

DRAFT
MINUTES
Town of Blowing Rock
Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting-October 14, 2014

The Town of Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, October 14, 2014 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, Sue Sweeting, Doug Matheson and Ray Pickett. Others in attendance were Town Manager Scott Fogleman, Town Attorney Allen Moseley, Town Engineer Doug Chapman, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Building Inspector John Warren, Police Chief Tony Jones, Finance Officer Nicole Norman, Public Works Director Mike Wilcox, Parks & Recreation Director Jennifer Brown, Emergency Services Director Kent Graham and Town Clerk Sharon Greene.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Sweeting made a motion to approve the minutes for meetings held on September 9, 2014 with Closed Session as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pickett.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS AND REPORT

Mr. Kipp Turner began his monthly update regarding the Hwy 321 By-Pass Widening Project with a recap of several items that had taken place in the project recently, such as the detour in front of the Blowing Rock Fire Department being removed, the Skyland View Drive intersection being paved and reopened, and 600 feet of sewer line installation that had been completed. He also advised the rock stabilization work was completed below Cliff Dwellers Inn. Mr. Turner advised that several areas would be patched and restriped before winter and that an additional 2100 feet of sewer line installation would commence near the Chetola Resort side of the project which would result in the road being closed in that area for several days.

Commissioner Matheson thanked Mr. Turner for having the barrels removed along the project on weekends and also asked about the Skyland View Drive area and if the final grade had been completed. Mr. Turner stated that area had been constructed according to the plans.

Commissioner Yount asked if a left turn lane exiting the Blowing Rock Country Club was planned. Mr. Turner stated he was not aware of one; however there was a left turn lane

planned entering that area. Commissioner Yount also asked about the entrance to Green Hill Road. Mr. Turner advised there was no left turn lane into that area planned, however he would check on it. Commissioner Phillips asked that Mr. Turner check on the entrance to Norwood Circle as well.

With no further comments, Mayor Lawrence thanked Mr. Turner for his monthly update.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Budget Ordinance Amendments

Town Manager Fogleman advised that items included in this budget ordinance amendment for the current fiscal year are to recognize and appropriate funding for repairs made to Shady Lane (\$402), an ABC Store donation for the Police Department's DARE Program (\$1,000), movie in the park sponsorships (\$650), a donation for a Memorial Park bench and plaque (\$1,200), additional Powell Bill funds for street repaving (\$6,638), reallocates unused funds from the prior fiscal year for repaving (\$20,435), a donation to BRAAC for truck repairs (\$2,500), additional FEMA and NCDPS revenues to complete Wonderland Trail (\$23,820), and water treatment plant filter repairs (\$2,259). **Budget Ordinance Amendment #2014-35 – Exhibit A**

2. Paving Bid Award

Town Manager Fogleman stated that three contractors have provided bid estimates for road repaving and selected repair work on ditches. Staff recommends awarding the work to Tri-County Paving, Inc. in the amount of \$330,566.03 for the 11 different roadway segments identified in the staff report including sections of Chestnut Circle, Possum Hollow Road, Sunset Drive, Wonderland Woods, Country Club Lane, Green Hill Road, Fairway 11 Court, Green Street, and Birch Drive Extension.

3. Blasting Permit Request for Chestnut Ridge PACF- CUP #2013-04

Town Manager Fogleman advised that Blasting Permit requests from non-state agencies associated with a Conditional Use Permit requires an approval by Council. Contractors have requested a blasting permit to help with the construction of sewer utilities on the Chestnut Ridge property. One blast is planned and all work is expected to be completed in one day. The applicant has provided the necessary insurance coverage and has named the Town of Blowing Rock an additionally insured party. **Blasting Permit –Chestnut Ridge CUP #2013-04 – Exhibit B**

4. Mountainleaf CUP #2014-03 Finalization of Written Decision Documentation and Conditional Use Permit

According to Town Manager Fogleman, pursuant to Section 16-6.5 of the Land Use Ordinance, a written decision has been prepared documenting the Board's findings and conclusions along with an updated Conditional Use Permit for formal approval.

Commissioner Phillips stated he wanted the record to reflect that he was in favor of the first three items on the Consent Agenda; however, he was not in favor of item #4

Mountainleaf CUP #2014-03 Finalization of Written Decision Documentation and Conditional Use Permit.

