

**TOWN OF VALDESE
TOWN COUNCIL PRE - AGENDA MEETING
JULY 28, 2025**

The Town of Valdese Town Council met on Monday, July 28, 2025, at 6:00 p.m., in the Town Council Chambers at Town Hall, 102 Massel Avenue SW, Valdese, North Carolina. The following were present: Mayor Charles Watts, Mayor Pro Tem Gary Ogle, Councilwoman Rexanna Lowman, Councilwoman Heather Ward, Councilwoman Melinda Zimmerman, and Councilman Glenn Harvey. Also present were: Assistant Town Manager/CFO Bo Weichel, Town Attorney Tim Swanson, Town Clerk Jessica Lail, and Alison Adams from WPCOG.

Absent: Town Manager Todd Herms

A quorum was present.

Mayor Watts called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., he offered the invocation and led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROSTAN ANNEXATION PETITION – CALL FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON AUGUST 4, 2025 Alison Adams, from WPCOG, explained that the petition is to annex one parcel, which is contiguous to the current town limits. The property owner, Mr. Rostan, will also be requesting a rezoning to reflect a town zoning district, which will be addressed next. The annexation petition was submitted on May 27, 2025. All legal notice requirements have been met, including newspaper publications on July 19 and 26 and posting of the property. Ms. Adams recommended that the Council direct the Clerk to review the petition for sufficiency and set the public hearing for August 4, 2025.

**RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE CLERK TO INVESTIGATE
A PETITION RECEIVED UNDER G.S. 160A-31**

WHEREAS, a petition requesting annexation of an area described in said petition was received on May 27, 2025 by the Town Council of the Town of Valdese; and

WHEREAS, G.S. 160A-31 provides that the sufficiency of the petition shall be investigated by the Town Clerk before further annexation proceedings may take place; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council of the Town of Valdese, deems it advisable to proceed in response to this request for annexation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of Valdese that the Town Clerk is hereby directed to investigate the sufficiency of the above described petition and to certify as soon as possible to the Town Council the result of her investigation.

/s/ Charles Watts, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ Town Clerk

Councilman Harvey made a motion to approve the resolution directing the Clerk to investigate a petition received under NCGS 168-31, seconded by Councilwoman Lowman. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

**RESOLUTION FIXING DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON QUESTION
OF ANNEXATION PURSUANT TO G.S. 160A-31**

WHEREAS, a petition requesting annexation of the area described herein has been received; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council of the Town of Valdese has by resolution directed the Town Clerk to investigate the sufficiency of the petition; and

WHEREAS, certification by the Town Clerk as to the sufficiency of the petition has been made.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of Valdese North Carolina that:

Section 1. A public hearing on the question of annexation of the area described herein will be held at Valdese Town Hall, Council Chambers at 6:00 p.m. on the 4th day of August, 2025.

Section 2. The area proposed for contiguous voluntary annexation is described as follows:

Being all of that tract containing 1.61 acres and being referred to as "PART OF 274206279575 TO BE RECOMBINED WITH 274206373669" as shown on survey prepared by West Consultants, PLLC dated August 27, 2007, entitled "PROPERTY OF JOHN P ROSTAN III (RECOMBINATION OF EXISTING PARCELS)" and recorded August 27, 2007 in Plat Book 34, Pages 221-222, Burke County Registry.

TAX ID #: 2742370517

BACK DEED REFERENCE: Book 1965, Page 193, Burke County Registry

Section 3. Notice of the public hearing shall be published in The Paper, a newspaper having general circulation in the Town of Valdese, at least ten (10) days prior to the date of the public hearing.

