

**Minutes
Spruce Pine Town Council
September 9, 2024 5:30 PM**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on September 9, 2024. Present were Mayor Phillip Hise and Council Members Rocky Buchanan, Jackie Rensink, and Wayne Peight. Staff in attendance included Spencer Bost, Kasey Cook, Michael Wood, Travis Phillips, Crystal Young, Darlene Butler and Brooke Peterson. Others attended, including Chad Donnahoo, Donnie Staton, Cynthia Sciacca, and Mariel Williams.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Phillip Hise called the regular meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Jackie Rensink gave the invocation. Wayne Peight led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Jackie Rensink moved to approve the agenda with the addition of the signage of the Blue Ridge Snorkel Trail. Wayne Peight seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2024 Town Council Meeting. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2024 Closed Session Meeting. Wayne Peight seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- ❖ Cynthia Sciacca presented the fundraising gala event benefiting the Spruce Pine Public Library on October 4th. This event is a classic evening with food, beverages, and music. Come dressed as your favorite classic character. Tickets are \$20 each. There will be door prizes available. This event will launch the book sale from October 5 – 12. Council Member Jackie Rensink inquired about donating books.

ACTION AGENDA

- ✓ Jackie Rensink moved to approve the Special Event Permit Application for Spruce Pine Southern Shows – Alien Festival on June 14, 2025. Rocky Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- ✓ Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the Special Event Permit Application for Spruce Pine Rotary Club – BBQ Festival on October 5, 2024. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- ✓ Darlene Butler noted the first reading of the Personnel Policy. She stated there have been a few changes regarding overtime provisions. The second reading will be ready at the next meeting in September, then the new policy will take effect October 1, 2024.
- ✓ Rocky Buchanan made a motion to release 2024 personal property taxes for James Robinson in the amount of \$7.94. Wayne Peight seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- ✓ Wayne Peight made a motion to release 2024 taxes for Taylor Estelle Heirs from commercial to residential in the amount of \$7.36. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- ✓ Jackie Rensink made a motion for the town to fund a second sign for the Blue Ridge Snorkel Trail in the amount of \$1,000. Wayne Peight seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The TDA is purchasing a sign as well. The Blue Ridge Snorkel Trail company will be installing both signs.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Finance

- Finance Officer Crystal Young updated the council on the financials for the period ending August 31, 2024. Said reports are incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- \$121,000 has been collected from 2024 taxes and the current tax collection rate is 7%.
- Budget funds for emergency repairs have been utilized for water at the McHone pump station and sewer at the Carter's Ridge station.
- The auditors will be back in the next few weeks to finish up the audit.

- The company that is completing the audit for our utility accounts has already found \$200 per month of savings on one bill. That company is continuing to work on all of the town's utility accounts.
- Crystal also discussed sending delinquent accounts to NC Debt Set-Off. Phillip Hise asked about how that process works and the amount the town actually receives.
- Crystal is also working on the property values for the town's utility companies like CSX and Duke from the Department Revenue and getting those bills sent out.

Police Department

- Police Chief Kasey Cook updated the Council on the police department for the month of August, presenting a log with a total of 440 calls logged through Mitchell County Communications. Said log is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- The new patrol vehicles that were purchased this year are now fully fitted and on the road. The old Dodge Charger will be sold on the Gov Deals website. The black Dodge truck has been given to the Parks and Rec Department. Also, all of the car cameras that were purchased with this year's budget is being installed in all 8 patrol vehicles this week.
- Chief Cook noted all of the upcoming festivals and it will be a busy time downtown, therefore his department will be patrolling heavily.
- At the end of this month officers will be completing annual In-Service and Firearm Training.

Water and Sewer

- Project Manager Donnie Staton with Veolia gave his report for the month of August. Said report is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- Donnie stated the McHone pump station upgrades are being completed. New valves will be installed along with new piping.
- The Beaver Creek Reservoir has been down, Donnie is checking on that weekly.
- Donnie also noted the amount of grease the waste plant removed and importance of not putting grease in drains. Council Member Jackie Rensink asked about the grease issue.
- Donnie shared how well Darrell manages the wastewater plant. The Sullins Branch lift station will be rehabbed per the request from the state inspector.
- All capital projects for wastewater have been completed, except for replacing the generator transfer switch at the upper prison.

