

MINUTES
Intergovernmental Retreat
September 28, 2009

The Town of Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners attended an Intergovernmental Retreat on Monday, September 28, 2009. The Retreat was held at the Broyhill Inn and Conference Center in the Powers Room South in Boone, NC. In attendance from the Town of Blowing Rock, Town of Boone, Watauga County, Appalachian State University, Beech Mountain and the Town of Seven Devils were the following:

Town of Blowing Rock

- Mayor Pro tem Keith Tester
- Commissioners: Albert Yount, Phil Pickett, Tommy Klutz
- Staff: Town Manager Scott Hildebran, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock
Emergency Services Director Kent Graham, Town Clerk Sharon Greene.

Town of Boone

- Mayor Loretta Clawson, Mayor Pro tem Lynne Mason
- Commissioners: Janet Pepin, Stephen Phillips, Rennie Brantz, Jamie Leigh & Council Candidate, Andy Ball
- Staff: Town Manager Greg Young, Town Attorney Sam Furgiule, Public Works Director Blake Brown, Assistant to the Town Manager Jim Byrne, and Deputy Town Clerk Kim Brown

Watauga County

- Commissioners: Jim Deal - Chairman, John Cooper, Bill Winkler & Tim Futrelle
- Staff: County Manager Rocky Nelson, Assistant County Manager Deron Geouque, TDA Recreation Planner Eric Woolridge, Parks & Recreation Director Stephen Poulos, Clerk to the Board Anita Fogle

Town of Seven Devils

- Town Manager Ed Evans

Town of Beech Mountain

- Town Manager Randy Feierabend
- Staff: Recreation Director Eric Jelinski

Appalachian State University

- Vice Chancellor of Business Affairs Greg Lovins
- Board of Trustees: John Cooper
- Chief of Staff Dr.Lorin Baumhover

High Country Council of Government

- Director of Planning & Development Phillip Trew and Senior Planner Kelly Coffey

HEALTHCARE

Richard Sparks, President and CEO of Appalachian Regional Healthcare Systems, Inc. provided information on the current operations and future plans of ARHS. Mr. Sparks stated that ARHS serves 10 counties and has three hospitals and 1,600 employees and that their Strategic plans focus on technology and efficiency. ARHS' major initiatives include the expansion of Behavioral Health Center at Cannon Memorial and the replacement of the Blowing Rock Hospital. Discussion on the national healthcare system then followed.

Dr. Baumhover and Mr. Greg Lovins, ASU Vice-Chancellor for Business Affairs then gave an overview of ASU's enrollment and the Nursing Program stating that ASU received 15,000 applications for 2010 and only had 2,700 openings. Mr. Baumhover then went on to state 34% of the student population lived on campus, 86% were in-state and 25% were first-generation college students. In 1996 the Nursing Program began by offering programs in satellite locations. According to Dr. Baumhover, 60 students had graduated from the program and ASU was also working toward a stand-alone Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program and had 80 students enrolled and they wanted to offer the MSN program in the future. He also said they were working to create the College of Health Sciences which would combine six existing health related programs/departments. Their plan was to house College of Health Sciences in a new building adjacent to Watauga Medical Center. The new building would be a 150,000 square-foot building that would cost \$50 million.

RECREATION

Watauga County TDA Recreation Planner Eric Woolridge stated that Watauga County was in the process of developing a 10-year plan and that the TDA was governed by six members and 2/3 of the revenue goes to marketing and 1/3 to infrastructure. He stated the TDA's initiatives involve nine outdoor recreation resources/activities which include mountain biking, greenways, road cycling, paddling, rock climbing, fishing, hiking/backpacking, equestrian trails and disc golf and that a section of the NC Mountain-to-Sea Trail was recently completed which included 18 miles from Blowing Rock to Deep Gap. The Watauga County TDA's goal was for uniform signage and design facilities (picnic shelters, restrooms).

Town of Boone Public Works Director Blake Brown stated that Boone operated four parks and the Greenway and anticipated the opening of the newest, Clawson-Burney Park, in October 2009. He stated the Town owns 80 acres dedicated to green space and leased 20 acres to Watauga County for active recreation and the Greenway currently included 4.8 miles. Mr. Brown added the Town builds their own sidewalks and was working on a "Walk to Boone" mapping initiative.

Town of Blowing Rock Town Manager Scott Hildebran stated the Town's focus on recreation in Blowing Rock was the construction of a new pool, replacing the Town's 50

year old pool. He went on to explain the Town assembled funding from a variety of sources and anticipated its completion by the summer of 2010.

Town of Seven Devils Town Manger Ed Evans stated that Bear Paw Natural Area was recently created containing 350 acres within/adjacent to the Town and that there were no final plans to date for development or access to Bear Paw. He also said the Town had a Recreation Committee and had marked and mapped walking routes along Town streets and that the Town had acquired two tennis courts from a private owner. Privately-run recreation in Seven Devils included snow tubing and ziplines at Hawksnest as well as downhill biking and cyclocross events.

Town of Beech Mountain Recreation Director Eric Jelinski said the Town's year-round population was 350 and increased up to 4,000 in the summer. Beech Mountain operates four parks and the Buckeye Recreation Center, which has 22 miles of hiking trails, sledding hill (with snowmaking capability), picnic shelter, and fishing docks as well as fitness and wellness programs.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further topics of discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

MAYOR PRO TEM _____
Keith Tester

ATTEST _____
Sharon Greene, Town Clerk