

adjusted. The Sanitation department currently has a truck needing repair. The Water and Sewer department is utilizing the money from the interconnect loan to pay off the cash flow loan on the water plant. At Harmon Field fund balance is needed to cover remaining expenses. Mayor Peoples so moved, Commissioner Lambakis so moved and the motion carried.

V. HELENE PROJECT ORDINANCE

Town Manager Fatland stated that the state of NC requires project ordinances. Fund 19 was for Helene and requires such. When council approved the \$200,000 transfer from general fund. Fatland sat down with Daniels and Brad Gordon to go over everything. Fatland wanted to show FEMA reimbursement, cash flow loan, and transfer. Total project is at \$3.3 million. Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adopt amendment, Commissioner Lambakis so moved and the motion carried

VI. HARMON FIELD UPDATE

Manager Fatland provided an update on Harmon Field. Fatland stated that Dellara Field is under construction. The playground will begin soon with new fencing and mulch. The HFBS voted to keep the dog park where it is. The basketball court at the open air gym will also be redone. Cash flow issues are being looked at to see about the soccer fields. Fatland wanted a special thank you to Daniels and Gordon for all of their hard work. The cabin at Harmon Field along with the money from the boardwalk and other areas is going to be mitigated into restoring the old school building which the town previously received a grant on and needs to remain complicit with. The potential of a bathroom instead of a catering kitchen was also mentioned. Commissioner Crowell asked about the old field house and why it needed to be torn down. Fatland explained that due to the county rule that if something is damaged at more than 50% of its value it has to be torn down. Commissioner Crowell asked if the cabin could be sold to someone instead of just being torn down and thrown away. Daniels stated he would look into that. Fatland stated that FEMA consultant from Rostan was writing a letter to aid in moving the funds to the old school building. Fatland stated he has been in contact with Warren Watson from the HFBS about the old school building and he is on board with it. Commissioner Lambakis asked if outlets for food trucks were still an idea. Fatland stated the current plan was to have that area near the concession stands. Fatland wants to work with the Hunter Jumpers to get their idea on a vision and plan for the equestrian side. Commissioner Lambakis asked about the pickle ball area. Daniels stated new nets were ordered and discussions were in place for a different configuration especially with the sand bags currently being used. Town Clerk Dale and Daniels stated the cost to resurface would probably be around \$180,000. Mayor Peoples pointed out that a lot of people do not always have a good grasp on how much things really do cost the town to do.

Town Manager Fatland stated that the Harmon Field Board has an opening. Town Clerk Dale stated that Greg Miner who resigned due to health had one year remaining on his term. The recommendation was for Steve Nelson to be appointed for the remainder of Miner's term effective July 1, 2025. Commissioner Crowell so moved and the motion carried.

VII. SIDE ARM MOWER FINANCING-HOMETRUST

Town Manager Fatland stated that the Local Government Commission meets soon and we need to get on the agenda for the Side Arm mower. Town Clerk Dale stated that a request for financing was sent out to four different banks with only one quote coming back which was HomeTrust Bank. Loan terms were 4.75% for 10 years. Recommendation was for council to approve bank financing contingent on LGC approval. Funds will be the Powell Bill. Mayor entertained a motion, Mayor Pro Tem so moved and the motion carried.

VIII. CITIZEN OF THE YEAR NOMINEE

Mayor Peoples provided a brief overview of the citizen of the year campaign. He would like to nominate Trade Street Diner for all they did for the Town during Helene. They provided food to the fire department. Fed citizens for free along with providing free wifi and their personal shower trailer for the community. Mayor Pro Tem so moved and the motion carried.

IX. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe stated he had several things to bring up just as questions he had heard from citizens.

The first topic covered was kudzu and bamboo. There was much discussion about what is the Town's responsibility and what becomes private property owners. Daniels stated that there is a noxious weeds ordinance that could be used. Neighbors have called in on other neighbors. Commissioner Crowell suggested people needed to be more educated on how to combat it. Town Manager Fatland stated that in Flat Rock the Town gives out money to residents to help cover the cost of removal. After much discussion there was a consensus for everyone to research the topic and come up with a plan to combat the issue.

