

MINUTES
Town of Blowing Rock
Town Council Meeting
April 12, 2016

The Town of Blowing Rock Town Council met in regular session on Tuesday, April 12, 2016 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 Jim Steele, 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, Finance Officer Nicole Norman, Fire Chief Kent Graham, Public Works and Utilities Director Mike Wilcox, Police Chief Tony Jones, Parks & Recreation Director Jennifer Brown and Interim Town Clerk Hilari Hubner.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council Member Sweeting made a motion to approve the minutes for the March 8, 2016 with the following addition. She stated during the last meeting, a motion was made to ask Susie Greene to be a part of a task force to work with the Town and NCDOT and Susie agreed. The motion was seconded by Council Member Pickett. Unanimously approved.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS AND REPORTS

Highway 321 Valley Boulevard Construction Update

Kipp Turner of Maymead Construction began his monthly update on the Highway 321 Widening Project by stating that two weeks ago the extension of the traffic split down to Tanger Outlets began which allowed work to resume on the duct bank work. He stated that the duct bank work is proceeding on schedule.

Mr. Turner stated at the Food Lion intersection asphalt has been installed and the intersection is now open and left turns can now be made.

Mr. Turner stated the next major traffic disruption will be at the intersection of North Main Street. He said they will have to do some traffic control and use steel plates. Mr. Turner advised he will communicate with Town Manager Fogleman regarding any disruptions.

Mr. Turner stated the wall at Chetola is substantially complete. Grading has begun and in a couple of weeks they hoped to add more asphalt and open the extra lane.

Mr. Turner informed Council that the 10-inch sewer line will be installed this week, which will cross under Hwy 321 at Tanger, this is part of the extra work that was asked by the Town to be done along with the 18-inch sewer line last year.

Mr. Turner informed Council that in the next few weeks, there will be traffic pattern shifts in the area from Norwood Circle to Greenhill Road to allow work to begin on the wall near the golf course.

Mayor Lawrence thanked Mr. Turner for his update.

Holiday Inn Express CUP Related Ransom Street Repair Update

Town Manager Fogleman showed Council before and after photographs of the area on Ransom Street behind Holiday Inn Express. Mr. Fogleman stated a fence was installed and one of the property owners in the area had payed for the fence materials.

CONSENT AGENDA

Town Manager Fogleman presented the following consent agenda items:

1. Budget Ordinance Amendment to Account for Various Items

A budget ordinance amendment has been prepared for Council to consider adjusting general obligation bond issuance cost and debt service budgets for the final closing costs associated with the bond sale in March and allocating anticipated design funding within existing obligation bond funding projects to capture related costs (no change to total project funding). **Budget Ordinance Amendment# - Attachment A**

2. Surplus Equipment Resolution

From time to time various pieces of equipment or office furniture are no longer needed. Council is authorized to sell personal property by electronic auction upon of a resolution. At this time, items identified including a 2004 Ford F-150 truck, a 1985 Gardner Denver Air Compressor, and a M9000 Kubota tractor. All items are in poor condition. **Resolution# - Attachment B**

3. Pool Bathroom Maintenance

The pre-season pool inspection revealed some maintenance items that are best addressed prior to the opening of the pool including painting the restrooms and adjusting an exterior door. It is recommended that recognition of \$1,500 in higher than expected utility franchise tax revenue be utilized to support these needs in Fiscal Year 2016.

4. Grant Agreement with NCDOT for Sidewalk to Bass Lake

At their meeting on March 3, 2016, the North Carolina Board of Transportation approved the Memorandum of Agreement between the Federal Highway Administration Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division, the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and the Town of Blowing Rock. Per the agreement, the total estimated project cost of \$1,220,000 would be funded by \$987,956 of grant funding and \$232,044 of funding from the Town of Blowing Rock. The current project schedule reflects the required

environmental analysis and design being completed in 2016, bidding in December 2016, bid award in February of 2017, and construction completion in the fall of 2017. A subsequent agreement with NCDOT to administer the project includes a set aside of 5% or \$58,000 of the non-Federal Lands Access Program management costs. The final impact of this previously unknown allocation on the project funding will not be known until the project is designed and bid out for construction in early 2017. Transportation bond funding will be set aside in the interim to ensure it can be funded if necessary.

Council Member Steele questioned the \$58,000 being reserved for Watauga County to manage. He understood the agreement to say the Municipality to be responsible for the funds and was confused as to which it was to be. Town Manager Fogleman responded that he would check with NCDOT representative to get further clarification on the matter.

Mayor Pro-tem Yount commented that in the eight years he has been on Council, the Bass Lake Sidewalk had been mentioned numerous times and every time there has been a reason to not proceed. Mayor Pro-tem Yount complemented Council Member Sweeting on being a “bulldog” to get the Bass Lake sidewalk on the agenda to be approved. **Bass Lake Grant Agreement- Attachment C**

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Removal of Protest Petition

Planning Director Kevin Rothrock gave a brief background on the removal of protest petitions. In the fall of 2015, the NC General Assembly ratified multiple changes to land use regulations found in the NC General Statutes. One of those changes was the removal of protest petitions that required supermajority approval of zoning changes. Since 1923, protest petitions had been a way for neighbors to submit a petition to protest a potential zoning district change. This amendment to the statute affects towns and counties statewide.

At the March 17th meeting, the Planning Board recommended approval of the draft ordinance.

Mayor Pro-tem Albert Yount asked Mr. Rothrock to give a brief definition of what Protest Petitions meant.

