

**TOWN OF VALDESE  
TOWN COUNCIL PRE- AGENDA MEETING  
MAY 28, 2024**

The Town of Valdese Town Council met on Tuesday, May 28, 2024, at 3:00 p.m., in the Town Council Chambers at Town Hall, 102 Massel Avenue SW, Valdese, North Carolina. The Council meeting was live-streamed on YouTube @townofvaldese. The following were present: Mayor Charles Watts, Mayor Pro Tem Gary Ogle, Councilwoman Rexanna Lowman, Councilwoman Heather Ward, Councilman Glenn Harvey, and Councilman Paul Mears. Also present were: Interim Town Manager Bryan Steen, Town Attorney Tim Swanson, Town Clerk Jessica Lail, and various Department Heads.

Absent:

A quorum was present.

Mayor Watts called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. He offered the invocation and led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**PRESENTATION OF APPRECIATION** Mayor Watts presented the following Resolution of Appreciation to retiring Water Resources Director, Greg Padgett:

**WHEREAS**, Greg Padgett for the past 20 years has served the Town of Valdese with distinction as a committed and dedicated public servant with the Water Resource Departments; and

**WHEREAS**, throughout his tenure, Greg Padgett's profound knowledge and steadfast dedication have significantly contributed to the effective management and sustainability of our vital water resources; and

**WHEREAS**, under Greg Padgett's guidance, the Town of Valdese has made remarkable strides in the efficient utilization and conservation of water ensuring it's availability for generations to come; and

**WHEREAS**, Greg Padgett has demonstrated exceptional leadership, fostering teamwork and collaboration within the Water Resource Departments, and earning the respect and admiration of colleagues and community members alike; and

**WHEREAS**, Greg Padgett has consistently demonstrated a passion for environmental stewardship, advocating for responsible water management practices and spearheading initiatives to safeguard our water supply; and

**WHEREAS**, Greg Padgett's leadership led to innovative modifications in disinfection treatment strategies, enhancing public safety while simultaneously reducing chemical costs, including pioneering a first in the State pilot study to replace chlorine disinfection with peracetic acid disinfection; and

**WHEREAS**, Greg Padgett played a pivotal role in the development and advancement of Valdese's annual Capital Improvement Process (CIP), ensuring continued infrastructure enhancements for the community's benefit; and

**WHEREAS**, Greg Padgett's continuous dedication has resulted in the optimization and maintenance of our water facilities, ensuring a consistently high level of service for our residents.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Town Council of the Town of Valdese as we take this occasion to express honor, respect, and admiration to **Greg Padgett** for his outstanding contributions to the Water Departments and the Town of Valdese.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Town Council of the Town of Valdese, North Carolina, hereby expresses its sincere appreciation and gratitude to **Greg Padgett** for his service and leadership to the Water Departments and the Town of Valdese during the past 20 years and extends congratulations and best wishes upon his retirement.

May 28, 2024, MB#32

Adopted this the 28<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2024.

/s/ Charles Watts, Mayor

**REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF JUNE 3, 2024 PRELIMINARY AGENDA:**

Assistant Town Manager Bo Weichel added one item under Consent Agenda 6 F. Approval of American Rescue Plan Act Funding Policies. Mr. Weichel added a seventh policy title, Electronic Advertisement.

Mayor Watts asked if there were any questions under the consent agenda. No questions were asked.

**VALDESE POLICE DEPARTMENT PRESENTATION** Mayor Watts said that this presentation would take place on June 3, 2024.

**RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENTS AND/OR REAPPOINTMENTS TO VALDESE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT CORPORATION (VEDIC) BOARD**

Mayor Watts noted that there would be two appointments nominated by the VEDIC Board, Tim Barus and Kylie Gera. Mayor Watts said if Council members have other nominations, that would take place at the June 3, 2024 meeting. If someone is interested in serving, an application can be found on the Town's website.

**RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

**FY 24-25 PROPOSED BUDGET AND SCHEDULING OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR MONDAY, JUNE 17, 2024**

