



**MINUTES TOWN OF LAKE LURE
REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

Tuesday, October 8, 2024 @ 5:00 pm
Lake Lure Inn

Agenda

Attendees:

Mayor Carol C. Pritchett Mayor
Pro Tem Dave DiOrio
Commissioner Jim Proctor
Commissioner Scott Doster
Commissioner Patrick Bryant
Town Manager Olivia Stewman

Town Staff:

Fire Department Chief Dustin Waycaster
Police Department Chief Sean Humphries
Parks & Rec Department Director Dana Bradley
Public Works Department Director Dean Lindsey
Community Development Director Mike Williams
Communications Department Director Laura Krejci
Human Resources Department Director Jennifer Duncan
Finance Department Director Steve Ford

I. Call to Order:

Mayor Carol Pritchett called the meeting to order at 5:00pm and thanked everyone for coming.

I. Agenda Adoption:

Commissioner Jim Proctor made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, Commissioner Scott Doster seconded, and they all voted in favor.

II. Discussion of Storm Recovery Updates:

Commissioner Dave DiOrio made a motion to approve an Inter-local Agreement for hurricane debris removal, Commissioner Scott Doster seconded and all voted in favor.

- ❖ Fire Chief/Emergency Management Coordinator Dustin Waycaster provided an overview of Hurricane Helene.

- He noted that the Town signed a State of Emergency (SOE) leading into the storm which allowed life-saving measures to be taken as needed. The SOE remains in place.
 - Following the storm there were over 800 missing persons. Some of these were duplicates. At this time there are 41 people missing persons and the search continues for these individuals.
 - The Town of Lake Lure implemented the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) prior to the storm. The new siren system that was recently installed was activated. The Overbridged Emergency Notification System was utilized to share critical information.
 - At a certain point, the amount of water coming through the dam could not be controlled and an evacuation plan was implemented as part of the EAP.
 - The Fire Department utilized all equipment available and swift water teams were activated. Door-to-door evacuations took place, including in Chimney Rock Village.
 - There are currently 3 reported fatalities in Rutherford County.
 - Chief Waycaster thanked all those who heeded the warnings and evacuated.
 - He thanked the National Guard, US Coast Guard, NC HART, SC Hart and countless volunteers for their support with search and rescue efforts.
 - The Town is working closely with the Rutherford County Emergency Operations Center.
 - Dam Engineers came out after the storm to assess the dam. They confirmed that the dam was stable and developed a plan for emergency repairs due to erosion that occurred from water on the sides of the dam.
 - The Fire Department is providing mutual aid to Chimney Rock Village.
 - We are transitioning from search and rescue to the recovery phase of the operation with assistance from many agencies including the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI).
 - We have resources at our disposal through FEMA and we are meeting with them daily.
 - Duke Energy is working hard to restore power and the water system is also being repaired, but fixing the sewer system is more complicated. We must remove the lake debris quickly so crews can access the sewer lines, identify any issues and make repairs.
 - We are maintaining the lake level at 985.5 and monitoring discharge rates at the dam to reduce the chance of debris coming towards the dam.
 - We have had many high-level visits from the Governor, Senators and State Representatives. Mayor Pritchett has shared the high-priority needs of the Town along with cost estimates.
- ❖ Public Services Director Dean Lindsey oversees the Town's utility system and he provided an update on that are underway.
- He advised that the Town had two wells in place. One survived the storm and all those east of Pool Creek Park have water.

- A second well in Firefly Cove provides water to the Arcade Center and beyond.
- The issue with the Firefly Cove well was repaired and we are trying to re-configure the Firefly Cove wells to feed the Town Center area.
- Water samples have been submitted for testing and we are awaiting the results. The Boil Advisory will be lifted as soon as we know it is safe to do so.
- Regarding the Sewer System, the Lift Station was damaged in the storm and Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) was under water. We lost road access to the hydro-electric plant but we are working diligently to restore everything within the next couple of weeks. We have ordered a temporary pump for the lift station and we are working on a permanent solution including getting power to the WWTP by redoing the electrical. We are working closely with DEQ as these plans are being developed.
- Schnabel Engineers are overseeing dam repairs, specifically repairing the erosion on the left abutment. The Tanner Gates are operational and the dam is in good condition.
- We are working to fix the line under the dam next, which should restore sewer service.
- A portion of Buffalo Shoals road (near the dam) was damaged during the storm. This portion of the road has been repaired.

❖ *Parks, Recreation, and Lake Director Dana Bradley is overseeing Lake Cleanup and debris removal.*

- The priority is moving boats from the lake that present a hazard to a secure location. Owners will be contacted by the contractors. Boats in the marina and in other locations will be removed a little later.
- Crews are working from the dam side of the lake to remove debris carefully.
- We are working to obtain a second location to remove a very large debris field.
- Many truckloads have been removed. It will take weeks of work but we will get it done.

❖ *Police Chief Sean Humphries advised that the Police Department at Town Hall was badly damaged.*

- The Police Department is temporarily relocating to the Parks, recreation, and Lake Department.
- He thanked all of the agencies that have provided support including the NC Highway Patrol and the Rutherford County Sheriff.
- Four patrol cars were lost in the storm.
- He encouraged anyone needing assistance to call 911.
- Checkpoints remain in place as you enter town to minimize traffic to Town Center to homeowners only. This will prevent looters and also allow Duke Energy to continue to restore power as quickly as possible.

It was noted that Lake Lure is making great progress with the recovery process with the support of many agencies. NC DOT has worked diligently to repair roads throughout town.

