

DRAFT
MINUTES
Town of Blowing Rock
Board of Commissioners
2014 Annual Retreat

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Blowing Rock met in special session on Sunday, January 19, 2014 at 2:10 p.m. at the Doubletree Inn in Asheville, North Carolina. Present were Mayor J. B. Lawrence, Commissioners Albert Yount, Dan Phillips, Sue Sweeting, Doug Matheson and Ray Pickett. Also present were Town Manager Scott Fogleman, Finance Director Nicole Norman, and Town Clerk Sharon Greene.

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Town Manager Fogleman then introduced Madeleine Henley of Walking Stick Associates. Ms. Henley held a facilitated session with Council regarding meeting rules, objectives, procedures, and agenda adoption as well as working together as a team.

Commissioner Phillips expressed that he would like to receive the agenda items sooner. Commissioner Yount also asked that staff look into a consent agenda when feasible.

Council also discussed when the best time would be for allowing residents/audience members to speak during agenda items. Council agreed that it was important to keep the lines of communication open and to consider allowing residents to speak during the discussion period after a motion.

Ms. Henley asked each Council member to give a brief synopsis of items that were important to them as Council members. She also asked Mayor Lawrence and all members of Council to give their expectations of Town Manager Fogleman.

After further discussion, Mayor Lawrence thanked Ms. Henley for her presentation and stated that he thought it had been very beneficial to everyone.

Council began discussion regarding the Ensemble Stage request to use the old Fire Station building located on Park Avenue. Council consensus was to agree for Ensemble Stage to raise all the funds needed and place them in an escrow account before building renovations began. Council also agreed that all proposed changes to the building be brought before Council for their approval prior to any work on the building beginning. The Town should also receive copies of all invoices pertaining to the renovations and a copy of the monthly escrow account statement.

It was the consensus of Council to allow Ensemble Stage to begin drafting a formal lease agreement regarding the use of the old Fire Station including all stipulations stated above.

Council then began discussion regarding the American Legion Building Project. Town Manager Fogleman advised if buttresses were used for the support walls instead of soil nails; approximately \$23,000 could be saved and used towards renovating the kitchen area which would be used frequently.

Commissioner Yount mentioned the Rotary Club had come before Council during a previous Council meeting stating they would like to assist with the American Legion Project. He suggested they be approached regarding renovation of the basement area.

Town Manager Fogleman further explained the bid process and funding needed for the project. He also explained the timeframe for the project allowable by the PARTF grant.

Council consensus was to reject bids at this time and start a community fund raiser. Council stated approximately \$200,000 of additional funding was needed for the project and the Town should work closely with the Historical Society regarding fund raising efforts.

Council then briefly discussed the location for Art in the Park. It was the consensus of Council to allow Art in the Park to be placed on Park Avenue if residents along that street were agreeable to the change.

After discussing several other items of interest, the meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

At 8:00 p.m., the meeting was reconvened and discussion began regarding a potential economic development incentive.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

On Monday, January 20, 2014, Mayor Lawrence reconvened the meeting at 8:35 a.m. In attendance were Mayor Lawrence, Commissioners Yount, Phillips, Matheson, Sweeting, and Pickett. Others in attendance were Town Manager Fogleman, Finance Director Norman and Town Clerk Greene.

Town Manager Fogleman expressed that one Council member was needed on the Rural Transportation Advisory Commission which normally met quarterly. Commissioner Sweeting volunteered her services on this board.

Town Manager Fogleman also stated that Council representation was needed for the Watauga Intergovernmental Board which also met quarterly. Commissioners Matheson and Pickett agreed to represent Blowing Rock Town Council.

Council began discussion regarding Volunteer Board Appointments. The following recommendations were made:

Planning Board: David Harwood, Lisa Stripling, Wes Carter

Genie Starnes & Richard Scheurer (appointed to a 2-year unexpired term ending in 2016)

Board of Adjustment: Ron Oberle, Charles Davant & Joe Papa (Alternate)

ABC Board: Susie Greene

TDA: Lianne Mattar

BRAAC: Rita Wiseman, Alice Roess, Melissa Pickett, Susan Anderson, & Barbara Wright (honorary member)

At 10:00 a.m. Emergency Services Director Kent Graham and Planning Director Kevin Rothrock joined the meeting. A presentation was given by Cyrus Hurley and Jeff Brittain, representatives of Hitstech Technology.

It was the consensus of Council that technology updates were needed and a cost break-down was requested from Hitstech Technology in order to possibly move forward in phases.

Town Manager Fogleman inquired if Council wished to keep receiving weekly updates from him. Council all agreed the updates were very beneficial. Commissioner Yount also suggested that Council receive monthly updates from the NCDOT regarding the Hwy. 321 Widening Project. He suggested that a representative of the project attend Council meetings in order to keep everyone updated on the progress.

Council discussed several other issues such as resident communication with Town Hall, utilizing the Reverse 911 for various announcements that might be helpful to residents, e-mailing utility statements, etc.

It was also the consensus of Council for Emergency Services Director Kent Graham to facilitate a session for Council regarding the navigation of their iPads.

At 11:35 the meeting was adjourned for lunch.

After reconvening, Jason Eppley and Vagn Hansen representatives from Benchmark Consulting were present to give an update on the Comprehensive Plan project. Council discussed many aspects of the Comprehensive Plan.

At 3:00 p.m. Town Engineer Doug Chapman joined the meeting to discuss a storm water plan review. Several storm water issues and the need for ditch maintenance was discussed at length. Extension of the town's sewer system was also discussed. Mr. Chapman reviewed upgrades that had been made at the Town's Water Treatment Plant and further improvements that were needed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

On Tuesday, January 22, 2013 Mayor Lawrence reconvened the meeting at 8:30 am. In attendance were Mayor Lawrence, Commissioners Yount, Phillips, Matheson, Sweeting and Pickett. Others in attendance were Town Manager Fogleman, Finance Director Norman, Town Clerk Greene, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock and Emergency Services Director Kent Graham.

Emergency Services Director Kent Graham reviewed a presentation to Council regarding background information on the public safety telecommunication tower matter.

At 10:10 a.m. Mr. Rothrock and Graham exited the meeting.

It was the consensus of Council to continue pursuing other areas for placement of a tower.

Town Manager Fogleman then gave a financial update to Council..

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

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