

Town of Maggie Valley
Board of Aldermen Regularly Scheduled Meeting
April 14, 2026
MINUTES

Members Present:

Mayor Mike Eveland
Mayor Pro-Tem Jim Owens
Alderman John Hinton
Alderman Phillip Wight

Members Absent:

Alderman Tim Wise

Staff Present:

Sam Cullen, Town Manager
Kathy Johnson, Town Clerk
Noah Taylor, Planning Director
Matthew Boger, Police Chief
AJ Stamey, Police Officer
Ryan Flowers, Police Officer
Logan Wood, Patrol Lieutenant
Will Rhinehart, Public Services
Craig Justus, Attorney

Others Present:

Corrina Ruffieux, Ellen Pitt, and Five others were present.

Media Present:

No Media were present.

Meeting Call to Order

Mayor Mike Eveland called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm on Tuesday April 14, 2026, in the Maggie Valley Town Hall Boardroom 3987 Soco Road, Maggie Valley, NC 28751.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all followed by prayer led by Town Manager Sam Cullen.

Approval of the Agenda/Conflict of Interest Declaration

No changes were made to the Agenda. Mayor Eveland asked if there were any conflicts of interest. There were none stated.

Consent Agenda

- a. *Budget to Actual*
- b. *A/R Report*
- c. *Tax Releases/Tax Report.*
- d. *Minutes: March 10th and 17th (Regular and Closed Session).*
- e. *Resolution 26-07 Directing Town Clerk to investigate an annexation petition received: Gordon Dooley Holdings LLC, 9.9-acre PIN # 7696-18-3431.*

Alderman John Hinton made a motion to accept the consent agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously. (Alderman Tim Wise was absent).

Public Comment

Mayor Eveland reminded attendees that this would be the opportunity to comment on agenda items, as public comment would not be available during individual agenda discussions.

Ellen Pitt from the Western North Carolina Regional DWI Task Force addressed the board, thanking them for their visionary investment in helping a local resident recover and encouraging recurring donations for similar situations. She announced that on May 1st at 1:30 PM, the task force would meet in Asheville at the FOP Lodge, with representatives from Colorado presenting on continuous alcohol monitoring pretrial systems. Ms. Pitt explained that revolutionary systems now exist for continuous monitoring of drugs other than alcohol, which would require statute changes but could be implemented through successful pilot projects.

Ms. Pitt announced that the late Mike Clampett was unanimously voted as the North Carolina Public Safety Legislator of the Decade by their regional task force, recognizing his legislative history from 2017 onwards. She highlighted his introduction of the Magistrate Education Bill, requiring continuing education for magistrates for the first time in North Carolina history, and his courage in introducing the 0.05 illegal threshold for operating motor vehicles three years ago. She announced that "Mike's Law," an upgrade to existing DWI law not updated since 2006, would be introduced in the short session to address technology advances, officer training levels, and recovery focus.

She indicated that Representative Anna Ferguson, the interim representative appearing on the November ballot, would carry on Mike's work alongside another task force member. She left a copy of the bill with Chief Matthew Boger and thanked the board for their years of support for crime victims and law enforcement officers.

Quarterly Employee Recognition Award. (Presented by Manager Cullen).

Town Manager Sam Cullen explained this new quarterly program to recognize employees for dedicated service. Chief Boger and Officer AJ Stanley came forward for the presentation.

Manager Cullen read Chief Boger's nomination, stating that Officer Stanley had gone above and beyond while answering calls for service in recent months, displaying professionalism in follow-up investigations. Stanley's dedicated work led to the recovery of over \$2,000 in stolen property that would never have been returned without his efforts. Beyond reactive law enforcement, Stanley had been proactive in traffic enforcement, including DWI enforcement. Manager Cullen presented Officer Stanley with a certificate and token of appreciation, noting that Stanley was a great asset to the Town of Maggie Valley.

Corrina Ruffieux to present Haywood County Tourism Development Authority Annual Report.

Corrina Ruffieux from Haywood County Tourism Development Authority presented their 2025 calendar year annual report, noting it reflected both resilience and intentional progress following

Hurricane Helene's impacts. She emphasized their dual focus on immediate recovery needs while advancing the destination master plan for long-term sustainable tourism growth.

