



TOWN OF  
**GRANITE FALLS**  
*North Carolina*

Dr. Caryl B. Burns Mayor • Tracy Townsend Mayor Pro Tem • Jerry T. Church Town Manager  
Council Members Ritch Bolick • Larry Knight • Jim Mackie • Mike Mackie • Martin D. Townsend

**AGENDA**  
**REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2022**  
**4 SOUTH MAIN STREET**  
**6:00 PM**

Face coverings are optional for tonight's Council meeting but all attendees are encouraged to wear face coverings, and to social distance from other attendees who are not members of the same household, regardless of vaccination status. Individuals in high-risk groups, individuals who are completing isolation or were recently exposed, and residents at risk of infection should continue to wear face coverings in all public indoor settings.

- I. WELCOME - CALL TO ORDER MAYOR DR. CARYL B. BURNS
- II. INVOCATION COUNCILMEMBER RITCH BOLICK
- III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE COUNCILMEMBER MIKE MACKIE
- IV. CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT - COUNCILMEMBER MARTIN TOWNSEND

*In accordance with the State Government Ethics Act, it is the duty of every Council member to avoid both conflicts of interest and appearance of conflicts. Does any Council member have any known conflict of interest or appearance of conflicts with respect to any matters coming before the Council today? If so, please identify the conflict or appearance of conflict and refrain from any undue participation in the particular matters involved.*  
(N.C.G.S. 14-234, N.C.G.S. 160A-479.11, & N.C.G.S. 160D-109)

- V. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS
- VI. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS/INTRODUCTIONS/RECOGNITIONS
- 1) Assistant Town Manager Jana Williams will introduce Tax Collector/Finance Technician Kim Eckard to the Council.
  - 2) Police Chief Chris Jenkins will introduce Patrol Officers Alicyn Sterken and Deovoney Hawley to the Council.
  - 3) Police Chief Chris Jenkins will recognize the following individuals who were recently promoted – A) Lieutenant Ricky Lail, B) Detective Sergeant Clint Ferguson, and C) Sergeant Daniel Sharpe
- VII. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD MONDAY, JANUARY 10, 2022.**

**VIII. TOWN ATTORNEY REPORT**

**BRUCE CANNON**

**IX. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

**X. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**NONE SCHEDULED**

**XI. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS**

**1. CONSIDER APPOINTMENT OF TAX COLLECTOR**

At the December 6, 2021 Council meeting, the Council ratified the decision made by Town Manager Jerry Church to appoint Deputy Finance Director Ashley Presnell as Tax Collector until someone was permanently hired for this position. Town Manager Jerry Church appointed recent hire Kim Eckard to serve as Tax Collector and appointed Deputy Finance Director Ashley Presnell to serve as Deputy Tax Collector. Council is requested to ratify the Town Manager's decisions. (See attachment #1).

**2. ADVERTISE TAX LIENS ON 2021 TAXES**

Granite Falls Tax Collector Kim Eckard has submitted a certified list of property owners who have unpaid taxes that represent an unpaid tax lien. It is requested that Council set the date of Thursday, March 31, 2022 to advertise the 2021 unpaid taxes on real property as required by NCGS 105-369(c). (See attachment #2.)

**3. AUTHORIZATION TO APPROVE DISCOVERIES AND RELEASE TAXES**

Council is asked to authorize Granite Falls Tax Collector Kim Eckard to approve \$10.05 in property tax discoveries and to release taxes in the amount of \$114.69. Ms. Eckard submitted a certified request and the Caldwell County Tax Office verified the discoveries and releases.

At a regular Council meeting held on Monday, February 20, 2012, the Town Council approved a resolution allowing the Tax Collector not to bill a taxpayer, or otherwise attempt to collect property taxes when the principal amount of the property taxes due does not exceed \$3.00. The resolution requires the Tax Collector to keep a record of the amount of minimal taxes and report this to the governing body. Tax Collector Kim Eckard has reported that \$103.08, out of the \$114.69, in tax releases were for principal amounts of taxes due that were less than \$3. (See attachment #3.)

**4. FINANCIAL REPORT**

Town of Granite Falls Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Jana Williams will present the Financial Report for January, 2022. Fiscal year 2021-2022 is 58% completed. (See attachment #4.)

A) The Financial dashboard.

B) Sales tax revenue versus prior year and budgeted revenues.

C) Property tax revenue versus prior year and budgeted revenues.

D) Analysis of past due property taxes collected and property tax payment plans. (No attachment).

**5. ABC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Granite Falls ABC Board has submitted the financial statement for the quarter ended December 31, 2021 for your review and comments. (See attachment #5.)

