

Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission

Minutes

November 9, 2021

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

Staff Present: Jennifer Brown, Cory Cathcart, & Brian Johnson

Begin: 9:00 a.m.

End: 10:00 a.m.

October Minutes Approval – Mr. Henderson made a motion to approve the October minutes. Mrs. Pickett seconded, and the vote was unanimous to approve.

Budget Update – Mrs. Brown reported that \$23,710 has been collected since July 1st and \$3,500 has been spent on new hanging baskets, coco moss, and the annual solicitation letters. Mrs. Brown noted that the new mailing company had done an excellent job removing duplicate names and addresses. Additionally, they were able to recognize changes of property ownership and addresses. As such, she has not received any returned letters, saving Town staff many hours and costs sorting and re-mailing returned letters.

Glen Burney Trail – Mrs. Brown gave an update regarding progress of the efforts to improve information for hikers traversing the Glen Burney Trail. She had worked with Mr. Walters to ensure signs' clarity and utility. He has already ordered one sign to confirm that it is exactly what we envision before he orders the rest of them. She also reported that she is working with the Town attorney to obtain copyrights from Mr. Walters. Mr. Wetmore recommended that when the signs are installed that they won't dry pack the concrete around the posts. Furthermore, he would like to see the mileage added to each sign. Mr. Andrews made some grammatical suggestions and asked if Mr. Walters would be recognized for his generosity at an upcoming Town Council meeting. Mrs. Brown stated that after the signs were installed, she would indeed recognize him at the subsequent Town Council meeting.

Clock/Streetscape – Mrs. Brown reported that after last month's BRAAC meeting she had contacted the party who had inquired about donating a clock and that after learning of what would be appropriate, she kindly declined. She said that while she could not fund the entire project, if it were to be decided to purchase a clock, she would offer a donation.

Christmas Decorations – Mrs. Brown noted that Christmas decorations were being outsourced this year. A contractor will provide the lights and will install and remove them as well as all seasonal decorations. She explained that the necessary portion of full-time employees' salaries was greater than the amount of the contract and thus employees will be now able to conduct their regularly assigned duties in a timely fashion. Each year expectations for decorations have grown and have now surpassed the department's capacity. Mr. Henderson endorsed the outsource plan and everyone agreed. Mrs. Brown thanked contributors to the annual BRAAC appeal for funding \$4000 to decorate the large blue spruce tree at Town Hall.

BRAAC Board – Mrs. Brown congratulated Mrs. Pickett for being elected on Town Council and alerted the board that she would thus be vacating her BRAAC position. Mr. Henderson's seat is due to expire, and it has already been posted by the Town Clerk, so two positions will be filled by Town Council next

year. She asked the board members if they would be amenable to not filling Mrs. Pickett's seat until Town Council has made these appointments, thus leaving BRAAC with four members with current Vice Chair, Mr. Wetmore, as Chair for the months of January and February. Everyone agreed.

Other Business – Mrs. Pickett asked Mrs. Brown when the Tree City USA signs were going to be installed. Mrs. Brown replied that she would contact Public Works to arrange for installation. Mrs. Pickett reported that she had received an email to renew the Town's Tree City USA status. Mr. Johnson confirmed that an application must be completed annually to remain a Tree City USA.

Other Business – Mrs. Pickett asked if the board was willing to move the December BRAAC meeting from 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM. There was a unanimous vote to approve.