

Town Council Meeting - Tuesday, May 10th, 2022

The Town of Blowing Rock Town Council met for their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 10 2022, 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 Doug Matheson and Council Members Albert Yount, David Harwood, Melissa Pickett and Pete Gherini. Others in attendance were Town Manager Shane Fox, Town Attorney Allen Moseley, Town Engineer Doug Chapman, Police Chief Aaron Miller, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Brown, Public Works Director Matt Blackburn and Town Clerk Hilari Hubner who recorded the minutes.

Tue, 5/17 1:34PM • 1:06:27

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

short term rentals, ordinance, permit, pool, requiring, planning board, kevin, town, moving, motion, property, meeting, comments, council, elle, valley boulevard, shane, mayor, wilmington, closed session

SPEAKERS

David Harwood, Aaron Miller, Allen Moseley, Albert Yount, Jennifer Brown, Shane Fox, Doug Matheson, Jane Sellers, Melissa Pickett, Pete Gherini, Brittany Bonn, Charlie Sellers, Kevin Rothrock

Charlie Sellers 00:00

Thanks for coming out tonight to the May 10, 2022 Town Council Meeting. If you would please, roll call for attendance.

Albert Yount 00:00

Here

David Harwood 00:00

Here

Melissa Pickett 00:00

Here

Doug Matheson 00:00

Here

Pete Gherini 00:00

Here

Charlie Sellers 00:00

Rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. All righty, can I get a motion to approve the minutes from the April 12, 2022 regular and closed session minutes.

Doug Matheson 00:00

Motion to approve.

Pete Gherini 00:00

Second.

Charlie Sellers 00:00

I have a first and I have a second. All in favor?

Albert Yount 00:00

Yes

David Harwood 00:00

Yes

Melissa Pickett 00:00

Yes

Doug Matheson 00:00

Yes

Pete Gherini 00:00

Yes

Charlie Sellers 05:48

Moving right along the regular agenda, Council. I'm gonna let Kevin here in just a minute make up a couple of notes on Tammy Bentley, but also we've added a closed session to this evening's meeting this is to discuss attorney client litigation. So just be aware, this was a last minute request. So do I have a motion to approve the regular agenda?

David Harwood 05:55

So moved

Charlie Sellers 11:41

Do I have a second?

Melissa Pickett 11:45

Second

Charlie Sellers 11:46

Any discussion? All in favor?

Albert Yount 11:49

Yes

David Harwood 11:50

Yes

Melissa Pickett 11:52

Yes

Doug Matheson 11:53

Yes

Pete Gherini 11:54

Yes

Charlie Sellers 11:54

Now, consent agenda. Do I have a motion to approve consent agenda?

Pete Gherini 12:01

So moved

David Harwood 12:03

Second

Charlie Sellers 12:03

All in favor?

Albert Yount 12:04

Yes

David Harwood 12:04

Yes

Melissa Pickett 12:04

Yes

Doug Matheson 12:22

Yes

Pete Gherini 12:23

Yes

Charlie Sellers 12:24

Moving along to AMOREM presentation.

Brittany Bonn 12:28

Ms. Brittany Bonn representative for AMOREM Hospice explained in detail the current construction of a patient care center currently under construction in the High Country. The center will serve patients of Ashe, Avery and Watauga counties and be the first in this region. I'd say I guess I'm very partial to this project because my daughter works for you. And I've seen what she does day in and day out working with hospice care, and she's remarkable. To do what they do is something I just couldn't do, I mean, and deal with it. You know, each day, the need for this. We've tried before we're getting my sister when before she passed away. The beds were full down there. I mean, we couldn't get her in. So she ended up dying in hospital, but I mean, it's a very big need for this and congratulations for trying to get this done. Thank you for that. How will people contact you for additional information? They can reach out to us at just at our main phone number, which you said which is 828-754-0101. And they can also find more information about the project at our website, which is amoremsupport.org.

Charlie Sellers 21:35

Thank you Just recently we lost a very, very fine employee here at the Town of Blowing Rock, Tammy Bentley. I'm gonna let Kevin Rothrock make a few comments.

