

**DRAFT**

**MINUTES  
Town of Blowing Rock  
Comprehensive Plan  
Steering Committee Meeting- September 10, 2013**

The Town of Blowing Rock Comprehensive Plan Committee Steering Committee held a special meeting on Tuesday, September 10, 2013 at Town Hall beginning at 3:00 p.m. In attendance were Mayor Pro-tem Albert Yount, Commissioners Tommy Klutz, Doug Matheson, and Jim Steele. Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee members who attended were David Laughter, Jim West, Ray Pickett, Don Hubble, John Aldridge and Lisa Stripling. Mr. Jason Epley and Vagn Hansen from Benchmark were also present.

Mr. Epley stated the Public Input “Drop-in” Sessions held on August 27, 2013 had proved to be very productive. According to Mr. Epley, the noon session held at Town Hall had been attended by approximately 25 residents and the evening session at Blowing Rock School had approximately 50 people in attendance. Mr. Epley stated during the sessions; the attendees had been divided into several groups to review the following topics:

- Community Identity –Character
- Transportation, Infrastructure and Services
- Land Use & Growth Management, Downtown
- Open Space, Parks & Recreation, Natural & Cultural Resources

Mr. Epley also mentioned that there had been approximately 100 visits to the Comprehensive Plan website. Information obtained during the public input meetings was then discussed in greater detail.

Mr. Hubble requested that a financial plan be included in the Comprehensive Plan final document as a plan segment or addendum. He also recommended that the proposed Blowing Rock Hospital site, be discussed when the existing hospital area is discussed in a small area plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

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

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

**DRAFT**

**MINUTES**  
**Town of Blowing Rock**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**Regular Meeting- September 10, 2013**

The Town of Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, September 10, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. The meeting took place at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street, Blowing Rock. Present were Mayor J.B. Lawrence, Commissioners Albert Yount, Dan Phillips, Tommy Klutz, Doug Matheson and Jim Steele. Others in attendance were Interim Town Manager Bob Shepherd, Town Attorney Allen Moseley, Town Engineer Doug Chapman, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Police Chief Eric Brown, Finance Director Nicole Norman, Public Works Director Mike Wilcox, Parks & Recreation Director Jennifer Brown, Emergency Services Director Kent Graham, Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Brian Banner and Town Clerk Sharon Greene.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order at 5:28 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commissioner Klutz to approve the minutes for the August 6, 12, 13 (2 meetings), 14 & 27, 2013 including Closed Session meetings, seconded by Commissioner Steele. Unanimously approved.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Intergovernmental Relations (etc.)**

Mr. Phil Trew of High Country Council of Governments (HCCOG) was present to speak with Council regarding Intergovernmental Retreats held quarterly with representation from the Town of Blowing Rock, Boone, Seven Devils and Beech Mountain as well as Watauga County and Appalachian State University. Mr. Trew advised the retreats had been taking place since 2008 with the HCCOG acting as facilitator since 2009. Mr. Trew said that he had received comments that the meetings were not productive and defined goals were not being met. Mr. Trew mentioned that he and the town managers for each town in addition to representatives from Watauga County and ASU decided which topics of importance needed to be further reviewed at the retreats.

Mr. Trew suggested that each Town appoint two members from their board to a committee that would meet with a professional facilitator to discuss retreat topics and concepts so that future meetings could be more productive.

Commissioner Steele inquired as to when the next meeting would be held. Mr. Trew stated that possibly it would be November. A motion was made by Commissioner Steele for Council to wait until after the November election to appoint two delegates to serve on the committee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Phillips. Council asked that this item be placed on their November meeting agenda. Unanimously approved.

## **2. Blowing Rock Fire Department Organizational Chart**

EMS Director Kent Graham stated as a result of personnel changes and changing service needs, his department was proposing a redirection of funds to add three full-time 24-hour shift Firefighter/EMT-Basics. He stated the majority of expense incurred with this change would be absorbed by current payroll vacancies and fire department pass-through funds. The Training Captain would not be replaced; those functions would be divided among existing personnel.

Mr. Graham explained the Fire Class rating system in which the Town of Blowing Rock was presently rated as Class 5. He stated Greensboro was the only department in North Carolina rated as Class 1. Mr. Graham continued to explain if less than four (4) respondents attended a fire call, it would be recorded as a dropped call and the department would be placed on probation by the State of North Carolina. If there were more than one dropped call, the department would then be classified as Class 10 which is unprotected property and uninsurable.

Mr. Graham further explained in the past several years, the number of volunteers on the department had decreased due to various reasons, causing paid employees to return after their shifts ended in order to cover calls. Mr. Graham advised that he wanted Council to be aware of the situation; however he knew change would need to be forthcoming. He then invited Council and audience members to ask any questions they might have.

Commissioner Yount stated this was a serious situation that he was somewhat familiar with because it had happened to the City of Newton where he was also a property owner.

Commissioner Phillips inquired about the percentage of calls that were fire calls versus EMS. Mr. Graham stated approximately 90% of the calls received were EMS/stand-by calls.

Commissioner Klutz also asked about efforts being made to increase volunteer participation. Mr. Graham stated all efforts had been exhausted while trying to recruit volunteers. With no further discussion, Mr. Graham thanked Council for allowing him to discuss the matter with hopes of resolving the problem in the near future.

## **3. Planning & Development Items**

### **- CUP 2010-01 Up on the Hill Subdivision**

Planning Director Rothrock advised Council had approved the Up on the Hill Subdivision on March 15, 2011. The 17-lot single-family subdivision was located off Goforth Road in the Town's ETJ. The project was originally approved with a 2-year expiration period. According to Mr. Rothrock, no work had been done on the project with the exception of utility easements being secured.

