



**MINUTES
WATAUGA CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MEETING
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER,
7105 WHITLEY ROAD,
MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 2025
5:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Arthur Miner called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The meeting convened with the following members present:

Arthur L. Miner
Malissa Minucci
Pat Shelbourne
Cris Blackburn
Lovie Downey
Andrew Neal
Mark Taylor
Jan Hill

Mayor
Mayor Pro Tem/Council Member Place 5
Council Member Place 1
Council Member Place 2
Council Member Place 3
Council Member Place 4
Council Member Place 6
Council Member Place 7

and

Sandra Gibson
Linda Proskey
David Berman
Timothy Hamilton
Deby Woodard
Julie Rodriguez

Interim City Manager/Finance Director
City Secretary
City Attorney
Director of Parks and Community Services
Assistant Finance Director
Library Director

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements made.

Public Comments/Public Testimony

There were no requests to speak

PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation of proposed Personnel Policy updates.

Juliet Rodriguez, Human Resources and Civil Service Director, presented the proposed personnel policy updates set to take effect on February 11, 2025. She stated that These policy updates aim to enhance clarity, improve employee retention, and ensure greater operational efficiency. The revisions include changes to the Certification Policy (4.05), expanding eligibility for certification pay to full-time sworn peace officers, firefighters, the City Marshal, and Police Chiefs.

The Classification & Compensation Policy (6.04) introduces succession training pay, providing a one-time stipend of up to 3% of an employee's annual salary for training exceeding 30 days. This initiative aims to prepare employees for leadership roles and improve retention.

The On-Call & Call-Back Policy (6.05) will now apply only to non-exempt employees. Additionally, employees on vacation or sick leave will be excluded from receiving on-call pay to promote proper work-life balance.

The Holiday Policy (8.01) allow new hires to use personal days within their first six months with department head approval, while restricting the use of personal and birthday holidays during the last two weeks of employment.

Lastly, the Inclement Weather Policy (18.01) clarifies essential worker requirements. Department heads may call in only necessary staff, and essential employees required to work during early closures or delayed openings will be granted compensatory time.

Councilmember Neal requested clarification on whether both exempt and non-exempt employees could be placed on call and whether exempt employees would be permanently on call. Julie Rodriguez explained that exempt staff are generally expected to be available without being formally assigned on-call duties, as on-call pay applies only to non-exempt employees.

He then asked whether employees on vacation leave were eligible for on-call pay and whether this would apply to exempt employees. Rodriguez reiterated that the policy applies solely to non-exempt personnel. Neal further questioned whether exempt employees were expected to respond to calls while on vacation or if they were encouraged to fully disconnect. Rodriguez stated that the goal is for all employees to disconnect during vacation; however, in emergencies, exempt staff would be contacted before non-exempt personnel.

Councilmember Minucci addressed the inclement weather policy, asking whether essential employees must use their PTO during such events. Rodriguez explained that the policy applies to essential workers—police, fire, and public works—who are required to work during closures. To address compensatory time, the policy proposes granting comp time to essential personnel who must remain at work during closures, with department heads determining assignments.

Councilmember Blackburn expressed support for the succession plan, emphasizing the importance of mitigating leadership gaps. She inquired about a vetting process for identifying high-potential employees for key roles. Rodriguez acknowledged that while no formal vetting process exists, performance evaluations due on March 1 will help department directors identify employees for development and internal growth.

Councilwoman Hill asked about the birthday holiday, specifically whether employees must take it on their birthday or if they could use it later. Rodriguez explained that while the intent is for employees to use it within their birthday month, they may use it at any time throughout the calendar year due to scheduling challenges, particularly for police and firefighters. New hires receive the holiday upon employment and may use it for the remainder of the year, even if their birthday has already passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting at 5:48 p.m.

Approved: this 10 day of March, 2025

Signed: this 11 day of March, 2025

APPROVED:

/s/ Arthur L. Miner

Arthur L. Miner, Mayor

ATTEST: [Signature]

/s/ Linda Proskey

Linda Proskey, City Secretary



