

DRAFT

**MINUTES
Town of Blowing Rock
Town Council Meeting
July 14, 2015**

The Town of Blowing Rock Town Council met in regular session on Tuesday, July 14, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting took place at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street, Blowing Rock, N.C. Present were Mayor J.B. Lawrence, Mayor Pro-tem Albert Yount and Council Members Dan Phillips, Doug Matheson and Ray Pickett. Council Member Sue Sweeting was unable to attend due to being out of Town. Others in attendance were Town Manager Scott Fogleman, Town Attorney Allen Moseley, Town Engineer Doug Chapman, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Building Inspector John Warren, Public Works and Utilities Director Mike Wilcox, Parks & Recreation Director Jennifer Brown, Fire Chief Kent Graham, and Town Clerk Sharon Greene.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance and stated that Mayor Pro-tem Yount wished to address the audience.

Mayor Pro-tem Yount announced that David Wray, a prior member of Council had recently lost his father. He also advised that even though the Watauga Democrat had stated twice that he was running for Mayor that was incorrect; he filed to be reelected to Town Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council Member Pickett made a motion to approve the minutes for meetings held on June 9th and 22nd, 2015 as written, seconded by Council Member Phillips. Unanimously approved.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS AND REPORTS

Small Cell Project Update

Mr. Brad Shields of Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation (BREMCO) stated due to revisions to the Town's antenna ordinance, BREMCO in collaboration with Verizon Wireless, had recently installed 26 small cell antennas throughout Town. He stated that by strategically positioning small cells, Verizon Wireless was able to enhance its 4G LTE network coverage allowing residents to access the internet, send and receive

emails, etc. at much faster speeds. Mr. Shields thanked Council for their partnership in making this happen.

Ms. Judy Seamore of Verizon Wireless also expressed appreciation to the Town for help in making this enhancement happen. She felt that emergency services would see an improvement in service as well.

Highway 321 Valley Boulevard Construction Update

Kipp Turner of Maymead Construction began his monthly update by recognizing two NCDOT representatives who were also present, Doug Eller and Trent Beaver. Mr. Turner stated work continued on the wall at the Chetola dam and Wall #39 at Tanger Outlets was completed. Excavation work continued on Wall #18 South of Green Hill Road and a 12 inch water line had been relocated along Pinnacle Avenue and Goforth Road.

Mr. Turner advised that the major utility work was almost completed; however the installation of the water line to Blue Ridge Vista Condos would be completed next year.

Mr. Turner stated that further work would happen in the next few days at the Sunset Drive intersection. He mentioned the driveway tie-ins at Subway and the Blowing Rock Fire Department were completed and Samaritan's Purse was finished as well; however, work continued near the Food Lion entrance.

Mr. Turner mentioned that a traffic split had occurred near Norwood Circle and Skyland View Drive. He advised that signage had been placed in several areas making travelers aware of any traffic changes. He also stated the left turn lane at Sunset Drive recently approved by NCDOT, would be installed the week of July 27th if weather permitted.

Mayor Lawrence thanked Mr. Turner for his informational update.

Town Manager Fogleman presented the following consent agenda items.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Selection of a Firm to Assist with Preparation of the General Obligation Bond Execution

The first phase of the general obligation bond funded projects was approved by Town Council as part of the Fiscal Year 2016 budget process. The next step in acquiring the related funds involves preparing information for the NC Local Government Commission (NCLGC) approval and rating agency assessment. The Town has reviewed the three proposals received from consulting firms who provide assistance with these processes and based upon the thoroughness of the proposal and the pertinent experience of the firm, recommended the work be awarded to First Tryon Advisors. The billing amount for the work required will vary based upon NCLGC and rating agency feedback and will be paid for through bond proceeds received when the funds are borrowed.

2. Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Tax Settlement Report and Order to Collect Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Taxes

Consideration of the Tax Collector 2014 Settlement Report and approval of an Order of the Town Council for the collection of the 2015 taxes representing revenues for fiscal year 2015-2016. **2014-2015 Tax Settlement Report – Attachment A - Order to Collect Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Taxes – Attachment B**

3. Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce Event Dates for 2016

The Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce has identified their list of event dates for calendar year 2016 and has requested that Council provide approval. Events include Winterfest, Savor Blowing Rock (formally Blue Ridge Wine & Food Festival), Art in the park, and the Farmers Market. **Blowing Rock Chamber Event Dates for 2016 – Attachment C**