Kevin Rothrock 21:59

Thank you Mayor. Most of you already know. But for some that don't know, Tammy Bentley passed away April 19. And she was an incredible member of our Town Hall team. She worked for us, I want to say almost 12 years in the Planning Inspections office and she was not just a secretary or administrative assistant. She was a certified zoning official. She had done all that work to be certified. She was a real estate agent, she was a broker. Many people don't know that. That's why she knew so much. And if you could not get the answer from Tammy, there probably was not an answer to be found. She knew everyone. She knew everything about the town. She was just a great, dedicated employee and just a great friend. She In fact, she took care of our animals and we were gone on vacation. She lived right down the road from me. And so if you don't mind, we could have a moment of silence for Tammy and her husband Stan and her daughter Megan and her son Lucas during this time appreciate it.

Charlie Sellers 23:43

Thank you Kevin. She was a true asset to our community. Okay, moving right along. Ladies. Thanks again. Have a good evening. We have two public hearings tonight. One is NCDOT land purchase. I'll let Kevin Rothrock lead off and give us the details.

Kevin Rothrock 24:06

I don't have those details. This might be where Shane.

Charlie Sellers 24:15

You want me to.

Kevin Rothrock 24:16

Yeah

Charlie Sellers 24:17

Okay

Shane Fox 24:17

I'm here.

Charlie Sellers 24:19

Oh my gosh. I go to church Sunday.

Shane Fox 24:29

Is it a full house is what I am asking. Is the all the seats taken?

Charlie Sellers 24:37

Go for it, Shane.

Shane Fox 24:39

All right. Perfect. So this public notice is and let me know if you can hear me if I'm talking too loud or not loud enough. You woke us up Shane. I apologize. That's Thomas's doings on the speaker volumes but the public notice is in regards to the piece of property that's across from Food Lion. The NCDOT property that we the commitment to purchase way back at the end of 2019. We finally got through the red tape so to speak with NCDOT and committed to the closing. After we were able to move forward the purchase of the property, it was made aware of us that we should have entered or should have conducted a public hearing based on the financing agreement with our bank, UCBI. So you all have already approved the purchase of the land and the financing package that's in place, but we simply did not have a public hearing, which was the last step to satisfy the financing package, again, for UCBI, the bank of our choice. And if you recall, we went through the bidding process, and that was the low bid. The purchase of the property is \$442,250 interest rates, I don't have in front of me 1.2 something 1.3. Annual cost is around \$48,200. So I think I can say about \$40,000 in interest total with interest rates so low. This is simply just a public hearing that allows anyone a chance to speak. And then after that, if you all will make a motion to accept the finance package and then we'll close the public hearing and move on with property purchase.

Charlie Sellers 26:26

Council, comments, questions for Shane

Doug Matheson 26:29

I make a motion we open the Public Hearing.

Charlie Sellers 26:34

Thank you, you're quick tonight. We have a motion to open the public hearing. Is there anyone in the audience that would like to speak on the financing of this piece of property for the Town of Bowling Rock? Okay. Do I have a motion to close the public hearing.

David Harwood 26:59

Motion to close the public hearing.

Albert Yount 27:00

Second.

Charlie Sellers 27:01

I have a first and I have a second. All those in favor.

Albert Yount 27:04

Yes

David Harwood 27:04

Yes

Melissa Pickett 27:07

Yes

Doug Matheson 27:07

Yes

Pete Gherini 27:07

Yes

Charlie Sellers 27:07

Public hearings closed. Do I have a motion to approve to approve the financing offered by the lender moving forward with the purchase of the property from NCDOT.

Albert Yount 27:21

So moved.

Melissa Pickett 27:22

Second

Charlie Sellers 27:22

I got a second, any further discussion? How do you vote? Listen, I don't envy. Yes. Okay.

David Harwood 27:34

Yes

Melissa Pickett 27:34

Yes

Doug Matheson 27:34

Yes

Pete Gherini 27:34

Yes

Albert Yount 27:34

Yes

Charlie Sellers 27:35

Moving right along. Okay, this next one is short term rental ordinance change. Mr. Rothrock.

