

**MINUTES**  
**Town of Blowing Rock**  
**Town Council Meeting**  
**September 8, 2020**

The Town of Blowing Rock Town Council met for their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting took place at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street Blowing Rock, NC. Present were Mayor Charlie Sellers, Mayor Pro-Tem Sue Sweeting and Council Members Albert Yount, David Harwood, Doug Matheson, Virginia Powell, Town Manager Shane Fox, Public Works and Utilities Director Matt Blackburn and Town Clerk Hilari Hubner who recorded the minutes. Others in attendance via Zoom virtual/phone session were Town Attorney Allen Moseley, Town Engineer Doug Chapman, Fire Chief Kent Graham, Police Chief Aaron Miller, Planning and Inspections Director Kevin Rothrock and Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Brown, Finance Officer Nicole Norman.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Sellers called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Mayor verified attendance via roll call.

**THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGINANCE**

**MINUTE APPROVAL**

Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 11, 2020 regular session minutes, seconded by Council Member Powell. Unanimously approved.

Council Member Sweeting made a motion to approve the August 11, 2020 closed session meeting, seconded by Council Member Harwood. Unanimously approved.

**REGULAR AGENDA ADOPTION**

Council Member Matheson made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Council Member Powell. Unanimously approved.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**1. Patricia Aiken Annexation Request – 352 Heather Ridge Lane**

Patricia Aiken submitted a petition of voluntary satellite annexation with the intent to connect to Town sewer for Council consideration. **Aiken Annexation - Attachment – A1 and A2**

**2. Wonderland Drive Speed Limit Consent – NCDOT**

At the request of local residents on Wonderland Drive, the NCDOT is requesting permission from the Town of Blowing Rock to enact a 25 mile-per-hour municipal speed limit. **Wonderland Drive Speed Limit Consent NCDOT - Attachment - B**

### **3. Budget Amendment - #2020-09**

Budget Amendment to account for various items. **Budget Amendment #2020-09 - Attachment - C**

Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting made a motion to approve consent as presented, seconded by Council Member Yount. Unanimously approved.

### **SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR**

Mr. Tim Gupton read a letter via Zoom on behalf of the Blowing Rock Civic Association regarding the EMS Service. Mr. Ron Curtis read a letter via Zoom on behalf of the Blowing Rock Country Club regarding EMS Service. Mayor Sellers read letter from Mr. Bob Greene regarding vehicle noise on Hwy 321.

### **PRESENTATION**

#### **1. Middle Fork Greenway**

Mr. Keith Pugh from WithersRavenel did a PowerPoint presentation via Zoom. **Middle Fork Greenway Presentation - Attachment - D**

### **BUSINESS MATTERS**

#### **1. Chetola Lake – Dredging Request**

Manager Fox advised Mr. Kent Tarbutton from Chetola Resort, would like to respectfully request assistance from the Town in the removal of soil and other debris that have collected in the stream and cofferdam area at Chetola Resort.

Mr. Tarbutton gave a brief background of the Town's use in the past of Chetola Lake when needed. He explained that in 1998 during a severe three-year drought, then Mayor JB Lawrence made an urgent request to pump water from Chetola Lake to provide for the Town's immediate need. At the time there was a one-year contract to remove all the water the town may need to without remuneration. Mr. Tarbutton further explained after the contract had expired, they have allowed the town for two decades to take water as needed.

Mr. Tarbutton advised over the years the lake has filled with debris coming from stormwater from the Town. Chetola has had to dredge the lake in the past and most recently in May of 2020. Mr. Tarbutton further advised he would like to request the Town consider reimbursing Chetola for \$19,431.60 for the cost of dredging in the '21-'22 Budget.

Council Member Powell advised she wasn't comfortable committing a large expense against the '21-'22 budget with the current pandemic. She explained the unknown of what could financially happen before it's over is the main reason she isn't comfortable.