/s/ Charles Watts, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ Town Clerk

Councilwoman Lowman made a motion to approve the resolution fixing the date of the public hearing on this annexation, and the date will be on August 4, 2025, seconded by Councilwoman Zimmerman. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF AUGUST 4, 2025, PRELIMINARY AGENDA:

CONSENT AGENDA: Mayor Watts noted the items on the Consent Agenda.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 23, 2025

APPROVAL OF CLOSED SESSION MINUTES OF JUNE 23, 2025

APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 11, 2025

APPROVAL OF CLOSED SESSION MINUTES OF JULY 11, 2025

APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR MERIDIAN 10-INCH SEWER LINE REPAIR

RESULT: CONSENT ITEMS MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

NEW BUSINESS:

PUBLIC HEARING – ROSTAN VOLUNTARY ANNEXATION Ms. Adams noted that this is just a recap of what she just presented for the annexation.

Councilman Harvey expressed his support for the annexation, stating it sets a good precedent. He encouraged other heirs of the Waldensian founders with property adjacent to Valdese, especially land not included when the town was originally incorporated, to also consider voluntary annexation. He noted that while many of these property owners identify as Valdese residents due to the 28690 zip code and their Waldensian heritage, they are technically outside town limits. He added that it would be beneficial for the town if these surrounding parcels were eventually incorporated.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

PUBLIC HEARING – REZONING OF ROSTAN PROPERTY Ms. Adams explained that this rezoning request follows the annexation of the Rostan property. The property is currently zoned R-1 by Burke County, and the request is to rezone it to the Town of Valdese's R-12 district, which is consistent with surrounding zoning. She stated that the Planning Board reviewed the application on June 16, 2025, and gave a favorable recommendation. All legal notice requirements were met, including letters to adjoining property owners, posting the property, and publishing two newspaper ads. She recommended that Council hold a public hearing on August 4, 2025, to consider the rezoning.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

CALL FOR A PUBLIC HEARING TO MODIFY UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE Ms. Adams stated that this request serves as a cleanup item for the Unified Development Ordinance. The original effective date was listed as July 1, 2025, but due to unresolved issues with state legislation related to downzoning, it is recommended to move the effective date to January 1, 2026. This change allows additional time for the General Assembly to address the issue. She recommended that Council set a public hearing for September 2 to meet all legal notice requirements.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

APPROVAL OF IRON MOUNTAIN CONTRACT & RESOLUTION OF TENTATIVE AWARD FOR THE VALDESE BLUFFS PROJECT Mr. Weichel provided an update on the Bluffs project. He explained that although partnership funding from the county and the developer has not been secured, the Town received an \$800,000 ARPA grant with a strict deadline. Council previously decided to move forward using the available funds. The Department of Water Infrastructure approved that approach, and the Town worked with the low bidder, Iron Mountain, to revise the project scope to fit the budget. The proposed contract is for \$634,000 with a \$7,000 contingency. Remaining funds will cover design and construction administration. The award is tentative pending final approval of the scope of work. The revised plan allows the project to move forward and positions the Town to complete additional work when more funding becomes available.

Mr. Weichel clarified that the current phase of the Bluffs project is not expected to benefit Valdese Weavers or Draughn High School. The work is designed to serve the entire subdivision, but the initial construction will focus on select areas that can remain in place until the rest of the project is completed in the future. The goal is to install infrastructure that can sit idle without risk of deterioration.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

APPROVAL OF DR REYNOLDS CONTRACT FOR PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITIES Mr. Weichel stated that the contract with DR Reynolds is the result of an RFQ process initiated last year. The contract covers phase one of a facilities study for the police and fire departments. The town attorney has reviewed the agreement, and it will be included in the upcoming agenda package.

Councilman Harvey asked if we were going to use a DBIA contract that was specified in the RFQ. Attorney Swanson explained that the team initially attempted to use DBIA contract forms but encountered issues determining the appropriate version. Since neither the Town nor DR Reynolds is very familiar with those forms, they decided to use AIA documents instead.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

