

**TOWN OF VALDESE
TOWN COUNCIL PRE - AGENDA MEETING
September 29, 2025**

The Town of Valdese Town Council met on Monday, September 29, 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: Town Manager Todd Herms, Assistant Town Manager/CFO Bo Weichel, Town Attorney Tim Swanson, WPCOG Planner Daniel Odom, and Planning/Clerk Intern Michael Rapp.

Absent: Town Clerk Jessica Lail

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.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION FOR SRF/SRP FUNDING APPLICATION FOR SUPPLEMENTAL HELENE FUNDS Mayor Watts moved to the first item on the Agenda, Approval of Resolution for SRF/SRP Funding Application for Supplemental Helene Funds, giving the floor to Mr. Weichel.

RESOLUTION BY GOVERNING BODY OF APPLICANT

WHEREAS, The Town of Valdese has need for and intends to construct and plan for projects described as the Raw Water Intake Relocation and Electrical Substation Resiliency and,

WHEREAS, The Town of Valdese intends to request State loan and/or grant assistance for the project,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF VALDESE:

That Town of Valdese, the Applicant, will arrange financing for all remaining costs of the project, if approved for a State loan and/or grant award.

That the Applicant will provide for efficient operation and maintenance of the project on completion of construction thereof.

That the Applicant will adopt and place into effect on or before completion of the project a schedule of fees and charges and other available funds which will provide adequate funds for proper operation, maintenance, and administration of the system and the repayment of all principal and interest on the debt.

That the governing body of the Applicant agrees to include in the loan agreement a provision authorizing the State Treasurer, upon failure of the Town of Valdese to make a scheduled repayment of the loan, to withhold from the Town of Valdese any State funds that would otherwise be distributed to the local government unit in an amount sufficient to pay all sums then due and payable to the State as a repayment of the loan.

If applying for a regional project, that the Applicant will partner and work with other units of local government or utilities in conducting the project, including the City of Morganton and the Town of Drexel.

That Bo Weichel, Assistant Town Manager, the Authorized Representative and successors so titled, is hereby authorized to execute and file an application on behalf of the Applicant with the State of North Carolina for a loan and/or grant to aid in the study of or construction of the project described above.

That the Authorized Representative, and successors so titled, is hereby authorized and directed to furnish such information as the appropriate State agency may request in connection with such application or the project: to make the assurances as contained above; and to execute such other documents as may be required in connection with the application.

That the Applicant has substantially complied or will substantially comply with all Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, and funding conditions applicable to the project and to Federal and State grants and loans pertaining thereto.

Adopted this the _____ day of September, 2025 at Valdese Town Hall, North Carolina.

FORM FOR CERTIFICATION BY THE RECORDING OFFICER

The undersigned duly qualified and acting Town Clerk of the Town of Valdese does hereby certify: That the above/attached resolution is a true and correct copy of the resolution authorizing the filing of an application with the State of North Carolina, as regularly adopted at a legally convened meeting of the Town Council duly held on the 29th day of September, 2025; and, further, that such resolution has been fully

recorded in the journal of proceedings and records in my office. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this _____ day of September, 2025.

(Signature of Recording Officer)

(Title of Recording Officer)

Mr. Weichel stated this item was the only action item on this Agenda. Mr. Weichel stated that the reason for this was that the application deadline was the following day, September 30, 2025. Mr. Weichel gave a history behind this resolution. Mr. Weichel stated that back in June the Council approved the Town to create a resolution for Helene funding. Mr. Weichel stated that at the time, two projects were applied for, the raw water intake building and the interconnection project with Morganton and Drexel. Mr. Weichel stated that these projects were then scored, stating the interconnect did not score as high as the raw water intake building. Mr. Weichel stated that the raw water intake building had flooded during Helene. Mr. Weichel stated the cap for any project for any town was \$10,000,000. Mr. Weichel then presented the loan structure, where \$8,750,000 would be a principal forgiveness loan and that the remainder of the loan would be a 0% interest loan for twenty (20) years. Mr. Weichel stated the total project scope was estimated to be \$30,000,000. Mr. Weichel stated the resolution that was presented before Council on the dais was for another source of funding for the project. Mr. Weichel stated the funding from this source would not be as great, but was an opportunity to try and get a little more funding for the project. Mr. Weichel stated the scope for the raw water intake building project would have to be changed, but this application would help dip into more funds for the initiative.