Assistant Town Manager/CFO Bo Weichel recapped what Council wanted removed from the General Fund budget from the last meeting, \$100,000 Land Use Plan, reduced Attorney fees from \$120,000 to \$80,000, \$150,00 of the \$324,000 Public Safety money will go towards additional paving, ABC revenue that was being put into Public Safety goes back into the General Fund, added a \$2.00 Recycling fee increase, reduced Friday Family Night series in the amount of \$40,000, removed money for a full-time planner, reduced County election fees, and added \$5,000 for additional Police training. Mr. Weichel said we are at a \$69,000 fund balance appropriation with all those numbers run. Councilman Harvey was concerned that there were some things the Council had not resolved, such as staff COLAs, and recommended a 4% increase with money allocated for staff training. Councilman Harvey identified the training needed: Process Improvement, Customer Service, and Teamwork. Mayor Watts expressed his concerns about the staff COLA and workforce shortage and recommended a 5% increase. Councilman Harvey would like a salary study completed. Councilwoman Lowman has no problem adding training to the budget but would like the Council to be included in the training. Councilman Mears likes the idea of training, an updated salary study, and a 5% COLA. Councilman Harvey asked the Council members to consider removing themselves from the employee insurance program and adding compensation to cover the expense. Mr. Weichel suggested waiting until the new manager is hired to determine what training we need and then do a budget amendment at that time for the cost. Councilwoman Ward expressed disappointment for not having an orientation when appointed and feels that is a big reason why the Attorney fees are higher.

Mr. Weichel recapped the Utility Fund and shared that we are not pulling anything from the reserves. Mr. Weichel said that we have the outside water user's rate at 1.5 times over a 2.0 multiplier, moved inside residential water to a no increase, and increased the bulk users to 6%. Mr. Weichel noted that we removed the \$600,000 vector truck and moved that fund to add more aerators to do a one-and-done installation. The Council discussed the outside water rate with the 2.0 multiplier because they have received many calls and complaints. Most of the Council members would like to see the 1.5 multiplier. If we do, Mr. Weichel noted that we would have to look at the capital plan and possibly take away an aerator.

Councilman Harvey asked if the Efficiency Committee looked into the in-ground lift for \$30,000, which was reduced to \$20,000, a pickup truck in the Streets department, and a tractor with a mower for \$60,000. Mr. Weichel said they looked at it and decided it was best to keep those in the budget, so they are currently still in the budget. Councilman Harvey asked about the fee schedule and if there were any deferential outside fees. Mr. Weichel said there was some at the Recreation Center. Councilwoman Lowman asked if we had looked into adding adult orthodontics to the dental plan. Mr. Weichel said we did add it at a minimal cost. The Council further discussed staff COLAs and insurance plans. Councilman Mears, Councilwoman Lowman, and Councilman Ogle want a 5% COLA. Councilwoman Ward is having a hard time determining what the COLA should be.

May 28, 2024, MB#32

Mr. Weichel asked if the Council wanted to add a fee for public records request that was discussed at an earlier meeting. Town Attorney Tim Swanson said that you could charge for the IT time for email records requests and that the Town is getting around three to four requests a month for emails. Mr. Weichel said that IT services are \$110.00 an hour. Councilwoman Lowman feels if someone wants the records, that fee is too high, and she has a problem with that. Councilman Mears is not in agreement but recommends letting the requestor know how much it costs the Town. There will not be a fee added to the fee schedule.

**RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

**REVISION TO VALDESE TOWN COUNCIL RULES & REGULATIONS – RULE 5. PUBLIC COMMENT - COUNCIL DISCUSSION** Interim Town Manager Bryan Steen asked if the Council wanted to change the rules of public comments. Councilwoman Lowman is very pleased with what we have in place and does not think we should limit people. Councilman Harvey liked the Town of Albemarle Rules and Regulations that Mr. Steen shared with the Council and thought they had good ideas. Mayor Watts and Councilman Mears are happy with keeping things as they are. Councilwoman Ward would be in favor of limiting the presentations. Council members would like to see the presentations limited to 15 minutes and leave the public comments at five minutes. Town Attorney Tim Swanson will look at language to limit presentations to 15 minutes.

**RESULT: REMOVED FROM THE JUNE 3, 2024, MEETING**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING NEW TOWN OF VALDESE AD HOC STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE** Councilman Harvey shared that there are three proposed new ad hoc committees to continue public involvement. Councilwoman Lowman asked if we could wait until we got a Town Manager to get input from them. Councilman Harvey feels it is a Council decision.

**RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING NEW TOWN OF VALDESE AD HOC UTILITIES INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE**

**RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING NEW TOWN OF VALDESE AD HOC MERCHANTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING RESOLUTION OF LOCAL ADMINISTERED PROJECT PROGRAM (LAPP) LOVELADY SIDEWALK** Planning Director Larry Johnson shared that he and Councilman Harvey attended a Transportation meeting in April in Hickory and learned that funding was available for certain projects. Staff came up with a project that would install a sidewalk from Laurel Street along the northern edge of Lovelady Road down to the park. Mr. Johnson shared that this would be completed in two phases: phase 1 would be the sidewalk construction from Laurel to Crescent Street, and phase 2 would be to continue to Lakeside Park. Mr. Johnson noted that the Resolution would need to be approved so the Town could apply for the funds. Mr. Johnson said the commitment for the Town would be 20%.

