TOWN OF TRYON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TRYON TOWN HALL – MCCOWN MEETING ROOM
August 19, 2025 6:30 PM

WORK SESSION

Present: Mayor J. Alan Peoples Mayor Pro Tem Skip Crowe

Commissioners Present: Bill Crowell, Tracie Morris, Julie Lambakis

Staff Present: Jim Fatland, Town Manager Tim Daniels, Planning Director/Assist. Town Manager
Emily Dale, Town Clerk Josh Connell, Interim Fire Chief
Scott Holt, Police Chief
William Morgan, Town Attorney

Mayor Peoples called the work session to order.

Items discussed:

1. Commissioner Lambakis brought up a citizen on Glenwalden Circle who was having sewer issues. Town Manager Jim Fatalnd stated he would let dispatch know and encouraged everyone to reach out directly to dispatch with any complaints so that they can be logged appropriately and track the progress.
2. Commissioner Crowell brought up the blinking street light in front of Big Guns. He commended the progress on mowing and Fatland acknowledged that crews were working hard despite some delays and hang ups with the side arm mower.
3. Commissioner Morris brought up issues with the website and posting of issues. Staff acknowledged delays and issues and hopes to correct them promptly. Commissioner Morris recently met with Police Chief Scott Holt and was impressed by a report his department was doing and would like for that report along with one from the fire department to be brought back to council. Morris also brought up the potential problems with sewer issues and the Lake Lanier Dam. Fatland advised that there is a sewer project for Hidden Hill that started on August 4 and as far as the dam is concerned, we are waiting on funding from the government for that project.

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adjourn. Mayor Pro Tem Crowe so moved and the motion passed.

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I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Peoples called the meeting to order at 7:08pm

II. INVOCATION

Mayor Peoples led the invocation with a moment of silence.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Mayor Peoples presented the Citizen of the Year award to Tania and Davey from Trade Street Diner for their efforts during Helene. During the storm they donated food and meals, set up free Wi-Fi and even a shower trailer for the community. Tania wanted to thank Evan, Tom and Logan as well for everything they did to help. Evan helped cook, Tom ran back and forth, and Logan provided the Starlink. She wanted to emphasis that even though the Town was thanking them they wanted to thank the wonderful volunteers and community.

V. AGENDA ADOPTION

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Crowell so moved and the motion carried.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING: DOWNTOWN HISTORIC PRESERVATION DISTRICT DESIGNATION

Mayor Peoples declared the public hearing on the Historic Preservation District open. Planning Director Tim Daniels stated that the Planning Board had voted 4-1 to recommend the designation to Council for their approval. The question was raised if council would actually be voting on the matter tonight given the quantity of the material.

Richard North from Brookwood Dr in Tryon addressed the council. His concerns stemmed from the urgency and need to do this now and what the potential ramifications would be.

Ellen Reichenbach, chair of Historic Preservation Commission, responded to Mr. North's concerns. She spoke to the difference between contributing and non-contributing structures and how that status impacts a building dealing with the Commission. This way allows for the potential to negotiate for new owners of a building in the event the current owner wants to tear down a structure. She also stated there would be a lot of lead way with adaptive use and design. The hope is that with Rails to Trails coming in we would have a lot more visitors and no one wants to see the Town lose what we have.

Allan Casavant stated that he was on board with the way it was originally presented, but he can not support this new version. He stated that he owned two contributing properties and that it's nearly impossible to get five people to agree on anything.

Steven Siler stated that he is a member of the planning board who voted 4-1 to send to council and that like Allan he previously resided in an area that was known for historical charm. The goal of this is to simply maintain the character.

Dean Trakas, 31 First St, stated that Historic Preservation had been working on this for months and the entire point of them being created was as a commission, not an advisory board. There has to be some guidelines in place to give teeth to the commission. You are unable to get the grants and funding unless you have the power.

Luta Sabo,36 2nd Street, asked what grants would the commission be applying for?

Reichenbach replied that the grant applications deal with the certified local government and it can allow for repairing of houses and landscaping.

Alexander Cahill, 330 Melrose Ave, inquired about why it is so difficult to find documents online and brought up transparency and state laws. He also questioned if the rules would be strictly about design or about use.

Harriet Hudson, Mtn Shadows, spoke to the effort the commission has put in over the last 3 years. The state advises on one public hearing and the commission had 2 with plans for a third, but no one wanted to show up then, only now. The forum and information were there but no one bothered until now.

