

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2018
TOWN OF SAWMILLS REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
6:00 PM**

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Johnnie Greene
Clay Wilson
Keith Warren
Jeff Wilson
Rebecca Johnson
Joe Norman

STAFF PRESENT

Christopher Todd
Terry Taylor
Julie A Good

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Johnnie Greene called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION: Pastor Sam Craven gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Johnnie Greene led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPT AGENDA: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to adopt the January 16, 2018 Agenda.

Joe Norman made a motion, and Clay Wilson seconded, to adopt the January 16, 2018 Agenda. All were in favor.

APPROVE DECEMBER 19, 2017 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to approve the December 19, 2017 regular meeting minutes.

Clay Wilson made a motion, and Joe Norman seconded, to approve the December 19, 2017 regular meeting minutes. All were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked if anyone had any questions or comments at this time.

No one wished to speak.

RECOGNITIONS:

RECYCLE REWARDS WINNER: Mayor Johnnie Greene announced Ms. Amanda Perry as the January Recycle Rewards winner. A credit of thirty-two dollars (\$32.00) will be added to her sanitation bill.

No Council action was required.

DISCUSSION:

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY PRESENTATION:

The Western Piedmont Council of Governments Director, Anthony Starr, presented the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). CEDS is an important tool used to encourage and equip the region's counties and communities with strategies to improve economic conditions and the quality of life for residents.

No council action needed.

SAWMILLS FIRE DEPARTMENT WATER BILL: Mayor Johnnie Greene stated that the Sawmills Fire Department has requested that the Town Council formally address their November 2017 water and sewer bill because of a leaking commode. 59,000 (fifty-nine thousand) gallons of water passed through the meter during the month of October and the Sawmills Fire Department typically uses between 3,000 (three thousand) gallons and 5,000 (five thousand) gallons. Due to the unusually high usage, Town staff flagged the meter to be reread and Public Works Director Ronnie Coffey reread the meter on October 25, 2017. Public Works Director Ronnie Coffey noticed the meter was running, which indicated something was going on in the building, and spoke with a fireman that was on duty. Public Works Director Ronnie Coffey and the fireman found a running commode inside the building and turned the water off to that commode. Public Works Director Ronnie Coffey went back and read the meter later the day of October 25, 2017, after the commode was fixed and the meter was no longer running.

The staff's interpretation of the Town's Utility Billing Policy is that commode leaks are ineligible for a water or sewer credit. The policy currently states that, "The Town will adjust water and sewer use on bills in case of hidden underground leaks in service lines located between the meter and the house and busted or leaking pipes inside the home."

The Town Council discussed this matter during the November 2017 Town Council meeting, at which time they chose to take no action and keep the current policy.

No Council action was taken.

FIREARMS ORDINANCE: Mayor Johnnie Greene stated that the Town Council was addressed by resident Dean Hall during the regularly scheduled December 2017 public comment time period. Mr. Hall was concerned about the use of firearms near his home, due to both safety issues and the noise created from the discharge of firearms. The Town of Sawmills does have an ordinance governing the discharge of firearms within its municipal limits. Ordinance §130.04 reads “No person, except an officer in the discharge of his or her duties, shall shoot any firearms within 400 feet of a residential dwelling, except on his or her property in defense of life or property.”

During 2017 the Caldwell County Sheriff’s Department responded to thirty-three (33) discharge of firearm calls, and approximately five (5) loud noise nuisance calls related to firearms.

Currently the municipalities of Lenoir, Granite Falls and Hudson have ordinances that do not allow the discharge of firearms within their municipal limits. The Town of Sawmills ordinance was put in place in 1991 with the recognition of the rural character of the community.

No council action was taken.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jake Ramsey, property owner in the Town of Sawmills, wanted to thank everyone for all they have done for the Sawmills Café and appreciate everyone who has come out and ate there.

UPDATES:

JANUARY CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT: Town Planner Leslie M. Meadows stated that there are nine (9) code enforcement cases open:

- Teresa Annas Compton is the owner of a dilapidated house located at 4476 Sawmills School Road. An official hearing was held December 19, 2017. Ms. Compton did not attend. A Findings of Fact and Order for repair or demolish within fifteen (15) days was sent from the Town Attorney’s Office on December 21, 2017. There has been no contact from Ms. Compton. The Town can move forward with contracting out abatement efforts (demo and removal) and require reimbursement in the form of a lien on the property;
- WNC Properties, LLC owner of 4209 Creekview Pl. Minimum housing complaint. Town Planner Leslie M. Meadows stated that she needs to verify complaint before arranging site visit with Caldwell County Building Inspector Mark Annas and current resident;
- David Graham (Landlord) owner of 4176 US Highway 321A. Minimum housing complaint. Town Planner Leslie M. Meadows stated that she needs to verify complaint before arranging site visit with Caldwell County Building Inspector Mark Annas and current resident;