Commissioner Pickett who was recused from the prior Mountainleaf public hearings due to a perceived financial conflict of interest since his property is adjacent to the Mountainleaf property, stated he too was in favor of the first three items on the Consent Agenda and had no opinion on Item #4 (Mountainleaf). **Mountainleaf CUP #2014-03 Finalization of Written Decision Documentation and Conditional Use Permit – Exhibit C**

Commissioner Yount questioned the roadway repair on Shady Lane that was included in Item #1. Town Manager Fogleman explained that Shady Lane was a privately maintained road and as a result, property owners had paid \$402 to the Town for time and materials used to make the minor repair.

Commissioner Matheson then made a motion to approve all four items on the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Sweeting. In favor: Sweeting, Matheson, and Yount. Against: Phillips. Recused: Pickett. Motion passed.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. General Obligation Bond Referendum

Town Manager Fogleman stated that Town of Blowing Rock voters would have the opportunity to vote on four different questions on the November 4, 2014 ballot. If approved, general obligation bond authority would become available for capital infrastructure projects over the next 7 to 10 years totaling \$9 million for Transportation, \$1 million for Parks and Recreation, \$2 million for the Water System, and \$1 million for the Sewer System. Mr. Fogleman advised that related information was available through the main page of the Town's website at www.townofblowingrock.com.

Town Manager Fogleman then explained the process in which the bond referendum had been decided upon. He advised that during budget building time, Council had reviewed the Town's 10-year capital improvement plan focusing primarily on Transportation, Parks and Recreation, Water and Sewer. He advised that currently the Town did not have sufficient cash resources in order to make the needed repairs and Council decided to pursue a general obligation bond referendum, a less expensive form of debt for a municipality.

Town Manager Fogleman further explained if the bond referendum passed, priority items that met a certain criteria would then be included in one of the four (4) areas; (Transportation, Parks and Recreation, Water and Sewer) and improvements would begin.

A power point presentation showing examples of areas in need of repair was given by Mr. Fogleman.

Town Manager Fogleman advised if the bond referendum failed; the needed infrastructure improvements would be greatly reduced and delayed. He then explained the Town's current tax rate was \$0.31 per \$100 of the assessed value, while the Town of Boone is at \$0.41, Beech Mountain at \$0.732 and Seven Devils at \$0.51. He advised it was very likely that tax rates in the surrounding areas would increase as well. Town Manager Fogleman concluded his presentation by saying that thoughtful consideration had been given regarding the decision to hold a bond referendum and the Town had compiled materials to educate the public regarding this matter so they could vote on the bond referendum in November.

Mayor Lawrence opened the public hearing for questions at this time.

Audience member Ms. Betsy Wilcox expressed that she hoped the referendum would be passed and asked Mr. Fogleman to give an example of how a tax payer would be affected by the bond referendum. Mr. Fogleman explained if a tax payer had a home valued at \$500,000, their tax bill would increase by a total of \$500 over a ten-year period.

After a brief discussion, Commissioner Pickett made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Sweeting. Unanimously approved.

Commissioner Yount stated that he along with Commissioners Pickett, Matheson and Town Manager Fogleman had just returned from the NC League of Municipalities Annual Conference and one of the big topics was how the State of North Carolina was getting less able to help towns and counties as they had in the past, which results in less State funding to local governments like Blowing Rock.

Commissioner Matheson commented that infrastructure was a number one priority need for many other towns and counties who were playing "catch-up" as well due to the economic recession.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

1. Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission Request to Help Pay for the Legacy Garden Maintenance

Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Brown stated the Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission (BRAAC) requested the Town solicit contractor estimates for a fall clean-up of the Legacy Garden located on the east side of Main Street. Ms. Brown stated the privately owned property had been taken care of by volunteers for many years; however, the volunteers were now unable to maintain the garden and BRAAC felt it was an important and much-noticed garden leading into Town. According to Ms. Brown, estimates received for the clean-up were \$1,440, \$2,400, and \$4,200 and BRAAC had decided to move forward with the contractor bid of \$2,400. Ms. Brown advised that BRAAC was asking if the Town would be willing to share the cost equally.

Commissioner Matheson inquired where the money would come from if Council chose to help. Town Manager Fogleman stated the funds would be taken from Parks & Recreation maintenance line item.

