

**MINUTES**  
**Watauga Intergovernmental Retreat**  
**September 26, 2011**

The Town of Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners attended an Intergovernmental Retreat on Monday, September 26, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. The Retreat was held at the Broyhill Inn and Conference Center in the Broyhill Room 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: J.B. Lawrence
- Commissioners: Albert Yount, Tommy Klutz, Phil Pickett, Doug Matheson and Jim Steele
- Staff: Town Manager Scott Hildebran and Town Clerk Sharon Greene

**Town of Boone**

- Commissioners: Rennie Brantz, and Andy Ball
- Staff: Town Manager Greg Young and Deputy Town Clerk Kim Brown

**Watauga County**

- Commissioners: David Blust, Vince Gable and Nathan Miller
- Staff: County Manager Deron Geouque, and Clerk to the Board Anita Fogle

**Town of Seven Devils**

- Staff: Town Manager Ed Evans

**Town of Beech Mountain**

- Commissioner: Rick Miller
- Staff: Town Manager Randy Feierabend and Clerk to the Board Jennifer Broderick

**Appalachian State University**

- Vice Chancellor of Business Affairs: Greg Lovins
- Professor Dr. Harry Davis
- ASU Attorney Dayton Cole

After introductions, Mr. Phil Trew of the High Country Council of Governments welcomed everyone and introduced Harry M. Davis, Ph.D, NCBA Professor in ASU's Department of Finance, Banking and Insurance who would be speaking on the topic of the economy.

Dr. Davis gave a power point presentation. The main points of the presentation included the following:

- US has officially been out of the recession for two years
- Past recoveries have been fuelled by residential construction; that's not happening now
- Large companies are doing well, but are holding onto capital; not investing in machinery and people
- Manufacturing output is growing, but slowly and with fewer workers
- Companies that sell product in Asia are doing well
- Ratio of household debt/income rose from 80% in 1990s to 116% in 2010
- Fastest growing area of consumer debt is borrowing money for education
- US ranks 17<sup>th</sup> in the world in homeownership rates
- Housing values are still falling, but stabilizing
- Mortgage applications are at 15-year low
- 20 million adult children live with parents
- Other developed nations tax systems are structurally different than the US' – other countries give tax breaks to businesses; US gives tax breaks to families
- Lots of layoffs in state and local governments
- More than 50% of US debt owed to foreigners
- 10,000 Americans per day reach retirement age
- Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate 3.2 million job openings; can't find skilled employees
- 44% of college attendees don't graduate after six years
- Most new jobs being created don't require college degrees

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

**MAYOR** \_\_\_\_\_  
**J.B. Lawrence**

**ATTEST** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Sharon Greene, Town Clerk**