



# Town of Mars Hill

## MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN

John L. Chandler  
*Mayor*  
Nicholas A. Honeycutt  
*Vice-Mayor*  
Robert W. Zink  
*Treasurer*  
Stuart L. Jolley  
*Clerk*  
Larry H. Davis  
*Secretary*

### MINUTES SPECIAL MEETING Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School 225 Mount Olive Drive, Mars Hill, NC February 17, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

The Town of Mars Hill Mayor and Board of Aldermen met in special session on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School located at 225 Mount Olive Drive, Mars Hill, NC. This meeting was held to conduct the regular business meeting for February and receive an update from the Friends of the Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School. This meeting was rescheduled due to inclement weather and notice was published as required by NC General Statute 160A-71 and 143-318.12(b)(2). (Attachment A)

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor John Chandler; Aldermen Larry Davis, Nicholas Honeycutt, Stuart Jolley, and Robert W. (Bob) Zink.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Nathan R. Bennett, Town Manager; Larry Leake, Town Attorney; and Chad Wilson, Police Chief

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Johnny Casey, Madison News-Record & Sentinel; Willa Wyatt, Ray Rapp, Dorothy Rapp, Ryan Bell, Courtney Phillips, and other members of the general public.

#### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor John Chandler. Mayor Chandler thanked the Friends of the Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School for the invitation to hold this meeting with them. He welcomed those in attendance.

#### Approval of the Agenda

Mayor Chandler asked the Board to review the proposed agenda for approval. Upon review of the agenda, Mayor Chandler called for a motion. **Alderman Nicholas Honeycutt made a motion that the agenda be approved as presented.** Alderman Bob Zink seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the agenda was unanimously approved. (Attachment B)

#### Approval of Minutes

Mayor Chandler then asked the Board to review the minutes of the regular meeting held on January 5, 2026. There being no modifications to the minutes, **Alderman Stuart Jolley made a motion that the minutes for January 5, 2026, be approved as presented by management.** Alderman Larry Davis seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the minutes were unanimously approved.

#### Old Business

Mayor Chandler then moved to address old business. There was no old business.

### New Business

Mayor Chandler then moved to address new business.

### PRESENTATION – Friends of the Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School

Mayor Chandler recognized Willa Wyatt to provide a presentation of activities and other information regarding the Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School. Ms. Wyatt expressed appreciation on behalf of the Friends of the Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen for choosing to come to the School to hold this meeting every year during Black History Month. Mrs. Wyatt stated “that means a lot to us,” and they look forward to this meeting each year. Mrs. Wyatt provided a list of the folks who have visited the school and a summary of activities of the past year. She stated it has been an exciting year and they welcomed many guests, including NC State Superintendent of Public Instruction Mo Green, along with Madison County Superintendent Dr. Will Hoffman and the Madison County Schools Leadership Team. Mrs. Wyatt advised the school is getting a lot of use with visits from numerous school groups, colleges and universities (Mars Hill University & Western Carolina University, as well as numerous community groups, boards, and committees.

Mrs. Wyatt stated that the Friends have big plans and look forward to future activities. As the inside of the building is finished, their attention is now turning to improvements to the exterior of the building. These improvements include the installation of guttering, additional parking spaces, paving the driveway, pouring a concrete floor for the crawl space, and painting the exterior of the building, among other important maintenance projects. Mrs. Wyatt advised that the building will turn 100 years old in 2028, so they will be doing lots of things over the next two years to get ready to celebrate that event. Mrs. Wyatt also discussed plans to establish the “Long Ridge Historical Trail.” This trail will connect Mount Olive Church, Mount Olive Cemetery, and the Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School with signage and information kiosk at the 141 Long Ridge Road lot to welcome visitors to this important community. They plan many events from February to September 2028 to celebrate and she will come to the Board for help. Mrs. Wyatt stated that from the very beginning the Town of Mars Hill has been very supportive of this work and appreciates all the Town has done.

Mayor Chandler thanked Mrs. Wyatt for her presentation. He acknowledged that the Friends have been very busy this year and have accomplished a lot for the community. Mayor Chandler stated he looks forward to those celebratory events, the continued good work here at the school and Long Ridge community and the Town will continue to provide support.