Kevin Rothrock 27:52

Thank you, Mayor and Council. Recently, a North Carolina Court of Appeals case decided that the North Carolina General statutes prohibits communities from requiring permits and registrations for short term rental uses. Involved in this case was the city of Wilmington, which had a permitting requirement to register short term rentals in the city and also requiring a lottery for those property owners who wish to rent their property. The lottery process was to limit the number of short term rentals by a distance requirement. And both of these processes were deemed invalid by North Carolina Court of Appeals. In response, our town attorney recommends we stop requiring this type of permitting or registration that we currently do for short term rentals and remove that language from land use code. Our land use ordinance will still require some of the provisions about smoke detectors, 911 address postings and other information that's critical to someone that's a tenant. Planning Board reviewed this draft ordinance in in April and recommend approval as written. I've attached that draft ordinance but before I get into details, I did put another draft in front of your your space tonight that has one additional change. Alan and I spoke a little bit today about this change and how like that here in the first highlighted section. In this draft, we take out the zoning permit language specific to short term rentals in this case. And then in subsection G any anything related to revoking that permit and then in the in the next section down we strike that language related to short term rentals permitted by right or any documentation about this nonconformity. Strike that language. Section B is in green, we added that today, instead of listing this information on a permitting or a registration type form, we changed that to say that a local contact person or management company must be clearly posted in the dwelling unit. And that that person will be responsible to respond to complaints for emergencies within two hours, which is what our code already says. So we don't care that we get a list of that it should be posted somewhere pertinent in the in the rental unit so they can know who to contact. Allen and I talk a little bit more about this too. The School of Government had a blog to summarize the court case and kind of the ins and outs of permitting and how short term rentals are regulated in North Carolina. And there may be some language that would allow us to have a zoning permit because short term rental is a change in use, or is a use category in our zoning ordinance. So if you change from single family, or just a dwelling unit and you want to rent it short term, that would be a change in use. And conceivably we could require a zoning permit to make that change, to make sure these things are in place related to smoke

detectors, carbon monoxide, 911 addressing and things that we're asking for. So Allen is that pretty close to what we talked about today

Allen Moseley 32:04

There's a distinction between requiring registration and registration makes it seem like more, it's somebody who's actually an individual or individuals who own a piece of property having to register with the town versus a zoning permit, which is really more related to just the use of the property in accordance with our zoning ordinance. There's a distinction between the two. And sometimes it's a little hard to draw the clear line between the two. But clearly registration is prohibited. So what we're trying to do is balance our need to, from a health, safety and welfare standpoint to to regulate short term rentals, but at the same time, not run afoul of this court of appeals decision.

Kevin Rothrock 33:12

One last thing I want to be clear on is that we are not expanding short term rentals to any new zoning districts or restricting them those districts that they're allowed. And it has no bearing on on what this ordinance changes. So want to make that clear. Glad to answer any questions?

Albert Yount 33:33

Just wondering, you've crossed out Section G. Is that correct?

Kevin Rothrock 33:40

Yes, sir.

Albert Yount 33:42

And another one down here. Can you explain that?

Kevin Rothrock 33:48

Well, it made reference to a permit, which was part of how we started this about three years ago to apply for a short term rental permit. And we're trying to remove that language. So that is not a reference and trying to be consistent with the statute.

Albert Yount 34:13

I mean, I'm just asking, Kevin, I'm not complaining. You're taking out the revocation process, it appears for violations of the town code. That's what I want to know why.

Kevin Rothrock 34:31

Those violations are not going to be tied to their permit. If we require a zoning permit, those violations are not going to be tied to it those violations would be violations of town code would be penalized as such. So if they've got a noise issue, just like anybody else that doesn't have short term rental that's going to be prosecuted by the police, based on their noise ordinance violation. not tied to a registration requirement.

Albert Yount 35:06

So in your, I think you're saying to me this doesn't weaken the ordinance against people raising the roof of that?

Kevin Rothrock 35:15

Exactly. It does not. Yes, sir. ordinance still stands with issues related to dog run loose, noise, other violations of the town code? Yes sir.

Albert Yount 35:28

You concur that. Yes Okay

Doug Matheson 35:33

On that issue of what you were just talking about the complaint driven. I think we have an ordinance that we put in on trash also, that they have a certain time, well, I think it's townwide to their containers, put back to where they don't sit out there all week also.

Charlie Sellers 35:53

Is that 48 hours?

Kevin Rothrock 35:55

Yeah, that's already in there. We did make reference to it. And it's in here, item D. And it's still in there. We just brought that out of the town code and made it be addressed in short term rental, just so they know about it. It applies to everybody. But those that are renting short term, they're not here all the time. Although it's an area they're allowed to do it. They might not know what the rules are regarding related trash.

Charlie Sellers 36:31

Do I have a motion to open the public hearing?

Pete Gherini 36:33

So moved

Doug Matheson 36:35

Second

Charlie Sellers 36:39

All right. Those of you that would like to speak on this particular issue. If you would go over, see Hilari give her your name, address and step up to the podium.

