

MINUTES

Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners

Tuesday, April 10, 2001

The Mayor and Board of Commissioners for the Town of Blowing Rock met in regular session on Tuesday, April 10, 2001 at 7:00 p.m. Present were Mayor J. B. Lawrence, Commissioners Barbara Ball, Terry Lentz, Michael Sweeting, Charles Travis, and Rita Wiseman. Also present were Town Manager Don Holycross, Town Attorney Allen Moseley, Town Engineer Marion Rothrock and Town Clerk Barbara Beach. Other staff members who attended the meeting were Director of Public Works Johnny Lentz, Police Chief Owen Tolbert, Building Inspector John Warren, and Recreation Director Kim Oberle.

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Wiseman made the motion that the minutes of the March 13, 2001 meeting be approved as submitted. Mr. Sweeting seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Public Hearings:

1. Conditional Use Permit # 2001-02B – Expansion of Parking Lot at Chetola Resort

Mayor Lawrence opened a public hearing to hear testimony concerning the proposed parking lot expansion behind the Chetola Lodge and below the Oak Condominium Building. Kent Tarbutton was sworn to speak on the matter. After Mr. Tarbutton reviewed the plans, no one else requested to speak. Upon motion of Mr. Travis, seconded by Ms. Wiseman, the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Travis made motion that the draft CUP be approved with an amendment to item # 13 to require a minimum width of four feet for the sidewalks in the project. Mrs. Ball seconded the motion, and it was unanimously ratified.

CUP No. 2001- 02B Attached as Exhibit A

New Business:

1. Blowing Rock Art and History Museum

Mrs. Ginny Stevens presented a request on behalf of the Blowing Rock Art and History Museum to acquire a Town building for renovation into a museum to house a collection of artwork by Elliott Daingerfield.

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The Board of Trustees asked that the Council consider this use for the Fire Department building on Park Avenue at some future date when the Fire Department is able to move to the Highway 321 Bypass. Mrs. Stevens presented a slide show outlining their plans for displaying and caring for this valuable collection. She asked that Council consider the request during their budget work session and requested a commitment by June so that they can hire an architect to begin work. Mayor Lawrence thanked Mrs. Stevens and the Board of Trustees for their interest in Blowing Rock.

2. BRAAC Town Appearance Plan/Landscape Specialist

Mayor Lawrence recognized Lonnie Webster and other members of the Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission. Mr. Webster reported to Council that while the maintenance of parks has been handled satisfactorily on a contract basis with a local landscaping company, the members of BRAAC believe that a different approach is now necessary based on the maturation of the vegetation in the parks. Council reviewed an appearance plan drafted by the committee. Mr. Webster stated that a fundamental element of the plan is the creation of a new full time landscaping position to oversee the work that needs to be implemented. After discussion, Ms. Wiseman suggested that this proposal be reviewed at the budget work session in May, and Council agreed to this idea.

3. Appalachian Voices – NC Clean Smokestack Plan

Dr. Harvard Ayers, representing Appalachian Voices, a locally based environmental group, requested that Council support the passage of Senate Bill # 1078 which would mandate improved air quality for the state. Mr. Sweeting made motion that Council adopt a resolution in support of this bill. Mr. Lentz seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Resolution No. 2001-02 Attached as Exhibit B

4. Renewal of Lease for Blowing Rock Stage Company

Mayor Lawrence recognized Robert Warren of the Blowing Rock Stage Company. Mr. Warren requested the renewal of the lease of the Ice House for the coming year. By motion of Mr. Lentz, seconded by Ms. Wiseman, the draft lease was unanimously approved by Council.

Lease Attached as Exhibit C

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5. Blowing Rock Stage Company Request for Trailer

Mr. Robert Warren also requested permission to utilize a trailer for actors' dressing rooms and staging area for the upcoming season. The construction that will occur at Blowing Rock School this summer will prevent access to the rear of the Stage Company. Mr. Warren submitted a proposal to park an office trailer adjacent to the school for the twelve-week period of June 4 – September 3. An eight-foot high lattice fence would screen the trailer.

Mr. Sweeting moved that Council grant permission for the temporary use and that details are to be finalized by Zoning Staff. Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion, and Council unanimously agreed.

6. Agreement for South Main Street Sidewalk

Mr. Holycross noted that the agreement has been received from NCDOT for enhancement funds for the reconstruction of the sidewalk along South Main Street from the Episcopal Church to Chestnut Drive. Council reviewed the draft agreement and upon motion of Mr. Travis, second by Mrs. Ball, they voted unanimously to authorize Mayor Lawrence to execute the agreement on behalf of the Town.

7. Update on North Main Street Sidewalk

Mr. Holycross provided an update on the progress in talks with NCDOT about the North Main sidewalk project. He reported that he and Mr. Rothrock met with Carl McCann of NCDOT to determine if additional state or federal funding might be available. Mr. Holycross also contacted Sam Erby, Board of Transportation member. Mr. Erby plans to visit the proposed project area before he makes a decision to release funds. Council discussed the merit of continuing with plans for the construction.

Mr. Travis moved that Council authorize Mr. Holycross to continue to work with NCDOT to obtain additional funding. Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion, and the vote was called. Voting for the motion: Travis, Wiseman, Ball, and Lentz. Mr. Sweeting voted against the motion because he believes that the Town should not continue with the sidewalk construction since current cost projections far exceed the initial estimates. The motion was approved.

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8. Region D Requests Support for Rural Transportation Planning Organization

Mr. Dick Fender, Executive Director of Region D had sent information requesting support for the establishment of a Rural Transportation Planning Organization for our area. According to Mr. Fender, this would provide local elected officials a more powerful voice in the development of transportation systems in rural North Carolina. Upon motion of Ms. Wiseman, second by Mrs. Ball, Council unanimously voted to approve a resolution in favor of a Rural Transportation Planning Organization for the Region D area.

9. Closed Session

Mr. Lentz made a motion that Council convene in closed session by authority of NCGS 143-318.11(3) to consult with the town attorney. Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion, and Council members voted unanimously to agree.

Adjournment

Upon reconvening, there was no further business, and Mayor Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

J. B. Lawrence,
Mayor

Town Clerk