



**MINUTES
WATAUGA CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER,
7105 WHITLEY ROAD,
MONDAY, JULY 28, 2025
6:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Arthur Miner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The meeting was convened with the following members present:

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

Mayor
Mayor Pro Tem Place 2
Council Member Place 1
Council Member Place 3
Council Member Place 4
Council Member Place 5 (Absent w/notice)
Council Member Place 6
Council Member Place 7

and

Sandra Gibson
Linda Proskey
David Berman
Timothy Hamilton
Jennifer Calvert
Randy Barkley
James Lewis
Julie Rodriguez
Paul Hackleman
Lana Ewell

City Manager
City Secretary
City Attorney
Director of Parks and Community Services
Finance Director
Fire Chief
Police Chief
Director of Human Resources
Director of Public Work
Library Director

INVOCATION

Associate Pastor Matthew Hust of the First Baptist Church of Watauga and Police Chaplin gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Miner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember Blackburn mentioned that the Clear the Shelter event is underway and that there are many adoptable dogs and kittens in need of homes.

Councilmember Neal thanked the library for hosting ToshoCon and stated that he really enjoyed it. He also reminded everyone that the splash pad is open and a great place to beat the summer heat. Lastly, he mentioned the Clear the Shelter event taking place at the animal shelter.

Councilmember Taylor reminded residents that concrete can get extremely hot and dogs can burn their paws, so people should be cautious about the time of day they walk their pets.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation by HUB International on the RFP Analysis for Medical, Dental, Vision, Life Insurance and Disability with purchase recommendations for the upcoming FY 25-26

Director of Human Resources Julie Rodriguez presented the item and introduced Heath Haygood from HUB International, who provided an overview of the RFP analysis and recommendations for the City's medical, dental, vision, life insurance, and long-term disability benefits. Haygood reported that the City's loss ratio over the past 12 months was approximately 82.8%, an improvement from prior years and within the target range of 80–85%. He reviewed the RFP responses and recommended renewing medical, dental, and vision coverage with Blue Cross Blue Shield, noting minor plan design adjustments, bundling discounts, and overall savings, including a 1.2% decrease in medical premiums. He also recommended renewing life and disability coverage with Mutual of Omaha, including enhancements to the basic life benefit. Councilmember Taylor asked several questions regarding loss ratio trends, premium contributions, benchmarking against surrounding cities, and plan network continuity. Staff explained current contribution tiers and employee HSA contributions and noted that additional benchmarking data could be provided. Taylor expressed concern about the level of comparative information provided for a same-day vote. Staff and Haygood clarified that plan networks remain unchanged, that most employee premiums will decrease, and that employee feedback since the previous special open enrollment has been largely positive.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no request for public comment

PUBLIC TESTIMONY FOR ACTION ITEMS

There was no request for public testimony

CONSENT AGENDA

1. **Consider action to approve the Revised NEFDA Interlocal Agreement (Pulled by Councilmember Taylor now action item #4)**
2. **Consider action to approve the Regular City Council Meeting minutes from July 14, 2025**
3. **Consider action to approve the May 12, 2025, City Council Workshop meeting minutes**
4. **Consider action to approve the declaration of the items listed on the July 2025 Surplus List as surplus personal property assets of the City, approved for sale or disposition.**
5. **Consider action to approve a 5-year service agreement with AA Wrecker for wrecker and towing services for emergency and non-emergency vehicle towing, as well as other services as needed.**
6. **Consider action to accept the Watauga Economic Development Corporation's Proposed Fiscal Year Budget for FY2025-2026; providing for all anticipated expenditures**
7. **Consider action to set the Watauga Economic Development Corporation's Proposed FY2025-2026 Budget Public Hearing for August 11, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. and the budget adoption Date for Monday, August 25, 2025**

Mayor Miner asked the council if they wish to pull any of the items.

Councilmember Taylor asked that Consent Item #1 be pulled from the consent agenda. Mayor Miner stated that this will now become Action Item #4

Mayor Miner asked for a Motion. Councilmember Neal made a motion to accept the consent agenda as amended. Councilmember Downey seconded the motion. Mayor Miner called for a vote.

Motion passed 6-0-0-1.

Ayes, Shelbourne, Blackburn, Downey, Neal, Taylor, Hill

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Minucci

ACTION ITEMS

- 1. Discuss and consider action to approve the purchase of Medical, Dental, and Vision Insurance for all eligible employees and to authorize the City Manager to execute a contract for employee health benefits FY 25-26 with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas.**

Juliet Rodriguez, Human Resources and Civil Service Director, presented the item and summarized the HUB RFP results and recommendations for employee benefits. She reported that Blue Cross Blue Shield, the current provider, offered a 1.2% decrease in medical premiums, while Cigna proposed an 11.1% increase, making Blue Cross Blue Shield the recommended provider for medical, dental, and vision coverage due to savings and bundling discounts. Enhancements include increased vision frame and contact allowances and an increase in the basic life benefit from \$100,000 to \$150,000 with Mutual of Omaha, which also offered a 7% decrease in long-term disability premiums with a three-year guarantee. Staff recommended retaining all four current medical plans, continuing HSA contributions of \$1,000 per employee and \$1,500 for employees with dependents, reducing premiums for three of the four plans, and sharing the PPO HSA plan increase with employees. Wellness initiatives, including the Watauga FIT program, annual physical incentives, health education, biennial health fairs, and open enrollment scheduled for August 18–29 with a kickoff on August 19, were highlighted. Rodriguez emphasized the time-sensitive nature of approval due to open enrollment deadlines and vendor coordination. Council discussed HSA participation, retiree and COBRA coverage, premium contributions, and tobacco surcharges. Councilmember Taylor promoted the HSA plan for younger, healthier employees, noting the long-term tax advantages, and Rodriguez confirmed that retirees pay 100% of premiums and COBRA participants receive temporary coverage. Additional benefits through First Financial Group of America, Mutual of Omaha, and Optum Bank—including supplemental insurance, EAP services, travel assistance, and HSA investing options—will continue. Rodriguez noted that a 2024 compensation study confirmed alignment with neighboring cities' benefits.

