



# 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 REGULAR MEETING Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School 225 Mount Olive Drive, Mars Hill, NC February 5, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

The Town of Mars Hill Mayor and Board of Aldermen met in regular session on Monday, February 5, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School, located at 225 Mount Olive Drive, Mars Hill, N.C., pursuant to action taken at the January 8, 2024, regular meeting, and subsequent published notice given as required by NC Gen. Stat. 160A-71 and NC Gen. Stat. 143-318.12(b)(2). (Attachment A)

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

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Johnny Casey, Madison News-Record & Sentinel, Willa Wyatt, David Wyatt, Ray Rapp, Dorothy Rapp, Faye Chandler, Brad Guth, Jonathan McCoy, Ryan Bell, Steven Subera, Laurie Seleski, and other members of the general public

#### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor John Chandler. Mayor Chandler welcomed those in attendance and thanked the Friend of the Anderson Rosenwald School for the invitation to hold this meeting at their facility.

#### **Approval of the Agenda**

Mayor Chandler then asked the Board to review the proposed agenda for approval. Upon review of the agenda, Mayor Chandler called for a motion. **Alderman Bob Zink made a motion that the agenda be approved as presented.** Alderman Stuart Jolley 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 8, 2024. There being no modifications to the minutes, **Alderman Stuart Jolley made a motion that the minutes for January 8, 2024, 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 then recognized Willa Wyatt, chairperson of the Friends of the Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School for a presentation regarding the ongoing activities of the school. Mrs. Wyatt thanked the Board for holding these meetings at the School each year. She also thanked the Board for installation of directional signage from Main Street to guide visitors to the Anderson Rosenwald School. Mrs. Wyatt read and presented the Town a poem written by former Mars Hill Mayor Ralph M. Lee entitled “Our Town.” Mayor Chandler and Board members thanked Mrs. Wyatt for the poem and are excited to place it in Town Hall for others to see. Mrs. Wyatt then reported on other meetings and activities at the school including upcoming meetings of the Chamber of Commerce and Land of Sky Regional Council, as well as monthly Friends meetings. She stated that a fundraiser last year consisting of the artwork of community resident, the late Charity Ray, raised funds for both the School and the Chairity Ray Scholarship at Mars Hill University (MHU). In addition, a framed picture created by Charity Ray will be placed in the Nash Hall Education Department. Mrs. Wyatt stated in celebration of Black History Month, the Friends will host genealogy training programs on February 17 and 25, 2024, by Dan Slagle designed to guide participants on how to research the history of Madison County Black families using census data. She further stated that the Anderson Rosenwald School, and others, are getting national attention in part due to the effort to create a new national park in Chicago recognizing the importance of the schools and the work and financial investment of Julius Rosenwald to create them in support of African American education, primarily in the southern United States. Mrs. Wyatt advised that less than 10% of approximately 5,000 of these schools remain.

Mrs. Wyatt thanked the Board for all they have done to support the work of the Friends to preserve this special School. She also thanked Ray and Dorothy Rapp and Alderman Bob Zink for their hard work for the School. Mayor Chandler thanked Mrs. Wyatt and the Friends for inviting the Board and for the great presentation.

### **PRESENTATION – “Strengthening Our Bonds as Neighbors”**

Mayor Chandler then recognized Mr. Jonathan McCoy, MHU history professor and Director of the MHU Center for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, for a presentation of the board resolution approved in 2021 regarding “Strengthening Our Bonds as Neighbors.” He stated that great things can be accomplished when neighbors and communities come together to help one another. Mr. McCoy stated that the annual Soup Supper fundraiser for the Mt. Olive Church Cemetery maintenance and preservation fund is this Wednesday, February 7, 2024. He invited everyone to participate in this special event for the community. Mr. McCoy stated that the story of the contributions of African Americans to the community must be told. Mr. McCoy thanked the Board for that resolution and the attention it has brought to the subject. Mayor Chandler thanked Mr. McCoy for his presentation.

