

## MINUTES

### Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners

Tuesday, March 12, 2002

The Mayor and Board of Commissioners for the Town of Blowing Rock met in regular session on Tuesday, March 12, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. Present were Mayor J. B. Lawrence, Barbara Ball, Terry Lentz, Keith Tester, Rita Wiseman, and David Wray. Also present were Town Manager Don Holycross, Town Attorney Allen Moseley, Town Engineer Marion Rothrock and Town Clerk Barbara Beach. Other staff members attending the meeting were Director of Public Works Johnny Lentz, Police Chief Owen Tolbert, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Building Inspector John Warren, and Recreation Director Kim Oberle.

#### **Presentation by Blowing Rock Historical Society**

Mayor Lawrence recognized Ginny Stevens of the Blowing Rock Historical Society. Mrs. Stevens presented each Board member with a copy of the new book produced by the Historical Society, Postcards of Historic Blowing Rock. Mayor Lawrence thanked Mrs. Stevens and all of the members for their work in completing this beautiful book.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order. Upon motion of Mr. Lentz, second by Mrs. Ball, Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes as submitted for the meeting held on February 12, 2002.

#### **Public Hearing**

##### **1. Draft Ordinance to Provide Flexibility in the Application of Density and**

##### **Dimensional Regulations**

Mayor Lawrence opened a public hearing to allow citizen input into a draft ordinance to allow more flexibility to the Council in modifying or adjusting strict provisions of the Code related to lot size, density, and setback requirements when applying those provisions to conditional use permits. After Wayne Green spoke, there were no other questions or comments, and Ms. Wiseman moved that the public hearing be closed. Mr. Wray seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Ms. Wiseman made motion that the draft ordinance be adopted as submitted, and Mr. Tester seconded the motion. Members voted unanimously to ratify the draft ordinance.

*Ordinance No. 2002-01 Attached as Exhibit A*

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#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **1. Bridge Inspections**

Mr. Holycross reported that the NCDOT recently advised the Town that any municipal bridges within the Town would have to be inspected. The one bridge in Town that meets their standard for mandatory inspection is the one on Cornish Road. Council reviewed a proposed contract with NCDOT to conduct inspections for the Town. NCDOT will have the inspection performed, and 80% of the costs will be paid for by Federal Highway Administration funds. Board members thought the cost of \$2,400 per bridge is excessive but agreed that it is necessary to comply with the regulation. Upon motion of Mr. Lentz, second by Mrs. Ball, members voted unanimously to adopt a resolution to authorize Mayor Lawrence to execute the agreement with NCDOT to inspect municipal bridges.

*Resolution Attached as Exhibit B*

## **2. Alcoholic Beverage Control Resolution**

Mr. Holycross advised that the General Assembly has created a Legislative Alcoholic Beverage Control Study Commission, which has raised concerns that they may recommend privatization of ABC Stores. If this occurs, it could impact revenues that local governments receive from ABC sales. Council reviewed a draft resolution to oppose privatization of alcoholic beverage sales, and by motion of Mr. Tester, second by Ms. Wiseman, the Board voted unanimously to ratify a resolution in support of the current system of alcoholic beverage control.

*Resolution Attached as Exhibit C*

## **3. Status of Clean Water Management Trust Fund Grant**

Mr. Holycross provided an update on recent discussions with the Conservation Trust of North Carolina concerning assignment of the Clean Water Management Trust grant recently approved for the Town. The Town has an interest in purchasing an 192-acre tract of land above China Creek for the purpose of transferring the land to the Blue Ridge Parkway in exchange for the Town's reservoir site that is owned by the Park Service. Initial discussions would provide that the CWMT grant be assigned to the Conservation Trust of NC in exchange for the Town obtaining an option to purchase the 192-acre tract at the net amount of \$234,000. The Town would have a three-year option to purchase the property to allow the details of the land exchange between the Park Service and the Town to be completed. The option would be valued at \$5,000 per year, and the Town would prepare an agreement to reflect these details.

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## **Status of Clean Water Management Trust Fund Grant Continued**

Council discussed the proposed agreement and Mr. Wray moved that Mr. Holycross continue work on the details with the stipulation that the money paid for the option each year be applied to the purchase price. Mrs. Ball seconded the motion, and members voted unanimously to agree.

