

## Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission

### Minutes

June 4, 2020

Members Present: Melissa Pickett, Curt Andrews, Bo Henderson, Carol Knapp, & Chris Wetmore

Staff Present: Cory Cathcart & Jennifer Brown

Begin: 9:00 a.m.

End: 10:00 a.m.

**Minutes Approval** – Bo made a motion to approve the April minutes. Carol seconded, and there was a unanimous vote to approve.

**Budget Update** – Jennifer stated that BRAAC has collected \$33,635 through the end of May. To date, BRAAC has spent \$10,137.89 of its \$36,510 budget; however, the bill for the hanging baskets, planters, and flowers has not yet been paid. Carol made a motion to approve the budget. Bo seconded, and there was a unanimous vote to approve.

**Town of Blowing Rock Funding Request** – Jennifer stated The Town of Blowing Rock is requesting \$10,000 from BRAAC's fund balance to allocate toward Town Center Beautification. This, in turn, would be transferred to and expenses would be paid from the Parks & Recreation budget. While normally funded by the TDA, their revenues have been cut by 40% and are therefore they are unable to fund Town Center Beautification, given that their obligations to fund the Memorial Park playground as well as the debt service on the parking deck next to BRAHM are inflexible. She opined that the request is consistent with the mission of BRAAC and that here available donor funds do exist. She further shared that the Town's general fund is allocating \$300,000 of its fund balance to the proposed 2020-2021 budget.

Curt stated that he was in favor of the proposal and advised that BRAAC evermore carefully manage its expenditures since, given the current economic situation, fundraising may be a greater challenge this year. Bo added the he was in favor as well and felt that we should put buying trash cans for Memorial Park on hold. He said BRAAC should allocate funds on needs versus wants. Curt made a motion to approve giving the Town \$10,000 of BRAAC's fund balance for Town Center Beautification in the 2020-2021 budget. Bo seconded, and it was a unanimous vote to approve.

**Memorial Park Playground** – Jennifer told the group that the playground for 2-5-year-olds has been installed, as well as the equipment on the mounds and the poles for the large tower with the hill slide. She stated due to so many days of heavy rain, the project has suffered delays, however with the most recent six clear days, much has been accomplished. She will keep the Commission informed.

**Broyhill Presentation Update** – Curt stated that he has the outline of the presentation ready and that whenever staff is able to create renderings it can be quickly completed for review.

**Flowers** – Jennifer stated that the baskets and planters have been placed on Main Street, Sunset, and Morris Street. The landscape crew was planting annuals in flower beds around town. Curt asked if staff was pleased with the flowers and Jennifer responded that there have been some issues.

Cory explained that there were flowers planted in the middle of the baskets that cannot be seen but that they are working to improve the baskets with pruning and fertilizing.

Jennifer stated that the two companies that we have used in the past have had issues and her department will seek dependable options, perhaps with the Watauga Regional High School horticulture program. All BRAAC members agreed.

**Other** – Melissa stated that Rotary is going to help maintain the trailhead park of the Middle Fork Greenway that is next to Tanger Outlets. She is going to work with Chris Pate and staff to get a better understanding of the needs and noted that she is excited to be able to help!

**Other** – Chris Wetmore asked that an update on the becoming a Tree City USA certified town be added to the July agenda. Cory stated the he would gather information for that meeting.