Commissioner Pickett asked what would be done to the garden for \$2,400. Ms. Brown advised the laurel bushes, saplings, etc. would be cut back, which would be a major undertaking due to the lack of care the garden had received lately. She also said that once the garden was cleaned up initially, it would then be cleaned 2 or 3 times a year thereafter.

Commissioner Matheson made a motion for the Town to equally share the cost with BRAAC in the amount of \$1,200 to maintain the Legacy Garden. Commissioner Yount seconded Commissioner Matheson's motion. Unanimously approved.

2. NCDOT Highway 321 Project – Wall #20 at Blowing Rock Country Club Hole #4 Design Preference

Planning Director Kevin Rothrock stated that NCDOT officials had requested formal feedback from Council regarding the Town's preferred design and materials of the wall and railing for wall No. 20, which is adjacent to the number 4 hole at Blowing Rock Country Club. According to Planning Director Rothrock, three different options were available to choose from; a single metal rail, double metal rail, and no railing with a solid parapet wall meeting the required safety height of 42 inches. The treatment options shown would represent a formliner concrete wall using the same pattern as columns. A simulated stone cap is also shown on the top of the wall and columns. The color of the formliner stain would be compatible with the stone veneer wall being constructed across the road at wall No. 19. Mr. Rothrock also noted that coach lights would most likely be positioned on an average of 90 to 120 feet increments along that area, instead of the spacing shown on the diagram.

Mr. Rothrock stated that staff had reviewed the renderings with representatives of the Blowing Rock Country Club, the Green Park Inn, BRAAC, and Council and the preferred design had been the single metal rail style. Also, they emphasized their preference was for the wall surface materials to match the rock veneer wall currently being built across Hwy 321 (wall No. 19).

Commissioner Phillips questioned the positioning of the lamp posts and thought it would be too dark in the area. Mr. Rothrock explained the lamp posts would be spaced approximately 90 to 120 feet which would provide adequate lighting.

Commissioner Sweeting suggested a letter be sent to NCDOT stating that preference. Town Manager Fogleman assured Commissioner Sweeting that a letter would be prepared once Council made a final decision.

Audience member Alice Roess asked about maintenance of the fence and who would be responsible. Mr. Rothrock advised that he would have to check into that further.

Commissioner Sweeting then made a motion to approve the single rail design with the same rock veneer design to be used on wall No. 20 as that used on wall No. 19. Commissioner Phillips asked if Commissioner Sweeting would amend her motion to state the Town would not pay extra money for these changes. Town Manager Fogleman stated that in his letter to NCDOT, he would request a cost estimate.

Commissioner Yount asked to hear from a representative of the Blowing Rock Country Club regarding this issue. Mr. Don Hubble commented the Country Club preferred the same rock veneer be placed on both walls in order to match.

Mr. Steve Irace owner of the Green Park Inn advised that during foggy weather it would be difficult to see people walking on the sidewalk and suggested reflectors of some type be placed on the bottom of the sidewalk adjacent to the roadway. He also stated the same material should be used on wall No. 19 and 20.

Ms. Lorry Mulhorn of the Green Park Inn also suggested that wall No. 20 have rock on both sides of the wall.

Commissioner Sweeting asked that her motion state the Town of Blowing Rock's **expectation** was for the material on wall No.19 and wall No. 20 to match and that the single rail design be used and that wall No. 20 be wrapped in stone. The motion received a second from Commissioner Matheson. Unanimously approved.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

None

OTHER

Mayor Lawrence commented that Council and staff were wearing pink due to October being Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

He also asked that everyone remember the Klutz family during this most difficult and tragic time.

Commissioner Pickett then made a motion pursuant to NC General Statute 143.318.11(a)(3) to enter in Closed Session to consult with the Town Attorney, seconded by Commissioner Sweeting. Unanimously approved.

A short recess was taken at this time.

ADJOURN

At 6:40 p.m. Council reentered their regular meeting and there being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

MAYOR _____
J.B. Lawrence

ATTEST _____
Sharon Greene, Town Clerk

ATTACHMENTS (10-14-14)

Budget Ordinance Amendment #2014-35 – Exhibit A

Blasting Permit –Chestnut Ridge CUP #2013-04 – Exhibit B

Mountainleaf CUP #2014-03 Finalization of Written Decision Documentation and
Conditional Use Permit – Exhibit C