Mayor Watts then opened the floor for questions from the Council. Councilman Harvey asked if the \$30,000,000 covered one, or both, parts of the project. Mr. Weichel responded that the raw water intake project was projected to cost \$30,000,000, for relocation of the building to higher ground. Mr. Weichel stated the interconnect had its own, separate, funding which was approximately \$29,000,000 for the Valdese portion of the project. Councilman Harvey then questioned how much funding the Town applied for the interconnect portion. Mr. Weichel responded that the Town applied for the full \$29,000,000, that both projects applications had the town requesting for the full amount. Mr. Weichel went on to state that at the time of application funding caps were not outlined. Councilman Harvey clarified that the Town applied for two different things. Councilman Harvey stated that according to the paper Morganton and Drexel received fund allocation for the interconnect project, which Valdese did not. Mr. Weichel responded in the affirmative. Councilman Harvey asked about the interconnect project, stating, for everyone to make the interconnect project work Valdese needed to get their portion as well, which Councilman Harvey stated, according to the newspaper, was an elevated water tank that would provide pressure and other necessities. Mr. Weichel responded in the affirmative. Councilman Harvey stated the Town had received nothing for this interconnect project. Councilman Harvey then questioned what the Town had received approval of and for. Mr. Weichel stated the raw water intake project was what had gotten approved. Mr. Weichel went on to state that the full project scope was not funded, stating that the Town should hit the pause button, apply for the SRF funds, and see what the Town could get from there, then possibly revise the scope to meet the funding the Town has. Councilman Harvey questioned the total cost of that project. Mr. Weichel responded stating if the Town were to do it how it was originally applied for, the project cost would be \$30,000,000. Councilman Harvey then questioned how much funding the Town received. Mr. Weichel stated the cap was \$10,000,000, stating \$8,750,000 of the awarded amount was a principal forgiveness loan, and the remainder was a 0% loan, over twenty (20) years. Councilman Harvey then questioned what was being applied for if the Council were to approve. Mr. Weichel stated it was for more funding toward that same project. Councilman Harvey questioned how much more funding there would be, asking if it would be the other \$20,000,000. Mr. Weichel responded by stating that the additional funding would likely only be a couple million dollars at the most. Councilman Harvey then stated this had nothing to do with the interconnect project, that the application was strictly for the water plant building. Mr. Weichel responded in the affirmative. Councilman Harvey questioned if no more funding were to be received, could the Town spend the \$8,500,000 that it had been awarded even if the Town were to not complete the whole project. Mr. Weichel responded that a few hoops would need to be gone through to change the scope of the project to still do modifications to the building that would meet resiliency, and not relocate the entire structure. Councilman Harvey stated that the Town had been awarded \$8,500,000, that the Town would try and get a couple million more. Councilman Harvey questioned if there was an interest free loan the Town could

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also qualify for. Mr. Weichel responded that there was, that it was part of the \$10,000,000 of funding. Councilman Harvey then clarified that the Town had been awarded \$10,000,000 and would try and get a couple million more, and if it were to be acquired, the Town could then do \$10,000,000 of improvements to the water plant. Mr. Weichel responded in the affirmative. Councilman Harvey then stated if the additional funding were to not be acquired the Town could still do \$10,000,000 worth of improvements to the water plant, with no question. Mr. Weichel responded that as long as the changes in the scope were approved that was correct, but that the Town must know how much more funding would be present before the changes could be explored. Mayor Watts asked for further comments, none were provided.

Councilwoman Lowman made a motion to approve the resolution for SRF/SRP Funding Application for Supplemental Helene Funds, seconded by Councilman Harvey.

Mayor Watts opened the floor for further discussion. Mayor Pro Tem Ogle then asked for clarification on the interconnect project funding, stating it totaled \$30,000,000, questioning how it would be paid for. Mr. Weichel responded that the Town would not be able to afford the full cost, so the Town would try and apply for additional funding through the SRF, and then revisit the scope of the project.