Jane Sellers 37:01

My name is Jane Sellers, not related to the Mayor but spelled the same way. And my address here is 412 Wonderland Drive, Blowing Rock. My name is Janie I go by Janie Sellers, and homeowner here for about five years and visitor prior to that for many years. And I am a Lawyer by profession retired recently, and also a member of the Board of the Blowing Rock Civic Association. I've had as my assignment on the board to pay attention to the topic of short term rentals. And as such, I've followed

the City of Wilmington case among others and agree with what Mr. Mosely and Mr. Rothrock have said about the impact of that case on the town's ability to have permits of the type that you've had before. And I did see that School of Government piece that Mr. Lovelady wrote. And I think that's an interesting possibility. I didn't see your language, how you've changed the did you change it in here yet? Or is that something you're thinking about? No, we didn't have Haven't done that yet.

Kevin Rothrock 38:29

We didn't address the idea of a permit.

Jane Sellers 38:31

Right, the change of use permit

Kevin Rothrock 38:33

But our land use code ready requires that.

Jane Sellers 38:36

Okay, I understand. The other thing on the permits I would mention is that in the statute that the city of Wilmington case was based on, there was an exception in there for requiring permits for properties that have multiple violations. I think it's more than four in a year or two and a 30 day period. So it's a little bit like Mr. Yount was talking about. You can't revoke a permit if you don't have a permit. So I understand the need for removing that Section G I guess it was. But I do think it would be possible if it comes up, that you have multiple violations in these periods of time to actually have a permit requirement or a registration requirement. But let me back up a little bit and say that the court did hold that the zoning overlay districts like we have for short term rentals that are permitted or not permitted, was fine. So we can certainly keep that and also that you could have other regulations like we have to promote health, safety and welfare for visitors and residents. And I certainly support those goals and support you know, keeping things like that in place. One of the things that concerned me about removing the permit requirement is I went on the town website to try to find out where it tells people what the rules are about short term rentals there if I wanted to, if my house was in the right area, if I wanted to rent it in that fashion, and I couldn't find it anywhere, and other than the ordinance itself, which is kind of buried in the Land use code, and I don't think would come to people's attention very well. Where that information was nicely laid out was on the permit application, like the page and a half of the permit application is really a listing of all the rules that are applicable to people who are doing the short term rentals. And I did have a conversation with Mr. Fox who may or may not still be in the ceiling about this, because it seemed like it would be a good idea in the absence of the interface with the town residents or Chetola other places that there'll be an easily accessible spot where people can find out what the rules are, with a link, for example, to the Vacation Rentals Act, which previously was a copy was attached to the permit application. So that is actually one of my suggestions. And I don't know whether it requires a resolution or just putting it out here in these minutes, that would be something I think would be worthwhile for the Town to do. The other thing that form did was it required the naming of the local manager for the property. And, as Mr. Rothrock was talking about earlier, having that information posted somewhere as opposed to just having a requirement that you have such a manager, I think would be helpful. I have seen one other proposed ordinance that required that information actually to be not just accessible inside the dwelling, but on the outside of the dwelling. So for example, if the trash

cans aren't taken in, or the smoke detectors are going off, and there's nobody there, no one has to get the police there to break into the house to find out what the name is, because it's not going to be on file with the Town. So that was something that occurred to me as ways in which our current ordinance might be modified to compensate for the absence of the permit that we had before. So I guess I feel like with the increase in short term rentals, generally, and the impact of this Wilmington case, which has nearly every town in the state that had a system like this examining their current ordinances, as well as the School of Government, and maybe the League of Municipalities, all these other groups that worry about this kind of thing, studying the rules that people are using. And I'm not saying that we would need some of the ones that are there places have I've seen one where there was a specific short term rentals ordinance about noise. And sounds like we're fine on the noise front here, we don't really need to embed that in the short term rentals ordinates, but seems like a good time to undertake a study of what's out there, and what is coming out there. So that maybe instead of just you know, picking things up one at a time, maybe a general review, I don't know if the planning board are the ones who might be supposed to do this, or Kevin's office. Or I will say that the Civic Association would be happy to help out if you want to give us an assignment to do some surveying for you, that kind of thing. But that is my other suggestion is to take advantage of this opportunity to think about this topic a little more comprehensively. And, you know, make sure the bases are being covered as well as possible within the constraints that the court has found the law imposes. And that, I think, is all I have to say unless somebody wants to ask me a question, but thank you very much for your time.