Council Matheson advised he felt this wasn't something Council had budgeted for and the Town has had so many things have that have popped up this year. He explained the

Town has frozen all unnecessary spending and been as conservative as possible not knowing what the future holds. He advised he would like Council to consider discussing this at the Winter Retreat and then decide how to proceed.

Council Member Yount advised he would compromise with anything except not doing anything ever.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting advised Chetola has been a good neighbor and during a heavy rainstorm water does end up there and she felt the Town needs to be good neighbors as well.

Council Member Harwood advised he concurred with Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting that Chetola has been an excellent neighbor. He further advised he would like to ask Manager Fox, Town Engineers and Staff between now and winter retreat look things that would give Council an opportunity to be informed in terms of what we are looking at with storm water and what are major contributors of that. He explained he would like to have knowledge for more of a pro-active stance on addressing the issue.

Council Member Matheson made a motion to table the discussion until the Council winter retreat to discuss further, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting. Unanimously approved.

## **2. 321 Valley Blvd. Update**

Planning Director Kevin Rothrock gave an update of the Hwy 321 Valley Blvd. He advised since the August Council meeting the committee met with Planning Board during which time the Planning Board developed a sub-committee to study the issues and come up with a solution. Mr. Rothrock gave reviewed what the sub-committee has been discussing during their meetings.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting thanked Mr. Rothrock for his work. She explained Council has been discussing stormwater run off and wanted to know if there was a committee that had been looking at that issue. Mr. Rothrock advised that had been sent over to McGill and he would follow up with Town Engineer Doug Chapman.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting asked if they would be involving the Blue Ridge Conservancy as partner. Mr. Rothrock advised he would. She further asked if he had a targeted completion date. Mr. Rothrock advised he hoped to be done before winter retreat.

Council thanked Mr. Rothrock for his hard work.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

- Mayor Sellers – thanks to the Department Heads. Very busy weekend, some water main breaks, had some unfortunate tragedy's in our community and expressed his condolences to the families. The ribbon cutting for Memorial Park playground was

this afternoon prior to the Council meeting and thanked all involved in making that project happen.

- Council Member Yount – None
- Council Member Harwood – Appreciated the Civic Association putting the ambulance service back into the forefront, felt it's important and worth talking about it. He wanted to also say to the other side of that, the Town has one of the best and most equipped and most qualified first responders in the state. Thought that it may be good to include something along those lines in the Town Newsletter. The playground was exactitude flawlessly and thanked Parks and Rec staff and the committee. He advised not only is it beautiful and a great addition, it's going to be a huge economic driver to the community.
- Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting – thanked all emergency services for their hard work during a difficult weekend. She also thanked Public Works for their hard work on a major water leak.
- Council Member Matheson – echoed the other Council Members in thanking emergency service and Public Works for their work over the weekend. He advised he had spoken with a few individuals to work on getting broad band in Town to help with the kids accessing internet for school.
- Council Member Powell – Asked if there was an update on when the tax bills will be going out. Manager Fox explained there has been a software issue with the county conversion and should be resolved soon.
- Manager Fox – Thanked staff for all the hard work over the weekend with various issues that occurred. Chestnut Drainage is well underway, and they are making great progress. The crosswalks for Main Street will be discussed at the October meeting. The bulk tanks bid package was sent out and will be on the October Agenda.

Council took a ten-minute recess at 7:30 p.m. before.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 7:40 p.m. Council Member Harwood made a motion to go into executive session *NCGS 143-3 18.11. (a)(3) – Attorney/Client update on current litigation*, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Sweeting. Unanimously approved. No action was taken.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:15 p.m. Council returned to open session, with no further business Council Member Powell made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Council Member Matheson. Unanimously approved.

**MAYOR** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Charlie Sellers**

**ATTEST** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Hilari Hubner, Town Clerk**

**Attachments**

**Aiken Annexation - Attachment – A1 and A2**

**Wonderland Drive Speed Limit Consent NCDOT - Attachment – B**

**Budget Amendment #2020-09 - Attachment - C**

**Middle Fork Greenway Presentation - Attachment - D**