Ms. Ruffieux presented impressive economic impact data from Visit North Carolina and Tourism Economics, showing tourists spent \$357 million at Haywood County businesses in 2024, driving over \$12 million in local taxes. This generated over \$900 in tax savings per Haywood household due to visitor spending and supported over 2,200 full-time jobs, making tourism Haywood County's biggest employer.

The presentation included visitor data from Data5's mobile spending platform, showing peak visitation on weekends with strong weekday numbers. While 22% of visitors came from North Carolina in 2025, 78% were from outside the state, with Georgia, South Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee as top sources. Florida visitors were particularly valuable, representing the highest share of spending despite not being the largest visitor group.

Lodging performance data showed seasonal patterns with softer February-April periods, strong summer performance, and peak October fall foliage season. Hurricane Helene's impact was visible in occupancy tax data, but October, November, and December 2025 achieved record occupancy tax collections, demonstrating visitor confidence returning to Haywood County.

Ruffieux highlighted their unified Visit Haywood brand campaign running for a full 12 months in 2025, generating over 63 million impressions, and driving over 1 million website sessions. Most significantly, they achieved 99% year-over-year growth in website views while other destinations nationwide saw 2.5% decreases, demonstrating the power of unified messaging.

She detailed successful programs including Ice Fest 2025, which drove over \$566,000 in business sales and \$18,000 in local tax revenue from just the ticketed event at Maggie Valley Festival Grounds. Fat Burger Month launched post-Helene saw 100% of participants try new restaurants and generated 192% increase in social impressions. Their summer campaign, launched after noticing 20% booking pace declines, generated over 4 million impressions and \$532,000 in attributed lodging revenue with 13.3 to 1 return on ad spend.

Public relations efforts secured 113 media placements generating 204 million media impressions worth nearly \$1 million in equivalent advertising value. Notable accolades included Outside Magazine naming Haywood County and Maggie Valley one of seven best fly fishing and multi-sport adventures in the US, and features in Southern Living, Travel and Leisure, and Lonely Planet.

The Visit Haywood team earned awards from North Carolina Travel Industry Association and Southeast Tourism Society for Ice Fest, plus an international award from Hospitality Sales Marketing Association International for their post-Hurricane Helene campaign, winning best of category in small budget range and silver overall.

Looking ahead to 2026, Ms. Ruffieux announced National Travel and Tourism Week celebration on May 7th, a new website launching in August built for AI functionality, hosting the Society of American Travel Writers Annual Convention in October (the first time in 70 years held in a non-

metropolitan location), and returning programs including Gift of Haywood, Elk Fest, Ice Fest 2027, and Fat Burger Month.

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Owens praised the work accomplished by Ruffieux and her small team, calling the recovery from Helene and achieving the best fourth quarter in history nothing short of amazing. Mayor Eveland noted the challenging economic environment ahead but expressed appreciation for the authority's work. Alderman John Hinton complimented the quality of data in the report.

Consideration of Approval of the 2026 Audit Contract.

Town Manager Cullen presented the annual audit contract with Martin Starnes, explaining it was straightforward with approximately \$3,000 price increase due to the new year and additional FEMA-related expenses requiring additional audit requirements. Staff remained satisfied with the firm's performance and recommended approval.

Alderman John Hinton made a motion to accept the 2026 audit contract with Marin Starnes & Associates, CPAs. P.A. The motion carried unanimously. (Alderman Tim Wise was absent.)

Consideration of Approval of the Pavilion Rental Policy.

Town Manager Cullen explained the updated pavilion rental policy was similar to previous versions but included clarity on reservation processes, complete application requirements, and additional information about cleanup, pickup, and prohibited activities. He emphasized nothing had actually changed from previous policies - it was simply stated more clearly with no price changes.

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Owens made a motion to approve the updates to the Pavilion Rental Policy. The motion carried unanimously. (Alderman Tim Wise was absent)

Proclamation Police Week 2026: May 10-16,2026 (Read by Mayor Mike Eveland).