Charlie Sellers 44:52

Any questions for Ms. Sellers

David Harwood 44:54

Thank you

Pete Gherini 44:55

Yes, just a comment and I think that several of those suggestions would merit looking at. And maybe Kevin could, you know, look at those and incorporate some of the things that Janie has mentioned, because I think they are very valid points.

Jane Sellers 45:16

Thank you, Kevin, I'll be happy to give you a call.

Albert Yount 45:21

I want to clear my mind. You're actually saying that? We don't or we're thinking about not having a list of what is short term rentals. In other words, my neighbor may be a short term renter, and I don't know what happens.

Jane Sellers 45:42

There won't be a list anywhere. I mean, I don't think you'll know. Assuming your neighbor is in the right Zoning area, I don't think that you will know that they're doing it unless you happen to see a lot of out of state cars parking, you know, in their in their parking area.

Albert Yount 46:03

Well, I'm interested also in your identifying somewhere on the outside of the house, who to call, because that's certainly going to be cheaper than replacing a door that the police knock down.

Jane Sellers 46:21

Maybe. Yeah.

Albert Yount 46:28

So I think that merrits thinking about.

Doug Matheson 46:35

We were, Melissa and I were at the conference in Wilmington. And that was probably the biggest topic talked about by everybody. When we get together and have our own meetings. A lot of little towns are waiting to see what the bigger ones are going to do before they make any move right now.

Charlie Sellers 46:58

Ms. Sellers, thank you.

Jane Sellers 46:59

Thank you.

Charlie Sellers 47:00

Thank you so much for your hard work and appreciate your input.

Jane Sellers 47:03

This has been a fascinating topic, and I look forward to it coming to a conclusion. Thank you.

Charlie Sellers 47:11

Thank you.

Albert Yount 47:14

We have two former chairmans of the Planning Board. Do you want to say anything?

David Harwood 47:22

Well, I think the matter at hand is to rid our current ordinance of this permitting. But I do think that we could ask the Planning Board to look at some of those recommendations and come back to us. But I would say that let's take care of the matter at hand.

Pete Gherini 47:48

I echo David's comments.

Albert Yount 47:53

Allen, do you concur? Are we okay?

Allen Moseley 47:58

I don't think we necessarily need to rush into adopting this change. I'm curious as to whether because this is such a hot topic, controversial topic, one that everyone's talking about, then you have to assume that there are lots of towns that are going through the same process that Blowing Rock is going through. And I would also imagine that Adam at the School of Government is being called upon constantly to tell folks whether what they're suggesting or proposing is, he believes is consistent with the court of appeals decision. So maybe if we give it a little bit more time and try to borrow from the wisdom of others, we can make sure that we're doing everything we should doing as much as we can. Without again, running afoul of the court of appeals decision.

David Harwood 49:15

But take care of this. Are you saying push pause on this?

Allen Moseley 49:21

Yeah that's what I'm saying. I'm saying give us a little bit more time. And maybe maybe we'll tweak it a little bit more.

Melissa Pickett 49:33

Table of this along with sending it back to Planning Board to look at the other suggestions.

Charlie Sellers 49:39

Yeah, we could do that. But we need to make sure do we have anyone else that would like to speak on this matter in the audience? Do I have a motion?

Allen Moseley 49:51

One more thing? I think, you know, we, Kevin's fully aware of the court of appeals decision and so he's going to in the meantime, you know, adhere to what we understand that the decision what the decision says with respect to what he can and can't do. I'm just suggesting that we might be doing better fine tuning of this thing we have at this very moment.

Charlie Sellers 50:24

Okay. Do we do we have a motion to close the public hearing?

Melissa Pickett 50:30

So moved

Charlie Sellers 50:31

Do we have a second.

David Harwood 50:32

Second.

Charlie Sellers 50:34

Now who would like to make a motion to move forward with this or table it until Planning Board comes back to the Council with revisions?

Doug Matheson 50:49

Well you started it.

Melissa Pickett 50:54

So based on the recommendation of our Town Attorney I make a motion that we table the current changes given to us and send back to the Planning Board to bring further recommendations to us.

Albert Yount 51:09

Second

Charlie Sellers 51:11

Further discussion? How do you vote?

Albert Yount 51:15

Yes

David Harwood 51:15

Yes

Melissa Pickett 51:15

Yes

Doug Matheson 51:17

Yes

Charlie Sellers 51:18

Mayor Sellers I want to Thank the Planning Board for the work they have done so far.