INFORMATION ITEMS FOR COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

i. **FY 2025 PRELIMINARY FINAL RESULTS, AS OF JUNE 30, 2025** Mr. Weichel provided a preliminary year-end financial update as of June 30, 2025, noting the figures have not yet been audited. He reported that revenues slightly exceeded projections and expenditures came in under budget. As a result, approximately \$500,000 to \$550,000 will be added to fund balance. The primary factor was investment income, which was budgeted at \$243,000 but ended at \$772,000 due to a surplus of idle funds, resulting in about \$530,000 in unexpected interest income. Councilman Harvey asked if the preliminary results would be included in the agenda packet, specifically the June 30, 2025, year-to-date column.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

ii. **STATUS OF MOBILE FOOD ORDINANCE** Attorney Swanson stated that the draft food truck ordinance is currently under review. A copy will be provided for Council to begin reviewing and offering feedback. The ordinance will also be submitted to the Planning Board for review as part of the process.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

iii. **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT FOR VALDESE TOWN COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEES** Attorney Swanson explained that adding a residency requirement for committee members can be done in two ways. To apply the requirement to all committees, an amendment to the ordinance is needed, which is a more complex process requiring a public hearing and Council vote. If the residency requirement applies only to specific committees, it can be adopted by resolution. He noted that listing specific committees that Council previously formed and modifying their requirements through a resolution is a simpler option. Attorney Swanson suggested grandfathering in committee members that are currently serving on a board that live outside of the town limits.

Councilwoman Ward supported residency requirements, noting that taxpayers should have a greater say in town decisions. Councilwoman Zimmerman and Councilwoman Lowman raised concerns about exceptions, such as police officers and business owners who live outside town but serve on committees. Councilman Harvey expressed concern about outside water customers on social media wanting a voice in town decisions despite not paying town taxes. Attorney Swanson just needs guidance on which committees need to be included. The group agreed on the need to clarify residency requirements and suggested drafting a resolution to address this for consideration at the August 4 or September meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

iv. **STATUS REPORT ON \$25,000 WPCOG CONTRACT, FROM AUGUST 7, 2023 – DECEMBER 31, 2026** Mr. Weichel explained that the contract with the Council of Governments for grant administration related to the Old Rock School renovation project has been completed. The project was finished last year, all grant funds have been received, and the contractor has been paid in full.

RESULT: REMOVED FROM THE AUGUST 4, 2025 AGENDA

UPDATES ON AGREEMENTS AND PROJECTS APPROVED AT THE JUNE 2025 MEETING:

i. **WPCOG PLANNING ASSISTANCE** Mr. Weichel stated that the planning contract remains unchanged from the previous year. It is a two-year agreement with a 30-day termination notice. Currently, planning services are provided one day a week on Wednesdays.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

ii. **WPCOG STORMWATER PARTNERSHIP** Mr. Weichel explained that this continues the Town's longstanding stormwater partnership with the Council of Governments. Although no work has started yet this fiscal year, the contract is in its second year of a two-year term.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

iii. **FIRST TRYON FINANCIAL ADVISORS** Mr. Weichel reported that work with First Tryon on the financial model is progressing well. They have provided a second draft, which he has not yet had time to review. The model is being customized to fit the Town's needs and integrated with the budget document. Once finalized, it will be presented to Council.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

iv. **APPLICATION FOR SUPPLEMENTAL HELENE FUNDING THROUGH DWI** Mr. Weichel provided an update on the funding application for the new Division of Water Infrastructure (DWI) program. Council previously approved a resolution to apply, and the application will be submitted by the August 1st deadline. Since the program guidelines were only recently released, McGill Associates and staff is working quickly to meet the requirements. The current focus is on submitting the water project application,

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particularly the water plant impacted by Hurricane Helene, as it is expected to score well. The Town will wait to submit sewer projects in the next round of funding on November 1st, once there is a better understanding of how DWI evaluates projects under the new program.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT Town Manager Todd Herms will report at the August 4, 2025 meeting.

Mayor Watts announced that there would be a Special Called Meeting on Monday, August 4, 2025, at 5:00 pm in the Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT: At 6:35 p.m., there being no further business to come before Council, Councilwoman Ward made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilwoman Zimmerman. The vote was unanimous.

Town Clerk

Mayor

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