Mayor Mike Eveland read the Police Week proclamation, recognizing police officers of the Maggie Valley Police Department who stand watch over citizens, selflessly risking their lives to protect individuals, families, neighborhoods, and property against crime. The proclamation noted the importance of recognizing duties, responsibilities, hazards, and sacrifices of local law enforcement, designating May 15, 2026, as Peace Officers Memorial Day honoring those who made the ultimate sacrifice or became disabled in service. The proclamation declared May 10-16, 2026, as Police Week in Maggie Valley, publicly saluting law enforcement officers' community service.

Mayor Eveland added personal remarks acknowledging that while they joke with Chief Boger, they never lose sight of the responsibilities and service provided by the police department.

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Owens made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring May 10-16 as Police Week in Maggie Valley, NC. The motion carried unanimously. (Alderman Tim Wise was absent.)

National Public Works (Public Services) Week Proclamation: May 17-23, 2026 (Read by Alderman Jim Owens)

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Owens explained the confusion regarding the department name change from Public Works to Public Services, then read the proclamation for May 17-23, 2026, themed "Rooted in Service, Powered by Community." The proclamation recognized public services professionals focusing on infrastructure, facilities, and services vital to sustainable, resilient communities and public health. It acknowledged dedicated efforts of engineers, managers, and employees at all government levels responsible for rebuilding, improving, and protecting transportation, water supply, treatment, solid waste systems, and public buildings. The proclamation designated the week as National Public Services Week, marking the 66th annual event sponsored by the American Public Works Association.

Mayor Eveland praised the public works staff.

Alderman Phillip Wight made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring May 17-23 as Public Works (Public Services) week in Maggie Valley. The motion carried unanimously. (Alderman Tim Wise was absent.)

Budget Amendment Ordinance 1134-Use investigative fund balance to purchase upgraded computer.

Town Manager Cullen explained the approximately \$5,300 budget amendment would move unused investigative fund balance that had not been utilized in years to purchase a heavier duty computer setup for the police department to assist with investigative equipment. This would avoid putting the expense in next year's budget.

Ordinance No. 1134

An Ordinance Amending the FY 2025-2026 Budget Ordinance

Be It Hereby Ordained by the Town Board of Aldermen of the Town of Maggie Valley, North Carolina, that the Budget Ordinance for the year 2025-2026 is amended as follows:

General Fund – 2025-2026 – Use investigative fund balance to purchase upgraded desktop.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Previous</u>	<u>Increase (Decrease)</u>	<u>Amended</u>
Revenue			
Fund Balance-Reserve Investigative Funds	\$0	\$5,380.79	\$5,380.79
Expenditures			
Police Dept.	\$1,952,115.00	\$5,380.79	\$1,957,495.79

Adopted by the Town Board of Aldermen of the Town of Maggie Valley in the regular session April 14, 2026.

Alderman John Hinton made a motion to adopt Budget Amendment Ordinance 1134 as presented. The motion carried unanimously. (Alderman Tim Wise was absent.)

Other Business

No other business was presented.

Department Head Reports were not read in their entirety but are included below.

Sam Cullen, Town Manager

Managers' BOA Meeting Report for March 2026

- I have successfully completed my Municipal Administration Course at the UNC School of Government. As you know this course was 8 weeks long over an 8-month time frame. This was one of the most beneficial courses I have ever completed.
- I have completed our memorandum of understanding with the LEAD NC Fellows program. Pre-interviews of applicants by LEAD are underway and final interviews by staff will be conducted in late May.
- I am coordinating with Acting Director Taylor to implement our Technical Review Committee (TRC) for land use developments going forward. The TRC will put all stakeholders (staff level) and developers in the same room at the same time when submitting proposals.

Strategic Planning Updates**- Revitalized Town Infrastructure**

- o Continued work on Town buildings such as painting/staining and repairs to damage facades. As well as sprucing up the waterfall in front of Town Hall.

- Organizational Excellence

- o I have appointed Christy Passmore as Deputy Town Clerk. This is not a separate position but rather the addition of duties to her current job. She has registered for her clerk classes which she will take over next year. This will provide great cross training opportunities with Kathy Johnson.
- o I have coordinated for Matt and Seth to attend a supervisory practices course. The school of Government is offering their fundamentals course in the near future.