A motion was made by Council Member Steele to approve the Removal of Protest Petition and Council Member Pickett seconded. Unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

1. Middle Fork Greenway Tiger Grant Application and Supporting Resolution

Planning Director Kevin Rothrock stated that last year the Town applied for a TIGER grant with the United States Department of Transportation. A resolution was approved by Council to do the process of applying for the grant. June of last year the application was submitted, however, due to a glitch in the system, the application never went through. This year Town staff would like to make another attempt to apply for the TIGER grant for the Blowing Rock section of the Middle Fork Greenway beginning at the Tanger Outlets property and ending at the Chestnut Ridge property. The resolution is for consideration to proceed with the grant application.

Mr. Rothrock introduced Ms. Ann Browning with the Middle Fork Greenway to give an update on the project. Ms. Browning stated that she has been with the Middle Fork Greenway for the last few years serving as the part-time director. Recently, a full-time director was hired, she then introduced Winnie, who will begin as the Middle Fork Greenway Director next month.

Ms. Browning explained that the Middle Fork Greenway goes through three jurisdictions, the Blowing Rock, Boone and Watauga County. She also stated that strong projects are currently going on in each jurisdiction. She briefly explained the funding process and informed Council that a little over a million dollars was collected last year for the benefit of the Middle Fork Greenway project. She stated that the funding came in three sources; State grants, Local Government and private donations. She stated that the Town of Blowing Rock is the beneficiary of a state grant that the Middle Fork works with the Town on and those funds will go to build the Greenway in the Chestnut Ridge area. The second source of funding comes from Local Government in which the Blowing Rock TDA has been a huge part of as well as the Town of Boone and the County TDA. The third source of funding is private donations, the biggest donation was from Blue Cross Blue Shield of which the funds were used to purchase major pieces of land for the project.

Ms. Browning stated that the Blowing Rock area of the Middle Fork Greenway is divided into three subdivisions; Chestnut Ridge connection, the National Park Service connecting to the Mountain to Sea trail and through the NCDOT right of way to Tanger Outlets. Funds from the TIGER grant would fund this area of about 1.3 miles. Ms. Browning stated that the \$1.7 million is the amount requested for the TIGER grant. She stated that approximately \$2.1 million is the estimated cost to complete this area of the Middle Fork Greenway. The funds to match the gap would come from the Blowing Rock TDA, Watauga County TDA, the Water Resource Grant that the Town of Blowing Rock received for the project and private donations. Ms. Browning explained this is an expensive section of the project due to engineering obstacles. She also explained if the Town and the Middle Fork Greenway do not receive the TIGER grant, the focus will be on building the trail on the Chestnut Ridge section and the Water Resource grant funds will be used to complete this section.

Council Member Sweeting thanked Ann Browning for all her hard work on the project.

Council Member Matheson made a motion to proceed with the TIGER grant application, seconded by Council Member Sweeting. Unanimously approved.

1. Overnight Parking on Town Property

Chief Tony Jones stated that over the last few months the Police Department and Council have received complaints regarding public parking being used for personal use in several areas of Town. Chief Jones advised, after staff looked into the matter, they recommended the adoption of an ordinance stating the Town does not allow overnight parking on Town property. Chief Jones gave examples of public parking areas where overnight parking would not be permitted; the Chestnut Street Parking Deck, Davant Field, the American Legion and Robbins Pool. Chief Jones expressed Blowing Rock is a tourist town and the ordinance would enforce this matter to those who consistently abuse the use of Town property to park their personal vehicles.

Council Member Sweeting made a motion to approve creating a ordinance for overnight parking, Council Member Pickett seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

2. Bid Award for Broyhill Park Drainage Improvements

Town Engineer Doug Chapman stated that a project identified for Bond funding is the replacement of drainage pipe at Broyhill Park. Mr. Chapman went into detail explaining the damage to the current piping and why it needed to be replaced.

Mr. Chapman advised that the Town had received bids for the Broyhill Park drainage on April 5, 2016 with M&M Construction being the low bidder in the amount of \$83,750.00, plus a 10% contingency. Also with an allowance of \$5,000 for construction material testing during construction.

Council Member Sweeting asked Mr. Chapman to further explain what is currently happening to the lake at Broyhill due to the result of the collapse of the piping. Mr. Chapman explained that soil had been washing around the joints of the piping causing sedimentation in the lake.

Council Member Matheson commented that new piping may worsen the sedimentation due to a full pipe carrying more run-off into the lake. Mr. Chapman explained he didn't feel new piping would make this issue worse, he felt it would help with the sedimentation in the lake.

Mayor Lawrence asked if it was in the plan to dredge the lake. Town Manager Scott Fogleman stated that this is one of the key steps to prevent additional sediment before that is done.

Council Member Steele asked why the construction and testing materials during construction were not placed in the base bid. Mr. Chapman explained the Town can have the option to hire an independent testing firm and that this option has been used with previous projects. Council Member Steele also asked if 10% is always asked for as opposed to 5 percent. Mr. Chapman explained on smaller projects, he recommends 10

percent as opposed to 5 percent because on smaller projects the risk of running into costly issues are greater.

Council Member Pickett made a motion to approve the bid award to M&M Construction in the amount of \$83,750.00, seconded by Council Member Steele. Unanimously approved.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

MAYOR _____
 J.B. Lawrence

ATTEST _____
 Hilari Hubner, Interim Town Clerk

ATTACHMENTS