

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 3, 2025

REGULAR MEETING The Granite Falls Town Council held a Regular Meeting Monday, February 3, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Administrative Building.

PRESENT The following members of the governing body were present: Mayor Dr. Caryl B. Burns and Council Members Ritch Bolick, Larry Knight, Jim Mackie, Mike Mackie, Martin Townsend, and Tracy Townsend.

ABSENT The following member of the governing body was absent: None

STAFF PRESENT The following staff members attended the meeting: Town Manager Daniel Cobb, Town Attorney Bruce Cannon, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Officer Ashley Presnell, Town Clerk Paula Kirby, Police Chief Brine Branham, and Police Officer Michael Tackett.

VISITORS Barry Winkler

NEWS MEDIA No news media attended the meeting.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER Mayor Dr. Caryl B. Burns called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present.

INVOCATION Pastor Jay Worsley, First Baptist Church Granite Falls, led in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Councilmember Ritch Bolick led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT Councilmember Jim Mackie read the Conflict-of-Interest Statement.

*In accordance with the State Government Ethics Act, it is the duty of every Council member to avoid both conflicts of interest and the 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)*

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS/INTRODUCTIONS/RECOGNITIONS None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA Tracy Townsend made a motion the Council approve the agenda as presented. Larry Knight seconded the motion, which was followed by a unanimous affirmative vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

All items below are considered to be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion or separate votes of the items listed under the Consent Agenda unless a Councilmember requests that an item or items be considered as a separate item of new business. When a Councilmember makes this request, the item(s) will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered under agenda Section XII. New Business.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2025

ABC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS The Granite Falls ABC Board submitted the financial statements for the three-month period ending December 31, 2024, for Council review.

ABC DISTRIBUTION Town Finance Officer Ashley Presnell requested Town Council to authorize the distribution of ABC funds in the amount of \$14,268.24 to the local schools as follows:

Granite Falls Elementary School	36%	\$5,136.57
Granite Falls Middle School	36%	\$5,136.57
Dudley Shoals Elementary School	<u>28%</u>	<u>\$3,995.10</u>
Total Distribution	<u>100%</u>	<u>\$14,268.24</u>

TOWN HOLIDAY SCHEDULE The Town of Granite Falls Administrative Office, the Recreation Center, and the Public Works and Electric Departments will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

Good Friday	Friday, April 18 th
Memorial Day	Monday, May 26 th
Independence Day	Friday, July 4 th
Labor Day	Monday, September 1 st
Veterans Day	Tuesday, November 11 th
Thanksgiving	Thursday & Friday, November 27 th & 28 th
Christmas	Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday, December 24 th , 25 th , & 26 th

The Police & Fire Departments and the Water & Wastewater Facilities will be on duty as scheduled. Republic Services will pick up garbage and recycling on the regular schedule except for Christmas Day.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS APPROVED Martin Townsend made a motion the Council approve the items in the Consent Agenda as presented. Ritch Bolick seconded the motion, which was followed by a unanimous affirmative vote. Copies of the documents are attached and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

TOWN ATTORNEY REPORT Town Attorney Bruce Cannon did not have a report.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Barry Winkler speaks to the Council Barry Winkler, resident of 5692 Brookhollow Lane, Granite Falls, stated concerns regarding extreme noise coming from A1 Scrapyard, which is located near his residence. He stated the noise is coming from an unmuffled excavator and is constant. Mr. Winkler stated that he has spoken to Town Planner Greg Wilson numerous times, and nothing has been done to resolve the issue. Mr. Winkler also stated that he has expressed concerns to the Council at a previous meeting of EPA violations at the scrapyard property, but the minutes stated that he made “illegitimate statements” and nothing was done with that matter. Mr. Winkler is hoping to work with authorities to help in both matters. He stated that he felt taken advantage of and asked the Council to instruct Town employees to cooperate with him.

Town Attorney Bruce Cannon thanked Mr. Winkler for his comments. Attorney Cannon will be talking to Town Planner Wilson regarding these issues. Mr. Winkler was instructed to call Town Attorney Cannon or Town Planner Wilson with any questions or concerns.

PUBLIC HEARING None scheduled

NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

ADVERTISEMENT DATE FOR TAX LIENS ON 2024 TAXES APPROVED Granite Falls Tax Collector Katilyn Parlier submitted a certified list of property owners who have unpaid taxes that represent an unpaid tax lien. It was requested that the Council set the date of Thursday, April 24, 2025, to advertise the 2024 unpaid taxes on real property as required by NCGS 105-369(c).

