

MINUTES FOR BOARD OF ALDERMEN WORK SESSION
January 28th, 2025
5:00 PM

The following elected officials were present: Mayor Beaty, Alderman Martin, Alderman Withers, Alderman Cloninger, Alderman Milton, and Alderman Cearley.

The following Staff members were present: Jonathan Newton, Town Manager; Robbie Walls, Police Chief; Lanny Smith, Electric Director; Bill Trudnak, Public Works Director; Lindsey Tysinger, Town Clerk; Zack Foreman, Assistant Public Works Director; Kristin Boone, Finance Director; Brittany Beams, Planner; Sonny Gibson, Electric Supervisor; Dusty Haney, Assistant Fire Chief; Chris Page, Fire Captain; Earl Withers, Fire Chief; and Marcus Fleming, Police Captain.

Mayor Beaty called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

The Mayor then opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Beaty asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda. Alderman Cloninger made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Alderman Cearley and carried unanimously.

New Business:

Item 3A - Presentation – Lowell, Ranlo, Dallas PD Mission Trip

There will be a PowerPoint presentation followed by a few officers discussing the Mission Trip to Lake Lure and Chimney Rock in October 2024, that the Dallas PD, Ranlo PD, Ranlo FD, and Lowell PD participated in during Hurricane Helene.

Chief Harrison of Lowell showcased a slideshow detailing the Mission Trip to Lake Lure and Chimney Rock. He highlighted the dedication of the officers in assisting the impacted areas and the devastation they encountered. Board members and staff expressed their gratitude to the officers for their hard work, concluded in a standing ovation.

Item 3B - Volunteer Company Officer of the Year for 2024

Fire Chief Earl Withers the III, to formally introduce Chris Page who was awarded the Western North Carolina Association of Firefighters Volunteer Company Officer of the Year award for 2024.

Fire Chief Withers spoke on the hard work and dedication of Captain Chris Page by detailing some of his top moments as a Firefighter for the Dallas Fire Department. Board and Staff congratulated Chris for his accomplishment.

Item 3C - Gaston 250 Presentation

Director of Communications & Marketing Department, Dandria Bradley, will be giving the Gaston 250 presentation on behalf of Gaston County.

Dandria Bradley presented a slide presentation detailing Gaston 250. Ms. Bradley stated that on July 4, 2026 America will celebrate its 250th birthday, this initiative was launched at the federal level and then pushed down to the state level. Gaston County was able to receive funding in the amount of \$10,000 in the first round of grants from the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources to fund our efforts in getting the word out about Gaston 250 and America 250. Gaston county was one of the first to form a committee, the Gaston 250 Committee is made up of more than forty members that represent multiple historical groups throughout the county and most municipalities. Last year the committee created a logo that was approved in September. There has also been a website created for people to begin to gain information from. Within the upcoming year and half the committee plans to get the word out about the Gaston 250 initiative.

Item 3D - § 91.02 Noises Expressly Prohibited

At the November 12th Board Meeting, Staff was tasked with reviewing the noise ordinance, identifying issues, and gathering facts. They are to present copies of the ordinance and recommendations at the next work session for the Board's review.

Findings:

July 2012 - Item 10F- Staff was advised to present a revised ordinance at the next meeting with a public hearing. August 2012 - 1st item under Public Hearing - 3 yays/2 nays - needed 4 affirmative votes from Board Members to pass, brought back to next meeting to vote again. September 2012 - Item 9A - No motion was made, so ordinance will remain in its original form. Town staff worked on revising this ordinance and are proposing to remove the General Entertainment ordinance and replacing it with the same times as currently stated in our ordinance with also including dbA ranges as well. Attached is the revised noise ordinance.

Town Manager Jonathan Newton presented the item and discussed the revised noise ordinance. This item will be brought back to Februarys meeting for vote.

Item 3E - Personnel Policy Approval

The Administration/Personnel sub-committee of the Board of Aldermen met on October 12, 2023 to discuss employee compensation and ways to ensure that employee compensation is appropriate. In order to ensure that the Town's salary structure, job descriptions, and Personnel Policy are up to date, the Committee is recommending that a salary study be done that will also include updating job descriptions and the Personnel Policy. The study will conducted by The MAPS Group and can be accomplished in time to make necessary adjustments in the upcoming FY2024/25 budget year. The Salary Study was completed in July 2024 and now we are to the last phase of this study with updating our personnel policy. At the November 26th work session, the policy was discussed only in regards to changing the grievance officer. After further investigation, the Town Manager would like to be the grievance officer, reflected in the policy, instead of the Mayor going forward. Also, in our previous policy, Department Heads were to be on a twelve month probationary period. In the new policy, we'd like to have the department heads on a six month probationary period like regular employees with the exception that the Manager can extend the probationary period another six months if they deem it necessary.

Town Manager Jonathan Newton presented the item, stated that at the previous meeting it was discussed to change the grievance officer from Mayor to Town Manager. Newton looked into other municipalities and the grievance officer is also the Town Manager. The other change is the probationary period for Department Heads from a 12 Month period to a 6 Month period with the exception that the Manager can extend the probationary period another six months. This item will be brought back to the February meeting for vote.

Item 3F - New World IT Provider for the Police Department

In February 2023, the Town began using a new IT provider for the Town. This company is well known, however, they are not equipped as much as we thought for Police Departments. Over the last year, we have had a lot of hiccups with our current provider and our officers are not able to do their day to day operations due to waiting on IT to fix their issues they are having. Staff has had numerous meetings with the current provider, as well as the proposed new provider.

Chief Walls would like to discuss another IT provider for the Police Department. Attached, you will find a breakdown cost of:

- 1) Startup
- 2) Cost the PD could reduce this fiscal year
- 3) Annual cost to our current IT provider for the Police Department.

If approved to move forward, a budget amendment will follow in February for final approval. (Exhibit 3F 1-2)

Town Manager Jonathan Newton presented the item, went over the breakdown of New World IT and discussed cuts that could be made in the budget to assist with the cost. Staff discussed with the Board the current problems they are experiencing with our current IT preventing Officers from being able to do their duties. This item will be brought back to the February meeting for vote.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Beaty informed staff and Board of an upcoming Disaster Relief trip in Black Mountain with the Red Truck Men on March 8th, will give us more information closer to date.

Manager Report

Town Manager, Jonathan Newton informed staff and Board that the Parks and Recreation Department received an event application from the No Brainer Foundation, for Jackson Hall Celebration of Life on March 11th 6-8 PM at the ballfield behind Carr Elementary.

Alderman Cloninger made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderman Cearley and carried unanimously (5:57).

Hayley Beaty, Mayor

Lindsey Tysinger, Town Clerk

Tyler Technologies (City of Gastonia and Gaston County)

New World Start Up Cost

Amendment for FY25

	\$22,080	Connectivity/Software/Hardware
	\$56,350	Equipment/ Laptops/ Printers/ Etc
	\$2,500	Spectrum (\$500 monthly cost)
	\$24,500	Gastonia IT (\$49k annually)
	<u>\$105,430</u>	

Deletions from current budget if went live in February

In Current Budget	\$ 2,200.00	Cell Phones
	\$ 722.75	Desk Phones
	\$ 3,420.00	Mifis
	\$ 24,800.00	Current IT Provider (Yearly Cost \$59,520)
	\$ 31,142.75	Total reduction for FY 2025

New World Yearly Cost	\$49,000	Gastonia IT
FY 2025-2026 budget	\$6,000	Spectrum Internet
	<u>\$55,000</u>	

