

## **MINUTES**

### **Town of Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners Budget Work Session-May 21, 2013**

The Town of Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners continued their budget work session on Tuesday, May 21, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. The meeting took place in the Town Council Chambers at 1036 Main Street Blowing Rock. Present were Mayor J.B. Lawrence, Commissioners Albert Yount, Tommy Klutz, Dan Phillips, Doug Matheson and Jim Steele. Others in attendance were Town Manager Scott Hildebran, Finance Director Nicole Norman, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Town Engineer Doug Chapman and Town Clerk Sharon Greene.

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

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

#### **DISCUSSION ITEM**

Town Manager Hildebran continued the FY 2013-2014 Budget discussion regarding the Water/Sewer Fund. He stated the FY 2013-2014 Recommended Budget for the Water/Sewer Fund totaled \$1,439,000 which was a \$28,000 or 1.9% increase from the previous year's budget.

Per Council's direction at the previous work session, revenue enhancements were discussed. Mr. Hildebran advised that additional revenue could be generated by charging a solid waste fee for residential customers in town. He also advised that nearby areas, such as Lenoir, Beech Mountain, Sparta, etc. charged a monthly fee for this service. Commissioner Klutz stated that he did not want to charge a solid waste fee, nor did he want to increase taxes during this difficult economy.

Town Manager Hildebran stated a two percent employee cost of living increase was proposed in the FY 2013-14 Proposed Budget. He also mentioned an increase of \$0.75 per month for both water and sewer fees were proposed.

Mr. Hildebran then gave a brief review of Tourism Development Authority (TDA)/Occupancy Funds collected and how they were distributed as expenditures. Mr. Hildebran stated that TDA funds were paying the debt on the American Legion Parking Facility and the goal was to keep Town debt service levels as even as possible. He explained when one debt was paid another debt was added.

Commissioner Klutz inquired as to how much money it would take to finish the streetscape plan. Mr. Hildebran advised approximately \$560,000 would be needed and currently \$56,000 per year was being set aside for that purpose.

Commissioner Matheson asked about the pool fees for non-tax payers vs. taxpayers. He felt non-taxpayers should be charged more.

Commissioner Steele stated County residents utilized a lot of programs in Town. Mr. Hildebran advised that Council had recently approved differential fees for in-town and out-of-town swimming pool users and that it was too early to see results. Mr. Hildebran also mentioned that other recreational programs were breaking even and self-sustainable.

Commissioner Klutz asked if employee salaries were competitive with surrounding areas. Mr. Hildebran explained that some towns were not anticipating a salary increase due to the economy; for example, Lenoir, Boone and the State were recommending a 0% increase, while Watauga County was recommending a 2% salary increase. Mr. Hildebran commented that the Town was comparable to other areas.

Next, Town Engineer Doug Chapman began discussion regarding Inflow & Infiltration (I & I) problems. He stated there were some areas with problems occurring that could not be found by camera and the Town might possibly be eligible for a portion of grant funding from the rural center to use towards a study. Mr. Chapman mentioned the Mayview Lift Station seemed to be the most prevalent area and some infiltration had been noticed near the Public Works facility located on Cone Road. Mr. Chapman explained, as an example, if there were homes built and their guttering was tied into the town system, this would cause I & I issues. Commissioner Matheson inquired if flow meters had been used. Mr. Chapman advised that inflow meters had not been used.

Mr. Chapman stated storms caused a problem each year because of the intensity of rainfall. He mentioned the Town could apply for grant funding in order to smoke and camera the lines in problem areas to see which homes could possibly be tied into the town system. Once decided, the Town could deal with it case by case.

Council also discussed certain areas in town that they felt guardrails were needed. Mr. Hildebran stated the Town was not mandated to have guardrails. Mayor Lawrence asked that the Town continue to keep the white lines painted.

Town Manager Hildebran then presented the FY 2013-2014 Street Paving Schedule which included the following streets:

- Laurel Lane (Bridge to Clark Street)
- Morris Street (Main St to School)
- Laurel Grove Court
- Westview Drive (Cliff Dwellers to top)
- Greenway Court

Mr. Hildebran informed Council that Tri-County Paving was the low bidder in the amount of \$102,261.32. Commissioner Phillips made a motion to award the low bid to Tri-County Paving, seconded by Commissioner Klutz. Unanimously approved. **Street Paving Schedule – Exhibit A**

Commissioner Steele commented that asphalt specifications needed to be changed for this area in order for roads to last for a longer period of time and that he was working with High Country Council of Government and new NCDOT appointee, Jim Palermo.

Commissioners Steele and Yount then updated Council regarding their meetings with potential architects regarding the American Legion building. Commissioner Steele stated they had met with three architectural companies and had decided that David Patrick Moses would be the most cost effective and best person for the job. Commissioner Klutz, seconded by Commissioner Matheson made a motion to approve David Patrick Moses Architect as the architect for the American Legion Building for a fee of \$12,000. Unanimously approved.

Planning Director Rothrock updated Council regarding the proposals that were received regarding the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that two were received and both were well qualified to assist with the process. Commissioner Phillips made a motion to table this item for sixty (60) days, seconded by Commissioner Yount. Unanimously approved.

Town Manager Hildebran advised that Public Works Director Mike Wilcox had located a used chipper truck for \$4,500.00 but Council's permission was needed to acquire the vehicle. Commissioner Matheson made a motion to approve the acquisition of the vehicle in the amount of \$4,500, seconded by Commissioner Klutz. Unanimously approved.

Town Manager Hildebran stated due to his resignation, he had discussed advertising the position through the NC League of Municipalities and the NC Association of County Commissioners. Council concurred. Mayor Lawrence suggested the deadline to receive applications be June 21, 2013.

Several aspects in which to look for in the process of hiring a Town Manager were discussed.

**ADJOURN**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m. It was the consensus of Council to continue the work session on Thursday, May 23, 2013 beginning at 4:00 p.m. to further discuss fees.

**MAYOR** \_\_\_\_\_ **ATTEST** \_\_\_\_\_  
**J.B. Lawrence** **Sharon Greene, Town Clerk**

**ATTACHMENTS** (05-21-13)

Street Paving Schedule – Exhibit A