- Safe, Reliable, and Sustainable Utility Services

- o I have received formal quotes for phase two of our sewer fees study. This portion will focus on sewer user fees. The cost of the study is \$35,500.

- Economic Development and Tourism Resources

- o I am continuing to work on hosting a small business day in Maggie Valley. We have received interest from almost every organization I have contacted.
- o I will attend a meeting with the Secretary of State, Elaine Marshall, to discuss small business and tourism development in Maggie Valley in June.
- o Manager Cullen reminded Board members of the upcoming budget meeting on April 20th, the Chamber dinner on April 29th and the cog meeting on April 21st.

-Sam Cullen, Town Manager

Will Rhinehart, Public Services

PUBLIC SERVICES

- Monthly maintenance, general cleaning and repairs at Town Hall, Pavilion, Parham Park, Rathbone/Rich Park, Festival Grounds, Public Works buildings and Police Department.
- Monthly Recyclables approx. 8 tons.

Town of Maggie Valley

Board of Aldermen Regular Scheduled Meeting Minutes

April 14, 2026

- Monthly Solid Waste approx. 43 tons.
- Monthly White Goods/Electronics 3 pick-ups.
- Picked up miscellaneous residential brush and debris. 105 brush pick-ups that totaled 17 loads of brush.
- Monthly Snow Plowing/Salting. 0 Events
- Continuing maintenance and repairs on Welcome Banners, Miss Maggie Banners, and Summer Banners.
- Public Works continues maintenance of all Town facilities.
- Perform ditch, culvert, shoulder, and road maintenance along streets. Both private and Town streets.
- Service and/or repaired 2 Public Works vehicles/equipment 0 Administration and 3 Police vehicles.
- Picked up bagged trash and debris along Highway 19 and Highway 276 from Fie Top Road to the Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Public Works has staffed 0 events at the Festival Grounds this month.
- Public Works continues inspections and testing infrastructure at Mountain View Estates.
- Public Works continue inspections and testing infrastructure in Valley Woods subdivision on Jonathan Creek as they begin building.
- Public Works continues meetings with DOT and their contractors for work on highway 276, Evans Cove bridge and Johnson Branch bridge.
- The highway 276 project is well underway. The work for the roundabout has started and will cause continual traffic issues for the next ?? months. All traffic at the 276 redlight will continue to be reduced to 1 lane in all directions with both ramps closed.
- Public Works has continued the improvements list for beautification in and around Town Hall.
- Festival Grounds inspection is completed, and Repairs have been made to damaged areas found during the inspection.

WWTP

- Daily and Monthly testing, monitoring, and analysis; Monthly cleaning and repairs.
- Monthly Road, Levee, equipment and building maintenance.
- Continued yearly sewer line, manhole, easement spraying and creek crossing inspections as required by DENR.
- Installed/repaired 2 sewer services issues, cleaned, and videoed approximately 17,563 feet of sewer line, inspected 40 sewer connections/installations, 17 Final home inspections, repaired/leak stopped 0 damaged manhole and inspected 13 manholes as we continue to work on I&I issues.
- Dewatered 42,750 gallons of digested sludge. Lime Stabilized 20 tons of dewatered sludge. Also, we hauled 36 tons of dewatered sludge to the landfill.
- Worked with business owners, homeowners, contractors, and others to help resolve sewer related issues such as rainwater getting into sewer lines, back-ups, video inspection, private line or service locations and damage to lines.
- Continue monthly sewer easement maintenance. Bush hogging, tree cutting, spraying and debris removal.