- Carolyn Bray/Robyn Brittan, owner of 2570 Baker Cir. Abandoned mobile home. Town Planner Leslie M. Meadows stated that she is unable to contact Ms. Brittan or an update, but financially, Ms. Brittan has stated that she cannot pay for removal or any accrued fines. A final Notice of Violation packet from the Town Attorney's office to set a hearing date will be needed before the Town can contract out the abatement efforts (demo and removal) and require reimbursement in the form of a lien on the property;
- John "Jody" McRary and neighbors, Jody Drive. Outdoor storage/junk vehicles in ROW/freight container. This is a non-conforming use, Impressive Auto, encroaching on neighborhood and blocking street for Fire & Rescue/Trash Pick-up. A code enforcement committee meeting was held on December 28, 2017 for this matter. It was decided that the Town would look into the cost of relocating the shipping container for the landowner, in order to avoid any ordinance amendments that could result in the influx of these containers in residential areas;
- Sasser Family, LLC, owner 2526 Meadows Park Lane. Minimum housing complaint. Town Planner Leslie M. Meadows stated that she needs to verify complaint before arranging site visit with Caldwell County Building Inspector Mark Annas and current resident;
- Jose Montes, owner 4321 Cherokee Court. High grass/junk vehicles. Town Planner Leslie M. Meadows stated that she spot checked property on January 4, 2018. All original junked vehicles have been removed, but a different vehicle with the hood up being worked on was in the cul-de-sac. Still no indication of progress on installation of a proper off-street driveway. Small lot size and steep slope are limiting factors. This is a possible case for code enforcement committee consideration;
- Janice Griffin, Trustee of Iona Griffin, 2148 Oaktree Ln. Abandoned, partially burned apartment building. Town Planner Leslie M. Meadows stated that she received a response from Janice Griffin's attorney stating Lewis Miller Construction is currently in the process of demolition and removal. Once clean-up is complete, permits are to be obtained to begin rebuilding. Estimated date for new construction to begin is mid-January. Town Planner Leslie M. Meadows stated she spot checked the site on January 4, 2018, and the roof/top story has been removed so far (there is photo documentation) and Town Planner Leslie M. Meadows will continue to monitor;
- Jeremiah Taylor, owner of 4190 Duff Dr. Junked vehicles/outdoor storage/overgrown vegetation. Town Planner Leslie M. Meadows stated she spot checked and sent a Notice of Violation Letter on December 28, 2017, with a deadline of January 16, 2018. Town Planner Leslie M. Meadows stated that the owner contacted her on January 4, 2018, and agreed to begin trying to relocate the two (2) junked vehicles. The truck needs work to reattach to the frame before it can be moved. The family has just recently moved and is still using the property for storage. Homeowner stated that the intent is to eventually clean up and sale the property (Town Planner Leslie M. Meadows has photo documentation and will continue to monitor).

No Council action was required.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE: Town Administrator Christopher Todd stated that Town Council had applied for two (2) grants for a GIS inspired project (one grant for water and the other for sewer) that would put water and sewer lines on a GIS site. The date has been pushed back for the grant awards until March.

Town Administrator Christopher Todd stated that the Town is continuing to work on the Virginia Acres sewer project. Letters went out for surveying to be done and then easements will need to be signed. Town Administrator Christopher Todd also stated that there have been very positive reactions to the project overall so far with some minor concerns of where the lines were going to be placed.

Town Administrator Christopher Todd stated that the Horseshoe Bend waterline extension project is getting close to be completed. The project has approximately two (2) more weeks, weather permitting. Town Administrator Christopher Todd stated that the contractor has done a very good job and not had to take Public Works employees away from their normal job.

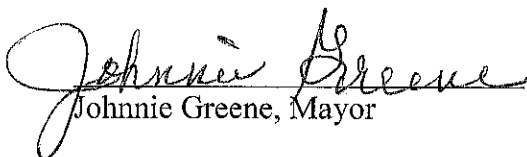
COUNCIL COMMENT: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked if anyone on the Council had any questions or comments at this time.

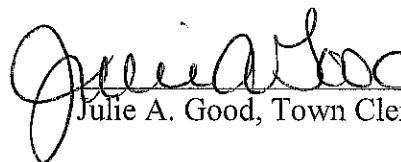
Jeff Wilson stayed he hoped everyone had a good night.

Mayor Johnnie Greene wanted to thank everyone for coming out and thank Council for a good job.

COUNCIL ADJOURN: Mayor Johnnie Greene asked for a motion to adjourn.

Jeff Wilson made a motion, and Joe Norman seconded, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.


Johnnie Greene, Mayor


Julie A. Good, Town Clerk