Public Works

- Public Works Director Travis Phillips presented a Work Order Summary Report for his department. Said report is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- Travis discussed G & C will be coming this week to install the new valves at the McHone station. This will be done without disrupting service.
- The splash pad has been shut down for the season. Public Works will be replacing the smaller water line with thicker line that will be able to withstand constant shutting off and on.
- Leaf season is coming up. The truck is currently in good working order.

Main Street

- Main Street Director Spencer Bost presented his August report for Main Street, which is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- Spencer shared the last third Thursday event of the year was a success.
- Spencer discussed the grant for the Riverbend Park regarding the knotweed.
- The downtown yard sale was a huge success with very positive feedback.
- Spencer also noted the upcoming festivals – Giving Gardens: September 14, Treasures in Fall: September 28, BBQ: October 5, and Potter's Market: October 12-13. Halloween which will be a major event downtown.
- Spencer mentioned the success of the golf tournament fundraiser that was held today-Monday, September 9 to benefit downtown and the chamber.
- Spencer applied for a grant which is for a native pollinator garden in the pocket park between the buildings to replace the holly bush that is currently there.

- Council Member Rocky Buchanan noted he appreciated Spencer's work in the downtown yard sale event.

Parks and Rec

- Parks and Rec Director Michael Wood presented his August report for Parks and Rec, which is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- Michael noted Riverside is still a work in progress. The old concession stand and restrooms are being converted to storage.
- Michael stated the pool has officially closed and he will begin the winterizing process soon, along with the restrooms.
- Michael followed up about the knotweed issue at Riverbend Park that Spencer also discussed. His department is constantly working on that issue.
- Michael also discussed all of the upcoming festivals and how his department will be assisting with the garbage pick-up. The new side-by-side will be a huge asset during festivals and it now has a permanent state tag.
- The new full-time employee, Kyle Patrick, between Parks and Rec and Public Works has started. Michael believes he will be a great fit for both departments.
- Leaf season will begin soon, Michael noted his department will be ready.
- Mayor Phillip Hise inquired about the bathroom door at Riverside. Michael noted he will reach out to the contractor to ensure that is repaired.

MANAGER'S UPDATE

- Town Manager Darlene Butler updated the council on current grant standings:
 - Streetscape grant which is \$49,999 from NC Department of Commerce and \$150,000 from USDA. WithersRavenel has begun developing two concepts for Locust Street and Oak Avenue. An engagement event will take place on October 5th, which is the same day as the BBQ Festival.
 - Stormwater Asset Inventory and Analysis is \$300,000 from NCDEQ. High Country Council of Government mapping should be complete by the end of September. The kickoff meeting with WithersRavenel was on September 5th. An online survey will be available by the end of September. Assessment is expected by December.
 - Water and Sewer AIA, which is \$150,000 for each area from NCDEQ. A scoping meeting with WithersRavenel was held on September 4th.
 - The HWY 226 waterline replacement is \$775,349 from Golden Leaf. The design phase is complete. We should have an answer within two weeks. EDA grant application for \$1,484,275 to complete the funding.
- Darlene noted she is working on the proposal from the engineer for overseeing the condemnation of the 116 S. Dale Street location.
- Darlene noted that she is also working on an ad and job description for a code enforcement officer starting at \$25/hour for a part-time position. If no changes are recommended from the council, she will publish the ad in the newspaper and online.
- Darlene updated the council on the return of the watershed property. After a zoom meeting with Pat Dale and attorneys, she is expecting an agreement regarding road upkeep, security gates, and environmental condition affidavit.
- The EDA and Chamber are both currently seeking directors.
- The High-Country Council of Government Annual Banquet is approaching. Darlene advised the council to complete their RSVP and give that to Brooke by September 20th.
- Mayor Phillip Hise asked Darlene if the state had contacted her regarding the Streetscape grant and she noted that she referred them to the engineer.
- Darlene also noted that DOT has been working on feasibility studies for different scenarios for the pedestrian bridge. The contracting company wants to meet with a town representative and a local DOT member to see which proposal would work best. Darlene requested that Mainstreet Director Spencer and Mayor Phillip be involved.