The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF OCTOBER 6, 2025, PRELIMINARY AGENDA: Mayor Watts then moved on to Item B, review and discussion of the October 6, 2025 Agenda. Mayor Watts asked if there were any questions on the Consent Agenda. Councilman Harvey stated he would like item E. Approval of Budget Amendment – 4th of July Fireworks, to be removed and dealt with separately. Mayor Watts asked for further comments, none were provided.

APPROVAL OF PRE-AGENDA MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 25, 2025

APPROVAL OF CLOSED SESSION MINUTES OF AUGUST 25, 2025

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 2, 2025

APPROVAL OF LEASE AGREEMENT AT OLD ROCK SCHOOL WITH VEDIC

APPROVAL OF FIRST AMENDMENT TO AGREEMENT FOR PURCHASE FOR PURCHASE AND SALE OF LAND – 800 PINEBURR PROPERTY

CALL FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025, 5:00 PM – SPECIAL USE PERMIT 800 PINEBURR PROPERTY

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

ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA:

APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENT – 4TH OF JULY FIREWORKS No further discussion.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEW BUSINESS AT THE NEXT MEETING ON OCTOBER 6, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

NEW BUSINESS:

PUBLIC HEARING – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION (CDBG-NR) – FUNDING FOR BERRYTOWN WATERLINE PROJECT Mr. Weichel opened by stating Kyle Case from WPCOG would be present at the next meeting to present on this item. Mr. Weichel offered a brief overview, stating \$800,000 had originally been requested for the Berrytown Waterline project through the CDBG-NR program. Mr. Weichel stated that due to increased project costs the Town had been awarded an additional \$200,000. Mr. Weichel stated the public hearing process had been gone through for the original \$800,000 and due to the additional funding, the Town would have to go through the same motions again. Mr. Weichel stated the public hearing was to notify the public of the additional \$200,000 worth of funding.

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

ADOPTION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT-INFRASTRUCTURE (CDBG-NR) DOCUMENT Mr. Weichel stated this Item, Item B, went hand in hand with the previous Item, Item A, adopting several documents which had been adopted previously. Mr. Weichel stated the adoption of these documents was required by the CDBG program.

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

APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE DIRECTING CLOSURE OF PROPERTY DEEMED IMMINENT DANGER

Mr. Curt Willis, Code Enforcement Manager, WPCOG, opened on this matter. Mr. Willis stated the Town had been dealing with the case at Pineburr for quite some time, stating Ms. Bolick was still living in a tent with her son. Mr. Willis stated a minimum housing case had been opened in July, that a hearing had been held on the 23rd of July with Ms. Bolick present. Mr. Willis stated during this hearing it was explained to Ms. Bolick what was going on and that connection had been made between Ms. Bolick and the Homeless Outreach Team. Mr. Willis stated that Ms. Bolick had a voucher for a program called Back to Home, and that there were no available openings for the program at the present time. Mr. Willis stated Ms. Bolick had several avenues and that she was actively pursuing a place to live, but that as of the present time she was still living in the tent. Mr. Willis stated Ms. Bolick's 60 days were up, and that if the ordinance were to be adopted on Monday the 6th of October, the property would be placarded and if necessary she would be removed from the property for trespassing, and that the tent and whatever else would be torn down from the property.

Mayor Watts opened the floor to the Council for questions. Councilman Harvey questioned if the property would be closed due to it being deemed an imminent danger. Mr. Willis responded that this was a minimum housing issue, and that conditions were unhealthy and unsanitary as there were no facilities for Ms. Bolick and her son to use, and that they were living in a tent. Mayor Watts stated he had had multiple complaints on the property and that it had been worked on for over a year, alongside the Police Department. Councilman Harvey asked what the address of the property was. Mr. Willis stated the address was 508 Pineburr Avenue Southwest. Councilwoman Ward questioned where Ms. Bolick would go, stating she had people living in tents near her, and that they had tried to go the no trespassing route, stating that the Police were doing a phenomenal job, but that they end up going somewhere else. Councilwoman Ward stated that if they lived in Valdese, that she had a feeling they would not want to leave Valdese, stating it seemed as if people were being moved from one place to another. Mayor Watts stated that this went a whole lot deeper, that there was a long history with this case. Councilwoman Ward questioned where people would end up. Mr. Willis responded that he did not know. Mayor Watts stated that help had been offered to Ms. Bolick and that it had been refused. Mr. Willis stated the son was 25 years old, and that his father had picked him up and taken him camping over the last summer, and that the son was brought back to the property after this. Mr. Willis again stated he did not know where they were going, that this was something he had dealt with quite often, and that it just had to be dealt with as issues popped up. Mr. Willis stated Ms. Bolick was on a path to find a place, that she had a voucher, and that as soon as something became available she would be in a place.