Council Member Pickett, seconded by Council Member Phillips made a motion to approve the consent agenda items as presented. Unanimously approved.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Appalachian Ski Mountain Welcome Center Annexation Request

Planning Director Kevin Rothrock stated that on June 1, 2015, Appalachian Ski Mountain submitted a petition of voluntary annexation for Council consideration. The petition initiated the satellite annexation process for the 1.48 acre subject property located on the northwest corner of Hwy 321 and Edmisten Road. According to Planning Director Rothrock, the property owners were requesting Town sewer service to serve the Appalachian Ski Mountain Welcome Center as the land has been deemed unsuitable for a septic system by the Watauga County Health Department. Annexation is required since public sewer service is available to in-town properties only. Sewer will be available after the lift station and force main is installed for the ARHS Post-Acute Care Facility north of the property at the Blowing Rock Lodge site on the west side of Highway 321.

Planning Director Rothrock stated that Appalachian Ski Mountain was not requesting public water service as they will rely on a metered private well to be located on the property.

During the June 9, 2015 Council meeting, Council adopted Resolutions 2015-10 and 2015 -11 establishing the public hearing for this annexation request.

Planning Director Rothrock then reviewed several key points and advised the annexation request met the five basic rules for satellite annexation pursuant to NC General Statute 160A-58.1(b).

Mayor Pro-tem Yount asked about the timeframe in which the visitor's center and the pump station would be constructed. Planning Director Rothrock stated a temporary pump would be installed at the visitor's center until the pump station was completed.

With no further comments, Council Member Phillips made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Council Member Pickett. Unanimously approved.

A motion to approve the Appalachian Ski Mountain Welcome Center Annexation Request as presented was made by Council Member Phillips, seconded by Council Member Yount. Unanimously approved. **Appalachian Ski Mountain Welcome Center Annexation Request – Attachment D**

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Blowing Rock resident, Pamela Dunston stated she attended the recent meeting with NCDOT at the Blowing Rock Country Club and felt that NCDOT was working with everyone involved with the road construction to speed up the process. Mrs. Dunston stated she had visited several businesses in Town and had heard complaints regarding the traffic congestion due to the project and everyone she had spoken with wanted the project to be completed soon.

Charlie Sellers suggested a second crew begin working on the project with longer working hours in order to help complete the project faster. He suggested these changes be made in the form of a motion from Council.

On behalf of the Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce, David Harwood reminded everyone of the State of the Town event to be held at the Blowing Rock Art and History Museum on Monday, August 17 beginning at 5:30 p.m. He mentioned that Town and NCDOT representatives would be present during this event.

Business Owner and Town Resident Annie Whatley expressed her concerns with the long traffic delays on Hwy 321 during the previous Friday. She wanted to know why this had occurred. Town Manager Fogleman explained that construction work at the intersection of Sunset Drive was being done and traffic was delayed especially for those traveling south. He also advised that the construction flaggers were not in sync with the traffic lights at Tanger and Chetola. Mr. Fogleman stated that NCDOT was aware of these issues and would be working to improve traffic flow during similar situations in the future.

Mrs. Whatley also inquired about the procedure regarding public comments during the Chamber event dates segment of the meeting. Mayor Lawrence stated that particular item was not a public hearing item. Mrs. Whatley expressed her concerns with Art in the Park being held during the same time as ASU graduation in 2015. Chamber Executive, Charles Hardin stated the Chamber hadn't planned for that to happen; however, sometimes that happened due to the calendar.

With no further Speakers from the Floor, Mayor Pro-tem Yount expressed that Council continued to work with NCDOT, the Chamber of Commerce and ASU regarding the road construction process and stated improvements were planned for Sunset Drive that would entice people into Town once the construction of Highway 321 was completed.

At 6:35 p.m., Council Member Phillips made a motion to enter into closed session to consult with the Town Attorney pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (5) to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease, seconded by Council Member Pickett. Unanimously approved.

ADJOURN

At 7:25 p.m. Council reentered their regular meeting and with no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

MAYOR _____
J.B. Lawrence

ATTEST _____
Sharon Greene, Town Clerk

ATTACHMENTS (07-14-2015)

- [204-2015 Tax Settlement Report – Attachment A Order to Collect Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Taxes – Attachment B](#)
- [Blowing Rock Chamber Event Dates for 2016 – Attachment C](#)
- [Appalachian Ski Mountain Welcome Center Annexation Request – Attachment D](#)