

**Town of Pinetops
Board of Commissioners
Regular Monthly Meeting (Also available via Zoom)
Minutes
June 6, 2023
Pinetops Town Hall**

A. Call Regular Meeting to Order

Mayor Harrell called the Regular Meeting to Order.

All Board Members were present for the meeting except for Commissioner Sugg who was away on vacation.

B. Invocation

Commissioner Taylor led the Invocation.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Harrell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Proposed Agenda

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the proposed agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Taylor. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Mabry made a motion to approve the May 2, 2023 Regular Minutes as written. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

F. Public Comments

1. Carolyn Hopkins – 314 N 6th Street

Carolyn Hopkins appeared before the Board to discuss what "can be" and what "is being done" about all the junk in the yard in front of her residence. This includes junk cars, car parts "engine" and tires which attract rodents. Administrator Ventresco replied that the attorney is currently in the process of drafting a letter informing them that they are being cited for a zoning violation. There will be two violations; one is a zoning violation of running a business outside of their home in an area where this is not allowed and the second will be a civil violation of being in possession of vehicles that are not legally registered. The Town Administrator added that the town can go after both the renter and landlord as it pertains to the zoning ordinance violation. The Police Chief will pursue going after the renter on the vehicles that are not legally registered. He explained that if the cars are legally registered then there is nothing he can do. Once the individual is cited it will then proceed to court as a civil matter where if the violation is not brought into compliance the Chief can then tow the vehicles in question. As far as the zoning ordinance violation is concerned the Administrator stated that if it is not brought into

compliance the individual will be charged a fee for each day it remains in non-compliance. If the violation fee is not paid a lien will be placed on the property.

2. **Bernice Anderson – 214 N Martin Luther King St.**

Bernice Anderson appeared before the Board to discuss the proposed \$4 Sanitation Fee increase in the upcoming budget. The projected increase was mentioned during the last meeting. She stated that she didn't agree with the increase especially if it is only being suggested to fund the purchase of a fire truck. Administrator Ventresco replied that any revenue generated would not go towards the purchase of a fire truck. She closed by saying that any increase would be hard on the citizens.

3. **Raymond Moss – 107 Sally Jenkins St.**

Mr. Moss appeared before the Board to question if there is any type of ordinance pertaining to overgrowth and yard debris. He then proceeded to ask the Board to check the house on the corner of Hamlet & Sally Jenkins. The Town Administrator replied that the town does indeed have an ordinance pertaining to this and he will check the property mentioned to see if it is in violation. If they are in violation a letter must be sent giving them a set time in which to comply and if they don't the town can have the property cleaned and the resident will be billed. If the invoice is not paid, a lien will be placed on the property.

G. Departmental Reports

1. **Police Department:** Chief Harrell read over the police report for the month of May 2023. The police department answered and/or initiated 918 official police actions. A new cadet will begin BLET on Monday and will then proceed to go through a six-month process. The annual Tractor Pull was a success. A detailed copy of the entire police report is hereby attached to the minutes.

Gloria Bennett – 605 E Lashley St. stated she was new to the area and had a couple of questions. She then proceeded to ask Chief Harrell how he decided how many officers the town needs, is it ratio to population. The Chief explained that the FBI ratio is only a recommendation not absolute; it is basically up to each municipality to decide what they need. He went on to say that the town provides 24/7 coverage. He told her that he would be glad to meet with her anytime to discuss the way he determines the number of officers is needed for Pinetops. Raymond Moss followed up this question by inquiring just how many officers the town has. Chief Harrell reported there is a total of 7 including 1 that just started BLET. This number also considers that he is a working Chief.

2. **Public Works Department:** Cody Lancaster, Public Works Supervisor presented the water and sewer report for the month of May 2023. The total water produced for the month was 8.47million and total wastewater treated was 5.8 million. There was 1 water line break for the month of May and 1 electrical outage.

Cody told the Board that the town has been receiving numerous "brown water" complaints because the Rural Fire Department has been testing the PSI on fire hydrants

in the area. All the testing has disturbed the water and thus the reason for the brown water. Public Works has been flushing hydrants around town to clear up the water.

Smoke Testing will take place next week for approximately 3 days. The testing will hopefully help locate any infrastructure issues throughout town. An all-call will be sent out informing citizens of the testing just in case they notice smoke at their residence.

3. **Fire Department:** Chief Burress presented a copy of the fire report for the month of May 2023. There were 12 service calls for the month. A detailed copy of the fire report is hereby attached to these minutes. A copy of the cemetery report for the month of May was also furnished. There were 2 lots sold for the month of May. A detailed copy of the cemetery report is hereby attached to the minutes.
4. **Finance Department:** Ms. Keesler presented the financial report for the month of May 2023. The general fund had a loss of \$ 54,398.41. The electric fund had a gain of \$ 65,362.66 for the month. The water/sewer fund ended the month with a gain of \$ 25,123.62. A Paid Check Report and Budget to Actual Report was also presented for the month of May. The adjusted ending balance for the month of May is \$3,741,310.27.