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

CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE – UTILITY LINE REPLACEMENT FY 25-26 Mr. Weichel stated that with the CIP adopted budget, the Town had several utility line projects. Mr. Weichel stated these projects included Rodoret, Curville, and Jefferson. Mr. Weichel stated the projects were being moved forwards, that the capital project ordinance sets up capital project funds for these items so that they could be accounted for properly. Mr. Weichel stated that the ordinance being presented would set up the surveying and engineering work. Mr. Weichel stated once the Town went out for bids and received actual construction costs, the project ordinance would be updated to reflect the costs, amending the ordinance at that time. Mr. Weichel stated that this was why the ordinance reflected a smaller cost than what was approved in the budget, as current costs only reflect the surveying and engineering work.

Councilwoman Lowman questioned when the project would get started for residents. Mr. Weichel stated that this would get the engineering work kicked off, but that he was not entirely sure how long it would take.

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Mr. Weichel stated that he hoped bids would go out near January. Councilman Harvey questioned if the projects would only impact the Utility Fund and not the General Fund. Mr. Weichel responded in the affirmative. Councilman Harvey then clarified the project would not have impact on property taxes or general fund reserves, that this would all be funded through water and sewer revenue. Mr. Weichel responded in the affirmative.

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

CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE – WATER PLANT BULK CHEMICAL FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Weichel stated this item was to set up another project ordinance fund. Mr. Weichel stated this project was not in the CIP for the current year, that it would be in the CIP for next year. Mr. Weichel stated the reason for it to be done at the present time was to include it in the bidding for the water plant upgrades project, as to maybe receive more competitive bids/pricing. Mr. Weichel stated the ordinance would set up the project for design work for it to be included in the bidding package.

Councilman Harvey clarified that this would impact the Utility Fund and not the General Fund. Mr. Weichel responded in the affirmative. Councilman Harvey questioned if the Utility Fund had any reserves which were invested. Mr. Weichel responded in the affirmative. Councilman Harvey questioned how much roughly was in the Utility Fund reserves. Mr. Weichel responded that he could not remember the dollar amount but that it was at about 65%-70% fund balance. Councilman Harvey questioned what the current USDA lending interest rate was. Mr. Weichel responded that it was at five-and-a-quarter percent (5.25%). Councilman Harvey stated this was interesting as approximately a year ago, as the Town was inquiring into public safety building financing, the interest rate was less than that. Mr. Weichel stated when the process was gone through in the past, approximately four years ago, that the rate was three-point-seven-five percent (3.75%). Councilman Harvey stated that one large chunk of debt in the Utility Fund was the bond for the Settings sewer substation. Councilman Harvey questioned if there was any way to eliminate this debt, if the funds were available, or if the Town was stuck with those bonds until they expired. Mr. Weichel responded that the Town could pay off any loan early from USDA, that there was no penalty, and that it would be up to the Council's wishes.

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

YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIAL RESULTS Mr. Weichel stated that he was planning to include September's numbers in the presentation, as to review the first quarter of spending. Mr. Weichel stated that as September's numbers had not been closed out yet he did not have anything to present at the time.