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe wanted to address concerns of citizens in Galaxy and Lyncourt regarding the walking trail/park. Stated that clear information is crucial to combat misinformation. Mayor Peoples stated that there have always been complaints about this. Simply put it is a sunflower garden. Commissioner Crowell brought up Spanish Court and asked if we would be surveying that property in order to obtain an easement. Mayor Peoples wanted to state that he met with those individual and had discussions. His neighbor had given property to the Town. The

individuals he met with stated they would be interested in giving the land needed to complete the loop. The hope is to connect Harriet's Garden to Woodland Park. Commissioner Crowell stated no one would be able to see the people walking on the trail and that maybe a park plan would be beneficial.

The proposed Cell Tower was brought up. Daniels stated that we were just waiting on an application. That he confirmed with Town Attorney Morgan and that there was a general consensus that the terms of the lease were agreeable. Morgan stated that he felt Verizon was nervous about spending a lot of money on getting it through the Planning and Zoning Board when there was possible uncertainty regarding the lease. Town Manager Fatland asked what the procedure was for instance does the lease need done first or the planning board? Morgan stated it could be either way but he felt last time it should have been lease first then planning board. Morgan stated that council could go ahead and approve the lease contingent upon public hearing. Mayor Pro Tem asked if the lease would be with Verizon. Morgan stated in a sense yes. There is a chance the location of the tower is different given there were several covenants and instead of deal with that the location was changed. This current lease is also different than the previous council was presented. The Town has not approved any location as confirmed by Town Attorney Morgan. Morgan stated that the lease needs to be approved before it goes to the Board of Adjustment. Town Manager asked if council should be presented to new lease at the next meeting since all the members of this current council had not seen it's exact terms. There was much discussion about the potential terms and then the possible location. Daniels asked if he needed to tell them to hold off and Morgan stated to say the lease is under consideration. There was a question regarding the need for a public hearing. Morgan stated he believed it was not a public hearing; however, it needed to be posted that it was going to be considered. Daniels stated the last time it was public information session but he was unsure since he doesn't have a physical application since that is what people wanted to question. Daniels was hopeful that they could turn that around in a month or two. Morgan stated if the lease is approved first it may give the perception that it is a done deal before it goes to the planning board. Town Manager Fatland asked if the application would go before the planning board prior to the August meeting. Daniels stated he was unsure of what their time frame would be.

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe posed the question regarding any invasive species ordinances the Town may have in place. Daniels confirmed that there were indeed ordinances in place. Attorney Morgan suggested looking into what/if the civil penalties may be regarding those violations. Commissioner Lambakis asked if we could reach out to Duke Energy to cut any of their areas. Commissioner Crowell stated that Duke is mainly just focused on the power lines and not the areas underneath but it could be looked into.

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe inquired about the possibility of applying for a grant or community block grant to assist in the invasive control. Town Manager Fatland stated that Daniels would be looking into working with the Foothills Regional Commission to see what programs may be

available. The parking study was also brought up. Fatland brought up one possibility could be making Maple St a one way and encouraging town employees to park there in order to open up the public parking lot. He stated that the goal should be to provide free parking to visitors, residents and merchants and try to stay away from paid lots. Commissioner Lambakis felt that the key was to also make it clear to people where the parking is located. Daniels said the two hour parking rule could also be enforced for some individuals who are parking downtown all day long. The idea of employees and business owners parking below Trade St was mentioned in order to leave open the Trade St. spaces open for visitors and those who may struggle walking up the hill on Maple. There were also minor discussions regarding the public bathrooms. Mayor Peoples entertained a motion for closed session. Commissioner Crowell so moved and the motion carried.

X. CLOSED SESSION

XI. OPEN SESSION-RETIREE MEDICAL

The council were presented with monthly premiums in the amount of \$704.66, \$704.66, \$647.20 and \$920.22. Theses number were for health insurance coverage through the end of the benefit period (December 31, 2025) for the four retirees seeking medical coverage. Given that these individuals would not have health insurance effective July 1, 2025 since there were no longer eligible for the Town's plan, Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to provide payment to the current group of four retirees for the amounts provided through the end of the current benefit period. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

XII. ADJOURN

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Crowell so moved and the motion carried.