TOWN OF TRYON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TRYON TOWN HALL – MCCOWN MEETING ROOM
March 17, 2026 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, Fire Chief
Brad Gordon, Harmon Field Superintendent Scott Holt, Police Chief
William Morgan, Town Attorney

Mayor Peoples called the work session to order.

The following topics were discussed:

Commissioner Lambakis asked for a follow up on the NC DOT and ADA parking. Planning Director Daniels stated he would get with the Foothills Regional Commission and provide and update.

The ability to add special projects and updates to the website was discussed. Daniels stated there would be a special display section the Town could potentially utilize for this.

Sidewalk improvements throughout the Town especially concerning the potential for a pedestrian crosswalk and light to the new McCowan park.

Sections of the minutes were clarified in regard to the water plant. It was stated the cost to repair the pump was $102,000. The pumps are almost 20 years old so they are at the end of their life cycle. The 428 project at Harmon Field was clarified. This is the name given by FEMA to the project at Harmon Field of taking money from the buildings that were destroyed and cannot be rebuilt and using it for the community center building.

Audit inquiry was provided. The Local Government Commission required an outside accounting firm to handle the financial statements. Our current firm has not been very responsive. Town Manager Fatland stated the partnership for the software conversion allowed access to other resources. Town Clerk Dale had reached out and the North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM) are going to assist with the bank reconciliations at no cost to the Town. There was mention of looking for a new CPA firm moving forward.

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Lambakis so moved and the motion carried.

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I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Peoples called the meeting to order.

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. AGENDA ADOPTION

Town Manager Fatland stated there was an addition to the agenda for an item regarding the Saluda Grade Trail. This item would be 12a. Mayor Pro Tem Crowe moved to adopt the agenda with the updated item. The motion carried unanimously.

V. CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTION

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

VI. PUBLIC HEARING: ST. LUKE'S REZONING

The staff recommendation was to open the public hearing, but recess to a later date given that the Planning Board voted to table the item for a month. The public hearing was advertised in the Tryon Daily Bulletin on March 4 and March 11, 2026.

The Board decided to open the Public Hearing and allowed for some discussion. The following individuals spoke and started their support or opposition for the potential rezoning of the property referred to as the Old St. Luke's Property.

Dorothy Easley, current owner of 330 Carolina Dr. (property in question): Supports the rezoning due to the proposed plan respecting/enhancing the landmark and increased tax revenue. Potential traffic and noise would be able to be mitigated.

Jane Herman: Opposed the rezoning due to concerns regarding increased traffic, noise and wildlife.

Leslie Turnage: Opposed the rezoning due to concerns regarding increased traffic and wildlife.

Charlie McGee: Opposed the rezoning due to the fact that the current proposal is only for half of the property leaving the half up in the air.

Tom Brylowe: Supports the rezoning due to the fit of the project for the current facility and that traffic concerns could be mitigated.

Mark Ware: Did not state either support or opposition. Expressed concern about the steep hill on the road and need for mitigation.

Debbie Ware: Did not state either support or opposition. Expressed concern regarding noise and lights and suggested some restrictions be put in place.

Josh Stahl, (prospective buyer of 330 Carolina Dr.): Stated he has heard the residents concerns and trying to come up with solutions.

Steven King: Did not state either support or opposition. Expressed that the traffic concerns may not be there given that during his time doing Meals on Wheels that road/area saw a lot of traffic.

Susan Lay: Expressed concerns that the building/projects in town cause for increased wildlife.

Stefanie Green: Opposed the rezoning due to the increased traffic and safety concerns for her elderly neighbors.

Ester Albert: Opposes the rezoning, but not the project as a whole. She feels it's a good project just the wrong location due to concerns with traffic, parking and downtown economic impact.

Planning Director Daniels stated he would be happy to look into what measures may be taken to mitigate any traffic issues.

Mayor Peoples then entertained a motion to recess the Public Hearing to April 21 at 7:00pm. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. RESIDENTIAL PARKING ORDINANCE

The Board continued their discussion regarding a potential parking ordinance that references the number of cars and location of said cars at residences. This potential ordinance was brought forth from an attempt to deal with a residence that had multiple vehicles parked in front. Daniels and Town Attorney Morgan had been working on this ordinance. Commissioner Morris inquired if they should be entertaining an ordinance or looking for other solutions. Mayor Peoples asked if the Board wanted to tweak the current ordinance. Daniels and Morgan stated the Board could deem the vehicles a nuisance which would enact the nuisance ordinance. No formal decision was made by the Board.