- This month we received 84 locate requests for NC811. These were all marked in a timely manner.
- Continue monitoring Johnathan Creek and stream banks for fallen and dead trees that could impact the Town's sewer creek crossings. This is now required by NCDEQ.
- Removed fallen trees and debris from Jonathan's Creek on Moody Farm Road, Stonebridge Campground, Valley Creek, and Campbell Creek.
- Grease in the Towns sewer collection system and in the Wastewater Treatment Plant is an ongoing and time-consuming problem. Regular grease trap pumping and maintenance is the key to keeping these problems to a minimum. All food handling businesses are required to have grease-removing equipment installed and to maintain records of cleaning and maintaining their equipment. The sewer department staff regularly inspects this equipment and looks at records and logs of this maintenance. This month we performed 6 grease trap inspections. Of these 1 was found to be non-compliant. We continue to work with all businesses on their grease issues. We provide assistance and education in hopes of reducing the amount of grease in our sewer system.
- We continue working on storm related issues. Sewer projects, engineering for stream bank repairs, WWTP bridge engineering and road repairs.
- WNC Paving continues the widening portion of the project, which puts them in conflict with the Towns Manholes. The Sewer Dept. also inspects them frequently.
- T&K Utility have completed the road crossing replacement of the 8inch sewer at DG. This was inspected during the construction phases as well as air testing after everything was installed.
- Vision contract company has completed about 21,000ft of line cleaning and video for the town. This is something that is done every year to help us meet 10% of collection systems cleaning required by NCDENR.

Matthew Boger, Police Chief

Incidents

- During this reporting month March, the Maggie Valley Police Department (MVPD) investigated twenty-two incidents, which included property damage, burglary/breaking & entering, larceny, simple and aggravated assault, liquor law violations, weapon law violations, drug/narcotic violations, driving under the influence, and trespassing.

Arrests

- Maggie Valley Police Officers arrested thirteen individuals, resulting in sixteen charges, which included Aggravated Assault, Property Damage, Drug/ Narcotic Violations, Weapon Law Violations, Liquor Law Violations, Driving Under the Influence and Trespassing.

Motor Vehicle Traffic

- Maggie Valley Police Officers investigated three motor vehicle accidents for the reporting period and issued one-hundred and forty-six traffic-related charges. Forty-four percent of charges were for speeding (9 citations and 56 written warnings).

Officer Activities

- **THIS LIST IS NOT A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF ALL THE INCIDENTS FOR THE REPORTING PERIOD. SOME CASES, DUE TO THE SENSITIVITY OF THE CASE, CAN NOT BE PUBLICLY DISCLOSED AT THIS TIME.**

- Lieutenant Wood and Officer Stamey were sent to a reported fight at Cool Breeze Campground. When they arrived, they separated both parties. Each person showed visible signs of assault. One individual needed medical attention for what looked like a puncture wound to the eye. The other had significant swelling around the eyes and was bleeding from the mouth. This person refused treatment. Because of the severity of the injuries, the officers decided to pursue charges after the incident. During the investigation, the father of one of the involved parties arrived at the scene armed with a baseball bat. The situation was handled without further escalation. He then left with EMS to take his son to the hospital.
- K9 Officer Bullard responded to a report of stolen AirPods from a local nursing home. While speaking with the victim, a GPS location for the items was obtained along with a list of potential suspects. Officer Bullard checked the address linked to the GPS and confirmed that one of the suspects was reported to live there. Lieutenant Wood and K9 Officer Bullard went to the address and made contact with an employee of the nursing home. The stolen property was successfully recovered and returned to the owner.
- On March 20, 2026, Officer Herbertson stopped a vehicle and detected the smell of marijuana. During the search, firearms and marijuana were found, leading to a probable cause search. Officer Herbertson confirmed that one individual was a convicted felon and placed him under arrest for possession of a firearm by a felon. The individual was transported to the detention center, formally charged, and all evidence was processed and secured.
- Officer Stamey located a hit-and-run suspect wanted by the North Carolina State Highway Patrol. After stopping the vehicle, Officer Stamey performed standardized field sobriety tests and determined the driver was impaired. Officer Stamey charged the suspect with driving while impaired, and the North Carolina State Highway Patrol helped with processing the Intoximeter.
- Officer Stamey observed a driver who was unable to stay in lane and initiated a traffic stop. After noticing signs of impairment, Officer Stamey performed standardized field sobriety tests and determined the driver to be impaired. The driver was placed under arrest and refused testing at the scene. EMS responded, and after securing a search warrant for a blood sample, the evidence was collected.

Evidence Processing (E/P)

- Evidence Technicians O. Murphy and S. Justice processed eleven items for the month. Evidence included Firearms, Firearm Accessories, Drugs/Narcotics, Paraphernalia, and DNA.

