



**MINUTES
WATAUGA CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER,
7105 WHITLEY ROAD,
WEDNESDAY, JULY 30, 2025
5:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Arthur Miner called the meeting to order at 5:30 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/Council Member Place 2
Council Member Place 1
Council Member Place 3
Council Member Place 4
Council Member Place 5
Council Member Place 6
Council Member Place 7

and

Sandra Gibson
Linda Proskey
David Berman
Kevin Mead
Jennifer Calvert
Timothy Hamilton
Lana Ewell
Paul Hackleman

City Manager
City Secretary
City Attorney
Assistant Chief of Police
Finance Director
Parks and Recreation Director
Director of Library Services
Director of Public Works

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Pro Tem Blackburn read a statement in remembrance of Kip Woodruff former board and commission member.

Councilmember Neal, Councilmember Minucci, Councilmember Taylor, Councilmember Hill, Mayor Miner and Councilmember Shelbourne all echoed the condolences for former board member Kip Woodruff.

Public Comments/Public Testimony

There were no requests to speak

PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation on Facility Improvements and Possible Bond Election

City Manager Sandra Gibson explained that the City has been working with Brinker Sargeant, Hidell and Associates, and SAMCO to prepare information for a potential bond election. She introduced Bill Hidell of Hidell and Associates to review proposed library improvements.

Mr. Hidell reported that the Watauga Public Library continues to outperform state averages in programming and circulation, with attendance 180% above and circulation 220% above the Texas average. Despite offering over 800 annual programs, space constraints limit growth. A new two-story, 40,000-square-foot facility was proposed, expanding study rooms from six to eighteen and including dedicated program areas, improved staff spaces, and a drive-up book drop for efficiency. The estimated project cost has risen from \$17 million in 2019 to \$33.5 million in 2025 due to inflation and market conditions, incorporating photovoltaic and geothermal systems projected to cut energy use by 50%, though site feasibility remains uncertain.

Council discussion centered on location and logistics. Councilmember Taylor expressed concerns about service disruption and preferred a new site near Indian Springs for better parking. Mayor Pro Tem Blackburn questioned whether relocation could be more cost-effective and asked about staff input. Library Director Lana Ewell and other members favored the current site adjacent to the park, citing accessibility and community connection. Councilmembers Downey, Shelbourne, and others supported retaining the existing location, noting traffic flow and weekend activity alignment. Councilmember Neal asked about LEED certification and efficiency features; Mr. Hidell confirmed the building would meet current energy codes without formal LEED certification.

Following the library discussion, Denny Boles of Brinkley Sargent Wiginton Architects presented updated plans for the combined police and animal shelter facility. The design proposes a three-story, 24,000-square-foot structure integrating both departments to improve visibility and public engagement, with the shelter on the first floor and police functions above. The estimated cost increased from \$26.1 million to \$49 million, reflecting inflation and expanded features, including solar panels and specialized ventilation for the kennel area.

The design includes secure parking, a covered sally port, interview rooms, and administrative

offices. Councilmembers raised concerns about noise, odor, and proximity to other facilities, as well as safety, parking, and water mitigation. Mr. Boles addressed these issues, confirming soundproofing, ventilation, and fire safety measures, and noted no jail facilities would be included.

RECESS

Mayor Miner called for a recess at 7:08 pm.

RECONVENED

Mayor Miner reconvened the meeting at 7:16 pm.

City Manager Gibson then introduced Andrew Friedman of SAMCO to outline the potential bond election. To be called mid-August 2025 for a November vote, the bond would fund both projects, with bidding expected in late 2026 or early 2027 and first payments due February 2027. The combined projects would result in an estimated tax rate increase of 22.5 cents per \$100 valuation—9 cents for the library and 13.5 cents for the police and animal shelter facility—spread over 30 years to minimize taxpayer impact. Council members discussed the need for public education and town hall meetings to ensure voter understanding. Mr. Friedman confirmed each project must appear as a separate ballot proposition and that early repayment options would be included.

Mayor Miner and the council emphasized the importance of transparency and readiness before proceeding. The council reached consensus to pursue a November 2025 bond election, allowing citizens to vote on each project individually.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Approved: this 8 day of Dec, 2025

Signed: this 8 day of Dec, 2025

ATTEST:


Linda Proskey, City Secretary



APPROVED:


Arthur L. Miner, Mayor