- ❖ Peter O'Leary provided an update on Chimney Rock Village.
 - Chimney Rock Village Officials have established a pass system for homeowners that allows for one entry/exit per day.
 - Entry is restricted to all others except workers.
- ❖ Town Manager Olivia Stewman noted that Communications Director Laura Krejci has been posting daily updates on the town Website and Facebook.
 - Hard copies are placed in the Post Office and at the Resource Center at Ingles daily
- ❖ FEMA Representatives Natalia Santana-Pollard and Jeff Monroe were introduced.
 - Ms. Santana-Pollard shared that she was devastated by our loss. She thanked everyone for being present.
 - FEMA representatives are stationed at the Ingles Resource Center to offer individual assistance.
 - She advised that FEMA Representatives will be going door-to-door to provide assistance to those who may not be able to get to the resource center.
 - She reviewed the process and advised that she would work with Laura Krejci so all of the forms can be placed on the website.
 - She addressed myths and explained the facts related to the process.
 - She noted that individuals can apply using the FEMA app, online, or by phone. [disasterassistance.gov](https://www.fema.gov/disasterassistance).
 - Assistance available in multiple languages.
 - There is a deadline (60 days) to apply, but this may be extended.
- ❖ Mayor Pritchett thanked FEMA representatives for their support.
 - She thanked the Town Staff for their hard work.

III. Discuss Schnabel Work Order 11"

Work order #11 from Schnabel Engineering was approved to support the emergency repairs to the dam referenced earlier.

IV. Amend 2024 Schedule

Commissioner Jim Proctor made a motion to amend the town council meeting schedule for the rest of the year, changing the meeting location to the Lake Lure Inn.

The dates and times remain the same, Commissioner Patrick Bryant Seconded and they all voted in favor.

V. Public Comment:

Commissioner Doster advised that all Boards were going to take a pause for the rest of the calendar year.

The Board of Adjustment will meet as needed and the ABC Board will continue to support operations.

- Commissioner DiOrio advised that there would also be a suspension of water and sewer bills for the rest of the calendar year.
 - Mayor Pritchett thanked those in attendance and asked everyone to remain courteous as we addressed the public comments. She noted the progress that has been made since the storm has been incredible
1. Mike Wood from Lake Lure Village Resort (LLVR) asked if there was an environmental impact study of the debris in the lake. He expressed concern regarding the chemicals. Commissioner DiOrio stated that we are in stabilization at this point and noted that there are contaminants on the lake. There was a discussion regarding the possibility of utilizing LLVR to remove debris.
 2. Debra Gardner from Firefly Cove asked if there was still a no flush order in place and how long will that last. Mr. Lindsey confirmed that there was still a no flush order in place. He explained that the goal is to repair the lift station and repair line within the next two weeks.
 3. Beth Foster from LLVR advised that she was the Resort's board secretary. She explained that their Board needed to meet to consider the request to use LLVR to retrieve the debris from the lake before responding.
 4. Jeff Giesler, General Manager for Rumbling Bald on Lake Lure thanked the Town and stated that he thought the response has been wonderful. He added that Rumbling Bald was here to help in any way. Mayor thanked Mr. Geisler and Rumbling Bald for their partnership.
 5. Frederick Gable stated that the Town had done an amazing job. He asked what level of filters we have for the water when the boil advisory is lifted. Commissioner DiOrio noted that lake water should not be infilling into the wells and there should be no contamination. Mr. Lindsey reiterated that tests were being completed and the boil advisory would be lifted when results come back good. He advised that DEQ is working with us to ensure that water is healthy for consumption and noted that the water here has been very clean historically.
 6. Chuck Stokes from Mark Twain Drive, provided a letter with questions. He noted that his was among the first eight properties on the lake at Mark Twain Drive. He stated that those first eight properties are good but there is a lot of

boat house destruction and the silt has built up. He asked that the town keep the Mark Twain neighborhood involved in this process. He asked if boat houses will have to be destroyed when the silt and debris is removed? The Mayor noted that some things are still unknown but the Town commits to keeping people informed.

7. Anthony Stoffel from Homestead Drive asked what the process was to get approval for entering private property? Chief Waycaster confirmed that the Town would get permission to access private property but noted that time is of the essence. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the debris, working with DEQ, and utilizing the National Guard to assist with the process.
8. Rick Jackson, owner of Riverside Stables stated that he has been in business since the 80s. He thanked God that everyone in the room was still. He shared that he was sad for all the loss. He and his wife have lost everything they own. There was a lengthy discussion about how the lake was lowered prior to the storm. Commissioner Proctor explained the process for lowering and raising the lake and advised that the lake levels should not change more than 2 feet per day either way, ideally just 1 foot per day to protect the integrity of the dam.
9. Jamie Wood from LLVR provided partial list of what may be in the debris that is in the lake. There was a discussion about a concern of the debris catching fire. Chief Waycaster explained that most of the lumber has been saturated to the point that it is not going to reach its ignition point.
10. Dave Marsic from Lure woods Manor noted that he had an easement with Town for dredging and would like to revisit this for removal of debris from the lake.
11. Suzanne Eddy from Bottomless Pool advised that the Pool Creek Bridge needed to be repaired due to erosion.
12. Brandy Neil from LLVR shared a security concern following an interaction with contractors driving in a truck. They came into the neighborhood and they had no prior notice. She asked for communication with their board before anyone entered their neighborhood. Ms. Bradley advised that this issue has been addressed.

VI. Adjourned:

Commissioner Jim Proctor made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Dave DiOrio seconded and they all voted in favor, the meeting ended at 7:15 p.m.

Attest:

Elba A. Willette, Town Clerk



Carol C. Pritchett, Mayor