TOWN OF TRYON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TRYON TOWN HALL – MCCOWN MEETING ROOM
April 15, 2025 6:30 PM

WORK SESSION

Present: Mayor Pro Tem Skip Crowe

Commissioners Present: Bill Crowell, Tracie Morris, Julie Lambakis

Staff Present: Jim Fatland, Town Manager — Emily Dale, Town Clerk
Tim Daniels, Planning Director/Asst. Town Manager
Brad Gordan, Harmon Field Superintendent — Scott Holt, Police Chief
William Morgan, Town Attorney — Josh Connell, Interim Fire Chief

Mayor Pro Tem Skip Crowe called the work session to order.

Items discussed:

1. Commissioner Lambakis brought up that several citizens have approached her regarding a "lack of enforcement" with planning and zoning issues. Daniels stated various issues are in process, but it takes a long time to go through the required avenues.
2. Uplighting Downtown
    a. Commissioner Crowell stated they had been working on installing the uplighting and hoped to have it completed by end of week.
3. Police Prescence at Town Entrances
    a. Commissioners Morris stated that some citizens had expressed that the police vehicles at town entrances could be perceived as unfriendly. There was much discussion about this matter presenting both sides. Some merchants have requested the PD in order to deter speeding and other activities. In most cases PD is there for people exiting town who may have been speeding not necessarily people entering town.

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Crowell moved and motion passed unanimously.

TOWN OF TRYON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TRYON TOWN HALL – MCCOWN MEETING ROOM
APRIL 15, 2025 7:00 PM

Present: Mayor Pro Tem Skip Crowe Absent: Mayor Peoples

Commissioners Present: Bill Crowell, Tracie Morris, Julie Lambakis

Staff Present: Jim Fatland, Town Manager; Emily Dale, Town Clerk; Tim Daniels, Planning Director/Asst. Town Manager; Brad Gordan, Harmon Field Superintendent; Scott Holt, Police Chief; William Morgan, Town Attorney; Josh Connell, Interim Fire Chief

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe called the meeting to order.

II. INVOCATION

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe led the invocation with a moment of silence.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. AGENDA ADOPTION

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe asked for any deletions, additions, or corrections to the agenda. Town Manager Fatland stated four (4) changes to the agenda as follows:

- Add Item 6c: Dallara Ballfield Restoration at Harmon Field
- Add Item 8a: Memo from Tim Daniels about Historic Preservation—
- Add Item 9c: Public Works Committee appointment
- Remove Item 9a

Commissioner Lambakis made a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Crowell so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

V. CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTION

Commissioner Crowell made a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Lambakis so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. TROPICAL STORM HELENE DAMAGES AND RESTORATION

(a) Update—Jim Fatland/Tim Daniels: Town Manager Fatland reported that money from FEMA has not arrived. Assistant Town Manager Daniels confirmed that the first payment to the Town has been approved and should be delivered in the next few days. Fatland stated that the plan for Harmon Field is to rebuild the playground and screened-in porch by the entrance of the park as well as move some existing amenities to different locations within Harmon Field. Rental money will not be received this year, so the only funds towards Harmon Field will come from the Township tax which will affect its FY25/26 budget. Daniels described a meeting he attended in Asheville about the aftermath of Tropical Storm Helene. Attendees were encouraged to state their grievances about how everything has been handled thus far.

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe asked for an update on the cabin. Fatland stated that FEMA requires construction cost estimates in order to fix the cabin to ADA compliance as well as estimates to move and rebuild the cabin. The problem, he stated, is that contractors are very busy and do not want to complete projects for free. It was appraised at $260,000. Since that exceeds $130,001, the cabin is required by the county to be torn down. Commissioner Crowell asked where the screened porch will be built. Fatland responded next to the playground area near the entrance of the park; the playground will include shade elements since that area is sunnier.

(b) FEMA Advance Assistance Grant Application—Jim Fatland/Emily Dale: Fatland stated that the Town acquired a grant finder which he took on a tour of the old Middle School at Harmon Field in order to start the process of obtaining a grant to fix the damages. Fatland stated he is working on getting money to get the roof fixed on the old school building and to get money to hire an architect to redesign the building into a 10,000 square foot Community Center. Town Clerk Dale stated that after her most recent communication with Will Rice, founder of Water Funding Financial, it was expressed that the Town has a high chance of receiving the $400,000 FEMA Advance Assistance Grant for rebuilding certain areas of Harmon Field. Fatland stated that the grant requires a 10% match.

(c) Dallara Ballfield Restoration at Harmon Field: Town Manager Fatland stated that the Dallara Ballfield received significant damage from Tropical Storm Helene. Spartan Environmental Concepts already fixed the drainage throughout HF including the ballfield. The Town acquired a bid from Hipp's Land Management to redo the grading and irrigation of the ballfields and install sod and topsoil for $83,815 (the lowest bid). The Town also acquired a contract from Pace Land Management for the fencing of the ballfield for $4800. Fatland requested approval from the Board to award contracts to Hipp's Land Management and Pace Land Management.