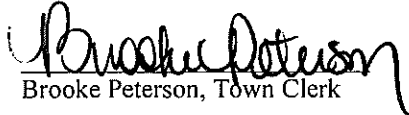
MAYOR/COUNCIL COMMENTS

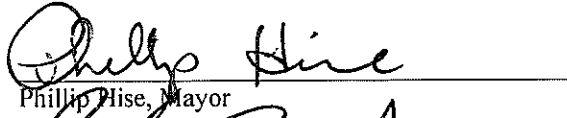
- Mayor Phillip Hise followed up with Council member Wayne Peight regarding quotes for repairing the Public Works roof.

- Council member Jackie Rensink discussed how pleased she is with the progress of all the grants, festivals, and just everything going on in town.

ADJOURNMENT

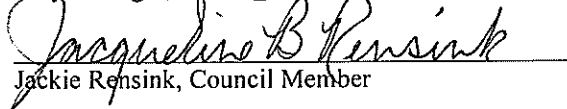
With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by motion of Jackie Rensink at 6:25 PM.


Brooke Peterson, Town Clerk


Phillip Hise, Mayor


Rocky Buchanan, Council Member


Wayne Peight, Council Member


Jackie Rensink, Council Member

PUBLIC COMMENT SIGN-IN SHEET

Date: 9/9/24

[illegible]

Taxpayer name: Zbigniew

Address: 1400 Birchbrook Trail, Suite 100

Account #: 555782667

Parcel #: 06-10-01-0000-0000

Reason for Release or Refund: NOT SOLD

Date: 8-16-24

Year	Bill #	Real Value	Personal Value	County Tax	Fire Tax	Total to be Released	Penalty Adjustment	Cost of Advertising Adjustment	Interest Adjustment
2024	13071	—	1570	8.79	—	8.79	.88		

Amount to be Refunded:

Authorized by:

Affirmed by:

Chairman Mitchell County Board of Commissioners

Clerk to the Mitchell County Board of Commissioners

Total Sp. class:

1725

Punch : Oil

70

Taxpayer name: Taylor Estelle He's

Address: 36 Walnut Ave Spruce Pine

Account #: 555 783330

Parcel #: 0590-17-12-8205

Reason for Release or Refund: Changed land assessment from Commercial to residential

Date:

[illegible]

Amount to be Refunded:

Authorized by:

Affirmed by:

Chairman Mitchell County Board of Commissioners

Clerk to the Mitchell County Board of Commissioners

Tom Sp release. # 7310

Spine

Town of Spruce Pine Financials
Ending June 30th, 2025
1st Quarter
FY 2024-2025



2024-2025 Budget Figures				
August 31st, 2024		2024-2025	Y-T-D June 30th,	
		Budget	2025	Percent
General Fund Revenue				
Levied Taxes and Penalties		\$1,532,500	\$121,225	7.9%
Local Sales Tax		\$750,000	\$128,851	17.2%
Franchise Taxes		\$285,000	\$0	0.0%
Powell Bill		\$80,000	\$0	0.0%
Interest Earned		\$120,000	\$47,487	39.6%
Recreation Park Revenue		\$26,000	\$15,053	57.9%
Revolving Loan Repayments		\$2,000	\$250	12.5%
Misc Income		\$135,015	\$3,993	3.0%
Grants		\$0	\$1,136	
Fund Balance Appropriated		\$0	\$0	
General Fund Revenue		\$2,933,515	\$317,995	10.8%
General Fund Expenditures				
Governing Body		\$23,692	\$3,277	13.8%
Total Administration & Finance		\$281,868	\$85,936	30.5%
Cost of Elections		\$0	\$0	0.0%
Tax Collections Fees		\$5,250	\$710	13.5%
Economics		\$170,927	\$30,756	18.0%
Total Public Building & Facilities		\$130,028	\$42,879	33.0%
Fire Department		\$171,500	\$0	0.0%
Building Inspections		\$31,350	\$0	0.0%
Police Department		\$1,201,192	\$287,532	23.9%
Public Works		\$188,491	\$63,330	33.6%
Powell Bill		\$116,068	\$11,402	9.8%
Sanitation		\$97,073	\$8,076	8.3%
Parks & Recreation		\$325,230	\$93,296	28.7%
Library		\$118,959	\$19,694	16.6%
Trac Grant		\$5,000	\$5,000	100.0%
Cemetery		\$34,350	\$8,325	24.2%
Contingency		\$32,537		
Total General Fund Expenditures		\$2,933,515	\$660,214	22.5%
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over Expenditures		\$0	-\$342,219	