### **RESOLUTION – “Black History Month”**

Mayor Chandler the recognized Town Manager Nathan Bennett to present a draft resolution recognizing and proclaiming February 2024 as “Black History Month” in Mars Hill, N.C. Mr. Bennett read the resolution aloud for the Board and public in attendance. The resolution notes the month of February is designated as Black History month in the United States to recognize the heritage and achievements of African Americans and to enhance knowledge of African American history. The resolution states that the Town of Mars Hill has committed to enhancing the quality of life for all residents by taking policy action to support and promote racial and ethnic equality throughout our community. The resolution resolves that the Town of Mars Hill proclaims and celebrates February 2024 as Black History Month, and that 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. Following comments of support by Board members and upon completing discussion of the resolution by the Board, Mayor Chandler called for a motion. **Alderman Jolley made a motion to approve the “RESOLUTION – BLACK HISTORY MONTH” as presented.** Alderman Zink seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote by the Mayor, the motion was unanimously approved. The resolution is incorporated as a part of these minutes as an attachment. (Attachment C)

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

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

#### **NCDOT – NC 213 Corridor Landscaping Plan**

Mr. Bennett provided an update on the corridor landscaping improvement project for NC 213 & I-26 Exit 11 that the NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is preparing in coordination with the Town of Mars Hill. The project consists of “gateway” welcome to Mars Hill signage at interchange locations, new shrub and tree plantings at select locations along the NC 213 corridor to the Main Street intersections, including the slope adjacent to Ingles, and replacement of other deteriorated trees from a previous project many years ago. Mr. Bennett states he and town staff have surveyed the area with NCDOT planners and highway roadside enhancement engineers to develop the scope of work. The Town is awaiting the final scope of work and a maintenance agreement from NCDOT, together with a proposed installation date, which is expected for this fall. Alderman Jolley comment on the scope of the project history and process and thanked Mr. Bennett for his hard work on this project with NCDOT and looks forward to getting this project to implementation. Mr. Bennett advised he will update the Board as the project moves forward.

#### **NCDOT – Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan**

Mr. Bennett advised the Board he applied for an NCDOT grant in Spring 2023 to create a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to guide project development in Town considering those modes of transportation. He stated the Town’s current pedestrian plan is from 2007, and the Town has never had a bicycle plan. Mr. Bennett stated that NCDOT awarded the Town a grant in August 2023 to complete a consolidated comprehensive bicycle & pedestrian plan. NCDOT will conduct the planning process using a private transportation planning and consultant firm from Durham called McAdams. The proposed scope of work has been developed and a contract will be drafted by NCDOT for the firm to begin the work. The Town will appoint a stakeholder committee of residents to provide guidance on our community needs and desires as the plan is developed. The final plan will be brought before this Board for final approval when complete. The planning process period is expected to be about 12 months once a start date is established by NCDOT and McAdams. Mr. Bennett stated he will update the Board as the project is further developed.

#### **General Update**

Mr. Bennett stated he had no other items to discuss at this time.

#### **Public Comment**

Mayor Chandler then moved to public comment. The Mayor recognized Ms. Laurie Seleski who spoke about the need for an additional crosswalk on Bailey Street at MHU Chambers Gym and Pool from the parking lot across the street. Mr. Bennett advised that Bailey Street is an NCDOT street and would be the entity to make a determination regarding that matter and he will discuss it with NCDOT, particularly in light of the pending bridge replacement at that location next year. In addition, Ms. Seleski stated she would like to see alcohol sales expanded to include the sale of liquor and mixed beverages, and the question on the ballot in November. Mayor

Chandler advised her to contract the Madison County Board of Elections to discuss the statutory petition process to place such a question on the ballot. The Mayor and Board members thanked Ms. Seleski for her comments.

