



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 Town Hall – Conference Room October 2, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

The Town of Mars Hill Mayor and Board of Aldermen met in regular session on Monday, October 2, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the Mars Hill Town Hall.

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

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Regina Brzycki, Sebastian Dunn, 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.

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 Larry Davis seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the agenda was approved unanimously. (Attachment A)

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Chandler then asked the Board to review the minutes of the regular meeting held September 11, 2023 and the emergency special meeting held on September 19, 2023. There being no modifications to the minutes, **Alderman Davis made a motion that the minutes for the September 11, 2023, regular meeting and the September 19, 2023, emergency special meeting, be approved as presented by management.** Alderman Honeycutt seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the minutes were approved unanimously.

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.

Fire Truck Purchase Authority – Brush Truck

Mayor Chandler recognized Town Manager Nathan Bennett to provide information regarding purchase authority for a replacement brush truck for the fire department. Mr. Bennett reminded the Board that the fire chief noted during his September presentation to the Board that the fire department had identified the need to replace one of the brush trucks. The fire chief has advised Mr. Bennett that as the department has sought potential vehicles to purchase, due to the limited stock of vehicles the time perspective vehicles remain on the market is incredibly short making it difficult to wait for a Board meeting to receive purchase authority for vehicles. Mr. Bennett recommended the Board grant the town manager and fire chief authority to enter into a purchase agreement for a fire department brush truck chassis up to \$75,000.00 consistent with state procurement guidelines. In response to a question from Alderman Honeycutt, Mr. Bennett advised the Board that the purchase of the vehicle will come from fire district revenues and reserve funds. Alderman Bob Zink asked if the bed and equipment from the current brush truck would be reused on the new vehicle. Mr. Bennett advised that the department expects the existing bed and equipment will be repurposed on the new vehicle if possible. Upon completion of discussion, Mayor Chandler called for a motion. **Alderman Honeycutt made a motion to grant the town manager and fire chief authorization up to \$75,000 to purchase a new brush truck for the fire department as presented.** Alderman Stuart Jolley seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote by the Mayor, the motion was approved unanimously.

Town Manager Report – Nathan Bennett, Town Manager

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

General Update

Mr. Bennett provided a general update on Town operations and projects. He reported that a request for bids was released today regarding the Smith Farm PARTF grant improvement project. Mr. Bennett advised that the town is seeking a general contractor to perform the grading and other activities at the property as previously discussed as part of the PARTF grant received from the state. Mr. Bennett advised he has a list of approximately ten general contractors from the immediate area that he will provide the bid documents to as well as advertise on the town website and the engineer's website. There will be a virtual pre-bid conference held on October 10, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. to answer questions from potential bidders and provide other information as appropriate. Bids are due at Town Hall at 3:00 p.m. on October 26, 2023, to be opened at a public meeting.

Mr. Bennett advised that he had followed up on items from the last meeting including the following: preparing a grant budget amendment to the N.C. Department of Commerce to request remaining funds in the Robinson building RTG grant be used for stabilization, abatement, and clearing functions; executed the agreement with Land of Sky Regional Council to provide technical services in developing the North Main Street Small Area Plan as noted in the second RTG grant, with scheduling of initial meetings with subject area property owners and stakeholders for the coming weeks; executed the agreement with OnSolve CodeRED for the citizen notification system to deliver emergency and non-emergency notifications to town residents who register for the system, with a kickoff meeting with the consultant scheduled for October 4, 2023 to begin work; the notice to proceed on the Woodhaven Lift Station Improvements Project has been executed and delivered to the engineering firm and work is being finalized on the contract documents with TP Howard Plumbing Co.

Mr. Bennett reported that the property tax scroll was received last week from the Madison County Tax Assessors Office. He advised that this scroll should have been received months ago but received no explanation for the county delay. Further, he advised that the town tax collector, Stephanie Payne, is busy analyzing the data received and working to prepare and release town property tax statements by mid-October. Mr. Bennett then reported to the Board on recent utility repair work by the public works department. He advised the Board that on

September 22, 2023, the department had a water line break on Bailey Street and a wastewater line issue on the Highway 23 line serving the NCDOT I-26 rest area occur simultaneously requiring all-hands-on-deck working throughout then night to complete those repairs. Mr. Bennett noted the very hard work of the public works staff and expressed how proud and appreciative he is of them and their dedication to the Town. Alderman Zink and Alderman Honeycutt provided comments of appreciation for the public works staff and noted they want to do all the Town can to support them and their work with good equipment and good pay for their time spent away from their families to do this work. Mr. Bennett noted two upcoming events of interest to the community and encouraged the Board and the public to attend: First Friday on October 6, 2023; and the Community Housing Coalition of Madison County Pickleball Tournament on October 14 and 15, 2023.

Alderman Honeycutt asked if there was an update on the NCDOT project to replace the Bailey Street bridge that crosses Gabriels's Creek at the MHU Chambers Gym. Mr. Bennett advised that he, and staff members from public works and police departments, met onsite with NCDOT about four weeks ago to discuss the project, and specifically the utility relocation work that will be required as part of the project. Mr. Bennett advised the Board that the project let date is tentatively scheduled for September 2025. NCDOT has preliminary plans for a complete closure and removal of the bridge and institute a detour that would take traffic from Main Street to Bruce Road to Bailey Street, and then access the other streets from Bailey Street. Mr. Bennett stated that he and other town staff expressed to the NCDOT several complications that a full closure would cause, including restricting large tractor-trailer access to the former Microswitch/Honeywell facility that now houses Spark Robotic and several other companies. Mr. Bennett advised NCDOT field staff at the meeting that a Bruce Road detour is not a viable plan. He stated that additional discussions are ongoing with NCDOT regarding the detour and he expects an alternate proposal will be developed.

Mr. Bennett provided information on other items of interest to the Board.

Public Comment

Mayor Chandler then moved to public comment. Mayor Chandler recognized Mrs. Burnette who provided a brief comment that the bridge connecting Bruce Road to Bailey Street is in poor condition and can't accommodate the detour route proposed by NCDOT. Everyone agreed.

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

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

Mayor Chandler advised the Board that there is a need for a closed session to discuss a personnel matter.

Alderman Bob Zink made a motion to enter closed session to discuss a personnel matter pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6). Alderman Stuart Jolley seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the motion was approved unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION

Upon completion of discussion of the personnel matter 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 Honeycutt seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the motion was approved unanimously.

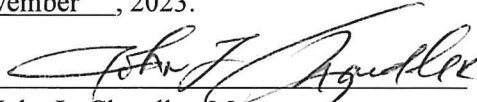
Open Session

Upon return to open session, Mayor Chandler announced there was no action to be taken regarding the 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 6th day of November, 2023.


John L. Chandler, Mayor

ATTEST:


Nathan R. Bennett,
Town Manager





ATTACHMENT A

Town of Mars Hill

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AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING

Mars Hill Town Hall Conference Room

October 2, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order – *Mayor John L. Chandler*
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes: September 11, 2023 Regular Meeting; September 19, 2023 Special Meeting
4. Old Business
5. New Business
 - a. Fire Truck Purchase Authority – Brush Truck
6. Town Manager Report – Nathan Bennett, Town Manager
 - a. 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

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