

MINUTES

Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners

Tuesday, December 11, 2001

The Mayor and Board of Commissioners for the Town of Blowing Rock met in regular session on Tuesday, December 11, 2001 at 7:00 p.m. Present were Mayor J. B. Lawrence, 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, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, and Building Inspector John Warren.

Opening Remarks

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order and welcomed the citizens to the meeting. He gave Mr. Travis and Mr. Sweeting an opportunity to address the assembly. Both men expressed appreciation to the citizens of Blowing Rock for the support they received and to the Town Staff.

Oaths of Office

Town Clerk Barbara Beach administered the oath of office to J. B. Lawrence, who will serve another two-year term as Mayor of the Town. Mayor Lawrence then administered the oaths of office to incumbent member Barbara Ball and new members David Wray and Keith Tester for four-year terms as Council Members.

Oaths of Office Attached as Exhibit A

Presentation of Plaques

Mayor Lawrence called Mr. Sweeting and Mr. Travis forward to receive plaques in honor and appreciation of their service to the Town. The Mayor thanked both men for their dedication in serving the citizens of Blowing Rock.

Appointment of Mayor Pro-tem

Ms. Wiseman moved that Terry Lentz be appointed as Mayor Pro-tem. Mrs. Ball seconded the motion, and all members voted in favor of the selection.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Ball made a motion that the minutes of the November 13, 2001 meeting be adopted as submitted. Mr. Lentz seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

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Public Hearing

1. Charles Davis-Construction of Storm Water Detention Basin -CUP No. 2001-10

Chuck Davis was present to request a conditional use permit to construct a storm water detention basin on 1.342 acres of property behind Woodland's Restaurant with access to the Highway 321 Bypass. The basin is designed to provide approximately 338,000 cubic feet of storm water storage for a drainage area of 47.79 acres. After storm events, the basin is designed to drain completely to allow storage for the next storm. It can handle a significant amount of the storm water detention needed for the entire Town.

Mayor Lawrence opened a public hearing to receive comment on this request. Mr. Davis and Wayne Green were sworn to speak. In response to a question about the basin, Mr. Davis explained that the basin will be ten feet deep, and with no additional influent into the pond, it will release all the water in 52 minutes. Mrs. Ball was concerned that the proposed four-foot fence around the basin is not tall enough; she believed it should be six feet or more to guard against a drowning accident. Marion Rothrock said it would take a 100-year to a 150-year storm event to fill the basin, and that it would probably not be full even one time per year. After further discussion, Ms. Wiseman made motion that the public hearing be closed, and Mr. Lentz seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion.

Mayor Lawrence announced he would entertain a motion for action on the request. Mr. Lentz moved that the draft CUP be approved with a change to item number 8 that the fence be defined as a split rail fence. Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion. Then Mr. Lentz amended his motion to require the planting of two staggered rows of yews around the perimeter of the basin except in the gate area. Ms. Wiseman seconded the amended motion, and the vote was called. Voting for the motion: Lentz, Wiseman, Wray, and Tester. Voting against the motion: Ball. The motion passed.

CUP No. 2001-10 Attached as Exhibit B

Old Business

1. Water Quality Report

Mr. Holycross noted that the Town has not received any complaints about rusty water, and that the reservoir is at full pond.

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2. Status of Bids for Construction of North Main Street Sidewalk

Marion Rothrock reported on the bid opening for the North Main Street sidewalk. The Town received enough bids to open as defined by North Carolina General Statutes, but there were no bids on three of the separate projects, and he elected to re-advertise for bids on December 14. He will report back to Council at the January 8 meeting.

New Business

1. Appointments to Watauga County Recreation Board

Charles Travis and Terry Lentz are the current representatives of the Town Council to the Watauga County Recreation Board and their terms are scheduled to expire in January 2002. Mrs. Ball nominated Mr. Lentz to continue for another term on the Board, however, Mr. Lentz declined due to conflicts with other commitments. Mrs. Ball moved that Council submit the names of Mr. Wray and Mr. Tester to the Watauga County Commissioners to fill the vacancies. Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion and all members voted to assent to the recommendation.

2. Local Government Debt Setoff Program

Mr. Holycross presented a plan offered to North Carolina municipalities to facilitate the collection of outstanding debts. The program is a joint service of the NC League of Municipalities and the NC Association of County Commissioners and is supported by legislation by the 2001 General Assembly. After proper notice to the debtor, The Town would submit a debt to the clearinghouse set up for this purpose. The information would then be filed with the NC Department of Revenue and if the debtor is due a refund of North Carolina state income taxes, the debt would be withheld from that refund. Mr. Holycross explained that though the Town does not have many delinquent accounts, we could potentially benefit from joining the program. After Mr. Holycross and Mrs. Beach answered questions about the plan, Mr. Lentz made motion that the resolution be adopted to authorize participation in the plan. Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion, and members voted unanimously to ratify the resolution.

Resolution No. 2001-08 Attached as Exhibit C

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3. Wayne Green - Discussion of Retention of Public Records

Wayne Green asked that zoning permits and plats for conditional use permits be recorded at the Register of Deeds. He also suggested that verbatim minutes be written for Council meetings, and that an audit of public records be requested from the NC Department of Cultural Resources. Mayor Lawrence replied that the Council will take his suggestions under advisement and that Town staff does a good job in documentation and record keeping and commended Town staff for their work. Council members agreed with the mayor's assessment, and added their praise to staff for a job well done.

Adjournment

There was no further business, and Mayor Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

J. B. Lawrence,
Mayor

Barbara G. Beach, Town Clerk