



Town of Laurel Park
Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes
November 18, 2025, at 9:30 AM
Town Hall – 441 White Pine Drive, Laurel Park, NC 28739

Present:

Mayor O’Cain
Mayor Pro Tem Banta
Commissioner Bridges
Commissioner Bonnema
Commissioner Morse
Town Manager Reeves
Town Clerk Banks
Police Chief Trotter
Public Works Director Johnson
Mike Erwin
Edward Eaves

Absent:

Philip Wiehe
Fire Chief Garren

Call to Order

Mayor O’Cain called the meeting to order at 9:30am.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor O’Cain led members and attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

Mr. Erwin of 209 Rowland Drive addressed Town Council regarding a road closure issue where vehicles ignore posted signs and damage his driveway. He requested the town contact GPS services or Google Maps to update their navigation systems. The Town Manager agreed to reach out to DOT for assistance, as they would have more influence with navigation services.

A public comment from Jan Carter was read into the record regarding a wedding permit issue at Jump Off Rock on November 1st. Mrs. Carter requested a refund after another wedding party with a fraudulent permit disrupted her daughter's scheduled ceremony. Chief Trotter indicated she was investigating the incident and would determine potential recourse.

Approval of the Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Banta. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda included the minutes from October 21, 2025.

Motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Commissioner Morse. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

New Business

Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems Grant Program

Mr. Bud Melton from Civil Design Concepts presented information about available grant funding for decentralized wastewater systems in counties affected by Hurricane Helene. The funding opportunity would allow the town to address septic system issues in areas like lower Laurel Park through 100% principal forgiveness loans. Town Council expressed interest in pursuing this funding for both the Canal/Trellis area project and potentially a second project on Davis Mountain Drive. Town Council directed staff to work with Will Buie and Bud Melton to develop application before the January review period.

FY26 Budget Amendment - Transfer of ARPA Funds

A budget amendment was proposed to transfer approximately \$97,000 of ARPA funds from water/sewer infrastructure to the general fund for potential use in landslide repairs. After discussion about whether to maintain these funds for their original purpose of culvert repairs, the Council approved the amendment.

Motion to approve the budget amendment was made by Commissioner Bridges. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Old Business

Comprehensive Plan Committee Update

Town Manager Reeves reported that the comprehensive plan survey is live with hard copies available at Town Hall. If you need help filling out the survey or need to use a computer or Wi-Fi stop by Town Hall. Commissioner Bridges said as of this morning there were 65 responses received, which is up from 10 responses from last Friday.

Hurricane Helene Repair Project Update

Town Manager Reeves reported that Laurel Park is one of six municipalities eligible for section of amended language regarding the cash flow loan program terms. This modification means the town will not be required to repay any portion of its \$3.2 million State Treasurer Cashflow Loan programs #1, #2 and #3 until the latest of: June 30, 2030, final declination of FEMA coverage, or receipt of FEMA reimbursement funds.

Town Manager Reeves also provided updates on task orders for engineering services on repair projects, with the first 12-culvert project having engineering costs of \$488,000, and construction costs of \$2,050,000. Second task order will be the primary road project of Roberts Drive and Laurel Park Hwy at a cost of \$80,000 and the third project will be Fairway Drive and Panorama Drive cost of \$160,000.

Motion to authorize the Town Manager Reeves to sign task orders related to the cash flow loan for hurricane repairs up to \$3.2 million was made by Commissioner Bridges. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Staff Reports

Town Manager

Town Manager Reeves reported that Town Hall would be closed on November 24th for retention day. We hope Henderson County Tax Office will take the large tax binders we have and that City of Hendersonville will take the Water and Sewer billing which is taking up a lot of space. The Christmas tree lighting will be on December 3rd, and an update on asbestos abatement in Town Hall. Police Chief Trotter will give a wildlife update at the December 11, 2025, Work Session meeting. Town Manager Reeves said she received a quote from the NEO Corporation for asbestos abatement, mold remediation, lead litigation. That quote was \$21,000 dollars.

Public Works

Public Works Director Johnson reported they finished the FEMA debris cleanup, which has put them behind on the brush clean up but they should be finished with that this week. They are also working on the leaf collection, added new lights to the pumphouse and patched 10 potholes. The new tarp is on the way for Rowland Drive and road striping plans for primary roads should start soon I expect a phone call today letting me know when they can start. Public Works Director Johnson did a tour with DOT and the Engineer on Davis Mountain Rd. Staff finished up some Continuing Ed classes last week. Johnson, Pearce and Bingham will also be attending a required Stormwater Control Measure Training class. Mayor O'Cain asked Public Works if they could clean off the speed limit sign that is just below Bent Tree.

Fire

Police Chief Trotter reported on behalf of Fire Chief Garren. Fire Chief Garren said Tuesday meetings are difficult for him to get to and he would need to come in on the work sessions. They have been pretty busy with training and with the holidays coming they are gearing up for fires.

Police

Police Chief Trotter reported on police activity including 5,043 house checks, 5,499 business checks, and 58 vehicle stops resulting in 20 verbal warnings, 38 citations, 8 arrests were made, including 4 DWIs. Halloween in the Park went great. The department is fully staffed, and "Flock" cameras have been installed at key locations to assist with vehicle identification and tracking and will fill in gaps where the city and county do not have cameras.

Administration

Town Clerk Banks provided updates on upcoming events with Retention Day on 11/24/25, Christmas Tree Lighting on 12/3/25 and the Employee Christmas Gathering on 12/5/25. She also mentioned there were several vacancies on the Board of Adjustments, Henderson County appointed Charles Backer as a ETJ ALT.

Mayor and Town Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Bonnema mentioned the water sewer meeting was continuing into January due to ongoing disagreements between the county and city. Commissioner Banta announced his retirement from the Friends of the Ecusta Trail Board, and Commissioner Morse agreed to serve as the new liaison.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Morse at 10:50 am. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.