### RESOLUTION – “Black History Month”

Mayor Chandler addressed the resolution designating February as “Black History Month.” Mayor Chandler recognized Mr. Bennett to present the resolution for Board consideration. Mr. Bennett read the resolution proclaiming and celebrating February 2026 as Black History Month in the Town of Mars Hill. Further, the resolution encourages all Mars Hill citizens to recognize, celebrate, and expand their knowledge of the history, culture, legacy, struggles, and achievements of African Americans. Upon completion of discussion, Mayor Chandler called for a motion. **Alderman Jolley made a motion to approve the “RESOLUTION – BLACK HISTORY MONTH,” as presented.** Alderman Honeycutt seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote by the Mayor, the motion was unanimously approved. (Attachment C)

### Town Manager Report – Nathan Bennett, Town Manager

Mayor Chandler then recognized Mr. Bennett to provide the Town Manager Report.

### Winter Storm Fern

Mr. Bennett provided information regarding Winter Storm Fern, a predicted major storm with devastating ice and snow accumulations for our area during the period of January 24 to January 26, 2026. Mr. Bennett advised pursuant to statutory authority granted to the Mayor, that Mayor Chandler issued a Proclamation declaring a Local State of Emergency on January 23, 2026. This proclamation authorized certain measures that were necessary to ensure the protection and safety of Town of Mars Hill residents and to coordinate the emergency response among town, county, and state officials. Thankfully, the storm was not as severe as expected, however, all town public works and public safety personnel worked throughout the period ensuring safe travel and response to calls for service. Mayor Chandler issued a Proclamation Terminating the Local State of Emergency on January 27, 2026. Mr. Bennett requested the Board consider a vote to ratify this state of emergency actions by the Mayor and enter these proclamations into these minutes. Upon completion of discussion, Mayor Chandler called for a motion. **Alderman Jolley made a motion to ratify the “PROCLAMATION – LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY,” and the “PROCLAMATION – TERMINATING LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY” for the Town of Mars Hill as presented.** Alderman Honeycutt seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote by the Mayor, the motion was unanimously approved. (Attachment D)

Mr. Bennett advised the Board that a second storm occurred the following weekend from January 31 to February 2, 2026. This storm did produce significant accumulation of snow but did not severely impact the power grid or other utilities in the Town’s jurisdiction. Mr. Bennett advised that Town personnel worked around the clock clearing snow and ensuring the safety of our residents. Mayor Chandler stated all town personnel did a fabulous job and appreciated all their hard work.

### Curbside Yard Waste Program

Mr. Bennett advised the Board that the Town contractor responsible for collection and disposal of residential yard waste had retired and ended his service to the Town effective December 31, 2025. He stated that the contractor did not give any prior notice to the Town. Mr. Bennett advised the Board that if it is the pleasure of the Board, he will solicit proposals from other area landscaping businesses to continue this service for residents. The consensus of the Board was to continue the residential yard waste program and authorize the town manager to obtain proposals from potential vendors. Mr. Bennett stated he will work to bring this back to the Board as soon as possible for further consideration and action.

### General Update

Mr. Bennett advised the Board that McGill Associates Engineers has completed the engineering and design plans for the Calvin Edney Road/Exit 11 Water and Wastewater Extension Project. This project is funded by grants from the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Dogwood Health Trust. Mr. Bennett advised the request for bids for project construction was released to the public on February 13, 2026. Bids will be opened on March 10, 2026, at the Town Hall Conference Room. Once bids are verified, a recommendation will be made to the Board for award of the construction contract.

Pursuant to the Boards discussion with the fire chief and police chief at the January meeting, Mr. Bennett advised that utility task vehicles (UTV) have been purchased for the fire, police, and public works departments. Town staff are very excited to have these additional tools to assist them with their work. Mr. Bennett also advised the Board that the light tower discussed in January, purchased in part with a grant from the N.C. League of Municipalities, was delivered to the Town today. Mr. Bennett also discussed with the Board potential management options of the Town recreational swimming pool for the upcoming summer, including a private pool management company and the continuation of direct town management. Mr. Bennett advised he is reviewing opportunities and will return to the Board with more information for further discussion and consideration.

Mr. Bennett provided the Board with a summary of other activities, ongoing projects, and items of interest to the Board. Mayor Chandler thanked Mr. Bennett for his report.

**Public Comment**

Mayor Chandler then moved to public comment. Mayor Chandler recognized Ray Rapp. Mr. Rapp thanked Mr. Bennett and all the town crews for the great job clearing the roads during the recent winter storms. He also complimented the staff the town has, particularly the sanitation crews, and others, who are always friendly and very pleasant with every interaction when you deal with town employees. Mr. Rapp asked Mr. Bennett to share his sentiments with the staff. Mr. Rapp also stated he appreciated the hard work and dedication of the employees of French Broad Electric. Mr. Rapp stated they did a fantastic job through the storms as well, and he asked Mayor Chandler to pass his thanks on to those at French Broad. Mayor Chandler thanked Mr. Rapp for his comments and advised he will share his comments with French Broad.