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

CLARIFICATION OF NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETINGS Councilman Harvey stated he initiated this discussion with Town Attorney Swanson, and that it was shared with other Council members. Councilman Harvey stated that when the Council Calendar for the year was adopted, the normal date of the November meeting was moved to November 17. Councilman Harvey stated the reason for this was to allow the new Council Members to be present and sworn in. Councilman Harvey stated that new elects would not be sworn in until the first meeting in December, unless the Council was to set an earlier date. Councilman Harvey stated that it was his intent, at the next meeting, to state that the Town Council will designate the next organizational meeting to be on November 17, if the Burke County Board of Elections had certified the 2025 election results by then. Councilman Harvey stated this was being done due to issues from the 2023 election as new elects did not know what was going on. Councilman Harvey stated this would allow a quorum to be present at the meeting to swear in the new elects, and that after oaths were taken, the meeting would be handed over to the newly elected council members to handle the remainder of the Agenda.

Mayor Watts then moved to Item G III, Relevance of November 10 "Pre-agenda Meeting." Councilman Harvey stated that the November 17 agenda would belong to the new council after they had been sworn in. Councilman Harvey stated he was posing the question, without a suggested answer, of if the November 10 Pre-agenda meeting was relevant. Councilman Harvey stated it would be an opportunity to introduce the elects, but then the Council would be reviewing an Agenda that belonged to the new Council.

Councilwoman Zimmerman clarified that a motion would be made on October 6, to see if the meeting was needed. Mayor Watts responded in the affirmative.

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

ENGAGEMENT OF FINANCIAL ANALYSIS AND MODELING CONSULTANT Councilman Harvey stated he asked for this item to be on the Agenda. Councilman Harvey stated he was concerned about the process for deciding among four (4) options for the Public Safety Building. Councilman Harvey stated the way it stood at the time was that the Council would be presented with four (4) numbers, prepared by the General Contractor, which would address renovation or new construction on four (4) different options. Councilman Harvey stated that the problem he had was that each of these options would have other financial considerations, that would fall out if that option was selected. Councilman Harvey stated he did not feel as if the Council should decide without the consideration of many millions of dollars of related expenses, which would be inevitable. Councilman Harvey stated in the September meeting he had raised the question of using Tryon Financial Advisors for in-depth analysis and modeling for the project, and that he had not heard an answer. Councilman Harvey stated that if it was a possibility that it would be fine, but if not that he would be inclined at the October meeting, to make a motion authorizing Staff to acquire that kind of outside help and make that information available to the Council. Councilman Harvey stated that he had pretty deep financial training and experience, but that he would not be able to do justice on an in-depth financial analysis on a couple of those options. Councilman Harvey stated if Staff had a solution now, that would be fine, but if not, he would suggest a motion at the next meeting.

Town Manager Herms responded he would try to explain some of this. Town Manager Herms stated that the four (4) options that would be brought back would not necessarily have a price attached to them, that they would come and present the pros and cons of each option, if the option was even a viable one. Town Manager Herms stated they were currently looking at the properties to see the pros and cons of logistics, but that the main purpose was to see the viability of the project from their opinion as General Contractors. Town Manager Herms stated that he doubted there would be an exact price associated with each option, and that the discussion would likely focus on the structural capabilities and whether the options would be viable. Town Manager Herms stated for example if only two (2) of the four (4) options were viable, for whatever reason, at that point the Council would request to see the financial implications of either one (1) or both options. Town Manager Herms stated at that point the financial modeling and analysis would be explored of the options selected by the Town Council. Town Manager Herms stated he did not believe it was wise to spend money to see the financial feasibility of a certain option if the General Contractor were to say that option would not be viable. Town Manager Herms stated that this would allow the Council to explore the pros and cons of each option, and allow Council to explore the background of the viability of the options, with the General Contractor providing their ranked opinion of options, before getting into the finances.