Mayor Chandler then recognized Ray Rapp who spoke about the preservation of the Anderson Rosenwald School. Mr. Rapp thanked the Board for coming here and being interested in the history, preservation, and future opportunities of the School. Mr. Rapp commented on how well known the Mars Hill school has become, both locally and nationally, as the Anderson Rosenwald School has appeared in national literature promoting the establishment of a national park recognizing the importance of Julius Rosenwald was for educational advancement of African Americans. Mr. Rapp particularly commented on the hard work of Willa Wyatt to guide the efforts of the Friends to save this local treasure. The Mayor and Board thanked Mr. Rapp for his comments.

There being no additional public comments, Mayor Chandler closed the public comment period.

Mayor Chandler reminded everyone of the soup supper fundraiser for the Mt. Olive Church Cemetery maintenance and preservation fund this Wednesday, February 7, 2024.

### **Recess Regular Meeting**

Mayor Chandler thanked everyone for attending the meeting and specifically thanked the Friends of the Anderson Rosenwald School for the invitation to hold this meeting at this special location. At this point in the meeting, the Mayor announced that the Board had items to discuss in closed session, and in the interest of time and convenience of the Friends of the Anderson Rosenwald School, the Mayor stated the Board would recess the meeting to reconvene this evening at the Mars Hill Town Hall. Mayor Chandler called for a motion to recess the meeting. **Alderman Jolley made a motion to recess this meeting, to reconvene this date, February 5, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. at the Mars Hill Town Hall Conference Room.** Alderman Zink seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was recessed at 6:42 p.m.

### **Reconvene Regular Meeting**

The Mayor and Board of Aldermen assembled at the Mars Hill Town Hall, this date, February 5, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. as previously announced. Mayor Chandler reconvened the February 5, 2024, regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the Mars Hill Town Hall Conference Room as designated.

### **Closed Session (Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11)**

Mayor Chandler announced there were personnel items to discuss in closed session. **Alderman Zink made a motion to enter closed session to discuss personnel pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(6) and an honorary award pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(2).** Alderman Jolley seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the motion was unanimously approved.

### ***CLOSED SESSION***

Upon completion of discussion of the matters subject to the closed session, Mayor Chandler called for a motion to return to open session. **Alderman Zink made a motion that the Board end the closed session and return to open session.** Alderman Davis seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the motion was unanimously approved.



**Open Session**


Upon return to open session, Mayor Chandler announced the Board would take actions subject to the closed session. Mayor Chandler stated that the Board discussed the performance of the Town Manager and determined a salary increase commensurate for additional responsibilities for the Town Manager. **Mayor Chandler made a motion to authorize a salary increase of \$5,000/per annum for additional responsibilities for Nathan Bennett, Town Manager.** Alderman Zink seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the motion was unanimously approved.


Mayor Chandler then announced the Board discussed an honorary award for William “Bill” Zink in recognition of his public service upon his retirement as a local business owner later this month. Mr. Bennett read the draft resolution, which states in part that William “Bill” Zink devoted himself to the highest standards of professionalism and excellence in public service to the Town as a valuable member of the Mars Hill Fire Department serving as a volunteer for 50 years in various roles such as firefighter, training officer, captain, assistant and deputy chief; and, Mr. Zink has likewise been a valuable member of the Town of Mars Hill business community as owner and operator of Zink Outdoor Power Equipment since 1986 and until his formal retirement in February 2024. The resolution resolves in part, that the Mayor and Board of Aldermen recognize and thank Mr. William “Bill” Zink for his excellence in public service to the Citizens of the Town of Mars Hill through his thoughtful and dedicated volunteer commitment to the Mars Hill, Madison County, and regional fire service; and, are grateful to Mr. Zink for his contributions as a business owner and entrepreneur, providing economic investment in the Town of Mars Hill and providing important services to the Citizens of the Town of Mars Hill; and, **the Mayor and Board of Aldermen hereby proclaim February 24, 2024, as “WILLIAM “BILL” ZINK DAY” in the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina.** Following comments of support and appreciation by Mayor Chandler and Board members and upon completing discussion of the resolution by the Board, Mayor Chandler called for a motion. **Alderman Davis made a motion to approve the “RESOLUTION – RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC SERVICE TO THE TOWN OF MARS HILL – WILLIAM “BILL” ZINK,” as presented.** Alderman Jolley seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote by the Mayor, the motion was unanimously approved. The resolution is incorporated as a part of these minutes as an attachment. (Attachment D)

