

Friendsville Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
October 2, 2025
Friendsville City Hall
Minutes

Present:

Mayor Steven Cardwell	Steve Palmer
Vice Mayor Sandra Bell	Patricia Kuhn
Commissioner Jonathan Newberry	Janet Walton
Commissioner Shane Rogers	Barbara Palmer
Commissioner Margaret Maze	Ashley Hartsell
City Recorder Janet Ledbetter	Sherry Mathis
City Administrator Kim Rogers	Shelley Rios
Building Official Barry Ottinger	Sergio Rios
City Attorney Rob Goddard	Robert Berlin
Caitlyn Good	

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.
2. Mayor Cardwell led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Janet Walton led the invocation.
4. Roll call for Board of Commissioners: Cardwell, present; Bell, present; Newberry, present; Maze, present; Rogers, present.
5. Motion to approve minutes from September 4 regular meeting by Commissioner Newberry, second by Commissioner Maze. Motion passed.(Reversed from agenda)
6. Motion to approve minutes from September 4 public hearing by Commissioner Newberry, second by Commissioner Maze. Motion passed.
7. Public comment on agenda items: Janet Walton, 564 Bales Hollow Rd, asked about the status of the pavilion and why Friendsville wasn't having Fun Day anymore. Kim Rogers stated that the pavilion would be discussed later in

the meeting. Commissioner Rogers told Ms. Walton that the Fire Department used to hold fun day to give back to the community, but they stopped because it was costly, and the volunteer firefighters were spending about 12 hours volunteering during that event. As the Fire Chief, he felt like that was too much to ask the firefighters to do that since they volunteered their time to fight fires. He said that it might come back in a different form. Mayor Cardwell said in the late 90s and early 2000s the city used to work with the fire department on Fun Day. Kim also mentioned that the fire department had helped the city during Homecoming. Commissioner Rogers told Ms. Walton that the city and the fire department were two separate entities.

Patricia Kuhn, 205 N. Morgan, asked when the grinder pumps would be installed on North Farnum, and when the first payment would be due. Mayor Cardwell told her that both questions would be answered during the utility meeting.

Barbara Palmer, 336 Cedar Crest Ln., asked about the railroad scales that were in Homecoming Circle before it was removed. She said someone told her they would be brought back out when the circle was finished and asked why they weren't out there. Kim Rogers told her that they would be put out once the pavilion was built.

8. Discussion:

First reading of Ordinance No. 2025-06: Rezoning Property Currently Zoned R-2 Medium Density Residential to R-1 Low Density Residential (Ordinance was numbered the same as a previous ordinance so it was renumbered to 2025-07 after first reading): Commissioner Newberry explained that the Planning Commission had proposed the ordinance because they felt that the city was so small that they should combine all the residential properties into one residential zone to simplify the code. It would still allow all the uses that were allowed in R-2, except for Bed & Breakfast or tourist type homes and daycares, which would still be allowed in the Commercial zone. Motion to approve on first reading by Commissioner Newberry, second by Commissioner Rogers. Motion passed.

First reading of Ordinance No. 2025-07: The Maintenance and Disposition of Abandoned/Vacant Residential and Commercial Properties: (renumbered to 2025-08 after first reading) Barry Ottinger told the board that the \$150 penalty in Section 4 should be changed to \$50 and Section 4c had to be deleted in its entirety. This ordinance would allow the city to enforce the

property maintenance codes on vacant properties. Motion to approve on first reading (with the changes mentioned by Barry) by Commissioner Newberry, second by Commissioner Rogers. Motion passed.

Resolution No. 2025-06 Resolution requesting that the Blount County Election Commission conduct an election for the City of Friendsville: Motion to approve by Commissioner Newberry, second by Commissioner Maze. Motion passed.

Discussion of taxes paid on Friendsville building: The city had been paying taxes on the beauty shop/barbershop building since 2016. Kim Rogers had spoken to the property assessor, and they have since removed the taxes. She asked the board if she could request a refund, which would be around \$9,000, and they told her yes.