Councilman Harvey stated what was just said conflicted with what was said in the past, and conflicts with what is in the RFQ. Councilman Harvey stated that what was heard in the past was that the Council would decide between the four options, and that the next step would be to enter into contract to move ahead with the option the Council selects at that time. Councilman Harvey stated that this is what the plan had been, and what the RFQ says. Councilman Harvey stated that the motion would not commit the Town to spending money before Council analysis, it would be to authorize hiring, and paying for, modeling to evaluate the options before the Council chooses one. Councilman Harvey stated one cannot select between four (4) different building options, with millions of dollars in the balance, without the General Contractor knowing what potential issues could be. Mayor Watts stated he believed what Town Manager Herms was meaning was that once DR Reynolds looks at the potential options, they may identify two (2) locations that would not work at all, leaving Council two (2) viable options to explore the finances of. Councilman Harvey stated that this was not what the plan had been up until this time, stating the plan was for Council to decide on an option, or options, and then to proceed to a contract for Phase II to get the project under way. Town Manager Herms stated that it was his understanding that DR Reynolds would look at the four (4) options, bring back the pros and cons of each option, and then the Council would choose one (1) or two (2) options to look at or research. Town Manager Herms stated he believed there would only be one (1) or two (2) viable options, stating he did not want to put words into DR Reynolds mouth, but it looked like the two (2) existing buildings would not be viable options. Town Manager Herms stated that these evaluations were not completed yet, that engineers were still writing up reports, and once they present the information there would be a clearer picture of what the best path forward would be. Town Manager Herms stated that, at that phase, he would

totally agree with Councilman Harvey's assessment that the Town would need financial analysis of the total project costs, not just the cost. Town Manager Herms clarified with an example, stating that if the Town were to use a piece of prime property, worth \$1,000,000, versus using property that may cost less, that this would be included in that equation. Councilman Harvey stated that the motion, if he were to introduce it, would not commit the Town to spending any money, that it would simply authorize the Staff to receive the financial analysis which sounded as if it was being considered at the present moment. Councilman Harvey stated he would challenge everybody to go back and look at the September 17 meeting, listening to the question he asked, that question being what would the first step be. Councilman Harvey stated the answer he received at that time was that the Council would pick which option the contract would then undertake as Phase II of the contract. Councilman Harvey stated he would come back with a motion in the following week, providing more information from his perspective. Councilman Harvey stated he had considerable commercial building and construction experience, that he had a perspective, and that he would bring that back in the following week, with, probably, a motion that would allow the Town to engage in financial modeling assistance to help the Council. Councilman Harvey stated he would add one more thing, that he had heard that out of six (6) candidates for Town Council and sitting Council Members, about ten (10) or (11) people total, that he had heard about five (5) or six (6) say that as soon as they were to get the DR Reynolds numbers that they would decide and go with it. Councilman Harvey stated he was looking ahead, which was what he had to do in his day job for years, and that what he would bring back to the Council next week would not cost anything, and would just set the stage to allow Council to make a better decision.

Mr. Weichel stated he would address the modeling part of the process, stating that the First Tryon model that was being built would address what Councilman Harvey was trying to accomplish. Mr. Weichel stated that this model would have those inputs, allowing one to turn projects on and off, for all projects, not just the public safety building project. Mr. Weichel stated that if there were several options, all of those options could be input, but that this model was still being built and was not quite ready. Councilman Harvey stated this was great, but that he had asked that question in September, and that the answer was no, that that specific model was for preparing next years budget. Mr. Weichel stated he had gone back to First Tryon and explained what the Town was trying to accomplish, and that First Tryon would customize the model to incorporate that process in to it, but that it would take time to build. Councilman Harvey questioned if the model would be ready by the time DR Reynolds came back with four (4) options. Mr. Weichel responded in the affirmative, that the model would probably be done by December, and at this point the model could be played with. Mr. Weichel stated that First Tryon had also offered to come present that information. Councilman Harvey questioned if this would be done before the Council were to decide on an option. Mr. Weichel stated that if the Council chose to have that information it would be provided.

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

CONSIDERATION OF PERSONNEL POLICY AND TRAINING RECOMMENDATIONS BY TOWN MANAGER AFTER 5 MONTHS ON THE JOB Town Manager Herms stated that the Town was currently under contract to do a pay study and a review of the Town's personnel policy. Town Manager Herms stated that it was probably 65% to 70% of the way completed. Town Manager Herms stated once the information came back, it would come with a recommendation for the Council to review.

Town Manager Herms then referenced Item III of Item I, Status of Training, stating that conferences and trainings were already set up for employees. Town Manager Herms stated that this was actually where Town Clerk Lail was at the present time. Town Manager Herms stated that opportunities were being researched for different employees to go out and receive additional training for the positions they currently had.

