

**Town of Blowing Rock
Board of Commissioners
Departmental Meeting-March 8, 2010**

The Town of Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners held their annual departmental meeting on Monday, March 8, 2010 at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street, Blowing Rock. In attendance were Mayor J.B. Lawrence, Commissioners Albert Yount, Phillip Pickett, Tommy Klutz, Doug Matheson and Jim Steele. Others in attendance were Town Manager Scott Hildebran and Town Clerk Sharon Greene.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES

Chief Eric Brown addressed accomplishments and improvements that were made in the Police Department. An update was given regarding several special projects that the department was presently working on such as Crime Prevention meetings, Responsible Seller training, Ident-A-Kid Program, etc. Chief Brown advised that his department was continuing to concentrate on vehicular noise complaints and were also working on a new strategy to help alleviate parking issues. Chief Brown stated an application to receive grant funding toward the purchase of Mobile Data Terminals had been submitted in January. He also mentioned that he hoped to have the handheld computer parking device by May of 2010. Mr. Brown commented that his department continued to monitor the school traffic situation along Morris Street and Chestnut Drive and that several improvements had been made to aid with safety in that area.

Chief Brown presented an Employee Organizational Chart that he hoped would improve law enforcement services and also promote better employee morale. He explained that the reorganization would be done in several phases. Town Manager Hildebran stated there would be no increase in the number of employees in the police department only a reorganization of employees. He also advised the Captain position would now be an exempt employee position.

A motion was made to approve the job descriptions as presented to Council was made by Commissioner Klutz, seconded by Commissioner Mastheson. Unanimously approved.

Blowing Rock Organizational Chart & Police Captain, Police Lieutenant, Police Sergeant, Police Investigator Job Descriptions – Exhibit A

PLANNING ISSUES

Planning Director Kevin Rothrock highlighted several areas of the 2010 Retreat Priorities and Action Plan with Council. He mentioned the ISO Rating requirements were not regulated by the NC Building Code and that local insurance agents did not use this anymore. He recommended the Town disregard the ISO Rating requirements.

Commissioner Steele made a motion to discontinue this issue as recommended by Planning Director Rothrock, seconded by Commissioner Pickett. Unanimously approved.

Mr. Rothrock also advised the golf cart ordinance would be completed in time for the next Council meeting which would be held on March 9, 2010. A recommendation was made to list all streets affected by the ordinance.

The Hwy. 321 widening project was briefly discussed. Mr. Rothrock advised the widening plans did not warrant a traffic signal at the intersection on South Main Street. Commissioner Yount inquired about the type of rock that would be used for retaining walls for the project. Mr. Rothrock advised natural rock would be required in the historic district and this issue would be further discussed with NCDOT at a later date.

Mr. Rothrock presented Council with Ordinance #2010-08 Order to Demolish for the Arlon Mclean property located at 777 Possum Hollow Road. Mr. Rothrock gave a brief history regarding this issue, by stating that Town Building Inspector Jesse Horner had conducted an inspection of the structure on November 20, 2009 and deemed it **uninhabitable** and the property was condemned. A Notice of Condemnation and Hearing was sent by certified mail to Mary K. McLean. Mr. Rothrock stated the Town had not received a response from the owner and the demolition process would be forthcoming. A motion to approve Ordinance #2010-08 was made by Commissioner Steele, seconded by Commissioner Klutz. Unanimously approved.

Ordinance #2010-08 Order to Demolish-McLean – Exhibit B

COUNCIL/TDA ANNUAL JOINT MEETING

TDA members present were Chairman Kent Tarbuton, Rob Dyer, Lynn Drury, Phil Pickett, Ex-Officio members Scott Hildebran, and Nicole Norman. Others in attendance were TDA Executive Director Tracy Brown and Assistant Director, Amanda Lugenbell. Dean Bullis was unable to attend.

TDA Director Tracy Brown briefly discussed TDA expenditures and income. He advised that TDA funds were lower than last year, but were expected to rebound.

He presented a power point presentation that showed revenue comparison for the year 2009 between Blowing Rock, Boone and Watauga County. He also showed several examples of media ads that were purchased by the TDA. Recent website improvements were also shown during the presentation.

TDA Chairman Kent Tarbuton thanked Council for their choice of new members to the TDA Board.

Commissioner Yount questioned what type of marketing appeal the hotels/motels in Blowing Rock were continuing to focus on. Mr. Brown stated that some hotels/motels in town had made various upgrades which included wireless internet service and he thought that other hotels/motels in town should be encouraged to upgrade.

Commissioner Klutz stated he would hate to lose the small town feel that Blowing Rock currently had.

Commissioner Steele asked what marketing plans the TDA had for the next couple of years. Mr. Brown stated they would continue to try and reach areas such as Charlotte, Raleigh, etc.

Commissioner Matheson thought it would be helpful if employees who worked in various businesses in town were better educated on things to do while visiting Blowing Rock.

Council thanked Mr. Brown for his presentation and commended him on what a good job he was doing.

HAYES PERFORMING ART CENTER UPDATE

Ms. Ginny Stevens thanked Council and the TDA for allowing representatives from the Hayes Performing Art Center to meet with them so that an update could be given. Ms. Stevens introduced Ms. Allison West, Development Director, Mr. Ron Bryson, Board of Trustees Chairman, and Eric Davidson, Vice President/Treasurer of the Hayes Center.

Ms. West advised that a repositioning team and advisory council had been formed to aid with reaching various goals set for the Hayes Performing Center. She further explained various assignments that members of the repositioning team were focusing on in order to reach these goals. Some of the strategic focus areas were to delight audiences with professional high quality arts with a balance of theatre, music, comedy, dance, children's programming and film; to enhance visitor's experience with the High Country, achieve financial viability, etc.

Ms. West also stated the core purpose of the Hayes Center was to "entertain audiences and enrich lives through intimate performing arts experiences and life-long learning in the High Country."

Ms. West commented the Hayes Performing Art Center was the only nighttime entertainment in town and attracted many visitors which also helped other businesses in town such as restaurants, etc. She further stated their future plans were to offer a broader variety of entertainment to the public.

Mr. Bryson gave an update regarding the Hayes Performing Art Center's financial status and their plans to reopen the facility debt-free if possible.

Ms. Stevens thanked Council for their input regarding the Hayes Center and stressed the need for the Art Center to reopen for the good of the community.

At this time Council received a handout pertaining to the construction progress at the Blowing Rock Art and History Museum project.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

MAYOR _____
J.B. Lawrence

ATTEST _____
Sharon Greene, Town Clerk

ATTACHMENTS (March 8, 2010)

BR Police Department Organizational Chart & Job Descriptions – Exhibit A
Ordinance #2010-08 Order to Demolish- McLean – Exhibit B