

**TOWN OF TRYON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TRYON TOWN HALL – MCCOWN MEETING ROOM
May 19, 2026 6:30 PM**

WORK SESSION

Present: Mayor J. Alan Peoples

Mayor Pro Tem Skip Crowe

Commissioners Present: Bill Crowell, Tracie Morris, Julie Lambakis

Staff Present: Jim Fatland, Town Manager Emily Dale, Town Clerk
 Josh Connell, Fire Chief Scott Holt, Police Chief
 William Morgan, Town Attorney

Mayor Peoples called the work session to order at 6:35 pm.

The following topics were discussed during the work session:

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe provided an update on the kudzu program. He stated the Town is hoping to partner with the Polk County Appearance Commission for a grant to assist. They are working on dividing the Town into quarters and addressing the problem areas.

Commissioner Morris and Lambakis addressed potential parking issues on Pacolet St around the post office. The larger vehicles that part there tend to inhibit traffic. They discussed possible ways to create parking and alleviate traffic issues.

Commissioner Morris brought up concerns from citizens at Braewick Estates. The Board agreed to let a few citizens speak during the work session. The concerns stemmed from a recent development regarding the perception of family care homes within Town limits. Current Town ordinances state only one home is allowed every half mile and these citizens believe that ordinance could potentially violated.

Doug Clark, 335 Melrose Ave spoke and his concerns are outlined in his attached speech.

Margaret Parker spoke about her concerns in relation to not only the Town ordinance but potential violation of NC Senate Bill 274. This established certain licensing requirements. Parker feels that the services provided by the individuals who are in the homes such as dispensing medication would fall under licensure.

Lawrence Orłowski spoke and his concerns are outlined in his attached speech.

Scott Treety spoke regarding the qualifications of the individuals associated with this company. According to the company's website there may be individuals who require medical attention. He expressed concerns regarding the lack of licensing of the company.

Commissioner Morris thanked everyone for speaking. Mayor Peoples stated the best approach would be to consult with the Town attorney and that the Town in no way wants to deny anyone their right to anything; however, this matter does need to be addressed.

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adjourn the work session. Commissioner Morris so moved and the motion carried.

**TOWN OF TRYON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TRYON TOWN HALL – MCCOWN MEETING ROOM
May 19, 2026 7:00 PM**

Present: Mayor J. Alan Peoples

Mayor Pro Tem Skip Crowe

Commissioners Present: Bill Crowell, Tracie Morris, Julie Lambakis

Staff Present: Jim Fatland, Town Manager
Josh Connell, Fire Chief
William Morgan, Town Attorney

Emily Dale, Town Clerk
Scott Holt, Police Chief
Lourdes Guttirez, Downtown
Development Director

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Peoples called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

II. INVOCATION

Mayor Peoples led the invocation with a moment of silence.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. AGENDA ADOPTION

Town Manger Fatland asked to add two items, Saluda Grade Trail support and Tryon Fire Department Report. Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to add the items as 12a and 12b, respectively and change Item 6 from Public Hearing to Home Health Facility Issue. Commissioner Morris so moved and the motion carried.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Lambakis moved to adopt the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. HOME HEALTH FACILITY ISSUE

Commissioner Morris feels like this is a town wide issue. She would like for Town Attorney Morgan to look into this matter. Morgan stated he had started a file and would reach out to the State. He would have more information for them at the next meeting. The Board would like to have an information regarding the facility and the half mile radius ordinance.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARING-REZONING 584 N TRADE ST

Downtown Director Gutierrez presented on behalf of Planning Director Daniels who is away attending a Zoning Class. Gutierrez stated that the applicant with the consent of the property owner is requesting a rezoning from multiple family to general business. Per the ordinance the property has sufficient parking to comply with the ordinance. The Planning Board voted at their May 14 meeting to recommend this rezoning to the Board. The applicant, Fanina Padykula, spoke and stated the property used to be zoned business. She runs a yoga/Pilates studio and stated she would be mindful of school traffic with her business and class schedule.

Mayor Peoples closed the Public Hearing at 7:17 pm. Peoples entertained a motion to approve the rezoning of 584 N Trade St from multifamily to general business. Commissioner Crowell so moved and the motion carried unanimously.

IX. INSTALLMENT FINANCING FOR NEW VEHICLE FOR WATER DEPARTMENT

Fatland and Dale presented financing for a 2025 Ford Maverick for the Water Department, specifically the Water Meter Reader. The cost of the vehicle was \$36,123. The recommendation is to approve a loan with Home Trust Bank for this amount at 4.28% interest for five years. Fatland stated the vehicle is a hybrid which should help given the number of miles that vehicle travels. He also thanked Robbie Stott for donating a camper shell cover for the vehicle. Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to approve the resolution authorizing Fatland to act on behalf of the Town in the execution and acceptance of this loan. Mayor Pro Tem so moved and the motion carried unanimously.

X. DOWNTONW UPDATE

The TDDA Board along with Commissioner Lambakis recently attended the NC Main Street Conference. Member Lori Geddings provided an overview of some of the key takeaways form the conference. The

concept of establishing anchors throughout the Town in order to draw people in and help them feel connect was highlighted. The hope is to continue to strengthen the relationship between the Town and TDDA and businesses. She spoke on the benefit of having Gutierrez since she can serve as a liaison between all three parties.