Mr. Rothrock relayed that a six-month extension was granted by Council during their March 2013 meeting. The conditional use permit for the project would expire September 15, 2013 and the applicant was requesting an additional six-month extension to evaluate housing market conditions anticipating the start of construction in late 2013 or the Spring of 2014.

Mr. Rothrock also explained the applicant was aware of recent subdivision modifications which included an increased right of way width from 30 feet to 35 feet, an increased cul-de-sac right-of-way and pavement and decreased street setbacks from 40 feet to 30 feet.

Commissioner Phillips asked if the property had Town water and sewer. Mr. Rothrock stated presently it did not, but it would be installed.

After a brief discussion, Commissioner Klutz made a motion to grant a six-month extension as requested, seconded by Commissioner Yount. Unanimously approved.

- **CUP 2013-02 Mellow Mushroom**

Mr. Rothrock stated that Mr. Chuck Luddeke on behalf of Harvest Moon Enterprises, Inc. (Mellow Mushroom) was requesting a minor architectural change to the conditional use permit issued for Mellow Mushroom restaurant. Mr. Luddeke was requesting a design change to the shed roof patio and front entrance based on recommendations by the project architect.

Mr. Rothrock explained, through the design process, the architect discovered the shed roof patio would have insufficient pitch. The patio roof was then redesigned with a gable detached from the principle building with heavy timbers to match the building entrance. The main entrance would also be revised to enclose the current overhang and create a 3-foot vestibule.

Commissioner Phillips commented the proposed changes would enhance the building.

Commissioner Yount made a motion to approve the request as presented, seconded by Commissioner Phillips. Unanimously approved.

**4. Other Mayview Madness 5K Route Change (Addition)**

Police Chief Eric Brown presented Council with a request from the Blue Ridge Conservancy to change the route for their 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Blowing Rock Mayview Madness 5K Run/Fun Run to be held on Saturday, September 21, 2013.

As approved by Council during their November 2012 meeting, the Fun Run was scheduled to begin at 8:00 a.m. on Park Avenue and continue onto Laurel Lane to Clark Street, loop around Davant Field, then return to finish at the rear of Memorial Park.

As a result of the recent landslide on Wonderland Trail, the Conservancy was requesting the 5K route be changed to begin on Morris St. then follow to Laurel Lane,

onto Wonderland Trail, then back to Laurel Lane, Cone Rd., Hwy 221 following Clark St. to finish at Bistro Roca.

Chief Brown commented the Conservancy had worked with the Parks and Recreation Department, the Police Department, and Blowing Rock Fire and Rescue in coordinating the route change.

Chief Brown also mentioned once the landslide was repaired, the Conservancy would like to return to the original route for future events.

Commissioner Yount made a motion to approve the Mayview Madness 5K Route Change as proposed, seconded by Commissioner Klutz. Unanimously approved.

### **SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR**

None

### **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

Commissioner Yount mentioned that he had been approached by someone who had called the Police Department during the recent earthquake and had not received an answer. Commissioner Yount stated that he had met with Chief Brown and Mr. Jeff Virginia who is the Emergency Services Director at Watauga County regarding this matter. He stated that Watauga County had logged 4,902 calls during the earthquake and 99.17% of those calls had been answered in less than 10 seconds. Commissioner Yount stated this was an excellent record; however if there was a problem with the Police Department, he would like to see that it was straightened out.

Audience member Karyn Herterick advised that she had called the Police Department after the earthquake, but did not get a reply. Ms. Herterich asked Commissioner Yount how many other calls the County may had received above the 4,902 calls that were not answered. Ms. Herterich thanked Commissioner Yount for taking the time to pursue the issue.

Audience member Laurin Carter stated that she too had called the Police Department and had not received an answer during this time.

Commissioner Yount suggested that Chief Brown meet with Ms. Herterich and Ms. Carter to discuss this matter further.

Planning Director Rothrock advised that he and TDA Director Tracy Brown would be traveling to Winston-Salem to the North Carolina Planning Conference to receive an award for the Great Places North Carolina - Best Mountain Main Street 2013 and to make a presentation. Mr. Rothrock invited Council to attend.

Town Engineer Doug Chapmen updated Council regarding the landslide on Wonderland Trail, stating that he was working with Geo Tech Engineers and that FEMA had visited the area but he had not heard back from them.

Commissioner Phillips had questions regarding the Waste Water Treatment Plant being out of compliance for 26 days during the months of May, June and July due to excessive rainfall. Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Brian Banner stated the Wastewater Treatment Plant had been out of compliance due to excessive rain and exceeding treatment limits for the plant, and necessary officials had been notified. Commissioner Phillips asked if the press had been notified. Mr. Banner stated press notification had not been required.

Commissioner Klutz commented that he would like for someone from the Water Treatment Plant to make an appointment with Blowing Rock citizen Zack Tate to test the water at his home on Laurel Lane.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION - Manager Selection process**

Pursuant to N.C. General Statutes 143.319.11(6) Commissioner Yount, made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 6:25 p.m. to discuss the Town Manager selection, seconded by Commissioner Phillips.

At 8:45 p.m. Council reentered their regular meeting to further discuss details regarding the Town Manager position being offered to Mr. Scott Fogleman. Council and Mr. Fogleman agreed on a beginning salary of \$90,000.00 per year with plans for a 6-month evaluation of Mr. Fogleman by Council.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

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

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