

**MINUTES
WATAUGA CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP
MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2022
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBER, 7105 WHITLEY ROAD
5:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

The Workshop Meeting of the City Council was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The meeting convened with the following members present:

Arthur L. Miner	Mayor
Lovie Downey	Mayor Pro Tem/Council Member Place 3 (Absent w/Notice)
Pat Shelbourne	Council Member Place 1
Tom Snyder	Council Member Place 2
Andrew Neal	Council Member Place 4
Malissa Minucci	Council Member Place 5
Mark Taylor	Council Member Place 6
Jan Hill	Council Member Place 7

and

Linda Proskey	City Secretary
Joshua Jones	City Manager
David Berman	City Attorney
Tonya DeGrand	Animal Control Supervisor
Juliet Rodriguez	HR Director
Robert Parker	Police Chief

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements from the Mayor and City Council at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Requests for public comment were received. The mayor called:

- Cindy Ferguson, 1029 Black St, stated to the council that she supports the Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR) Program.
- Connie Stout, 5505 Janet Lane, Colleyville, is with Mid-Cities Community Cats. Connie asked the council to consider the Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR) Program. She provided the council with some facts and brought up information listed on the city's webpage.
- Kristen Richmond, 5912 Cathy Ct, is an active volunteer of Classic Cats. Kristen told the council to consider the Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR) Program as a resident and volunteer. She sees that what is being done now is not making a dent and that the council is doing the right thing by considering (TNVR).

PUBLIC TESTIMONY FOR ACTION ITEMS

Requests for public testimony were not received

PRESENTATIONS

1. Information about a Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Program for the feral cat population

Tonya DeGrand, Animal Control Supervisor, introduced this item and gave some information she found from her research on the TNR program. Next, Ms. DeGrand introduced Joe Stout from Mid-Cities Community Cats to further discuss this topic. Mr. Stout presented what is and how TNR works to the council.

Councilman Taylor said he is a cat guy and stated his opinions on this topic. Taylor said he advocates it and thinks the city should look into it or start a subcommittee of council members to work with animal control and code to see what kind of program the city can adopt. He is a 100% supporter of the TNR program.

Councilwoman Hill started by saying she's a dog and allergic to cats but told a story about a stray, abandoned cat she cared for and that the cat adopted her. She cared for the cat because she knew any shelter would have killed it. She further discussed her opinions on this topic, concluding that she favors the TNR program.

Councilman Neal inquired how long the vaccine is effective for cats. Mr. Stout and Ms. DeGrand answered the inquiry. Councilman Neal further asked about the number of feral cats in Watauga. Ms. DeGrand could not give an estimated number. Councilman Neal brought up concerns about the shelter already being at capacity, the time to keep these cats, displacing the cats that do need to come into the shelter, and the staff time. He acknowledges that trap and kill is not the answer but raises concerns about cats being mobile. Without support from surrounding cities or a uniform policy among multiple municipalities involving this program, he wonders whether the city can put a dent in this problem with a TNR program.

Ms. DeGrand addresses the council, stating that the residents are educated on the traps they lend to residents and are provided with all their options. She also says she keeps cats for four days because she knows cats are scared and may need some time before being evaluated.

Councilman Shelbourne inquired if they did provide this program, who would keep, neuter, feed, house, and pay for them. Ms. DeGrand addressed this question.

Mayor Miner addressed Ms. DeGrand that before assigning a committee, he would like some information in a report to include a timeline from trap to release, what has currently been spent annually on euthanasia, and from code enforcement on how many people we have fined.

2. Discuss and provide directions to the City Secretary on amendments to the Council Rules of Procedure and Code of Conduct Manual.

This item was moved to the following scheduled workshop meeting in January.

2. ~~3.~~ Discuss policy updates being presented for January 1, 2023 effective date.
(This was moved to Item 2.)

Joshua Jones, City Manager, stated that the leave bank liability is the goal of alleviating the cost to the city. These policies are to address this. Juliet Rodriguez, Human Resources Director, presented this item to the council. She explained the changes or new policies created for performance evaluations, tuition reimbursement, Longevity pay, telecommuting/work flexibility program, Holidays, vacation leave, sick leave, and classification & compensation plan.

Councilwoman, Minucci asked about vacation pay for terminated employees, and Ms. Rodriguez answered the questions.

Councilman, Taylor inquired if pulling the vacation and sick time together was considered. City Manager Jones answered this inquiry. Councilman, Taylor further asked about sick time. Ms. Rodriguez answered this inquiry.

Councilman, Snyder inquired about the budget fund for the leave, if compensation time is included, and the one week of vacation. Mr. Jones addressed these inquiries.

Councilman, Neal inquired about the tuition reimbursement amount and if employee certifications applied to this budget. Mr. Jones and Ms. Rodriguez addressed these inquiries. Councilman Neal also discussed the legality of the vacation pay for terminated employees. Attorney Berman addressed these inquiries.

Councilwoman Hill inquired about the forty hours to inquire if they could take part of the time if needed or if it had to be a total of forty hours. Ms. Rodriguez answered this inquiry.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

APPROVED: this 8th day of May, 2023.

SIGNED: this 9th day of May, 2023.

APPROVED:

[Redacted Signature]

Arthur L. Miner, Mayor

ATTEST:

[Redacted Signature]

Linda Proskey, City Secretary



NOTE: Original Audio and Video Recording of this meeting is preserved and maintained by the City Secretary's Office.