Pete Gherini 51:18

Yes

Charlie Sellers 51:18

Okay so this issue is going back to the Planning Board and Kevin Rothrock planning and zoning to make additional improvements. Okay, under regular agenda. We have parks and recreation pool fees. Ms. Jennifer Brown.

Jennifer Brown 52:16

Good evening, Mayor and Council. Over the past few years, we have tried to gradually increase our pool fees for non taxpayers to help offset the cost of the pool. We have not seen a significant increase. So we started looking at all of our pool pass fees for taxpayers and non taxpayers with the growing cost of goods and services as well as the increase in hourly wages for employees. We are recommending

that we increase and streamline pool fees to \$35 per person for the season for taxpayers and \$55 per person for the season for non taxpayers, we have compared our fees to other pools in and around our area that are open to the public. We are significantly lower than all of them. I have attached a price comparison of Watauga Parks and Recreation and the YMCA in Banner Elk. It's really hard to find a pool only because we are the only public outdoor pool in the county. So we had to compare to what we have. So I think Kevin has a slide Okay, so as you can see up there currently, it shows your resident and your non resident pool fees. And we do it as in a family of. So if you have a family of three or four, it's the same number. And then I will say this has been this way since as long as I've been here. And then if you have a family of 5,6,7,8 and one of the reasons we're saying doing it per person is it's going to be harder for a family of four to come in and maybe say that these two are my children when they're really not their children. So hopefully, by having individual pool passes for the family, we have to have their name, their address, you know, like have everything there with them. And then so that's what we're doing when we put on the side over here the propose \$35 It's just \$35 per person. So as you can see what that looks like there. If you look at Watauga Parks and Recreation and YMCA comparison, they obviously offer more than just swimming. So and their resident price and non resident price. I mean, we're still kind of right there in comparison to what they offer but we just have the pool so if you go to the next slide, Kevin so what we did is back In 2009, but before everything, for COVID, related, we took what we sold and pool pass memberships. And we on the other side compared it is what if we had charged these prices, then. And if you look, then we had \$48,380 sold in pool passes. And if we charged the prices that we're recommending now we would have made \$80,340. So it was almost double of what we would have made. So we are, that's why we're recommending what we're recommending and hoping that will help offset some of our costs.

Charlie Sellers 55:39

Ms Brown, haven't we been losing money on the pool the last few years? With operations,

Jennifer Brown 55:45

We lose money on the pool every year. There's probably very few pools in America that ever make money. So we will never make money on the pool. And there's so many different variables to the pool. There's weather, there's our chemicals. I mean, we just can't, we can't say it's it's not like summer camp or and say we have this many kids and it's going to be great. Well, we don't. If we have a lot of a rainy summer, then that's a lot of the time that our pool isn't open. Or, you know, if we have a really hot summer, then that affects your chemicals and keeping your pool balance. So there's just a lot to it to really be able to know how much it's gonna cost to operate.

Pete Gherini 56:29

Jennifer, if we approved this new rate, it's basically just getting us back to a break even point, right.

Jennifer Brown 56:39

I mean, it's I don't know if it'll be breakeven, I think we're just trying to help offset more of the cost that it's causing us to run the pool.

Pete Gherini 56:46

Thank you

David Harwood 56:53

Has just been incorporated into the budget recommended.

Jennifer Brown 56:57

I don't know if it was incorporated into the budget recommendation. Yeah, I have not seen it.

Shane Fox 57:02

It was shamed.

Jennifer Brown 57:04

Shane says out of the ceiling.

Doug Matheson 57:15

Before he speaks again, I'll make a motion.

Charlie Sellers 57:17

Motion wood floor, do we have a second.

Pete Gherini 57:23

Second.

Charlie Sellers 57:25

Any further discussion? How do you vote?

Albert Yount 57:33

Yes

David Harwood 57:33

Yes

Melissa Pickett 57:33

Yes

Doug Matheson 57:33

Yes

Pete Gherini 57:35

Yes

Charlie Sellers 57:35

Thanks for your hard work. Parking committee update. Chief Aaron Miller.

