

Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission

Agenda

November 10, 2020

Town Council Chambers 9:00 a.m.

Mission Statement: The mission of the Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission is to promote and enhance the natural beauty of the mountain landscape by providing input and advice to the Blowing Rock Staff and Town Council to help preserve and protect publicly maintained spaces.

- Approve October 8, 2020 Minutes –
  
- Budget Update/Annual Fundraising Collection/Hanging Basket Collection –
  
- Tree City USA –
  
- Cone Road Nature Park Presentation (Tim Gupton) –
  
- Other Business –

Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission

Minutes

October 8, 2020

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

Staff Present: Jennifer Brown, Cory Cathcart, Shane Fox

Begin: 2:05 p.m.

End: 4:08 p.m.

**Minutes Approval** – Curt made a motion to approve the June minutes. Melissa seconded, and there was a unanimous vote to approve.

**Budget Update** – Jennifer stated that \$500 was collected since the donation letters were mailed out. Revenue collected since the first of October is \$1,310. A total of \$89.99 has been spent on water truck repairs and mailing thank you notes.

**Fundraising Letters** – Jennifer stated that all the donation letters were mailed out about two weeks ago. She also stated that she had several letters returned because some of the addresses were missing a line. Staff has been resending the returned mailings with the full addresses. Melissa asked if it was worth BRAAC sending out the mailings themselves instead of using an outsourced company. Jennifer stated that approximately 4,000 letters are sent out and it would be a large feat to print, stuff, and address that amount as a group. Melissa asked if there is another company we could use instead, and Jennifer stated that she would get pricing on other companies and try a new company next year.

**Tree City USA Follow-up** – Melissa stated that there are four criteria that needs to be met to become a Tree City USA town. There needs to be a tree board or department, a tree care ordinance for the town, a community forestry budget, and an Arbor Day observance and proclamation. Melissa stated that she was certain the town had an ordinance already in place, BRAAC would fill the role as the tree board, and a budgeted line item for trees. Jennifer stated that she will reach out to Kevin Rothrock, the Town Planning Director, about the tree ordinance, and with Nicole Norman, the Finance Director, about the tree budget. Melissa stated that all that would need to be completed is an official Arbor Day observance and proclamation by Town Council, and it would take place April 30, 2021.

Curt asked if there was a cost to be a Tree City USA member and Melissa did not believe there was a cost.

Curt made the motion to move forward with the process to become a Tree City USA town as long as there is not a cost associated with being a member. Carol seconded the motion, and it was a unanimous vote to approve.

**Broyhill Steps** – Melissa stated that the stairs beside of the American Legion that lead to Broyhill are very dangerous. Carol and Curt agreed. She stated that before COVID the Village Foundation had received approval for Town Council to raise money and replace those steps, as well as add an ADA accessible ramp and an amphitheater. Since COVID, the Village Foundation has not been able to get any donors to commit to the project.

Jennifer stated that the Virginia Tech Plan was designed for that sole purpose and since the plan was completed, it has been put on hold trying to get funding, and then because the Village Foundation wanted to fund the project. Jennifer stated that there is almost \$500,000 in bond money that will be issued in Spring of 2021 and a Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Grant was going to be applied for in Spring of 2021 to match the bond money. This would be for improvements to Memorial Park all the way to Davant field which would include replacing the stairs next to the American Legion.

**Village Foundation Liaison** – Melissa stated that John Aldridge, who is a member of the Village Foundation, asked her if a member of BRAAC would appoint a liaison to the Village Foundation for a new project they are calling “The Historical Walk”, which would run from Main Street, down Laurel Lane, and end up on 221. She stated that the Village Foundation has already discussed this with the Historical Society. After further discussion, it was decided that there are only five members on BRAAC, one is on the Village Foundation board, one is on the Historical Society, and if a liaison is appointed to this project then that does not leave a quorum on the BRAAC board to make a decision.

**Art on Main Street** – Melissa stated that the sculpture on Main Street that was approved for last year’s Art Walk at Chetola, has remained up past the year agreement due to COVID and not having the Art Walk this year. She asked the board what their thoughts were about having it removed or letting it stay. It was decided that Melissa would reach out to Brenda Council, who was in charge of the Art Walk and had the sculpture installed, and find out if the sculpture needed to be removed or if it can stay.

**Moratorium on Projects** – Melissa stated that she was concerned with organizations coming to Town Council requesting to implement their own projects on Town property that are not a part of the Town’s master plan. Curt agreed and stated that outside organizations need to help implement and fund projects that the Town deems necessary, not their own agendas and projects.