

## **Watauga Intergovernmental Retreat March 5, 2012**

The Town of Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners attended an Intergovernmental Retreat on Monday, March 5, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. The Retreat was held at the ASU Athletics Center 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: Albert Yount
- Commissioners: Tommy Klutz, Dan Phillips, Doug Matheson and Jim Steele
- Staff: Town Manager Scott Hildebran, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Police Chief Eric Brown and Town Clerk Sharon Greene

### **Town of Boone**

- Mayor: Loretta Clawson
- Commissioners: Rennie Brantz, Lynne Mason, and Allan Scherlen
- Staff: Town Manager Greg Young, Town Clerk Kim Brown, Finance Officer Amy Davis, Police Chief Dana Crawford, Fire Chief Jimmy Isaacs, and Public Works Director Blake Brown

### **Watauga County**

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

### **Town of Seven Devils**

- Mayor: Larry Fontaine
- Mayor Pro Tem: Brad Lambert
- Commissioner: David Ehmig
- Staff: Town Manager Ed Evans

### **Town of Beech Mountain**

- Commissioners: Rick Miller and Alan Holcombe
- Staff: Town Manager Randy Feierabend and Town Clerk Jennifer Broderick

### **Appalachian State University**

- Vice Chancellor of Business Affairs: Greg Lovins
- Professor: Jill Ehnenn
- Technology Support Analyst: Cathy Ziegler
- Director of Public Safety & Risk Management: Gunther Doerr
- Environmental Health & Safety Manager: Seth Norris
- Director of External Affairs & Community Relations: Susan McCracken

## **High County Council of Government**

- Director of Planning & Development: Phil Trew
- Transportation Director: Craig Hughes

After introductions, Mr. Phil Trew of the High Country Council of Governments welcomed everyone and introduced Ms. Madaleine Henley of NC League of Municipalities who discussed projected revenue and expenditure items for local governments. Major points included:

- State income tax collections are ahead of projections
- Compared to taxable sales in 2008, sales were down \$13 billion in 2010 and \$10 billion in 2011
- Sales are rebounding except in construction-related activities
- County vehicle tax now tied to registration renewal, so collections should be 100% (compared to 85% in the past)
- Final sales tax projections should be received by Towns by the end of March
- Workers Compensation – a combination of reduction in employment and steady WC claims is likely to result in rise in rates
- In 2014, provisions of the Affordable Healthcare Act will start that require employers with <50 employees to begin contributing to employee health insurance

## **Watauga County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)**

Craig Hughes with High Country COG gave an update on the Watauga CTP process. Major points included:

- Work on the CTP began in September 2010
- Goals and objectives have been developed, and were approved by local governments in November 2011
- Population and employment growth projections have been developed, and were approved by local governments in November 2011
- Watauga County's population expected to grow from 51,000 in 2010 to 81,000 in 2040
- Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit elements of CTP have been developed
- Recent meetings have focused on highway deficiencies and recommended alternatives to alleviate deficiencies
- Recommendations discussed to date have all come from previous planning documents (previous transportation plans, and comprehensive plans from Watauga County and the Towns)
- Once recommendations are made, public workshops will be held
- Once draft CTP is developed, it will be presented to local governments for adoption

## **Consolidated Dispatch**

Mr. Vince Gable, Watauga County Commissioner, and Mr. Deron Geouque, Watauga County Manager, presented information on the proposed consolidated dispatch system. Major points included:

- US Department of Homeland Security and State 911 Board encourage consolidated dispatch
- Watauga County desires to have a consolidated dispatch system operated by a new County agency by July 1, 2012
- Town of Blowing Rock has passed a resolution of interest to consolidate with Watauga
- Town of Seven Devils has no dispatch system
- The proposed budget for a consolidated dispatch system that was distributed was based on a split between the local governments based on proportion of 911 calls originating in each jurisdiction (County-46%, Boone-38%, Blowing Rock-16%)
- Watauga County has adequate existing hardware for a consolidated system

## **ADJOURN**

With no further business to discuss, the Retreat was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

**MAYOR PRO TEM** \_\_\_\_\_

**Albert Yount**

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

**Sharon Greene, Town Clerk**