Commissioner Crowell made a motion to approve the two contracts as stated by Town Manager Fatland. Commissioner Lambakis so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. FY25 BUDGET AMENDMENT No. FOUR

Town Manager Fatland reported that the following amendments to the budget are recommended:

(1) GENERAL FUND: The Town Board approved the purchase and installation of downtown street lights at its March 18, 2025 meeting at cost of $36,000. The Town Board approved the purchase of two used dump trucks at a cost of $79,500. In addition, an additional $10,000 is needed for contract maintenance at the Tryon Cemetery and $15,500 to repair damaged steps near Downtown Clock Tower. Source of fund totaling $141,000.

(2) TOURISM FUND: The Tourism Board has requested that their FY25 Budget be amended for the purchase of a Meridian electronic kiosk for Downtown Tryon. The estimated cost share for Tourism is $14,500. The Tourism Board has also requested that $1,200 be approved for live music on the Downtown Plaza. Source of fund totaling $15,700 would be an appropriation of Tourism Fund Balance.

(3) FIRE DEPARTMENT FUND: The Tryon Fire Department received a FEMA Grant for the purchase of new air packs and cascade system in FY24. The total grant was $252,351. The grant was completed in FY25 with $61,915 being expended. The FY25 Tryon Fire Department Budget included the purchase of a new fire engine. The budgeted purchase price was $855,000. Source of funds was $813,000 loan proceeds and an appropriation of $42,000 from fund balance. The actual loan proceeds were $852,459. Instead, the $42,000 in fund balance will be appropriated in FY26 for accrued interest. The first loan payment for the loan will be October 1, 2025.

Commissioner Morris made a motion to approve the FY24-25 Budget Ordinance No. Four. Commissioner Crowell so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

VIII. REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT OF OUT OF SERVICE FIRE HYDRANTS

Town Manager Fatland reported that the Town has 13 fire hydrants that haven’t worked in years. He met with Andew McCallister, the Water/Sewer Supervisor, and Josh Connell, Interim Fire Chief, and asked them to prepare a list. Thirteen (13) broken fire hydrants were on the list. Manager Fatland requested to the Council that the 13 broken fire hydrants need get fixed but there are missing valves near the hydrants. To purchase the hydrants and valves, Fatland stated it will cost $49,500 and the Town’s employees will install them.

Commissioner Morris made a motion for the repair and replacement of the thirteen (13) fire hydrants and valves at a cost of $49,534.28. Commissioner Lambakis so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

IX. BOARD APPOINTMENTS

(b) Parks Committee: Wayne Albert

Commissioner Crowell made a motion to appoint Wayne Albert to the Parks Committee. Commissioner Lambakis so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

(c) Public Works Committee:
   i. Dave Delancy
   ii. Jay Goree
   iii. Tim McNeil
   iv. Stan Gibson

Commissioner Lambakis made a motion to appoint the four (4) individuals to the Public Works Committee. Commissioner Crowell so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

X. MINIMUM HOUSING/PLANNING UPDATE

Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Daniels reported the following about the Historic Preservation Commission:

- The Historic Preservation Commission is preparing to apply for Local Historic Designation to a section of downtown buildings to mirror the Federal Historic Designations.
- The Tryon Historic Preservation Commission unanimously voted at it's April 2, 2025 meeting to recommend that the Downtown Tryon Historic District, which was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2015, be designated as Tryon's Local Historic District. It would provide some safeguards to preserve the special character of the Downtown Historic District that the listing on National Register of Historic Places does not provide.
- On April 7, 2025, the Commission sent a letter and supporting documentation proposing a local designation to the State. The State has a 30-day period to provide comment or not. Concurrent with this time period, the Historic Preservation Commission plans to hold public information and outreach sessions about this change.
- Tryon's Ordinance provides for historic overlay zoning; local designation of a historic district would amount to such zoning.
- To comply with zoning procedures, the Historic Preservation Commission asks the Board of Commissioners to forward the recommendation for Local Designation to the Board of Planning and Adjustment for review.
- The Commission would like the Board to approve or deny the Historic Preservation Commission recommendation to the Planning Board for review and procedure initiation for the overlay zoning.

Commissioner Morris made a motion to approve the above-described Historic Preservation Commission recommendation. Commissioner Lambakis so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Daniels reported the following about Minimum Housing:

- Public Information Officer, Stever Siler, and himself are trying to coordinate with the county on 160 Cleveland without success. They are moving forward with it; the timer started about 3 weeks ago.

- 112 Jackson St. Extension: an initial inspection letter was sent. If he hears nothing, administrative warrants will be issued to inspect the property.
- He was made aware of another house on Lyle Ave (T1B7 is the property). Daniels plans to drive out there to take pictures and send an initial inspection letter.

