvest agreement that meets the requirements of the North Carolina Land and Water Fund.

Mr. Endries explained the removal process and the limited timeline for marketability of trees, and the conservation easement that is in place that will limit the logging activity. The NC Forest Service recommends removal of the fuel loads to address wildfire outbreak, it would not be possible to use a fuel fire line to control the wildfire for clearing the logging roads.

Motion to approve and authorize the Town Manager to enter into a cost-neutral salvage harvest agreement that meets the requirements of North Carolina Land and Water Fund.

Moved by: Phil Barnett

Aye: Peter McGuire, Dee Lawrence, John Chase, Mark Endries, Jennifer Young, and Phil Barnett

Carried unanimously. 6-0

C. LOSRC Recommended Resolution Regarding HCA/Mission Health

Councilmember Young discussed a recently adopted Land of Sky Regional Council Resolution that requests HCA CEO Sam Hazen to come to Western North Carolina and engage with community stakeholders and local officials to address improvements their services.

She also reviewed Mission Health in Buncombe County and its five satellite hospitals providing health services to the community. She stated that they provide essential services to the community so there is a need to work with the stakeholders and with HCA to help correct issues in the facility and later we can address the hospital monopoly situation in our region.

She recommended the approval of the proposed resolution that adds Weaverville to the list of jurisdictions that are asking for HCA CEO Sam Hazen to speak with stakeholders.

Motion to approve the resolution asking HCA CEO Sam Hazen to engage directly with the stakeholders in Western North Carolina.

[2026-4-27 Resolution Requesting HCA Sam Hazen.pdf](#) 

Moved by: John Chase

Aye: Peter McGuire, Dee Lawrence, John Chase, Mark Endries, Jennifer Young, and Phil Barnett

Carried unanimously. 6-0

D. FY2026-2027 Budget – Town Council Discussion, Direction, & Public Input

Manager Harris provided Council with the outside agency funding requests that he had received from the Weaverville Business Association, Senior Meals Program, and The Local Collective. He reviewed revenues and fund balance, balance reduction consideration, taxes, possible tax rates, staffing position requests by department.

There was general consensus to continue to support the Senior Dining and Wellness Program and to fund the request for \$6,000 annually.

Discussion regarding the WBA funding request addressed concerns about costs of multiple WBA events. It was noted by Councilmember Young that the Town provides Public Works, Police and Fire Department services, as well as marketing, for all of these WBA events without cost to the WBA. There was concern about the funding of a WBA position that the Town would not have any control over and it was noted that the WBA wanted to continue to hire and control their employee. Event security, access points, rules and regulations, manpower fatigue, traffic flow monitoring, footprint, and possible road closure fines from NCDOT, and parking violations were all noted as problems of concern for Town Council. Council members did understand that the WBA is having a hard time retaining a part-time position that does not provide benefits.

Manager Harris reviewed the positions that he proposes to add in the new year, including the parttime position in Finance, the fulltime Human Resources position, a fulltime Public Works stormwater position that is funding for half a year, 2 police officers, and one Water Treatment Plant Operator. There was general consensus to approve the Public Works stormwater maintenance position for a full year and to allow advertisement of these positions before July 1.

E. Updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan – Possible Adoption

Director Eller noted that the Planning Board reviewed the new version of the CLUP on March 2, 2026, and recommends Town Council consider its adoption. The public hearing was duly advertised and took place at tonight's meeting and therefore meets General Statutes compliance for adoption.

In response to Councilmember Endries question regarding public input, Assistant Manager Jackson noted that the Town Council has an annual review of the CLUP plan priority goals which may incorporate public comments into the document at that time and may include revisions into the action plan.

Motion to adopt the updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Town of Weaverville as presented and with map revisions.

[2027-4-27 Resolution Adopting Updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan.pdf](#) 

Moved by: Peter McGuire

Aye: Peter McGuire, Dee Lawrence, John Chase, Mark Endries, Jennifer Young, and Phil Barnett

Carried unanimously. 6-0

F. Code Amendment – Ch. 20 – Crypto-Mining/Data Centers

Director Eller reviewed the proposed code amendment to Chapter 20 that changed the definition of noxious uses to include crypto mining and data centers. The public hearing was duly advertised and took place at tonight's meeting and therefore meets General Statutes compliance for adoption.

There was discussion of industrial zoning districts, conditional district, and downzoning. Councilmember McGuire suggested adding the verbiage for crypto currency.

Motion to adopt the Ordinance Amending the Weaverville Town Code Chapter 20 Concerning Crypto Mining and Data Centers with “crypto currency” added into Code Sections 20-1202.

[2026-4-27 Ordinance Amending Code - Chapter 20 - Crypto Mining and Data Centers.pdf](#) 

Moved by: Jennifer Young

Aye: Peter McGuire, Dee Lawrence, John Chase, Mark Endries, Jennifer Young, and Phil Barnett

Carried unanimously. 6-0

G. Quarterly Report – Planning

Planning Director Eller reviewed the Planning Department report reflective of permits issued in January, February and March of 2026. He noted the actions of the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment activity during the same period.

An appeal of the zoning permit administrative decision was denied by the Board of Adjustment.

H. Quarterly Report – Community Center

Community Center Manager DeSerio provided the quarterly report for private rental revenues, community programming, classes, music events and storytelling, outdoor activities, and update regarding the pickleball clinic.

I. Quarterly Report – Finance

Finance Director Dozier reviewed the financial report with summaries of revenues and expenditures as of March 31st, capital project funds such as Water Treatment Plant Expansion Project, Water System Resiliency, and the Helene Disaster Recovery Response wrap-up.

11. Adjournment

There being no further business and without objection, Mayor Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 8:22 p.m.



Toman Meier
Town Clerk



Gay D. Lawrence
Mayor