

Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission

Minutes

March 10, 2021

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

Staff Present: Jennifer Brown, Cory Cathcart, & Shane Fox

Begin: 1:00 p.m.

End: 3:00 p.m.

February Minutes Approval – Mr. Henderson made a motion to approve the June minutes. Mr. Andrews seconded, and the vote was unanimous to approve.

Chair & Vice Chair – Mr. Andrews made a motion to nominate Mrs. Pickett as the Chair of BRAAC and Chris Wetmore as the Vice-Chair. Mr. Henderson seconded, and it was unanimous vote to approve.

Budget Update – Mrs. Brown reported that revenue collected to date is \$39,476, which is \$2,356 more than projected for the year. She also stated that money continues to be collected for hanging basket and planter donations through July. She explained that only \$5,978.59 has been spent of the \$37,120 budget; however, the flowers for the hanging baskets, planters, and flower beds still need to be purchased.

Mrs. Brown reported that the 2021-2022 budget process had begun, and she reviewed each line item for BRAAC. She stated that she was requesting \$11,000 more for Flowers/Landscaping line item due to purchasing new hanging baskets on Sunset and coco liners for the other hanging baskets. She also added \$750 for Arbor Day celebration each year. After further discussion, everyone agreed with the budget request.

Tree City USA Update – Mrs. Brown updated the Commission and stated that she had received a plaque, which was presented to Town Council by Mrs. Pickett at the Town Council meeting, as well as a flag and two street signs. It was suggested that the flag be used during the Arbor Day celebration and Mrs. Brown stated that the signs would be hung at the North and South entrances into downtown Blowing Rock.

Mrs. Pickett explained that eleven years ago a child raised money to plant a tree in Memorial Park by having a lemonade stand and selling lemonade. When the new playground was installed, the tree had to be removed. Mrs. Brown suggested that the tree that is planted for Arbor Day replace the tree that the little girl donated and invite her and her family to the Arbor Day celebration. Everyone was in agreement and recommended contacting Blowing Rock School to see if any of their classes would want to participate in the celebration as well. Mrs. Brown stated that she would reach out to the school and invite them.

Signage for New River on Bridge at Sunset Drive – Mrs. Pickett stated that the person who donated the sign for the New River on Sunset wants a description of the new River and its history to go with the sign. Mr. Fox stated that Wendy Patopersky with the Middle Fork Greenway was willing to help with the design of the sign. After further discussion Mrs. Pickett agreed to reach out to Mrs. Patopersky and work on the design and wordage.

Fountain in Mayview Lake – Mrs. Brown explained that she was approached by a citizen to look at replacing the fountain in Mayview Lake. She showed examples and the different displays to get an idea of what everyone liked to request quotes. She will bring back pricing on different fountains once she receives them.

Parks & Recreation Trust Fund Grant Presentation – Mr. Fox presented a project for Memorial Park that the Town would like to apply for a Parks & Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) Grant in May. He explained that the PARTF grant is a dollar-for-dollar matching grant and that the Town currently had approximately \$432,000 in bond money for Memorial Park improvements and they are requesting \$500,000 for PARTF. The project that he reviewed has an estimated cost of \$1,285,000 and if we received the grant it would leave approximately \$350,000 to be paid from other resources such as, TDA and the ABC board.

The improvements to Memorial Park include:

- ADA accessibility from Wallingford to Memorial Park
- Renovations to the public restrooms
- Build new public restrooms adjacent to the current restrooms
- Renovation to the tennis courts and add pickleball courts
- New picnic area
- New climbing rocks for the playground
- New shuffleboard and corn hole boards
- Relocate and improve volleyball court
- Add ADA walkway from current walkway at lower basketball court to Main Street

Mr. Wetmore asked about the needs of shuffleboard, tennis, and pickleball and asked if the outdoor park lights would remain. Mr. Fox said yes, they would stay but are hopeful that they can be upgraded in this project through BREMCO. Mrs. Knapp asked how many tennis and pickleball courts are being proposed and Mr. Fox stated that there are discussions taking place on what the right number for each should be, whether it is two tennis courts with lines for pickleball on them as well, or one tennis court with the other court lined for both tennis and pickleball, or a separate tennis court and pickleball courts.

Mr. Andrews asked why the Parks Strategy Committee chose this project over other proposed projects from other organizations. Mr. Fox stated that the committee evaluated and determined the needs of our parks and our Town and the Memorial Park project was determined to be the highest priority of all proposed projects and would score highest for the PARTF grant application.

The commission supported the project and will submit a letter stating that fact for the PARTF application.

Other Business – Mr. Wetmore asked Mr. Fox if the town could fix a sign on 321 bypass that is being held up by a support post and if the Town signs posts in downtown could be painted. Mr. Fox said he would address those two issues.

Mr. Fox updated the commission and stated that the construction of the sidewalk to Bass Lake has finally begun. Country Boy Landscaping began on Monday beginning at Speckled Trout and will work their way up 221 to Bass Lake.