There was discussion about the type of visitors coming to Town and recruitment of new businesses. A few citizens commented about needing a tenant in Owen's building as well as the concept of an economic impact study. Gutierrez stated the North Carolina Main Street Program could possibly do that study.

Gutierrez then went through her presentation on incorporating art into small towns. She was part of a panelist group at the Main Street Conference. At a prior meeting Commissioner Morris had expressed her desire to see the presentation. Gutierrez's power point is attached.

XI. PRESENTATION: PROPOSED FY27 TOWN BUDGETS

Town Manager Fatland presented the proposed FY27 Budgets to the Council. He stated since the Town is on the Unit Assistance List the budget had to be submitted to the Local Government Commission. That was submitted, reviewed and feedback was given. The draft budget was found to be in compliance with the LGC. The main highlights of the budget were as follows:

Employee Retention and Recruitment: Almost all departments are at full staff currently. The proposal included a 2.5% Cost of Living Adjustment along with an increase in 401k contributions from 2.5% to 3%. The 401k contribution is in response to the state only allowing for whole percentage contributions.

Equipment: The Town has delayed updating their fleet for the last 20 years and a lot of the vehicle and equipment have reached their end of life. Fatland stated the Town had spent over \$350,000 on vehicle repairs in the last five years. Streets, Water Distribution and Police have new vehicles in this budget.

Fatland highlighted several grant opportunities the Town is seeking to improve the Water and Sewer infrastructure.

In closing Fatland stated the budget is presented with a three-cent tax increase. Water and sewer rates will increase 5% and sanitation will increase to 28.60 per month. Harmon Field is hoping for money from Polk to offset lost rental income. The Fire Department met on April 22 with FRAC to review their budget. The Fire Department was informed during their state inspection that they need to have four members at the station at all times. The proposed fire tax increase will hope to offset some of those expenses.

Fatland thanked staff for their help with the budget especially Dulcie Juenger, Emily Dale, and Tim Daniels. He looks forward to going through the budget in more detail on June 5th.

The Board unanimously voted to hold the budget work session on June 5th at 9:00am at the Tryon Depot.

XII. BOARD APPOINTMENT

Town Clerk Dale stated she had an application from Barbara Oklesen to join the Public Works Committee. Commissioner Lambakis moved to appoint Oklesen and the motion carried unanimously.

XIII. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Fatland presented a resolution for support for the Saluda Grade Trail. The Town along with Conserving Carolina, PAL, Live Well, Saluda Grade Trail Conservancy, City of Landrum, NC State Parks and Spartanburg County are seeking to apply for a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission to assist with the trail. Under this Memorandum of Understanding the Town would be responsible for the following:

- Plan and implement local trail access points, streetscape improvements, and trailside amenities within their respective jurisdictions

- Identify and pursue appropriate parking and connectivity solutions supporting trail access

- Support trail-related infrastructure improvements and pursue local matching funds and complementary investments

- Provide input regarding wayfinding, signage, and visitor experience to ensure consistency across the corridor

- Participate in project committees and coordinated decision-making activities

- Support unified cross state marketing, tourism promotion, and economic development initiative related to the trail

- Coordinate on long term stewardship and maintenance planning for trail assets located within their jurisdictions

- Assist with collection and reporting of project performance measures and economic impact data.

Fatland stated he hopes to be able to get the Trail from Landrum to Lockhart/McCowan so the citizen and school can utilize it to get downtown.

Commissioner Crowell moved to approve the resolution and the motion carried unanimously.

Fire Chief Connell stated that his ride a truck to school education program took place today. There were three individuals who due to excelling at reading throughout the school year were able to ride to school on the Fire truck. He stated one child in first grade read over 100 books. Dr. Mauldin, principal of Tryon Elementary, stated the program was a success and the teachers saw an uptick in the number of reading logs being turned in. Connell stated it was a great experience and fun for all involved. He hopes to make this an annual event.

XIV. COUNCIL/MAYOR REPORT

Commissioner Crowell stated he had assisted in getting Morris a “new blanket” to help with the rain. The arbor for the kiosk was installed and the kiosk should be up and running in 2-3 weeks.

Commissioner Lambakis thank Commissioner Crowell for the install work. As well as Lori Geddings and everyone involved in the Earth Day clean up. She commended the success of the Harmon Field Flea Market and thanked everyone for coming out.

Commissioner Morris thanks everyone for coming out and Chief Connell for his work with the school.

Mayor Pro Tem Crowe thanked Fatland and Dale for all of their work on the budget and getting things into shape. He also thanked Street Supervisor Chuck Sherbert for his work.

XV. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Nancy Lynn Miller Johnson: Concerns regarding sewer cap and smell at her home. She stated there was a smell at the sewer cap while someone from the Town did eventually come out, they have no maintained it. She is requesting someone from the Town come and look at the situation.

Anne Day: Inquired about the status of the fire hydrants. Fatland stated one had been installed this past week. She also asked about the ivy and leaves in the road on New Market.

Alan Casavant: Expressed concerns with economic development due to the Historic Preservation and felt it is hurting the Town from getting businesses. He also expressed concern regarding the police presence in Town. He Feels that businesses are being targeted and the cops are sitting at the entrances to Town.

XVI. CLOSED SESSION: PERSONNEL 143-318.11(a)(6)

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to go into closed session. Commissioner Crowell so moved and the motion carried.

Commissioner Crowell moved to go into to open session and the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to amend the employment contract for Jim Fatland, Town Manager. Commissioner Crowell so moved and the motion carried 3-1.

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