Town of Spruce Pine
Analysis of Current Year Tax Levy
08/31/24
excluding vehicle taxes

	Property Valuation	Town-wide Rate	Amount of Levy
Original levy:			
Real property	56,303,370	\$0.46	
Building property	264,496,800		
Personal property	65,225,300		
Public service companies			
Penalties			
Exemptions	83,697,187		
	<u>302,328,283</u>		<u>1,390,710.10</u>
Discoveries:			
Current year taxes			
Rounding			
Prior year taxes	<u>-</u>		<u>-</u>
Abatements			
Min Bill	29,054		133.65
Rounding			0.38
Releases (Curr)			
Releases (Prior)			
Total property valuation	<u>302,299,229</u>		
Net levy			<u>1,390,576.83</u>
Uncollected taxes at			<u>1,293,658.23</u>
Current year's taxes collected			<u>96,918.60</u>
Current levy collection percentage			<u>7.0%</u>

Mitchell County Central Communications
117 Long View Drive Bakersville , NC 28705

Department CFS CallType Group By Month For 08/01/2024 - 09/30/2024

Spruce Pine Police Department													
CallTypeGroup	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
911 ABANDONED	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
911 INCOMPLETE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
ADMINISTRATIVE - LAW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	2	0	0	0	11
ALARM- FIRE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
ALARMS- LAW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	1	0	0	0	12
ANIMAL CONTROL/SHELTER REQUEST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
ANIMAL- LAW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	1	0	0	0	9
ASSAULT/SEXUAL ASSAULT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
ASSIST OTHER AGENCY - LAW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
ATTEMPT TO LOCATE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	1	0	0	0	8
BURGLARY/HOME INVASION	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
CARELESS/RECKLESS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	1	0	0	0	15
CHOKING	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
CITIZEN ASSIST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
COMMITMENT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
CONVULSIONS/SEIZURES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
COURT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
DAMAGE/VANDALISM/MISCHIEF	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	6
DCI / CRIMINAL HISTORY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
DIABETIC PROBLEMS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
DIRECT TRAFFIC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
DISABLED MOTORIST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	5
DISORDERLY CONDUCT/NUISANCE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	0	6
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	0	6

Spruce Pine Police Department

CallTypeGroup	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
TRAFFIC VIOLATION/COMPLAINT/HAZARD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
TRAINING	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
TRESPASSING/UNWANTED	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	4
UNCONSCIOUS/FALLING	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
UNKNOWN MEDICAL PROBLEM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
WARRANT / CIVIL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
WEAPONS / FIREARMS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
WELFARE CHECK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	0	0	0	6
WRECKER REQUEST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Department Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	336	104	0	0	0	440



VEOLIA NORTH AMERICA
95 CLEARWATER LANE
SPRUCE PINE, NC 28777

TELEPHONE (828) 765-3011
FAX: (828) 765-3013
EMAIL - donnie.staton@veolia.com

MONTHLY REPORT
OF THE
WATER AND WASTEWATER FACILITIES
SPRUCE PINE, NORTH CAROLINA



PREPARED
FOR THE
TOWN OF SPRUCE PINE
August 2024



WASTEWATER

The wastewater plant and lift stations operated in full compliance with all State and Federal rules and regulations for the month. We sent 4 loads of solids to the landfill.

8/5/24 Staff collected pre-treatment samples from BRP.

8/15/24 Staff pulled a sewer pump at the upper prison. It had fallen off the rails.

8/16/24 Staff pulled pumps at Beaver Creek and Carters Ridge. Both were clogged.

8/21/24 Hired KRG vac truck to pump out Carters Ridge, Depot Street, and both prison lift stations. There was a lot of grease and trash build up at these locations.

8/22/24 Staff installed a new sewer pump at the Henredon lift station.

8/27/24 Staff installed a new sewer pump at the Carters Ridge lift station.