Mayor Chandler then recognized Courtney Phillips. Ms. Phillips stated she is the market manager for the Mars Hill Farmers and Artisans Market. She provided a summary of the activities of the market, including various payment options such as SNAP, EBT, WIC, the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Vouchers, and other payment programs. Ms. Phillips advised the market operates from the first Saturday in April through the end of October. Last year was a very good year and they are excited for another great year. Mayor Chandler thanked Ms. Phillips for her comments.

Mayor Chandler then recognized Ryan Bell who provided information regarding the First Fridays events. He stated the Madison County Tourism Development Authority approved grant funding for First Fridays operational costs as he discussed with the Board at the January meeting. Mr. Bell stated he read the great letter provided by the Town Manager in support of First Fridays and looks forward to another great year. Mr. Bell stated he appreciated the Town's support, and they will get started with the first Friday in April. Mayor Chandler thanked Mr. Bell for his comments.

**Closed Session (Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) & (4))**

There was no closed session.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business before the Board, Mayor Chandler called for a motion to adjourn. **Alderman Zink made a motion to adjourn.** Alderman Jolley seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the motion to adjourn was unanimously approved.

Approved and authenticated this the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of March, 2026.

ATTEST:



Nathan R. Bennett,  
Town Manager

  
John L. Chandler, Mayor



Notice of Special Meeting for Regular Meeting  
of the  
Town of Mars Hill  
Mayor and Board of Aldermen  
Scheduled for 17 February 2026

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Mars Hill Mayor and Board of Aldermen shall, pursuant to NC Gen. Stat. 160A-71 and NC Gen. Stat. 143-318.12(b)(2), hold a special meeting at the following designated place and time:

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, 17 February 2026

Time of Meeting: 6:00 p.m.

Place of Meeting: Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School  
225 Mount Olive Drive  
Mars Hill, North Carolina

Purpose of Meeting: The Mayor and Board of Aldermen will meet in collaboration with the Friends of Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School to receive an update on the activities and initiatives related to the school and related purposes; and, to conduct the regular meeting business agenda for the month of February. This meeting location change was approved by unanimous vote of the Board and announced to the public at the regular meeting on January 5, 2026. This meeting is rescheduled from the previously established date of February 2, 2026 due to inclement weather on that date.

This the 10<sup>th</sup> day of February 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
/s/  
John L. Chandler, Mayor

Posted as required by NC Gen. Stat. 160A-71 and NC Gen. Stat. 143-318.12(b)(2) on this 10<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2026 at 10:00 o'clock a.m.

  
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Nathan R. Bennett, Town Manager



ATTACHMENT B

# Town of Mars Hill

MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN

John L. Chandler  
*Mayor*  
Nicholas A. Honeycutt  
*Vice-Mayor*  
Robert W. Zink  
*Treasurer*  
Stuart L. Jolley  
*Clerk*  
Larry H. Davis  
*Secretary*

## AGENDA

### REGULAR MEETING

Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School  
225 Mount Olive Drive, Mars Hill, NC  
February 17, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order – Mayor John L. Chandler
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes: January 5, 2026 – Regular Meeting
4. Old Business
5. New Business
  - a. **PRESENTATION** – Friends of the Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School – Willa Wyatt
  - b. **RESOLUTION** – “Black History Month”
6. Town Manager Report – Nathan Bennett, Town Manager
  - a. Winter Storm Fern – State of Emergency (January 23-27, 2026)
  - b. Curbside Yard Waste Program
  - c. General Update
7. Public Comment  
[Policy: Each speaker shall be limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes. The public comment period is not intended to require the Board of Aldermen or staff to answer any impromptu questions. The Board will not take action on an item presented during the public comment period. The Board may refer inquiries made during the public comment period to the Town Manager to address as appropriate. If necessary, the item may be placed on the agenda of a future meeting.]
8. Closed Session (*Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)*)
9. Adjourn

### Mars Hill Town Hall

280 North Main Street • P.O. Box 368  
Mars Hill, North Carolina 28754  
Phone: (828) 689-2301 • Fax: (828) 689-3333



# Town of Mars Hill

## RESOLUTION

### BLACK HISTORY MONTH

**WHEREAS**, each year the month of February is designated as Black History Month in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, Black history is American history, and Black History Month offers an opportunity to recognize the remarkable contributions of African Americans to the nation; and

**WHEREAS**, celebrating Black History Month allows all residents to learn, understand, and appreciate the diverse history that strengthens our community; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Mars Hill is committed to recognizing and celebrating the achievements and contributions made by African Americans to Mars Hill's economic, cultural, and spiritual development.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen for the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina, **IT IS RESOLVED**:

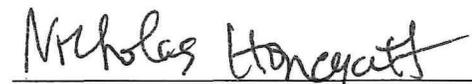
- Section 1.** The Town of Mars Hill proclaims and celebrates February 2026 as Black History Month.
- Section 2.** The Town of Mars Hill encourages all citizens to recognize, celebrate, and expand their knowledge of the history, culture, legacy, struggles and achievements of African Americans.
- Section 3.** This Resolution shall be effective immediately.