## **4. Update on Capital Improvement Projects – Award of Bid for Construction of**

### **Recreation Building Sidewalk**

Marion Rothrock provided a report of major projects he is working on for the Town. He advised that bids had been opened for construction of a new walkway to the Recreation building and waterproofing of the Police, Recreation, and Fire Station buildings. On February 26, insufficient bids were received to hold the opening, and it was rescheduled to March 5. Bids were received from:

Greene Construction \$31,964.00

Neil Shepherd 68,500.00

White Fox 69,427.00

Mr. Rothrock advised that he had received a letter from Greene Construction withdrawing their bid due to "gross omission." Mr. Rothrock recommended that Mr. Greene's request be approved without loss of his bid security under authority of NC General Statute 143-129.1. Mr. Lentz made motion that this be done, and Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion. At the suggestion of Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Lentz amended his motion to include the awarding of the bid for the project to Neil Shepherd. Ms. Wiseman agreed to the amended motion, and all members voted in favor.

Mr. Rothrock also advised that the contractor for the **North Main Street sidewalk** project has requested permission to close North Main Street during working hours. Council was opposed to the idea, and upon motion of Mr. Lentz, second by Ms. Wiseman, the Board voted unanimously to deny the request.

Mr. Rothrock also presented preliminary plans for the **South Main Street walkway** project to upgrade the historic walkway. He asked for direction in Council's vision of the walkway, advising them that if they wish to preserve the rock outcropping, the walk will have to be narrower in some places. Council agreed that they do not want to change the natural character, and they would prefer that retaining walls and a split rail fence not be included in the plans. They discussed the advantages and disadvantages of lighting the walkway, and agreed that perhaps it would be better to light only the entrances at each end. Mr. Rothrock will incorporate their suggestions into new plans to be presented at the April meeting.

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## **5. Creation of Landscape Specialist Position**

Mr. Holycross presented a proposed job description and ordinance to establish a pay classification for a new position of Landscape Specialist. This employee would be responsible for planting and maintaining the landscaping in Town parks and other Town maintained areas, and would be under the supervision of the Recreation Director. Ms. Wiseman stated that she is in favor of establishing the new position, but suggested that perhaps this was not a full time position. After Council members discussed their expectations for the amount and types of work needed to maintain parks and other areas of town, the vote was called. By motion of Mr. Wray, seconded by Mrs. Ball, Council voted unanimously to ratify the draft ordinance to establish a full time position of Landscape Specialist.

*Ordinance No. 2002-02 Attached as Exhibit D*

## **6. Budget Amendments**

Mrs. Beach, Finance Officer, presented three proposed amendments to the current year budget to recognize additional revenue that has been received from three sources: loan proceeds, grants, and donations.

The first is to recognize revenue received from First Union National Bank for financing received to purchase a new packer truck for the sanitation department, two police cruisers, and a new backhoe for street and water field operations. She recommended that the revenue line items for Proceeds from Long Term Debt be credited for \$163,638 to account for this revenue, and the affected departments be debited for the amounts spent for this equipment.

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10-3400-333 General Fund Proceeds from Long Term Debt \$138,140

10-4500-500 Street Dept. Capital Outlay \$25,498

10-4310-500 Police Dept. Capital Outlay 42,142

10-4700-500 Sanitation Dept. Capital Outlay 70,500

30-3400-333 Water Fund Proceeds from Long Term Debt 25,498

30-7120-502 Water Dept. Field Operations Capital Outlay 25,498

The second proposed amendment was to recognize revenue received from grants received in the amount of \$12,979 from the Watauga County E-911 office to aid in funding the new CAD system at the Police Department, and from the State for \$280 to assist in the purchase of body armor for a police officer. These funds should be credited to the Federal & State Grants line item to identify the revenue in this department and Police Department Capital Outlay debited.

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10-3300-349 Federal/State grants \$13,259

10-4310-500 Police Department Capital Outlay \$13,259

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## 6. Budget Amendments Continued

Mrs. Beach explained that after the September 11 attacks, many citizens made special efforts to show appreciation to local police and fire departments. Citizens donated a total of \$4,598 to be distributed to our public safety departments. The line item for Donations should be credited to recognize this additional revenue and the expenditure line items debited to allocate the money for use in the departments.

DEBIT CREDIT

10-3400-358 Donations \$4,598

10-4310-500 Police Dept. Capital Outlay \$3,324

10-4340-500 Fire Dept. Capital Outlay \$1,274

Upon motion of Ms. Wiseman, second by Mr. Wray, Council voted unanimously to approve the budget amendments as presented by Mrs. Beach.

**Adjournment**

There was no further business, and Mayor Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

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J. B. Lawrence,  
Mayor

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Barbara G. Beach, Town Clerk