XI. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Town Manager Fatland reported the following:

- Fire Deputy Chief, Josh Connell, was hired as Interim Fire Chief. Former Fire Chief, Josh Walton, moved on. Fatland met with all of the full-time fireman and is confident with the department. The full-time fireman asked if there would be room in the budget for opportunities for advancement within the department. Fatland went on to say that the department is looking for at least two (2) more full-time firemen to create continuity. Interim Fire Chief Connell expressed his gratitude for the help he has received thus far.
- The Harmon Field Board met this past week and approved a budget; however, it is not balanced. Harmon Field Board Member, Warren Watson, wrote a letter to the County Commissioners and Tryon Town Board of Commissioners about Tropical Storm Helene's damage to Harmon Field. Mr. Fatland read the letter in which Watson thanked the Town for their continued efforts to restore the park. The Harmon Field Board voted not to even consider a tax increase this year. They approved a budget of $332,840.00, but in leu of a $.01 increase in Township tax, the HF Board is asking the County Commissioners to fund approximately $50,000 for the annual operation and maintenance of Harmon Field. The Harmon Field Board strongly feels that the Polk County taxpayers residing outside the Township should also help finance to the long-term success of Harmon Field.
- During the previous fiscal year, Fatland stated that Harmon Field produced $75,000 in revenue which will be all zeros for the next 12 months. If the new budget doesn't get improved with help from the County, one (1) Harmon Field employee will need to be laid off. The high maintenance zones of Harmon Field are the baseball fields, soccer fields, and equestrian area. YMCA would like to continue using Harmon Field's soccer fields.

XII. TDDA REPORT (item was originally to be a part of Planning update)

Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director reported the following TDDA updates:

- Town branded furniture has been ordered to replace non-Town compliant furniture on Trade St.
- Saturday, April 19th, from 11-1 p.m. TDDA will host an Easter Egg Hunt downtown
- TDDA is spearheading a Community Clean Up Day in Downtown Tryon on April 22, Earth Day, from 10-12 p.m. Sign up to volunteer on the TDDA website.
- 4th Friday—Cool Dewey Kudzu will be performing on the Plaza from 5-7 p.m.
- Ribbon cutting April 25th at 5:30 p.m. for Monica Stevenson Photography at 112 N Trade St.
- Ribbon cutting May 2nd at 11:30 a.m. for Missi & Co., Fortunate Finds at 75 S Trade St.
- First After-Hours Business Mixer May 2nd at 5:30 p.m. at Livery Pour House at 60 Pacolet St.
- Tree Uplighting Project on Trade St. has begun. LED lights with color changing capabilities will be installed. The aim is to make Downtown Tryon more visitor friendly in the evening.

- The Town was awarded a bike rack grant from Blue Ridge Bicycle Club to install bike racks throughout downtown.

XIII. COUNCIL/MAYOR REPORT

- Commissioner Morris thanked Interim Fire Chief Connell for stepping up to the plate.
- Commissioner Crowell reported that a Conserving Carolina meeting took place today in Saluda and stated that the money is there to buy the railway—North and South Carolina—and will hopefully close by the end of July. In terms of timeline, in the next year the rails will be harvested and washouts fixed.
- Commissioner Lambakis congratulated Connell and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.
- Mayor Pro Tem Crowe thanked everyone who attended the East Side Clean Up and gave his appreciation to all who attended the meeting.

XIV. CITIZEN COMMENTS & RESPONSES

Ann Day

- Thanked Andrew, Josh, and Tim for taking care of the fire hydrants. The one by her house has been out of commission for at least five (5) years as well as 2 others within a mile radius of her house.

John Vining

- He is opposed to the Town trademarking Morris the horse and believes it is someone else's intellectual property that the Town is making their own.

Denny Crowe

- She asked the Council to address the plans for public bathrooms in Downtown Tryon.
- Daniels stated that several bids have been solicited of a rudimentary plan but no quotes have been received. It is being continuously pursued as well as communication with a local architect to shore up the plans in hopes to bring in more quotes.
- Mayor Pro Tem asked if the public restroom will be a free-standing structure. Daniels stated that one of the ideas is to buy a railcar and renovate it.
- Citizen King mentioned that a sign indicating a public restroom at Roger's Park might be helpful.
- Another citizen mentioned that sewer hook ups need to located to accommodate a restroom.
- Daniels responded that the sewer hookup is on Pacolet closer to the Depot. None are located on McCown St.
- Denny Crowe asked about a patch of land by the dentist's office. Commissioner Crowell stated that nothing would want to be built there because the view would be lost.

XV. CLOSED SESSIONS: PROPERTY ACQUISITION 143.318.11 (5); POTENTIAL LITIGATION 143.318.11 (11)

Commissioner Morris made a motion to go into closed session. Commissioner Crowell so moved. The motion carried unanimously.