VIII. RESOLUTION ACCEPTING GRANT OFFER JERVEY ROAD SEWER REHAB PROJECT

Town Manager Fatland stated the Town had been offered a grant from the North Carolina Department of Public Safety Emergency Management for Jervey Road Sewer Rehab in the amount of $239,800.

IX. RESOLUTION ACCEPTING GRANT OFFER SOURWOOD RIDGE & HWY 176 WATER MAIN PROJECT

Town Manager Fatland stated the Town had been offered a grant from the North Carolina Department of Public Safety Emergency Management for Sourwood Ridge and HWY 176 Water Project in the amount of $953,805. After clarifying the Point of Contract on both of the grants would be the Town Manager and Summit Engineering Commissioner Lambakis moved to accept the resolutions for both sourwood and Jervey rd. projects. The motion carried unanimously.

X. RECORD RENTENTION AGREEMENT WITH NC STATE ARCHIVES

Town Clerk Dale stated that the Town is required to have an agreement on file with the State Archive office regarding records retention. The Record and Retention Schedule was updated in 2021 and the Town needed an updated agreement. Commissioner Morris moved to approve the agreement as presented and the motion carried unanimously.

XI. DOWNTOWN UPDATE

Assistant Town Manager Daniels provided the Downtown update on behalf of Lourdes Gutierrez. The main highlight was the TDDA participation in the NC Main Street Conference held in New Bern. Six members participated along with Commissioner Lambakis. Gutierrez served as a panelist at the conference covering local artisans and partnerships.

Daniels stated that the new kiosk was set to arrive soon. The installation plan is to manufacture a trellis to carry the electrical instead of drilling into the sidewalk. The trellis would be adorned with flowers/vegetation.

Upcoming events were highlighted:

Tryon April Fools on March 28th
Fire Dept and Harmon Field Easter Egg Hunt on April 4th
Responsible Alcohol Seller/Server Program (RASP) sessions held by ABC Commission coordinator Web Corthel on April 14th at 10 and 1
Saluda Grade Trail Advisory Group spring Forum at Polk County High School on April 23 at 5:30

Commissioner Morris expressed that she would like for Gutierrez to present her panelist presentation at the next council meeting.

XII. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Town Manager Fatland provided an update on potential funding for the Saluda Grade Trail. Upon conclusion of a meeting with Senator Tom Tillis' office Conserving Carolina invited Fatland and Saluda manager Steve Orr to travel to Washington, DC with them on April 14 and 15 for meeting with Tillis' office. The hope is that the Senator will choose to carry this project for Federal funding in the amount of 3 million dollars. Fatland is seeking Town Board approval to travel to DC for two days. Commissioner Morris inquired about the cost of the trip to which Fatland stated he had not booked yet as he was waiting on Board approval. After some discussion Mayor Peoples expressed his desire to trust the Town Manager regarding the cost of the trip and potentially securing the funding. Commissioner Crowell made a motion to approve the travel plans as mentioned and the motion carried unanimously.

Fatland provided an update on the Lake Lanier Dam Project. He stated that an engineer is working on a revised budget given that the project was submitted two years ago.

Fatland stated that the grant the Board approved for Zieglar and Vaughn creek has seen its timeline moved forward. Instead of waiting a year, preliminary inspections are scheduled to start next week. Fatland also expressed thanks to the Parks committee for all of their hard work and noted there was an upcoming Eastisde clean up day, he believed on April 18.

XIII. COUNCIL/MAYOR REPORT

Commissioner Lambakis expressed a thank you to staff, citizens for coming out about the rezoning and members of TDDA. She enjoyed her time at the Main Street conference.

Commissioner Crowell expressed a special thank you to Harmon Field staff for their work.
Commissioner Morris thanked the citizens and staff. She expressed her desire to continue to work with everyone on these issues.

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe thanked the citizens for a lively but orderly debate.

Mayor Peoples agreed with his fellow Board members.

XIV. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Denny Crowe: Presented an idea regarding installation of the kiosk. She stated that the high students had done several construction projects lately that turned out great. The Town may want to consider using them to construct something to house the kiosk. Commissioner Crowel stated that the issue would be the material of the structure given that the Town needs something to last such as metal and not wood.

Mark Ware: Suggested installing rumble strips on Jervey rd. to assist in the traffic concerns.

XV. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Dale and Morgan clarified the time frame for the lake moratorium, with council confirming 90 days.

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adjourn and the motion carried unanimously.