Ms. Keesler informed the Board that the Budget to Actual worksheet for month 10 was completed and submitted on May 12, 2023. All worksheets that were requested as well as a copy of the proposed FY 23-24 budget have been completed and submitted to the Local Government Commission for review. She received a letter from the LGC on May 30th stating that the draft budget for FYE 06/30/2024 appears to be in compliance with the Fiscal Control Act. The letter did stress that the town adhered to the adopted budget. This is a good first step, however; the town needs to continue to be diligent moving forward.

H. Items for Discussion

1. Community Development Advisory Board and Donations.

Administrator Ventresco told the Board that he had been approached by the Community Development Advisory Board concerning them being able to raise funds. The town has appropriated \$1,200 for them in the upcoming fiscal year. He explained that they would like to have fund raisers so they could pursue various projects in the community. He told the Board he had already spoken to the Town Attorney who said he didn't see a problem with this, but the town should still consult with a CPA. The Finance Officer questioned how the money would be handled and what it would be used for. She stated that any money raised would need to come through the town. The Board decided to table this until the August meeting so a member of the Advisory Board could be present to answer questions.

2. Book Exchange Boxes on Town Property.

The Town Administrator informed the Board that he had been approached by Kyle Cecchi who is the founder of "Moss Kids." Basically, he was requesting permission to put book exchanges boxes at the Gazebo & Park which is town-owned property. Commissioner Mabry stated that he thought it was a good idea but had a few safety concerns. The Administrator said he had a few of the same concerns. Commissioner

Mabry suggested Mr. Cecchi be invited to attend the August meeting to answer any questions before any decision is made.

i. Action Items/New Business

1. Present FY 23-24 Budget Message

Ms. Keesler presented the FY 23-24 Budget Message to the Board. She stated that a copy of the budget message and budget ordinance has been placed on the town website. There are also copies available at the Town Hall including a detailed line-item budget if requested for public inspection. A copy of the entire budget message and budget ordinance is hereby attached to the minutes.

2. Set Public Hearing for FY 23-24 Budget

Public Hearing will be scheduled for June 27, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. on the adoption of the 2023-2024 budget. As mentioned above a copy of the budget will be available in the town hall and on the town website for public review. The public hearing notice will be advertised in a local paper at least twice before the Public Hearing takes place. All interested citizens are invited to attend. Commissioner Webb made a motion to set the Public Hearing Date for the adoption of the FY 2023-24 budget for Tuesday, June 27, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. Passed.

3. Budget Amendments Approval for FY 22-23.

Commissioner Mabry made a motion to approve the Budget Amendments for FY 22-23 as written and presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Webb. Motion passed. The Finance Officer did tell the Board that there could be possibly a few more Budget Amendments that need to be approved at the Public Hearing.

4. Approve Fee Schedule for Zoning Ordinance Violations

Administrator Ventresco told the Board that the town needs to adopt a fee schedule for zoning ordinance violations since the current ordinance doesn't specifically give an amount. He stated that he had discussed this with the Town Attorney and the following is what they decided on. 1st offense would be \$50 per day in non-compliance, 2nd offense would be \$100 per day in non-compliance, 3rd day would be \$250 per day in non-compliance, and subsequent offenses would be \$500 per day in non-compliance. Commissioner Webb made a motion to adopt the zoning ordinance violations fee schedule as stated above. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. The Finance Officer will add the zoning ordinance violations fee to the proposed fee schedule for FY 2023-2024. Commissioner Mabry asked the Town Administrator to follow-up with the attorney to see if the current ordinance needs to be amended since the book shows all penalties as \$50. The Administrator said he would, but the new fees only pertain to zoning ordinance violations.

5. Any Other Business

Administrator Ventresco remarked that he had a few things to mention:

1. He did check with the State to see if the town is obligated to Recycle, and the quick answer is No. However, even though it is not state mandated that the town recycle you are strongly urged to comply.

2. The town will be doing away with Drop Box since it will be replaced with Share Point through Office 365. Currently there are only 2 Board Members that have access to Drop Box which is Mayor Harrell, and Commissioner Mabry. Commissioner Sugg did have access originally but gave his up to the Town Administrator when he was hired. We need to know exactly how many wants to be able to use Share Point because any new members will have to have an email address set up. The Administrator would also like to schedule a training session with MRL to go over the new system. The Board agreed to hold the training session on Friday, June 16th at 11:00 a.m.
3. He wanted to make sure that the town is not interested in pursuing contracting out the garbage this upcoming fiscal year. The Board answered No, they are not interested in contracting out the garbage right now.
4. Administrator Ventresco informed the Board that he had received an offer of \$ 4,003 on the disposal of the old fire truck. He stated that he will make the final decision whether to accept the offer or go out for additional bids. He just wanted to make sure the Board knew what the offer was.
5. He questioned whether to keep or sale the Backhoe. He stated that he thought some Board Members thought we should try to sale it but after talking to Cody Lancaster he wasn't sure what direction the Board wanted to go. The Board asked Cody at the meeting, and he expressed interest in keeping it as a spare since it is still operable and not costing the town anything. The Board decided at this time to go with that recommendation.

J. Adjournment

Commissioner Webb made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Mabry seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Date: 6/27/2023



Mayor Brenda Harrell

ATTESTED:



Finance Officer/Town Clerk Tammy Keesler