Councilman Harvey asked about the personal use of Town vehicles, stating that Town Manager Herms had been working on a policy for that matter. Town Manager Herms stated he had researched other cities policies for that matter, but since the personnel policy was being reviewed, the recommendation would now come from a third-party. Town Manager Herms stated once this policy was to be presented, that Council, at that time, could then make modification if they so choose. Mayor Pro Tem Ogle asked who the individual was that was conducting the pay study and the review of the personnel policy. Town Manager Herms stated it was being done by David Hill, a professional HR consultant, from Piedmont Triad. Mayor Pro Tem Ogle asked if Town Manager Herms knew Mr. Hill. Town Manager Herms stated that he, and the COG, had worked with him in the past, stating that he lived in Lenoir and worked in the area a lot. Town Manager Herms stated that this was one of the reasons Mr. Hill was chosen, as he already had data sets for most of

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the desirable comparables. Councilman Harvey stated this was valuable information and suggested keeping it on the Agenda and running through it again at the October 6 meeting, when there would be a bigger audience.

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

UPDATES ON ONGOING OR PENDING COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS Town Manager Herms stated that the Town had been in contact with NC DOT about the resurfacing agreement, and that options were being explored to see if it would be beneficial to partner with other organizations. Town Manager Herms stated that it was still being worked through, and that there was not an answer yet, but that he hoped to have one within the next 30 to 45 days. Town Manager Herms stated everyone was in the same boat, with DOT having to shift focus out West following Hurricane Helene.

Town Manager Herms then moved on to discuss the interconnect agreement with the City of Lenoir, stating this agreement had been approved by both the Town of Valdese and the City of Lenoir. Town Manager Herms stated the agreement would begin to be utilized upon completion of construction and start of the interconnects. Town Manager Herms stated that Council would continue to receive updates on the project as it moves forward, but that it was a large project and would not happen overnight. Councilman Harvey questioned if the Town had received a permit from Duke Energy to go underneath the River. Town Manager Herms stated Duke Energy is in the process of receiving that approval.

Town Manager Herms then moved discussion toward the Status of Hoyle Creek Restoration and Path Project, stating that the Town was in the process of acquiring approval for right-of-way's and easements, after which the project would start.

Town Manager Herms then discussed the Mobile Food Service Ordinance, stating that this was currently being reviewed by the Planning Board. Town Manager Herms stated the Planning Board had two (2) meetings in which this ordinance was discussed and that this was still being worked through. Town Manager Herms stated once this is completed that it would come before the Council for their approval or modification.

Town Manager Herms then discussed the pool cover and ADA compliance project, where he noted that ramps should have been finished that week, but that due to weather the project had been delayed. Town Manager Herms stated a couple small issues had come up in regard to the pool cover, that the plans were not aligning with what was actually out there in regard to concrete thickness and electrical layouts. Town Manager Herms stated that it would not delay the project, but that as with any other project, issues come up and must be addressed.

Town Manager Herms then discussed the Public Safety Facility Options, Progress and Schedule, stating that he hoped the preliminary study would be available to Staff sometime in late October. Town Manager Herms stated it would then be presented to council either in November, December, or January, depending on what the study reveals.

Town Manager Herms moved discussion to the Design-Build Contractor Wall-estimates, stating he did not know much about this item. Councilman Harvey stated he was thinking about and working on suggestions to bring to the next meeting. Councilman Harvey stated that this was an action item from the previous year, and that he had some suggestions to compile before the next meeting.

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

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT Town Manager Todd Herms will report at the October 6, 2025 meeting.

At 6:52 pm, Councilwoman Ward made a motion to go into **Closed Session under NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(3)** to consult with an attorney retained by the Town in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the Town attorney and the Town Council, which privilege is hereby acknowledged. Seconded by Councilwoman Zimmerman. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

At 7:52 pm, Councilwoman Lowman made a motion to go out of Closed Session, seconded by Councilwoman Zimmerman. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

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ADJOURNMENT: At 7:54 p.m., there being no further business to come before Council, Councilman Harvey made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilwoman Zimmerman. The vote was unanimous.

Town Clerk
mr

Mayor