Smalltown Beauty Shop lease: Sherry Mathis has a lease until 2027 but wanted to extend it for another ten years. Kim Rogers gave the board some options on what to charge. There were two flat fee options with rate increases of \$50 and \$75 every three years, and three options with percentage increases of 5, 10 and 15 percent. Janet Ledbetter had listed the expenses for the building since the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Commissioner Newberry had sent Kim cost of living estimates for the future. Commissioner Rogers wanted to know if the rent revenue could be earmarked for building maintenance and repairs, and Vice Mayor Bell also thought it would be a good idea. Mayor Cardwell said that he didn't think the city could do that, but that the amount could be put into a budget line item for that purpose. Vice Mayor Bell asked if the upstairs could be used, but the stairs are not up to code so it can't be used. No one was sure when the roof had been replaced, but it had been repaired in 2019. Motion to approve Option #2 (rate increase every (3) three years of \$75) by Commissioner Rogers. There was more discussion about the lease after the motion. The present lease said that if the renter wanted to sublet that the board would have to be notified and approve it. Sherry wanted to bring in more hairstylists but felt like she wouldn't be able to do so without permission. Rob Goddard said that it was so the city would know who they were dealing with. The board felt like it meant subletting the building to someone else, not renting a station. Kim told them that the clause was put in there when Mom & Pop's Café went out of business and sublet it to the ice cream shop that closed after a week or so. If she wants to rent it to another business she would have to come in front of the board, but if she wants to rent a booth to someone else, she can do so without asking for permission. Janet

Ledbetter mentioned that if someone rented a booth and had their own liability insurance they would need to put the city as an additional insured and give a copy to the city. Mayor Cardwell asked Rob Goddard about rewording the lease to make it clearer about the booth rental. Sherry's husband Danny told the board that if the city decided to rent the upstairs they would like to rent it, and Sherry told them that she would rent the barbershop space if it came available. Commissioner Maze then seconded Commissioner Rogers' motion. Motion passed.

9. Tabled discussion: none

10. Staff Reports:

Administrator Updates: Kim Rogers updated the board about the issues with the internet and phones. The problem is the port switch in the basement. A new switch was ordered and VC3 will install it and run new cables. They told Kim it would take about 3 hours, but she thought it would take longer. She asked for an afternoon appointment around 12:00 so the office could be closed for the rest of the day to give them time to finish. She said she would let everyone know when she found out the date. All the computers have been updated but the networking equipment downstairs has not been updated since the city moved into the building.

Kim also discussed the speeding problem on South Farnum and Miser Station Roads. She had received a flyer from a company selling digital speed detector signs. She said she didn't know if it would help and they would have to look at the budget, but it was an option. Mayor Cardwell said it would be putting the city's best foot forward if they used them. Commissioner Newberry told him that Greenback used them, and that they could ask them how well they worked. Danny Mathis, 120 N. Morgan, mentioned that people always run the stop sign at North Morgan and asked for a speed bump there. He said they have had many close calls there. Barbara Palmer said they had asked for speed bumps on Cedar Crest and were told by the previous administration that they couldn't have any. She complained about speeding on Miser Station, which is a state road, so the city isn't allowed to put speed bumps there. Mayor Cardwell also mentioned that speed bumps can divert water, and the city had been told they could be held responsible if someone's car is damaged by one. Sergio Rios, 706 Kiser Station Rd., also complained about the traffic on South Farnum. The city cannot afford to hire an officer to patrol