8/29/24 Met with Kemp Inc. to get quotes on replacing 3 bearings in the waste plant ditch and replacing a valve on our grit separator. Also we are planning on rehabbing the Sullins Branch lift station per request from the state inspector.

8/29/24 State inspected all pre treatment records of analysis concerning BRP. All were good.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

All capital projects are complete except for replacing the generator transfer switch at upper prison sewer lift station.

ANALYSES

	INF AVG MG/L	EFF AVG MG/L	% REMOVAL
BOD	192.4	2.00	98%
TSS	223.9	6.0	98%

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

All employee safety training is up to date.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donnie Staton
Project Manager
Veolia North America

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www.veolianorthamerica.com

Town of Spruce Pine Monthly Report

August 2024

Public Works Department

Work Order Summary for August 2024:

Unlock and turn on meter 22

Jet Lines 11

Turn off and lock meter 13

Patch Potholes 13

Brush 26

Mowing 6

Leaves 0

Misc. 17

Locates 53

New Meters 15

Meter Checks 58

White Goods 6

Cardboard (weekly)

Water Leaks 6

Sewer Leaks 1

Water Taps 0

Sewer Taps 0

Graves 4

Unstopped culverts/ditches 2

Removed Trees from road 2

Facilities maintenance 5

August Misc. work summary:

Working with Kemp inc. on rehabbing the Sullins Br. Pump station with new piping and rail system and new concrete on the top where old is chipping off.

We shut the splash pad line down for the winter and going to replace the line this fall to poly pipe that can withstand the on and off of the splash pad system.

I have taken and successfully passed the NC Cross Connection ORC license this month and will start working more on that now.

We are working closely with several contractors with work going on in the system for new water and sewer services, A couple of those projects have wrapped up.

Worked with high country council on the stormwater mapping.

Mowing efforts are still continuing around town.

We Jetted out and cleaned 3,900 feet of sewer line this month which puts us at 16,150 feet working towards our goal of 18,500 feet per year.

All items from the budget have been ordered and received.

Travis Phillips

Public Works Director

Monthly Report - September 2024

Dear Town Council Members,

I hope this report finds you well. Below is a summary of the activities and initiatives undertaken by Downtown Spruce Pine over the past month:

1. Third Thursday Event:

- The last Third Thursday event was held successfully with enthusiastic community participation and positive feedback. Attendees expressed anticipation for its return next year.

2. Biological Survey at Riverbend Park:

- A state biologist conducted a survey of species of note in Riverbend Park. Their findings highlighted key ecological aspects and a report is available.

3. String Lights Installation in Pocket Park:

- Approval has been secured for the installation of string lights in the Pocket Park, enhancing its ambiance and attractiveness for visitors. Implementation is underway.

4. Downtown Yard Sale:

- The recent downtown yard sale was a resounding success, drawing significant community engagement and positive community feedback.

5. Collaboration with Potters Market:

- Downtown Spruce Pine is now collaborating with the Potters Market, actively supporting this renowned event through promotional efforts via posters and mailers.

6. Involvement in Hilloween Street Festival:

- We are excited to participate and support the upcoming Hilloween Street Festival, which promises to be a major event highlighting Spruce Pine's community spirit and local culture.

Upcoming Events:

- **Mitchell Giving Gardens Harvest Festival Fundraiser:** Saturday, September 14th.
- **Treasures in the Fall Festival:** September 28th.
- **Barbeque Festival:** October 5th.
- **Spruce Pine Potter's Market:** October 12-13.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our town's growth and vitality.

Spencer Bost



Parks and Recreation Department

Office (828)765-3012

Cell (828) 385-2179

Town of Spruce Pine Board Meeting

September 9th, 2024

General Park Maintenance

- Morning and Night check list completed each day
- Trash pick-up in town
- Mowing and weedeating

Brad Ragan Park

- Cleaned up down trees on the Mineral City walking trail

Riverside Park

- Old Concession stand and restrooms being converted into storage
- Splash pad is shut down for the season

Shelter Reservations

- August 41 reservations
- Last month of taking reservations till spring

Pool

- 2 pool rentals for August
- Shutting down the water towards the end of September

Riverbend Park

- Still working on knot weed

Town

- N/A

Other Business

- Have the side by side tagged
- Hired the new full time person between parks and maintenance (Kyle Patrick)