**Lovelady Sidewalk Phase 1: STBG-DA Funding – Funding to construct sidewalk connecting existing Laurel Street sidewalk to Crescent Street NE.**

- Estimated Total Project Cost: \$1,430,700.00
  - o 80% Federal Share: \$1,144,560.00
  - o 20% Local Share: \$286,140.00

**Lovelady Sidewalk Phase 2: STBG-DA Funding – Funding to construct sidewalk connecting phase 1 to Lake Rhodhiss Drive.**

- Estimated Total Project Cost: \$2,240,960.00
  - o 80% Federal Share: \$1,792,768.00
  - o 20% Local Share: \$448,192.00

May 28, 2024, MB#32

Daniel Odom, Transportation Projects Director from WPCOG said that the applications will be reviewed and approved in June.

**RESULT: PLACED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA AT THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

**CONSIDERATION OF MASTER SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH MCGILL ASSOCIATES** Assistant Town Manager/CFO Bo Weichel shared that this agreement is an on-demand professional service we can use for Water Resources expertise since Greg Padgett retired and for task orders on actual projects. Mr. Weichel, we would pay hourly as needed.

**RESULT: PLACED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA AT THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

**CONSIDERATION OF INTERIM TOWN MANAGER**

**RESULT: MOVED TO AFTER CLOSED SESSION**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING RESOLUTION OF AUTHORIZING UPSET BID PROCESS FOR THE SALE OF TOWN-OWNED PROPERTY – 338 TRON AVE** Assistant Town Manager/CFO Bo Weichel said the following two items go together. The Town received an offer of \$3,500 to purchase two side-by-side parcels, and this resolution would allow us to go through the upset bid process. Councilman Harvey noted that the lots are assessed at \$20,000. Councilman Harvey said the Town has five to six parcels left and recommends the Council give a local realtor the opportunity to list and market them. Councilman Harvey recommended not taking this offer.

**RESULT: REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING RESOLUTION OF AUTHORIZING UPSET BID PROCESS FOR THE SALE OF TOWN-OWNED PROPERTY – 342 TRON AVE**

**RESULT: REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING RESOLUTION OF SALE OF TOWN-OWNED PROPERTY - 308 STUART AVE SE** Assistant Town Manager/CFO Bo Weichel shared that the following three items went through the upset bid process by the same person, and there were no upset bids. Mr. Weichel noted that 308 Stuart was for \$10,000, 317 Stuart was for \$20,000, and 460 Perkins was for \$40,000.

**RESULT: PLACED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA AT THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING RESOLUTION OF SALE OF TOWN-OWNED PROPERTY - 317 STUART AVE SE**

**RESULT: PLACED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA AT THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING RESOLUTION OF SALE OF TOWN-OWNED PROPERTY – 460 PERKINS RD SE**

**RESULT: PLACED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA AT THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

**CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE AMENDMENT – CLINE AVE PUMP STATION** Assistant Town Manager/CFO Bo Weichel said that this amendment is just amending the Capital Project Ordinance to account for the construction cost and SRP loan we are getting.

**RESULT: PLACED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA AT THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

May 28, 2024, MB#32

**CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE – POOL STRUCTURE** Assistant Town Manager/CFO Bo Weichel said this is setting up a Capital Project Ordinance for the pool structure at the Aquatics Center.

**RESULT: PLACED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA AT THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

Town Attorney Tim Swanson said that we needed to add a Trail Easement between Hoyle Creek and Lake Rhodhiss Road to the June 3, 2024, agenda.

**RESULT: PLACED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA AT THE NEXT MEETING ON JUNE 3, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

**INTERIM MANAGER'S REPORT:**

Family Friday Nights continue each Friday in June on Temple Field from 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Valdese Independence Day Celebration, Friday, June 28, 2024, 6:00 p.m., Main Street

Next Regular Council meeting scheduled for Monday, June 17, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION:** Mayor Watts called for a motion to recess into Closed Session for:

- **Closed Session under NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(3)** to consult with an attorney retained by the Town in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the Town attorney and the Town Council, which privilege is hereby acknowledged.
- **Closed Session Pursuant to NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6)** to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee.

At 4:49 p.m., Councilwoman Lowman made a motion to go into closed session, seconded by Councilman Mears. The vote was unanimous.

At 5:34 p.m., Councilwoman Lowman made a motion to return to open session, seconded by Councilwoman Ward. The vote was unanimous.

**ADJOURNMENT:** At 5:36 p.m., there being no further business to come before Council, Councilman Harvey made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilwoman Lowman. The vote was unanimous.

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Town Clerk

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Mayor

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