

Blowing Rock Board of Commissioners

Tuesday, April 13, 2004

The Mayor and Board of Commissioners for the Town of Blowing Rock met in regular session on Tuesday, April 13, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. Present were Mayor J. B. Lawrence, Commissioners Barbara Ball, Terry Lentz, Keith Tester, Rita Wiseman, and David Wray. Also present were Town Manager Scott Hildebran, Town Engineer Marion Rothrock and Town Clerk Barbara Beach. Other staff members attending were Police Chief Owen Tolbert, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Building Inspector John Warren, Public Works Director Johnny Lentz, Recreation Director Jamie Saitta, and Emergency Services Director Marc Hickman.

Call to Order and Approval of Minutes

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order and welcomed the assembled citizens. He introduced attorney Jim Deal, substituting for Allen Moseley this evening.

Ms. Wiseman made motion that draft minutes for March 5 be approved, as well as the draft minutes as revised for March 9. Mrs. Ball seconded the motion for approval, and all members voted in favor of the motion.

Presentation

1. Service Award to Susie Greene, Volunteer Board Member

Mayor Lawrence recognized Susie Greene, who is retiring as Planning Board Chairperson after twelve years of service. He presented a Service Award, along with words of appreciation for her dedication and commitment to the citizens of the Town. Council members led a standing ovation for Ms. Greene and thanked her for her years of loyal service to the Planning Board.

2. Emergency Services/Blowing Rock Rotary House Numbering Project

Angie Gregg, Tim Gregg, and Kent Graham were present to introduce an upcoming house numbering project sponsored by the Emergency Services Department and the Blowing Rock Rotary Club. They showed pictures of homes illustrating problems with house number display and the difficulty of finding homes in an emergency. Because of HIPPA regulations, radio dispatchers can no longer identify homes by occupants' names, and it has become even more important that house numbers be highly visible.

Emergency Service members showed Council samples of the posts they propose offering to citizens. The house numbers are made of a reflective material, and are displayed on two sides of the post. They reported that they are still reviewing other options for styles and materials, and plan to come back to Council with more information at a later date.

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House Numbering Project Continued

Ms. Gregg noted that this would be applicable for residential use only; they are still working on plans for display for commercial use. Mr. Wray made motion that Council endorse the project, and Mrs. Ball seconded the motion. All members voted to approve the motion.

New Business

1. South Main Street - Sidewalk Bids

Mr. Hildebran reported that the following bids have been received for construction of 1,725 linear feet of sidewalk and curb and gutter for the South Main Street Sidewalk project.

Chris Rider, Inc. \$230,447.50

R & G Construction, Inc. 274,847.50

Iron Mountain Construction, Inc. 356,950.75

Taylor & Murphy Construction Co. 537,039.18

Mr. Hildebran reported that Bilmar Development would be billed for the actual construction costs associated with "The Groves" subdivision to comply with their CUP regarding sidewalk improvements. He also noted that a NCDOT Enhancement Grant of \$225,000 was awarded to the Town to aid the Town in funding the sidewalk.

After questioning Town Engineer Rothrock about the bid documents, Mr. Lentz made motion that the low bid of Chris Rider, Inc. be accepted. Mr. Tester seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

2. Sewer Request - Valley View Drive - Patrick Cartwright Project

Patrick Cartwright was present to request a sewer extension to his property in the lower portion of Valley View Drive. He plans to construct a new dwelling on lot 82. Mr. Hildebran reported that based on bids received, an extension could be installed for 2,000 feet along Valley View for a cost of \$50,500, not including road patching.

Mr. Cartwright has agreed to pay the full amount of the sewer extension, or \$42,100, if the project can be completed by the end of the year. The remaining balance of \$8,400, to be provided by the Town, would cover the installation of twelve sewer connections to other properties. The estimated cost to patch the road is \$4,000.

Mr. Cartwright asked that his neighbors not be required to connect to the new sewer line until they so desire, and expressed appreciation to the Town for consideration of his request.

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Sewer Request Continued

Mr. Tester inquired if there are specific neighbors not willing to connect at this time, and Mr. Cartwright replied that he knew of one owner that would prefer not to hook on now.

Mr. Wray suggested an exemption of one to two years before owners would have to connect. Mr. Lentz responded that he is not in favor of providing an exemption since the Town has always required property

owners to connect one year after construction. He felt that it would undermine future compliance with the Town Code by setting a precedent for exemption.

Wayne Green asked to speak, and requested that a schedule of sewer line installation be published to aid developers in their planning process.

Mr. Tester agreed that if Mr. Cartwright's request is approved, a precedent would be set for future sewer connections. Mr. Wray suggested a change in the Code to allow additional time for connection if private funding of the project is involved. Mr. Lentz stated his objection to such a change, saying the current ordinance protects the Town and other property owners.

After additional discussion, Mr. Lentz made a motion that the request be denied. Mr. Tester seconded the motion, and the vote was called. Voting in favor of the motion: Lentz, