

MINUTES
FOXFIRE VILLAGE COUNCIL
Monthly Work Session
May 28 ~ 5:30 PM
Village Hall Meeting Room

Call to Order: Mayor Gregorich called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Members present included Councilmembers Mary Gilroy, Stephen Gunn, Chris Kragel and Kevin Robbins. Others in attendance were P&Z Board Chair, Tashe Jarusinski and several Village residents.

Councilmember Gilroy added audit contract and WEFD 26/27 Contract, and Mayor Gregorich added a Resolution

Councilmember Gilroy moved to approve the April 30, 2026 agenda as amended, seconded by Councilmember Gunn and unanimously carried.

1. Planning & Zoning Board Recommendation

Planning & Zoning Board Chair Tashe Jarusinski provided a brief update on the board's most recent recommendations regarding accessory buildings, greenhouses, the Table of Authorized Uses, definitions, "walk-in trade" and home occupations. The update summarized the status of these proposed amendments and any recent revisions under consideration. There was also a brief discussion regarding the proposed Short-Term Rental (STR) ordinance.

Discussion followed regarding filling a planning & zoning board vacancy and the process of doing so. After considering the application process and timeline, the Council agreed to keep applications open for 30 days.

2. Continuation from Previous Meeting:

A. Approval of Minutes

- February 26, 2026 Work Session
- March 3, 2026 Special Closed Meeting

Councilmember Gunn moved to adopt both the February 26th and March 3rd meeting minutes as written, seconded by Mayor Gregorich and unanimously approved.

B. Brough Law Firm-MOU

The council agreed to move the MOU to the upcoming regular meeting for approval.

C. Permanent Notification Sign

This item will be moved to the next work session for further discussion.

D. FY 26-27 Budget Review – WEFD Contract

Councilmember Gilroy provided a brief update on the proposed Fiscal Year 2026–2027 budget, including projected revenues and expenditures and a pay scale. The proposed budget will be considered during the public hearing scheduled for June 16, 2026.

A brief discussion followed regarding the West End Fire Department (WEFD) contract. Foxfire has agreed to pay the County rate of \$321,900 for the current fiscal year. It was noted that Foxfire has a meeting scheduled with the County on June 12th to discuss the municipal portion of the fire truck purchase.

Councilmember Gilroy requested that approval of the WEFD contract be placed on the same agenda as the Fiscal Year 2026–2027 budget approval.

Discussion followed on the lease agreement which is separate from the contract and still needs work. Mayor Gregorich expressed a desire to have both the WEFD contract and the lease agreement finalized, or substantially resolved, prior to the public hearing on June 16th. Brief discussion followed regarding grants.

Councilmember Gilroy opened up the floor for public comments relating to the budget only.

Leslie Frusco, 7 Hillside Drive commented on proposed budget expenditures, expressing concerns about potential duplication between IT contract services and existing computer services funding. She also questioned maintenance-related contract expenses, including park bathroom cleaning and trail maintenance, and encouraged Council to review these items for possible cost savings and elimination of overlapping services.

She expressed concern that the proposed police vehicle maintenance budget is lower than prior-year budgeted and actual expenses, noting the need to ensure adequate funding for vehicle repairs and maintenance.

Frusco commented on the West End Fire Department contract, questioning the need for the Village to continue managing a separate contract if the payment rate is the same as the County fire rate. She suggested Council consider whether fire services should instead be provided directly through the County and noted that any shift in fire service costs could be reflected through an adjustment to the Village tax rate. She also raised concerns about the allocation of funds for fire service, as well as capital expenses and facility maintenance, including the responsibilities associated with the fire station lease agreement, and encouraged Council to continue evaluating the contract and the financial arrangements to ensure they remain beneficial to Village residents.

Frusco raised concerns about the parks budget, asking for an explanation of the significant increases in park cleaning services and maintenance supplies, as well as clarification on the purpose of the \$4,000 non-capital outlay item, which she noted was unusually high compared with previous years. She questioned continued spending on park trail maintenance and improvements, suggesting that some projects may be addressing issues that were unnecessarily created. She also questioned the \$5,000 pickleball fence replacement, stating that the fence was mostly in good condition aside from minor vandalism damage and asking whether regular pickleball users had been consulted.

She acknowledged the importance of funding reserves but noted that the village has more revenue than expenses and suggested that spending decisions should better reflect resident priorities

There were no further comments.

E. Foxfire Village Green and Trails Capital Asset Management Initial Assessment May 2026

Councilmember Robbins invited Andrew Miller, of Legion Construction Services, LLC, to approach the podium and address the Council.

Andrew Miller, owner of Legion Construction Services, reported that his initial assessments of the village's trails, parks, playgrounds, and other facilities identified extensive deferred maintenance, including drainage, erosion, trail, and landscaping issues. He recommended a phased, long-term approach to repairs, emphasizing that addressing underlying infrastructure problems before making surface improvements would help avoid repeated repairs and reduce future maintenance costs.

Mr. Miller said that the condition of the park restrooms reflected a lack of routine cleaning and maintenance. He reported finding spider webs, black widow nests, dirty floors, broken hand dryers, damaged soap dispensers, low toilet paper supplies, and failed toilet wax seals in multiple restrooms.

He further explained that the assessment process helps identify and prioritize projects, ensuring funds are directed toward long-term needs while addressing underlying issues, avoiding repeat repairs, and maximizing the value of village funds.

Councilmember Robbins thanked Mr. Miller and asked if the council had any questions. Extensive back and forth discussion ensued, summarized as follows:

Councilmember Kragel questioned whether the trail work exceeded routine maintenance and expressed concern that the recently maintained trail had been significantly changed. He also asked about the contractor's billing and whether equipment may have damaged the septic system during the work.

Mayor Gregorich said the concern was not routine maintenance but that the trails appeared to have been significantly widened or altered. She argued that substantial changes to village property should receive prior council approval, questioned using a contractor without a competitive bidding process, and raised concerns about whether the playground mulch met certification standards.

Councilmember Robbins said the village had been operating reactively rather than proactively and defended the maintenance program as a way to implement planned, ongoing maintenance. He maintained that the trail work was routine maintenance under an existing program, not a new project, and that larger capital improvements would still require council approval. He also defended the contractor's qualifications and the playground mulch installation.

Councilmember Gilroy supported establishing a planned maintenance program, arguing that routine maintenance should not require council approval each time. She said using the same contractor provides continuity and suggested the service could be competitively bid.

F. Village Green Park

- Park Rules
- Park Reservations

Councilmember Robbins reviewed proposed revisions to the park rules, stating the changes were intended to clarify existing ordinances and improve enforcement. The council discussed the weapons policy and agreed to retain the current language referencing state law. Council also reviewed updates to park hours, noise, parking, animal control, decorations, grills, trails, and reporting procedures, agreeing that pets must remain leashed and under their owners' control. The council reached a consensus to eliminate pavilion rentals and require applications and insurance only for council-approved special events. The park rules will be revised and posted.

G. Streets

Councilmember Robbins reported on discussions with Turner Asphalt regarding upcoming pavement projects and long-term roadway planning. The Forest Lake Drive resurfacing project is scheduled for June 29–July 2, with staff to provide public notice. Council discussed using pavement condition data to prioritize roadway improvements and establishing a consistent annual roadway budget. The consensus was to continue prioritizing projects based on roadway conditions, with street fund reserves available for higher-priority and unexpected needs.

Councilmember Robbins discussed the need for a more strategic approach to roadway maintenance by using pavement condition data to prioritize future projects and establishing a consistent annual roadway budget to support long-term planning. Council noted the Town's practice of completing one to two roadway projects annually and agreed that roadway conditions should continue to guide project priorities, with street fund reserves available for higher-priority and unforeseen maintenance needs.

H. Resolution

Mayor Gregorich presented a proposed resolution to formally designate the Village Clerk as the Village's IT Manager and Administrator, including oversight of the Village's IT systems and official email accounts.

Extensive discussion followed, with several council members expressing concerns about the provision requiring the Village Clerk to maintain access to passwords. Members noted that standard IT practice is for administrators to reset passwords or grant account access without possessing users' actual passwords. No action was taken

3. New Discussion/Work Items:

A. Budget Amendments

Councilmember Gilroy presented proposed budget amendments for Council review. The amendments included reallocating funds to cover the increased contribution to the West End Fire Department, transferring insurance proceeds to offset related expenditures and funding the police vehicle

reserve, reallocating unused administrative salary funds to police salaries, and appropriating fund balance for administrative salaries and new water meters.

Gilroy noted that the amendments would be finalized and placed on the consent agenda for the next meeting.

