

Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission

Minutes

February 7, 2023

Members Present: Bo Henderson, Curt Andrews, & Chris Wetmore

Staff Present: Jennifer Brown & Cory Cathcart

Begin: 9:00 AM

End: 10:30. AM

December 6, 2022, Minutes – Mr. Henderson made a motion to approve as written. Mr. Andrews seconded, and there was a unanimous vote to approve.

BRACC Chair and Vice-Chair Nominations & Vote – Mr. Andrews made a motion to appoint Ms. Whitney Brown as Chair and Chris Wetmore as Vice-Chair. Mr. Henderson seconded, and there was a unanimous vote to approve.

Budget Update – Mrs. Brown stated that she will email the current financial statement once she has received it from the Finance Director.

Broyhill Park (Broyhill Family Foundation) – Mr. Andrews noted that he will be meeting with Jennifer Brown after this BRAAC meeting to discuss details to begin work on the draft application for a grant. This grant request will be to complete the rock work around Broyhill Lake and to replace the sidewalks in Broyhill Park.

Murals Maintenance (add to donation letter?) – Mrs. Brown reported that during retreat last week it was disclosed that the two downtown murals (one on the backside of the old fire station, the other on the side of the Gilded Lily building) are owned by the Town and need renovating. BRAAC was asked, as it serves as the Arts Committee, to consider if this was something that could be financially handled by it.

Mr. Wetmore asked if there was a written agreement with the owner of the Gilded Lily building regarding access to and perhaps removal of that mural to another location. He also asked what the cost for restoration would be.

Mr. Andrews raised the concern that while BRAAC capably fulfills the function of Arts Committee, that role has been separate and distinct from fund-raising campaigns in support of hanging baskets, sidewalk planters, and installations at the Sunset Drive gateway, the cemetery, and in front of Town Hall and library buildings. He said that he was not comfortable committing previously raised funds for something so unrelated to their original intended purpose. Furthermore, he asked that if the gross total of annual collected funds might be a somewhat fixed amount, could adding an art restoration line subtract from the floral budget at a time when expectations are high.

Mr. Henderson strongly recommend that Town Council formally consider the forecasted annual burden to taxpayers related to the maintenance and upkeep of gifts to the town and/or that donors include with their gift an offsetting annual monetary contribution or physical commitment to upkeep. Mr. Wetmore agreed. Mr. Henderson added that with recent and likely future local, regional, state, and federal tax increases and other inflationary factors, there is a limit to expected from voluntary

contributions. and, therefore, assuming responsibility for gifts to the Town with no additional financial support to fund upkeep is not fiscally responsible.

Other Business – Mr. Andrews asked for the status of the updated ordinance for BRAAC regarding its definition and charge. Jennifer Brown reported that she and Mrs. Pickett are gathering data and will be consulting with Mr. Rothrock regarding the formal document. Mr. Andrews emphasized the importance of the ordinance to the success of the new Chairperson and to the future of BRAAC, whatever that might be.