Allan Casavant requested signed letters from business owners be placed in the official minutes. Those documents are attached. He reaffirmed his stance that this is downzoning and against state statutes.

Town Attorney William Morgan stated that based on his research it does not constitute downzoning. Steven Siler addressed the Board once more to say that the Historic Preservation Commission and the Planning Board are not there to seek out money. That they are all here for the benefit of the Town of Tryon. He also questioned if a group is saying that it is not a law, who benefits? If it gets overturned, who benefits? Who's making the noise and why are they making it?

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to continue the public meeting until the next meeting, Commissioner Crowell so moved and the motion passed.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTION

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adopt the consent agenda. Commissioner Lambakis so moved and the motion carried.

VIII. TROPICAL STORM HELENE UPDATE

Fatland stated that it has almost been a year since Helene happened and in working with our FEMA consultant Rostan, they suggested the Town look at areas that could make them stronger in the future. This includes generators, a leak near the Pacolet River. Fatland recommended the council approve the hiring of Rostan with a not to exceed limit of $30,000. Mayor Pro Tem Crowe so moved, Commissioner Crowell seconded and the motion carried.

The Town has received noticed that the cabin at Harmon Field has to come down. The silver lining is that the money to rebuild can be used elsewhere. The Harmon Field Board of Supervisors has recommended to the Board that the money be transferred to the old school center to convert it to a 10,000 sq ft community center with catering kitchen. Fatland is recommending to the Board that they approve a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the Harmon Field Community Center. Commissioner Lambakis so moved, Mayor Pro Tem Crowe seconded and the motion carried.

The Town was the recipient of 2 different cash flow loans from the State and they recently opened up a third Round. Commissioner Morris expressed interest in only accepting the third round if the amount is less than 200,000 at zero percent interest for five years. A motion was made and carried unanimously.

Interim Fire Chief Josh Connell applied for and received a grant from the Office of the State Fire Marshall in the amount of $50,000. He would like to use the money to purchase a UTV, skid unit and equipment/uniforms for brush fires. No town funds would be used as the grant would cover all costs. Commissioner Lambakis moved to approve the purchase and the motion carried.

IX. SALUDA GRADE TRAIL

Fatland expressed gratitude to the Mayor and Council for the event held on July 31. Fatland was asked to sit on the South Carolina section committee and hopes that this will enable to Trail to continue to Tryon

quicker and not just stop in South Carolina. That committee would help with the selection of the engineer. There was much discussion that followed regarding the success of the celebration and potential funding sources for the design and construction.

Charles Hooker, 109 Mimosa Inn Ln, asked how he can find out about meetings and that the website needs to be updated

X. PROPOSED INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL PROGRAM

Mayor Pro Tem Skip Crowe invited members of the town to be aware of the invasive species problem the Town has especially in right of ways and private property. Locally, the Town of Flat Rock provides 7k in funding. The hope is to have around 10k in funding with 2 contractors to get quotes. There is a citizen group that is meeting to fine tune everything and then take to council. The hope is to create a better education process for citizens.

Greg Miner, 345 Payne St, asked if there was any ordinance in place to assist.

Daniels and Crowell responded that there is a noxious weeds ordinance, but the enforcement is the issue.

XI. RESOLUTION ADOPITING SOUTH MOUNTAINS REGINAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Town Clerk Emily Dale presented the resolution adopting the hazard mitigation plan. This came to us via Polk County. Mayor Pro Tem Crowe so moved and the resolution was adopted.

XII. LGC AUDIT CONTRACT AMENDMENT

Dale and Fatland presented the amended contract. The new State Treasurer seems to be listening to municipalities. The prior deadline was October and now it is December 31. Commissioner Crowell so moved and the motion carried.

XIII. SET OCTOBER 21, 2025 FOR CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED CELL TOWER LEASE

Commissioner Morris brought up that she knew this project has been going on a long time. She brought up concerns regarding the location, lack of transparency with the matter and what problem are we really trying to solve. She advised slowing down and bringing in the experts on the matter.

Morgan brought up that just because the Board approves it doesn't mean it is going to be built. In realty there is a lease in place right now, the location just got moved. Consideration is the first part of this and then an application is done.

Joanna Fox, 1836 Carolina Dr., brought up that upon purchasing her home she received several legal documents pertaining to the cell tower. She feels that anything done four years ago is no longer relevant. She expressed concerned to do the right thing for the community as a whole.