**6. APPROVE BUDGET AMENDMENT #4 FY 20221-2022**

Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Jana Williams requests the Council approve budget amendment #4 for fiscal year 2022. (See attachment #6.)

Increase General Fund Budgeted Revenue – ABC School Receipts	\$17,890.00
Increase General Fund Budgeted Expense – ABC Distribution to Schools	\$17,890.00

**7. APPROVE 2<sup>ND</sup> QUARTER ABC DISTRIBUTION**

Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Jana Williams requests the Council authorize the distribution of ABC funds for \$17,890.25 to the local schools as follows:

Granite Falls Elementary School	36%	\$6,440.49
Granite Falls Middle School	36%	\$6,440.49
Dudley Shoals Elementary School	<u>28%</u>	<u>\$5,009.27</u>
Total Distribution	<u>100%</u>	<u>\$17,890.25</u>

These funds represent the portion of the ABC Store profit distribution to schools for the second quarter ended 12/31/2021. (See attachment #7.)

**8. APPROVE BUDGET AMENDMENT #5 – 2021-2022**

Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Jana Williams requests the Council approve budget amendment #5 for fiscal year 2022. (See attachment #8.)

Increase General Fund Federal Substance Tax Revenue	\$4,100.00
Increase Police Department Federal Drug Tax Expense	\$4,100.00

**9. CONSIDER HIRING 4 ADDITIONAL FULL-TIME FIREFIGHTERS, CONSIDER BUDGET AMENDMENT #6-2021-2022 FOR THE COST OF THE 4 ADDITIONAL FULL-TIME FIREFIGHTERS AND TO CONSIDER A NEW HEADCOUNT BUDGET FOR THE TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022**

At the January 10, 2022 Council meeting, Council approved Town staff applying for three additional full-time firefighters through the FEMA Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant. Late in the grant application process, our grant writer informed us that our grant application would not be funded unless the Town applied for at least seven additional firefighters so the SAFER Grant application was not submitted. Even if the grant application had been filed for 7 additional firefighters, it may not have been approved for funding and if it had been approved, it would not have given us the immediate assistance we need at GFFD. Additionally, it would have been extremely difficult to hire and train 7 new employees at once.

Unfortunately, we are losing one of our part-time employees who received a promotion from his primary employer and is moving to Virginia. We are also losing two more volunteers as one volunteer has taken full-time employment in Charlotte and another has decided he doesn't want to volunteer. We have two full-time firefighters that are retirement eligible now – one will be staying on through fiscal 2022-2023 and the other will retire shortly after 01/01/23 and will need to be replaced.

After discussing options extensively with Fire Chief Brian Bennett, Chief Bennett believes we will be able to provide adequate protection and response to fires and other emergencies by immediately hiring 4 additional firefighters. These new hires will make sure we have enough firefighters to comply with OSHA regulations that require us to have 5 firefighters on the scene (“2 in and 2 out”

before we can make an interior attack or conduct a rescue, plus 1 pump operator). Under normal conditions, these new hires would have been requested at the start of a new budget year. The estimated cost of hiring 4 additional firefighters for fiscal 2021-2022 is \$59,000 which computes to an annualized costs of \$236,000. The revenue side of the budget amendment is for the Council to authorize spending sales tax revenue collected over budget. The headcount budget for full-time employees would increase from 63 to 67 employees. As a side note, if future circumstances require the Town add 3 or more firefighters above and beyond these 4, the Town would have a better chance of obtaining a SAFER Grant.

Action requested: Council is requested to approve the request to add 4 full-time firefighters, to approve Budget Amendment #6 – 2021-2022 for the estimated costs for the 4 additional firefighters, and to approve the revised headcount budget for fiscal year 2021-2022. (See attachment #9.)

**10. APPROVE BUDGET AMENDMENT #7 – 2021-2022**

Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Jana Williams requests the Council approve budget amendment #7 for fiscal year 2022. (See attachment #10.)

Increase Water/Sewer Fund Miscellaneous Revenue	\$28,334.00
Increase Water/Sewer M&R Equipment - Water Plant	\$28,334.00

**11. APPROVE PREMIUM PAY PLAN FOR TOWN EMPLOYEES**

On January 10, 2022, Council agreed to use American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to provide premium pay to the dedicated Town employees who continued to provide exemplary service to Town citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic. Council is requested to approve the formal Town of Granite Falls Premium Pay Policy. (See attachment # 11.)

