

**MINUTES**  
**Town of Blowing Rock**  
**Town Council**  
**Mid-Year Retreat**  
**June 25, 2024**

The Town of Blowing Rock Town Council held their Mid-Year on Tuesday, June 25, 2024. The meeting was held at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street, Blowing Rock. Present were Mayor Charlie Sellers, Mayor Pro-Tem Doug Matheson, Council Members Cat Perry, David Harwood, Melissa Pickett, and Pete Gherini. Others in attendance were Town Manager Shane Fox, Finance Director Tasha Brown, Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Brown, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Interim Police Chief Nathan Kirk, IT Director Thomas Steele and Town Clerk Hilari Hubner, who recorded the minutes.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Sellers called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**Consideration of setting a Public Hearing for CZ – Green Hill – Utility Pole**

Planning Director Kevin Rothrock advised the CZ Green Hill Utility Pole request could go before the Planning Board for review at a July 11, 2024 meeting if Council desired. Council would need to set a special meeting for a Public Hearing for July 23, 2024.

Council Member Gherini made a motion approve the CZ Green Hill utility pole request to go before Planning Board on July 11, 2024 special meeting and set a special meeting for Council on July 23, 2024 to hold a Public Hearing, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Matheson. Unanimously approved.

**Update of Current Projects**

- Main Street Water and Sewer Project – replacement of appx. 9,200LF of 8-inch water main, replacement of hydrants, valves and pressure reducing valves, main line installed and tie-ins to happen in the next sixty (60) days
- Maple Street water sewer replacement
- 221 to Green St. water sewer replacement
- Paving and Crosswalks – NCDOT paving schedule is spring (March/April) of 2025, Crosswalks have two (2) options for Council to consider. NCDOT would put back asphalt with lines or Iron Mt. – Green’s construction bid for a concrete option is \$246,000 (2014 bond monies – phase 4)
- Chestnut Sewer Project – replacement of existing old clay line, new manhole to connect pressure to Grandfather Ave., allow for expansion on Chestnut Circle, utilize bond monies (phase 4 and interest)
- Laurel Lane – Town owned property, Mayview entrance – Mayview HOA, complete rebuild - \$135,000, repair/boulders on the ends - \$25,000, HOA contribution/interest income (2014 bonds to fund)

- Annie Cannon, handrails going from American Legion to Broyhill Lake, Wayfinding – Update

### **Winter Retreat Recap/Next Steps/New Items**

- USDA Loan – replacement of the Mayview sewer lift station and force main, WTP equipment replacement – high service pumps, flocculators, finished water pump, valves, piping, WWTP equipment replacement, bar screen, influent pump, aeration equipment, structural leak repairs, design, bid and then construction – Bid 2025 (interim loan)
- Memorial Park Phase 2 – three (3) options; Option one (1) – construct the entire project as bid plus alternates (\$2,134,656), option two (2) construct the project with “Value Engineering” proposal offered by the low bidder or selective components (\$1,610,719 - \$1,832,424), option three (3) selectively complete required PARTF elements (will require further pricing negotiation to determine component pricing), tennis/pickleball courts, picnic shelter, shuffleboard court, gaga ball pit, playground addition
- Memorial Park Capital Projects Phase 2 – option one (1) secure financing for completion as bid (accepting PARTF funding of \$500,000), option two (2) secure financing for completion as proposed by VE (with PARTF), option three (3) readvertise in summer/fall 2024, option four (4) defer PARTF funding
- Parking – study/behavioral analysis starts June 26<sup>th</sup> with Meredith McLaurin, several months of data collection, enforcement areas (problems identified), parking lot alternatives workers in Town, parking lot options for the public, next steps
- Downtown Subcommittee – Discussion of extending Town Center down Sunset Drive.

### **Retreat 2025 – Planning Ahead**

- Water and Sewer – get some numbers and look at storm water
- Parks and Rec – revisit Parks and Rec plan, current needs, future needs and expansion
- Streets and Sidewalks – paving assessment and sidewalk master plan (\$35,000)
- Buildings – current space and future needs, investigate having a company assess needs (appx cost \$40,000 to \$50,000)

### **Other Items**

- TDA Ordinance Amendment for Lodging Representative – request will go to Council at the July 9<sup>th</sup> meeting for review
- Impact/System Development Fees – study required (\$20,000), late 2024/early 2025 timeframe, can help offset future costs
- Employee Housing – NC Housing Coalition Watauga County, Watauga is 99<sup>th</sup> out of 100 counties in housing affordability, median home sold in 2024 \$565,000, average rent \$1,000 per bedroom, over 50% of Town staff live outside of Watauga

County. Options were reviewed to start conversation going forward. Discussed moving towards a conversation with Representative Ray Pickett and Senator Ralph Hise to request a local bill.

- Downtown Tax for Merchants – think about and discuss further

**ADJOURN**

At 4:33 p.m. Council Member Gherini made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Council Member Harwood. Unanimously approved.

**MAYOR** \_\_\_\_\_

**Charlie Sellers**

**ATTEST** \_\_\_\_\_

**Hilari Hubner, Town Clerk**