Richard North inquired as to the terms of the lease? And Mayor Peoples stated that 15 or so years ago there was an old tower and the town was getting around $1,500 a month for that. The new tower was supposed to go where the old one was but there was an issue with the legs and where it could go. He was unsure of the current figures of the lease so he did not want to speak on those incorrectly. Mayor Peoples also spoke to that fact that so many people showed up tonight implying the Town doesn't tell them things and encouraged everyone to come out to the monthly meetings if they want to be informed. The October meeting would be published in the paper 30 days prior to and the vote is simply on consideration to send to the Planning Board.

Hooker, stated that in his experience as a network systems engineer there was some truth in the fact that structures do block signals and spoke to the fact that engineering is the key in making sure signal can be reached.

Commissioner Crowell made a motion for consideration and the motion passed.

XIV. BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Dale presented Susie Hayes application to the Board for their approval of appointment to the Parks Committee. Susan Parris was also presented for the ABC Board. Commissioner Crowell was vacant from this vote but a motion was made and carried unanimously.

XV. DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS

Fatland presented the idea for a Municipal Service District. He is asking for TDDA to define the boundaries and approve a proposal for the Foothills Regional Commission. Mayor Peoples explained that the tax levied in an MSD can only be used in that area for improvements. Fatland spoke of the need to get the information together and to the merchants. A representative from Huckleberry's asked who would be in charge of the money from the MSD and was informed that a new board would be created to manage it. Mayor Pro Tem Crowe so moved to approve proposal with Foothills Regional Commission and the motion carried.

Fatland presented the concept of making improvements to McCown Street Park. Given the Trail coming in and that it is the first thing coming into town he feels the need to create a master plan so that area can best serve the community. Fatland is asking council to approve a proposal with Byington, Landscape Architects for a master plan not to exceed $6,210.00.

Various comments were made regarding communication issues and potential ways to improve it. Jane Herman, 12 E Park Dr., spoke to the need of individuals needing to take accountability as well. Things

are posted online and/or the bulletin, but it seems everyone wants to be spoon fed the information. She stated there's got to be a balance at some point.

Commissioner Crowell moved to approve the proposal, the motion was seconded and so carried.

Fatland presented the idea of making Maple St one way all the way to Howard in order to get extra parking. After input from Morgan, it was agreed to continue the item until next month

XVI. MINIMUM HOUSING/PLANNING

160 Clevland: Daniels stated he had requested a county building inspection to inspect status of repairs

112 Jackson St: Daniels stated the owner appeared at hearing and discussed process. Owner has until November 1 to remove the structure. They may want to forfeit it and get to done sooner.

Lyle St.: Owner have been sent a letter to initiation minimum housing procedure, thus far nothing is happening.

XVII. TDDA UPDATE

Daniels stated there is a conjunction with Tryon Arts and Crafts for a public art initiative. There will be a metal deer sculpture placed by the tracks. The piece will be on loan for five years and will hopefully open the door for more public art in the future. Daniels requested a street closure for Saturday, September 13 for TDDAs BBQ beatdown which serves as a fundraiser. Commissioner Crowell so moved and the motion carried.

A road closure was requested for the film festival on October 11 from 6-10 from the corner of Pacolet to the corner of the Post Office. After discussion it was agreed as long as the closure didn't interfere with access to Depot St it would be approved. Commissioner Crowell so moved and the motion carried.

XVIII. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Fatland provided an update on the Polk County Community Foundation Grants for the Cemetery and Rogers Park. He expressed the desire to clean up the cemetery as it had been neglected for several years and with the Nina Simone restoration project it needs to be improved.

XIX. COUNCIL/MAYOR REPORT

Commissioner Morris thanked everyone for coming out and reminded everyone that she ran on increasing transparency and community involvement. She wanted to especially thank Police Chief Scott Holt and his staff. After speaking with him she has a better understanding and greater appreciation for all that they do.

The remaining commissioner echoed her thanks to all the staff and were encouraged by the progress being made with the streets crew and Harmon Field.

XX. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Anne Day, 154 Whitney Ave, asked if there was an update on the installation of the fire hydrants. Fatland stated he had already reached out to the Distribution Supervisor for an update; however, part of the problem is that it is not an easy fix and very time consuming. He advised an update would happen soon.

XXI. CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made to enter closed session.

XXII. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Commissioner Crowell made a motion to adjourn; it was so seconded and passed.