Aaron Miller 57:45

Good Evening Mayor and Council, my update will be very brief, that our committee is still meeting we have two different subgroups. As you know, one of the subgroups has finished with their work and has given us their recommendations. The other sub group will be meeting again next week. The meeting has been postponed from this Friday to the following Friday. So hopefully that'll be their last meeting. And we can get their recommendations and hopefully, we can have some real information to bring to the Council. Might be a little overly ambitious to say the June meeting, but hopefully by the July meeting at the latest. That's what we're at.

Charlie Sellers 58:29

Thank you Chief. Any questions for Chief Thank you. Moving right along. Official reports and comments, well as Mayor I will to once again thank the Council, current and previous for what they have done with our little Town. We have our new traffic lights and cross walks up looking good. I think that Valley Boulevard I've had nothing but positive comments on the way Valley Boulevard looks. The town's really greening up it's looking great. And of course, as we all know, TDA pays for a lot of that particularly Valley Boulevard maintenance. If you haven't seen the new walkway coming up Broyhill from bring a lake up to Legion Hall. It's almost complete. Looking at it from a distance it's really looking good. So my hat's off to parks and rec and all the others that are involved in it, everybody is moving forward and being proactive instead of reactive. I like that. So I want to thank you all for attending this evening. Moving right along comments.

Albert Yount 1:00:04

Well, I just want to invite everybody as a member, commander of the Legion post to our ceremonial rotary day, on May 28, that is a Saturday at 11. We're really proud to present Captain Lotto of South Dakota. He was in the top 10 of his graduating class at Annapolis. Served 27 active duty years in the US Navy, everyday of it was a US Navy SEAL. There are a few officers in the seal corps that he was one of them. Captain commanded three SEAL teams, in his term. He got the Bronze Star, the Navy Cross five times. He's been everywhere. Iraq, Afghanistan. He now lives in North Carolina in Charlotte, his wife is from Charlotte. And he's gonna speak he's provided to us by the furniture family member Hump Broyhill, who is a big financial supporter of US Navy SEALs. For what reason? I don't know, but I'll find out. So we're inviting everybody. We're lucky to have a man of the statute here. He is the real deal. I have actually seen when I was in the Navy SEAL training, let me assure you, I don't think I would make one day was not one.

David Harwood 1:01:53

Thank you. I just want to say there's some new faces in the audience that we typically don't see. And I think a lot of them are some of our new board members. So I want to recognize them. And thank you for being here. And thank you for your interest and for serving. Very appreciative of that. The other thing I want to do is I want to recognize Elle Nichols. Elle has been an intern here at Town Hall and been shadowing Shane. And I'm really proud of Ms Nichols. She's a really outstanding young lady. Elle, raise your hand so everybody knows who you are. Elle just found out that she got accepted to NC State. And she has a full ride scholarship too. I have known Elle most of her life. And she is Blowing Rock bred and raised. And I'm extremely proud of her. Go pack.

Melissa Pickett 1:03:21

Actually, I'm kind of quiet or not this month.

Doug Matheson 1:03:30

I echo David's remarks and just add that like said, Melissa, and I've been in Wilmington at the conference. And we look forward with sharing a lot of things that we've heard down there. And like I've said it doesn't make much difference for your big town or small town. We all seem to have the same problems right now.

Pete Gherini 1:04:00

Thank you, Mr. Mayor, as a representative to the TDA board. We had our meeting on May 3. We reviewed the proposed budget, which Nicole was nice enough to go through and give us a lot of information, more information than you probably would want to know. But I guess we'll be hearing a lot more about that when we go into budget workshops. So that would be one thing. We also had a closed session, which was an employee review so we can talk more about that the next meeting. Thank you.

Charlie Sellers 1:04:42

Thank you

Shane Fox 1:04:42

Yes sir, I would just give an update on budgets for in front of you and then made available to the public. We will be online first thing in the morning and And now our workshop is scheduled for next week on Tuesday at 1 pm with the public hearing scheduled for Tuesday, June the 14th. Everything else, I think it was covered.

Charlie Sellers 1:05:13

Thank you, Mr. Fox. This has taken our meetings to a new level. All right. Well, ladies and gentlemen, we will be going into closed session to discuss litigation. We want to thank you so much for attending this evening. I don't think any decisions will be made from that when we come back into open session. But thank you so much for coming. Thank you for taking the time out of your busy days. And please let us know if there's any anything that we can do for you. Okay, thank you.

MAYOR _____

Charlie Sellers

ATTEST _____

Hilari Hubner, Town Clerk

ATTACHMENTS:

ARP Resolution – Attachment A

Tax Release/Refund #2021-03 – Attachment B