those areas. Commissioner Newberry suggested that a 3-way stop at Endsley Quarry and South Farnum might encourage people to go out toward the highway instead of going on down South Farnum, and Commissioner Rogers said it would not always change how people would drive. Steve Palmer, who lives on Buena Vista Ln., mentioned an intersection in Louisville with speed bumps and stop signs where he saw drivers running the stop signs and hitting the speed bumps. Patricia Kuhn asked about the roundabout that was discussed for West Hill Ave., and was told it was too expensive to build. The board decided to look at putting in stop signs at Endsley Quarry and Farnum. Janet Walton asked if the county didn't have officers patrolling in the city previously, and Mayor Cardwell told her that they did but that the city had to send in a request again to get them to patrol. The town of Louisville pays Blount County \$200,000 for two officers to patrol their town. Kim Rogers asked if they wanted her to put out a notice for the two new stop signs, and Vice Mayor Bell said the signs should be put on both sides of the road to get drivers' attention, and that she thought they still needed speed bumps. Kim asked Rob Goddard if there was a liability with installing speed bumps, and he said that he didn't think so as long as there was proper signage. Mayor Cardwell mentioned that there needed to be a study to determine water flow before any were installed. Commissioner Rogers said that the city should consult with other small towns to see what worked for them regarding speeding. Barry Ottinger told them that Louisville had lowered their speed limits because most people drive 10 miles per hour over the speed limit. Even though drivers still went over the limit, they slowed down. Mayor Cardwell said that would work great inside the city but not on Miser Station because they would have to go through the state to change the limits.

Kim Rogers also mentioned STEM night at Union Grove and Friendsville Schools. The utility workers always go and talk to the students about the work they do. She said the kids like to do the water testing and see the equipment.

Codes: The board looked over Barry Ottinger's report.

Events: Boo in the City is scheduled for October 31 from 5:30 until the candy runs out. Santa Comes to Town will be on December 6.

Financial updates: The board looked over the financial report.

Grants: The contracts for the Cybersecurity Grant have been signed. It will be \$47,712 and will be used to upgrade the computers at the operations building including the SCADA because they are all Windows 10. It will also be used for a new meter reading laptop and tablets for all the commissioners. Mayor Cardwell said he wanted a separate backup at the operations building and a way to connect to the city hall's network in case office employees had to work over there.

The Safe Streets and Roads grant will be \$60,000, and part of it could be used to purchase the digital speed detector signs to see if they slow down traffic. Kim also showed the drawings of the new pavilion which would be paid for by the LPRF grant. It includes a bathroom, but that may not be included depending on cost. They have a prefab bathroom option that can save money and can be built later. There is enough money for the sidewalk for the Memory Lane that is going to be put in, along with four handicap parking spots. Memory Lane will include the old railroad equipment and the old store sign, as well as the bricks that had been purchased previously by citizens. There is enough in the ARPA fund for the match, which can either pay for the bathroom or for paving the gravel lot off West Hill Ave. Kim said she would rather pave the parking lot because it has not been utilized, and people have been parking on the sidewalk. The decision didn't need to be made right away for those options. The bids for the pavilion were scheduled to go out on October 20.


Parks & Rec: none

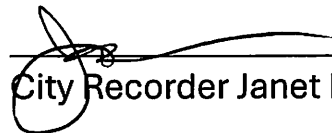
Planning: The Planning Commission forwarded the ordinance regarding the R-1 and R-2 consolidation to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Newberry said there was another developer interested in the property at 321 and Big Springs, but they also wanted the city to annex it in order for it to be viable. They proposed putting in 150-160 homes, but it is uncertain if the city can supply the water. He said he didn't see anything advantageous for the city to annex the property, but it was up to the Planning Commission to decide if they wanted to recommend it. Kim is working with the water department to see if they can provide the water and be able to supply the required water pressure to all their customers.

Streets: The tractor is back from the shop. It had needed some maintenance and new tires. City employees have now been long arming the

roads. Nitzschke has been repairing the yards where they were previously digging. Kim Rogers mentioned that several of the city limit signs were missing, and she wanted to put up larger signs (36x30) with theft preventive fasteners. Mayor Cardwell told her to make sure they were abiding by the state's sign rules on the state routes, and she said they would be in compliance.

11. Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Rogers, second by Commissioner Newberry. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.


Mayor Steven Cardwell


City Recorder Janet Ledbetter