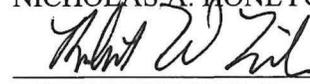
**ADOPTED** this 17<sup>th</sup> day of February 2026, by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen for the Town of Mars Hill.

  
 JOHN L. CHANDLER, Mayor

  
 STUART L. JOLLEY, Clerk

  
 LARRY H. DAVIS, Secretary

  
 NICHOLAS A. HONEYCUTT, Vice-Mayor

  
 ROBERT W. ZINK, Treasurer





# Town of Mars Hill

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*Clerk*  
Larry H. Davis  
*Secretary*

## PROCLAMATION LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY

**WHEREAS**, current weather forecasts indicate that a winter storm is anticipated to arrive in western North Carolina on or about January 24, 2026, causing serious impacts on the Town of Mars Hill; and

**WHEREAS**, the projected winter storm will likely cause damage to public and private property and could seriously disrupt essential utility services and systems; and

**WHEREAS**, certain measures are necessary to ensure the protection and safety of Town of Mars Hill residents and to coordinate the emergency response among town, county, and state officials; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 21, 2026, Governor Josh Stein issued Executive Order 31 declaring a State of Emergency for the State of North Carolina, and likewise, Madison County declared a Local State of Emergency for said County based on the potential for significant impacts to public and private property from the winter storm; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Mars Hill has authority pursuant to N.C. General Statute 166A-19.22 to declare a town-wide State of Emergency and that authority has been vested in the Mayor.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, by the authority vested in me by the laws of the State of North Carolina as Mayor of the Town of Mars Hill, **IT IS ORDERED**:

### **Section 1. State of Emergency**

I hereby proclaim and declare a State of Emergency as defined in N.C. General Statute 166A-19.3(6) and N.C. General Statute 166A-19.3(19) exists for the Town of Mars Hill due to the impact from the impending winter storm.

### **Section 2. County Emergency Declaration**

The Town of Mars Hill, pursuant to N.C. General Statute 166A-19.22(b)(2), further consents to extending the Declaration of a Local State of Emergency as may be issued by Madison County to the entirety of the Town of Mars Hill.

### **Section 4. Term and Future Modifications**

The State of Emergency declared herein shall continue until it is expressly rescinded. The provisions of this Proclamation may be amended by the issuance of subsequent proclamations as conditions warrant.

### **Section 5. Dissemination**

The Town directs that copies of the Proclamation be disseminated to the mass communications media for publication and broadcast, and that a copy of this Proclamation be posted at Town Hall and other Town-owned buildings as appropriate.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina to be affixed this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January 2026, at 3:00 p.m.

Attest:

  
NATHAN R. BENNETT, Town Manager



  
JOHN L. CHANDLER, Mayor



# Town of Mars Hill

MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN

John L. Chandler  
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Nicholas A. Honeycutt  
*Vice-Mayor*  
Robert W. Zink  
*Treasurer*  
Stuart L. Jolley  
*Clerk*  
Larry H. Davis  
*Secretary*

## PROCLAMATION TERMINATING LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY

**WHEREAS**, on January 23, 2026, I determined the existence of a local state of emergency in the Town of Mars Hill from the forecast winter storm; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 23, 2026, I proclaimed a Local State of Emergency for the Town of Mars Hill due to the potential for significant impacts to public and private property from the anticipated winter storm; and

**WHEREAS**, I have determined that a State of Emergency no longer exists in the Town of Mars Hill.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, by the authority vested in me by the laws of the State of North Carolina as Mayor of the Town of Mars Hill, **IT IS ORDERED**:

**Section 1. Termination of Local State of Emergency**

The proclamation of a Local State of Emergency and all of the restrictions and orders therein is hereby terminated.

**Section 2. Effective Date of Termination**

The termination of the Local State of Emergency is effective immediately.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina to be affixed this 27<sup>th</sup> day of January 2026, at 3:00 p.m.

  
JOHN L. CHANDLER  
Mayor

Attest:

  
NATHAN R. BENNETT,  
Town Manager