Mayor Miner asked for a motion. Councilmember Downey made a motion to approve the selection of Blue Cross Blue Shield for medical, dental, and vision coverage and to authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with Blue Cross Blue Shield. Mayor Pro Tem Blackburn seconded the motion.

With no further discussion Mayor Miner called for a vote.

Motion passed 6-0-0-1.

Ayes, Shelbourne, Blackburn, Downey, Neal, Taylor, Hill

Nays: None

Abstain: Minucci

2. **Discuss and consider action on approval to purchase Life/AD&D Insurance and Disability insurance with Mutual of Omaha for all eligible employees.**

Juliet Rodriguez, Human Resources and Civil Service Director, presented the item. Since she had covered the item previously, she asked if Council had any additional questions.

Hearing no further questions, Mayor Miner asked for a motion. Councilmember Hill made a motion to accept the item as presented. Councilmember Downey seconded the motion.

Mayor Miner called for a vote.

Motion passed 6-0-0-1.

Ayes, Shelbourne, Blackburn, Downey, Neal, Taylor, Hill

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Minucci

3. **Consider action to approve AN ORDINANCE BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATAUGA, TEXAS, AMENDING ARTICLE I ("IN GENERAL") OF CHAPTER 40 ("TRAFFIC AND VEHICLES") TO AMEND SECTION 40-4, AMENDING REQUIREMENTS FOR VISIBILITY TRIANGLES AT STREET AND DRIVEWAY INTERSECTIONS AND REVISING DIAGRAM; PROVIDING A REPEALING CLAUSE; PROVIDING A SAVINGS CLAUSE; PROVIDING FOR A PENALTY OF FINE NOT TO EXCEED THE SUM OF FIVE HUNDRED (\$500.00) DOLLARS FOR EACH OFFENSE; AND, PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE**

Paul Hackleman, Director of Public Works, addressed the agenda item as a continuation from the February meeting regarding safety and traffic along the corridor. He explained that staff had added visibility triangles to address both Council and citizen concerns about sightlines at intersections. A visibility triangle is an area where obstructions, such as tree limbs or shrubs, are limited to ensure drivers can see oncoming traffic. Specific height and clearance requirements were reviewed: tree limbs over streets must be removed if lower than 14 feet, sidewalks require 8 feet of clearance, and shrubs must remain below 2.5 feet. The ordinance was clarified to define the visibility triangle measurement from the street centerline rather than the curb, with an added eight-foot dimension to account for vehicle width and sight distance. Visual diagrams were updated with detailed dimensions to assist code enforcement in identifying property corners and parkways. Hackleman noted that

existing trees in sight triangles that pose hazards would be cited, with potential fines up to \$500. The changes also codified exceptions for long-standing driveways (30-plus/minus years), clarified measurement points for tree limbs, and addressed minor numerical corrections. The updates additionally support proper enforcement of bold pavement markings, such as those in Hightower and North Park, by incorporating the added eight-foot dimension.

Mayor Miner asked for a Motion. Councilmember Shelbourne made a motion to accept the item as presented. Councilmember Downey seconded the motion.

Mayor Miner called for a vote.

Motion passed 6-0-0-1.

Ayes, Shelbourne, Blackburn, Downey, Neal, Taylor, Hill

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Minucci

4. Consider action to approve the Revised NEFDA Interlocal Agreement (Was Consent Item #1)

Councilmember Taylor requested clarification on DFW Airport's participation in the Northeast Fire Department Association (NEFDA) program. Fire Chief Randy Barkley explained that DFW Airport, a long-time regional partner, recently joined the collaboration of 14 cities to provide additional manpower and specialized resources, including hazardous materials units, explosive ordnance teams, and K9 units. While these assets enhance NEFDA's overall response capabilities, they are not part of the capital replacement program, and the airport does not contribute to those costs. Their equipment may be used for specific incidents, such as large-scale commercial fires, but regular response duties remain with NEFDA units. Participation also allows for joint training and improved regional collaboration. Councilmember Taylor confirmed that this explanation addressed his questions regarding the capital replacement fund and the extent of DFW Airport's involvement.

Mayor Miner asked for a Motion. Councilmember Taylor made a motion to accept the item as presented. Councilmember Downey seconded the motion.

Mayor Miner called for a vote.

Motion passed 6-0-0-1.

Ayes, Shelbourne, Blackburn, Downey, Neal, Taylor, Hill

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Minucci,

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Mayor Miner asked Sandra Gibson, City Manager, for an update on the program for the WEDC.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

Approved: this 8 day of December, 2025

Signed: this 8 day of December, 2025

APPROVED:

/s/ Arthur L. Miner
Arthur L. Miner, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ Linda Proskey
Linda Proskey, City Secretary