**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 4<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2024.

  
John L. Chandler, Mayor

ATTEST:   
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 5, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.*

1. Call to Order – Mayor John L. Chandler
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes: January 8, 2024 Regular Meeting
4. Old Business
5. New Business
  - a. **PRESENTATION** – Friends of the Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School – Willa Wyatt
  - b. **PRESENTATION** – “Strengthening Our Bonds as Neighbors” – Jonathan McCoy, Director, MHU Center for Diversity Equity & Inclusion
  - c. **RESOLUTION** – “Black History Month”
6. Town Manager Report – Nathan Bennett, Town Manager
  - a. NCDOT – NC 213 Corridor Landscaping Plan
  - b. NCDOT – Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan
  - 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 – if needed*)
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, also known as African American History Month, in the United States, to recognize the heritage and achievements of African Americans and to enhance knowledge of African American history; and

**WHEREAS**, Black History Month is a time for all Citizens of Mars Hill to remember the contributions and legacy of those who helped build our nation, fought against prejudice to secure lives of dignity and opportunity for all our citizens, advanced the cause of civil rights for all Americans, and strengthened our families and communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Mars Hill, by prior resolution, has committed to enhancing the quality of life for all residents by taking policy actions to support and promote racial and ethnic equality throughout 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 2024 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 5<sup>th</sup> day of February 2024, 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

## RESOLUTION

### RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC SERVICE TO THE TOWN OF MARS HILL

### WILLIAM "BILL" ZINK

**WHEREAS**, William "Bill" Zink joined the Mars Hill Fire Department in 1970 and served until retirement, receiving his 50-year service award from the fire service in 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Zink devoted himself to the highest standards of professionalism and excellence in public service to the Town as a valuable member of the Mars Hill Fire Department, serving in various roles such as firefighter, training officer, captain, assistant and deputy chief; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Zink has likewise been a valuable member of the Town of Mars Hill business community as owner and operator of Zink Outdoor Power Equipment since 1986 and until his formal retirement in February 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Zink has served in countless volunteer roles in and around the Town of Mars Hill, and has been a tireless advocate of progress for the entire community; and

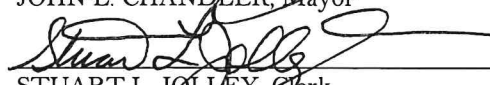
**WHEREAS**, because of the many important contributions that Mr. William "Bill" Zink has made to the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina, he deserves special recognition.

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

- Section 1.** The Mayor and Board of Aldermen recognize and thank Mr. William "Bill" Zink for his excellence in public service to the Citizens of the Town of Mars Hill through his thoughtful and dedicated volunteer commitment to the Mars Hill, Madison County, and regional fire service.
- Section 2.** The Mayor and Board of Aldermen are grateful to Mr. Zink for his contributions as a business owner and entrepreneur, providing economic investment in the Town of Mars Hill and providing important services to the Citizens of the Town of Mars Hill.
- Section 3.** The Mayor and Board of Aldermen extend best wishes for his retirement and all future endeavors.
- Section 4.** The Mayor and Board of Aldermen hereby proclaim February 24, 2024, as "WILLIAM "BILL" ZINK DAY" in the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina.
- Section 5.** This Resolution shall be effective immediately.

**ADOPTED** this 5<sup>th</sup> day of February 2024, by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen for the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina.

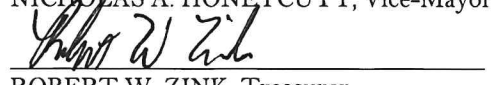
  
JOHN L. CHANDLER, Mayor

  
STUART L. JOLLEY, Clerk

  
LARRY H. DAVIS, Secretary



  
NICHOLAS A. HONEYCUTT, Vice-Mayor

  
ROBERT W. ZINK, Treasurer