

MINUTES

Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners

Wednesday, June 4, 2003

The Mayor and Board of Commissioners for the Town of Blowing Rock met in special session on Wednesday, June 4, 2003 at 4:00 p.m. Present were Mayor J. B. Lawrence, Commissioners Barbara Ball, Keith Tester, Rita Wiseman, and David Wray. Terry Lentz was unable to attend. Also present were Town Manager Scott Hildebran and Town Clerk Barbara Beach.

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order. Town Manager Scott Hildebran presented new budget figures based on changes requested by Council members at previous budget work sessions.

The proposed amendments included the elimination of the Recycling Department with recycling responsibilities to be taken by the Public Works Department for a Thursday only commercial recycling collection. A new charge in the amount of \$5.00 per month for commercial recycling pickup will become effective July 1, 2003. All large restaurants and Tanger Shoppes on the Parkway will be eliminated from Town recycling pickup, with the requirement that they must privately contract for cardboard and glass recycling.

Mr. Hildebran proposed a one-cent tax rate reduction to 29.5 per \$100 of valuation and fund transfers of \$47,750 to Capital Reserves – Undesignated and \$47,750 to Fund Balance. Mr. Hildebran had also included budget line items for postage for the fundraising letters mailed from Town Hall for both BRAAC and the Fire/Rescue Departments. However, Council members wanted to bill those organizations for the postage used instead of including them as contributions in the budget. This change will decrease the budget by \$4,500.

Council members discussed the proposed tax rate, with Mr. Tester urging the proposed one-cent decrease. Ms. Wiseman agreed, stating that monies should be allocated each year to Fund Balance. Mrs. Ball stated that she was in favor of a decrease in the amount of one and one-half cent per \$100, and that Mr. Lentz would also advocate the larger decrease in the tax rate.

Council also discussed a request from Mr. Sam Craver on behalf of the Blowing Rock Horse Show for a donation of \$10,000 from Town occupancy tax revenues to their fundraising campaign. Council members agreed that visitors attending the Horse Show have a great impact on lodging receipts, and that they would be amenable to funding this request. Mr. Tester suggested that the \$4,500 reduction in removing postage from the budget be rounded to \$5,000 and that Council allocate \$5,000 this budget year and ask the Horse Show to return next budget year during the regular budget process. Mr. Wray stated that he believed a contribution of \$5,000 or even \$10,000 would be fine and he suggested allocating it to a reserve account to be expended when development begins.

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Mr. Wray also stated that he did have a problem with allocating money to Capital Reserves – Undesignated and that he would prefer designating funds to a certain line item. Ms. Wiseman replied that she is in favor of contributing monies to Fund Balance every year. Mr. Tester agreed, citing the work done on the Five Year Capital Improvement Plan, and maintaining the need for a commitment to fund the equipment and projects on the list. Mrs. Ball voiced her agreement with Mr. Tester, and Mr. Wray suggested that the entire \$90,000 be allocated to Fund Balance.

Mr. Wray made a motion for consensus that Council fund the \$10,000 request by the Horse Show and that it be put in a reserve account for their use when their capital development project is underway. He also made a motion for consensus that the budget as drafted be approved, with a total of \$90,000 allocated to the Fund Balance. Members took no action on the motion, but indicated their support for the proposal.

The second item of business was the proposed widening project of US Highway 321. With the assistance of Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Council members reviewed the proposed maps for each section of the highway from Cone Orchard Road south to Possum Hollow Road, discussing concerns and questions for each section. Mr. Hildebran reviewed a list of Town goals for the project, and members established a list of priorities for the enhancements they prefer. Mr. Hildebran will circulate the list to the Council so that they can rate them by priority.

Goals and Issues Attached as Exhibit A

Road Sections Attached as Exhibit B

There was no further business, and Mayor Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

J. B. Lawrence,
Mayor

Barbara G. Beach, Town Clerk