Investigations (CID)

- Lt. Greene followed up on an assault between two males, where the victim was stabbed in the eye with a knife. He has filed criminal charges against the suspect for assault with a deadly weapon causing serious injury. Lt. Greene will present this case to the grand jury on 4/6/2026 for additional charges.
- Detective Clark and Lt. Greene responded to the area of Soco Road regarding a driving complaint. Detective Clark located the vehicle and pulled it over. During the investigation, it was determined that the driver was impaired by a substance. A consent search of the vehicle was conducted, and contraband was found. The driver was arrested for driving while impaired and possession of a Schedule III substance.

- Detective Clark followed up on a theft from a business. The suspect had taken gasoline from vehicles in the parking lot. Video was reviewed, but he was not visible on the security cameras in the area. Currently, there are no additional leads.
- Detective Clark responded to a domestic disturbance involving a knife. He followed up on the case and arrested the suspect for assault with a deadly weapon and misdemeanor domestic violence.
- Lt. Greene responded to the area of Jonathan Creek and Hall Drive regarding a driving complaint. Officer Rodney Riddle located the vehicle just below Hall Drive. Lt. Greene responded to the scene and conducted SFTS (standardized field sobriety testing), and the driver was placed under arrest for driving while impaired and open container.
- Chief Boger and Lt. Greene assisted the Haywood County Sheriff's Office with a welfare check that was reported by a family member who came to the police department. They found one person deceased inside the residence but were unable to locate the other individual. Both officers helped with the investigation. The next day, Lt. Greene and Detective Clark aided the Sheriff's Office in finding the other person deceased near the residence.

Follow up:

- Lt. Greene received a phone dump from the stalking case. While reviewing the phone, Lt. Greene found several pieces of evidence. The suspect was also charged with additional counts of sexual exploitation of a minor, including CSAM photographs.
 - Lt. Greene identified two more suspects in the check theft from Maggie Valley. The suspects have been charged.
- Lt. Greene received a search warrant return with the suspect's information from a fraud case. The suspect has been identified and charged.

K9 Program

- The K9 teams logged three training sessions and zero deployments.

Community Patrol and Interactions

- Maggie Valley Officers patrolled through our residential neighborhoods several times this month.
- Maggie Valley Officers performed their monthly business visits.
- Maggie Valley Officers responded to 300 Calls for Service (CFS) in this reporting period.

Events, Schools, and Meetings

- Officers Herbertson, Kelley & Stamey attended a Warrantless Search class.

Noah Taylor, Planning Director

March 2026	60	Description
Residential Permits	1	New Structure, 1639 Soco Road
Commercial Permits	1	New Use, 2549 Soco Road
Floodplain Permits	3	Renovation, 265 Moody Farm Road New Structure, 113 Heart Lane X2
In Person Consultations	14	MPO TCC Floodplain I.T. x2 TDA Developer X2 Floodplain X3 N.O.V. Variance question X2
Final Zoning Compliance	11	5 Mari Place 65 Creekwalk Lane 88 Creekwalk Lane 93 Creekwalk Lane 96 Creekwalk Lane 111 Clear Creek Lane 117 Clear Creek Lane 123 Clear Creek Lane 3211 Dellwood Road 1786 Soco Road x2
Misc. Requests	2	Variance, 5 Mari Place Variance, 57 Susan Drive
Notice of Violations	27	R.O.W. Signs x25 Building without permit, 1639 Soco Road Building without permit, 89 Wildbrook Drive
Resolved Violations	1	Building without permit, 1639 Soco Road

In March,

- I passed my Floodplain Class that I attended from 3/16-3/19
 - o Currently Studying for my Exam in May
- Planning Director Taylor said he is currently working on updating the Town Sewer Ordinance and Floodplain Ordinance.
- Wildbrook Village has pulled another six permits; There is only one more lot to pull for the 92-lot subdivision.
- Mr. Taylor and Manager Cullen attended a Stormwater workshop that was put on by the Town of Waynesville.
- Compared to last year, the planning department has seen above average permit applications.

Adjournment

With no further business, Alderman John Hinton made a motion to adjourn at 7:21 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

S: Mike Eveland
Mayor Mike Eveland

S: Sam Cullen
Sam Cullen, Town Manager

Attest: S: Kathy Johnson
Kathy Johnson, Town Clerk