

Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission

Minutes

October 26, 2023

Members Present: Whitney Brown, Carol Knapp, Chris Wetmore, Bo Henderson, & Curt Andrews

Staff Present: Jennifer Brown, Kevin Rothrock, Cory Cathcart, and Brian Johnson

Begin: 9:02 AM

End: 9:55 AM

**August 1, 2023 Minutes** – Whitney Brown made a motion to approve as written. Mrs. Knapp seconded, and there was a unanimous vote to approve.

**Budget Update** – Mrs. Brown stated that since July 1<sup>st</sup> \$1,893 has been committed and we have not collected any money because the donation letter is pending completion.

**Donation Letter** – Mrs. Brown stated that the donation letter has not been sent out because she is waiting for feedback from the board. When she receives a new draft, she will get it posted as soon as possible. Mr. Andrews said he would review board input and submit a draft for review.

**Broyhill Park** – Mrs. Brown explained that she has continued to discuss lake maintenance with relevant parties. She recently explored alternatives to an all-inclusive dredging of the lake with the pond maintenance firm that installed the fountain. She reported that there is bubbler system that will stir organic matter from the bottom of the lake so that it can subsequently be broken down by sunlight. She felt such a system might help in conjunction with the small-area, spot-dredging of areas where sediment has already accumulated, in some places up to six feet. The cost is \$9,300 which includes installation. Mrs. Brown stated there is approximately \$43,000 in BRAAC's fund balance and asked if BRAAC would approve funding the purchase.

Mr. Andrews asked, before we spend funds raised by citizens' donations primarily for hanging baskets, planters, and flowers, if we have sought funding from the organization that funded the fountain and donated it to the town in spite of BRAAC's recommendation to hold off on installation of a new fountain until the lake was completely dredged. Mrs. Brown stated that she had not reached out to them.

After further discussion, Whitney Brown requested delaying approval until she could contact her sources from her past experiences with lake/pond restoration/maintenance. Everyone agreed.

**Trees in Memorial Park** – Mrs. Brown stated that the two maple trees in wells need to be removed because they are indeed dead. Mr. Cathcart explained that they will be removed in November by Public Works, after which his staff will lay gravel for drainage and good topsoil up to the top of the walls. They will replace the dead trees with 4 to 4<sup>1/2</sup>-inch caliper maple trees and flowers will be planted around them. Mr. Henderson made a motion to approve removing and replanting maple trees in the two tree wells. Mr. Andrews seconded, and it was a unanimous vote to approve.

**BRAAC Ordinance Update** – Mrs. Brown reported that the draft ordinance changes were taken to Planning Board for review and approval. Mr. Johnson said that Planning had no issues with the integration of BRAAC and Parks & Recreation Strategic Board. Mr. Johnson went over the changes and roles the board will oversee.

Mr. Andrews expressed his enthusiasm for the updated ordinance and asked how this will ensure process improvement. Mr. Johnson explained that protocols are directed to be written to more explicitly direct affected parties to BRAAC first for its review and recommendation to Town Council.

Mr. Wetmore recommended a staggered terms be scheduled to ensure smooth turnover of board seats.

Mr. Henderson stated that this was a step in the right direction, and everyone agreed. Mrs. Brown explained that the recommendations will be presented to Town Council during the November Town Council meeting for their review and approval.