B. Zoning Question – Forest Ridge lane

Mayor Gregorich addressed questions raised by a resident regarding the zoning designation of properties on Forest Ridge Lane. She clarified that the properties were annexed into the Village in 2003 and have been zoned Equestrian since that time. She further stated that there are no agricultural zoning districts within the Village and that information suggesting otherwise was incorrect.

C. Police Liability Policy

Mayor Gregorich received a copy of the police professional liability insurance policy, which contains complex provisions and exclusions. She suggested consulting with the insurance representative to obtain clarification on the extent of coverage.

Lisa Kivett will contact League representative Patrice Adams to coordinate a meeting with the Police Department and interested Council members to review the policy, address questions, and discuss any concerns.

D. Audit Contract

The audit contract was discussed. The contract language was reviewed and found to be acceptable, and the title will be updated to change “Firefox” to “Foxfire.”

Council approval is required before the contract can be executed. The contract will be placed on the June 9th agenda for approval, after which it will be submitted to the LGC to begin the audit process.

4. Public Comments – Items Listed on Agenda Only

Dan Leary – 73 North Shamrock said he supports a “no weapons” park sign without exceptions, citing safety concerns and noting that emergency communication and police response are available if needed. He commented on the trail maintenance program, suggesting that major purchases should require approval, while routine maintenance should be managed efficiently with consistent service from a reliable provider. He commented on the pool project, expressing concerns that the contractor did not adequately manage the process.

Mick McCue – 10 Oak Hill Drive referenced the North Carolina General Statute regarding firearm regulation and suggested the Village consider prohibiting firearms in public buildings, parks, and recreation areas as allowed by the statute.

Sandy Burger, 66 Woodland Circle, stated that she attends meetings to better understand the community and Council processes but expressed frustration with what she described as ongoing confusion and a lack of clarity. She raised concerns that communication and transparency have declined and that residents’ input is not being adequately considered.

She added that limited communication has contributed to confusion and misinformation, citing concerns regarding trail widening, tree removal, and potential disc golf plans. She encouraged the Council to improve communication and seek resident input regarding major decisions.

Councilmember Gunn addressed his concerns about the importance of professionalism and respectful conduct during Council meetings. He expressed concerns about interactions, body language, and responses during public discussions, emphasizing that mutual respect and professionalism should be maintained by Council members, residents, and contracted representatives.

Warren Morgan, 14 Pine Tree Terrace, commented on communication among Council members and stated that improved dialogue was a positive outcome of the meeting. He expressed concerns regarding

contractor selection, recommending more thorough vetting, formal contracts instead of proposals, and consideration of legal review for service agreements.

Mr. Morgan also discussed trail maintenance, stating that recent work may have widened and altered the trails, increasing erosion concerns. He encouraged the Council to prioritize maintenance needs, communicate project plans with residents, and consult trail professionals regarding proper trail management.

He supported preventative maintenance and recommended establishing relationships with reliable contractors who can respond to emergency needs. He suggested evaluating whether services should be handled through specific project agreements or hourly/material-based arrangements rather than broad maintenance contracts.

Amanda Robbins, Forest Ridge Lane, read a prepared statement addressing concerns regarding her property and Two Buds Flower Farm. She stated that her family has operated the flower cart on their EU-zoned property with authorized agricultural use for approximately two and a half years without issue and noted that increased scrutiny began after her husband, Kevin Robbins, announced his candidacy for Council.

Ms. Robbins stated that she received a signed letter from the Village on January 13, 2026, confirming that flower sales grown on her property are permitted and may continue. She emphasized that the farm is a lawful agricultural business and her livelihood, and requested consistency, fairness, and adherence to the Village's determination.

She brought a container of cut sunflowers for anyone who wished to take one.

Marianne Kragel – Pine Tree Terrace expressed concerns regarding recent park trail changes, including tree removal and damage caused by rain. She stated that the trails are no longer the same and encouraged the Council to seek resident input before making decisions affecting the park.

Donna Morgan, Pine Tree Terrace, expressed concerns regarding zoning enforcement, stating that the issue was not with selling flowers but with ensuring Village ordinances are followed consistently. She emphasized that allowing exceptions could lead to unequal enforcement and questioned the fairness of requiring some residents to comply while others do not. She encouraged the Village to consistently enforce its ordinances.

5. Adjournment

Councilmember Gilroy **moved to adjourn**, seconded by Councilmember Gunn and unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM.



Lisa A. Kivett, MMC, NCCMC, CZO
Village Administrator/Clerk



Janice Gregorich
Mayor