**12. APPROVE BUDGET AMENDMENT #8 2021-2022 AND TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF ARPA FUNDS TO PAY PREMIUM PAY PER THE TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS PREMIUM PAY POLICY AND APPROVE A REVISED AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE**

Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Jana Williams requests the Council approve budget amendment #8 and the transfer of ARPA funds to the Town General Fund and Enterprise Funds per the Town of Granite Falls Premium Pay Policy and to also approve a revised American Rescue Plan Act Grant Ordinance. (See attachment #12.)

**13. APPROVE STATE CAPITAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (SCIF) DIRECTED GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE FOR THE GRANITE FALLS RECREATION CENTER & SIDEWALKS PROJECT**

The Town received confirmation for two State Capital and Infrastructure Fund Directed Grants (SCIF) totaling \$330,000. The first SCIF grant is for \$150,000 (CIP #R40) for the addition of ADA compliant sidewalk to the walking path at the Recreation Center from the pool area/multipurpose field #3 to the back parking lot and to the sidewalk at the ADA playgrounds. Council is requested to approve a Grant Project Ordinance of \$150,000 for this project. (See attachment #13.)

**14. APPROVE STATE CAPITAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (SCIF) DIRECTED GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE FOR THE GRANITE FALLS RECREATION CENTER PARKING LOT PROJECT**

The Town received confirmation for two State Capital and Infrastructure Fund Directed Grants (SCIF) totaling \$330,000. The second SCIF grant is for \$180,000 (CIP #R51) for the construction of a new parking lot at the Recreation Center in the area between the former civic building and the water tank. Council is requested to approve a Grant Project Ordinance of \$180,000 for this project. (See attachment #14.)

**15. APPROVE SELECTION OF TGS ENGINEERS FOR ENGINEERING OF THE BIRCH STREET STORMWATER PIPE REPLACEMENT**

Council approved the replacement of stormwater drainage pipe underneath Birch Street (CIP-S41) as part of the 2021-2022 budget using Powell Bill Funds. Town staff has solicited quotes for engineering services for survey, design, bid letting, bid recommendation, contract administration, and construction observation and the lowest quote was from TGS Engineers, Shelby, NC (TGS) for \$25,000. Council is requested to approve the hiring of TGS to perform the engineering services for this project and to approve the Town Manager to finalize the Engineering Services Agreement and to execute the agreement on behalf of the Town. (See attachment #15.)

**16. APPROVE PROCLAMATION DESIGNATING MARCH 2022 AS AMERICAN RED CROSS MONTH**

Council is requested to approve a proclamation approving March 2022 as American Red Cross month. (See attachment #16.)

**17. APPROVE CHANGE TO THE COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE**

Council is requested to cancel the regular Council Meeting scheduled for Monday, March 7, 2022 in the Council Chambers and call for a special Council Meeting for Monday, March 7, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers located at 4 South Main Street.

**XII. OTHER BUSINESS NOT LISTED**

**XIII. MANAGER UPDATE**

Town Manager Jerry Church shall update the Council on the following:

1. Enclosed with your Agenda package is a calendar of events through the end of March 2023. Revisions since the last calendar are highlighted in yellow.
2. COVID-19 update.
3. The Town Manager participated in roundtable discussions with approximately 24 members of the Caldwell County Chamber of Commerce Leadership Caldwell Program.

**XIV. COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

1. WPCOG Policy Board
2. Caldwell County Railroad Policy Board
3. Sales Tax Reinvestment Committee
4. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Technical Coordinating
5. Caldwell County Economic Development Commission (EDC)
6. NC Municipal Power Agency # 1 Board of Commissioners
7. Caldwell County Manager's bi-monthly meeting

**INFORMATION ITEMS:**

1. The Granite Falls Recreation Advisory Board will not meet in February.
2. The Granite Falls Merchants' Association will not meet in February.
3. The Granite Falls History Committee met Tuesday, February 15<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. at the Museum.
4. The Granite Falls Planning Board will not meet in February.
5. The Granite Falls Board of Adjustment will not meet in February.
6. The WPCOG MPO/RPO will meet Wednesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1:00 p.m. at the WPCOG.
7. The Granite Falls ABC Board will meet Monday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. at the ABC Store.

In accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, neither the Town of Granite Falls, nor the Granite Falls ABC Board, discriminates on the basis of disability in conducting its meetings. Individuals with disabilities who require auxiliary aids or services or other accommodations for effective communication and participating in a meeting may contact the Town Clerk at (828) 396-3131. Requests should be made at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

**Reminder: The next Town Council Meeting is a special meeting on Monday, March 7, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Room.**