Tracy Townsend made a motion the Council approve Thursday, April 24, 2025, as the advertisement date for tax liens on 2024 taxes. Mike Mackie seconded the motion, which was followed by a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the list is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

AUTHORIZATION TO APPROVE DISCOVERIES AND RELEASE TAXES The Town Council was requested to authorize Granite Falls Tax Collector Katilyn Parlier to approve \$1,979.49 in property tax discoveries and to release taxes in the amount of \$294.90. Ms. Parlier submitted a certified request, and the Caldwell County Tax Office verified the discoveries and releases.

Larry Knight made a motion the Council authorize Granite Falls Tax Collector Katilyn Parlier to approve \$1,979.49 in property tax discoveries and to release taxes in the amount of \$294.90. Martin Townsend seconded the motion, which was followed by a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of the 2024 property tax releases and discoveries is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

2024 TAX LEVY Granite Falls Tax Collector Katilyn Parlier submitted the revised 2024 Tax Levy, after the discoveries and releases, for Council review and comments. A copy of the 2024 Tax Levy is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

BUDGET AMENDMENT #2025-11 FOR INCREASED PROPERTY AND CASUALTY INSURANCE RENEWAL PREMIUMS APPROVED The Town's property, liability, and automobile insurance policy renewed as of February 1, 2025. The increase in premium is approximately 20%, or \$30,000 compared to last fiscal year. This increase is due in part to the number of claims submitted as well as increases in insurance costs nationwide. Town Manager Daniel Cobb stated that it may be a good idea to implement defensive driving classes for Town employees.

Mike Mackie made a motion the Council approve Budget Amendment #2025-11 as requested. Martin Townsend seconded the motion, which was followed by a unanimous affirmative vote. A copy of Budget Amendment #2025-11 is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

MANAGER UPDATE - TOWN MANAGER DANIEL COBB Town Manager Daniel Cobb updated the Council on the following:

1. Town Manager Cobb thanked the Council and Town Staff for attending the Budget Retreat on Friday, January 31st. He felt that it was time well spent.
2. Town Manager Cobb will be attending the North Carolina City and County Management Association Winter Seminar this week.
3. Town Manager Cobb recognized Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Ashley Presnell and Administrative Assistant Kara Calloway for their hard work with the FEMA reimbursement process from Hurricane Helene damages. This process is still ongoing.
4. The new tax value rates are available on the Caldwell County GIS. Residential property increases are 50%-60%, and commercial property increases are 20%-25%.
5. Manager Cobb informed the Council that former Town Manager Jerry Church is one of the recipients of the L.A. Dysart Award. This award recognizes individuals who exhibit extraordinary citizenship within their community. Mr. Church will receive the award at the Caldwell County Chamber of Commerce annual meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 27, 2025, the J.E. Broyhill Civic Center at 5:30 p.m. Manager Cobb encouraged Councilmembers to attend the meeting.
6. Manager Cobb informed the Council that the field work for the new Town sign safety report is complete. Manager Cobb will present the report to the Council when it's available.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. WPCOG Policy Board – The Council and Town Staff met Friday, January 31st at the WPCOG for a Budget Planning Retreat. Tracy Townsend stated that for every \$1 spent on dues equals \$369 of service, which is well worth to cost.
2. Caldwell County Railroad Policy Board - No report
3. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Technical Coordinating Committee - No report
4. Caldwell County Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDAC) – Town Manager Cobb stated that EDAC had applied for the Our State, Our Homes grant. This is an 18-month program to help communities develop capacity, analyze challenges, and implement strategies to address affordable housing and related issues in North Carolina. The WPCOG also applied and received the grant. They will be working together with this program.
5. NC Municipal Power Agency # 1 Board of Commissioners – No report
6. Caldwell County Managers’ bi-monthly meeting – Caldwell County Manager Donald Duncan will be leaving his position on February 27th to begin his career with the City of Asheboro.

INFORMATION ITEMS/REPORTS

1. The Recreation Advisory Board will not meet in February.
2. The Merchants’ Association does not have a meeting scheduled.
3. The History Committee will meet on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. at the History Museum. A Quilt Exhibition will be held in the near future.
4. The Planning Board will meet on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.
5. The Board of Adjustment will meet on Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Room.
6. The WPCOG MPO/RPO will meet on Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at the WPCOG.
7. The ABC Board will meet on Monday, February 10, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION None scheduled

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Town Manager Cobb informed the Council of a new business in Town. B Chord, formerly the Granite Falls Brewery, will be opening soon.
2. Police Chief Brine Branham recognized Police Officer Michael Tackett for being voted Officer of the Year. Chief Branham stated that Officer Tackett goes above and beyond his duties and is a great asset to the Police Department and the Town.
3. The Council is invited to an Open House event at the Duke Street Cottages on Friday, February 14th.

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MEETING ADJOURNED Tracy Townsend made a motion the Council adjourn the meeting.
Jim Mackie seconded the motion, which was followed by a unanimous affirmative vote.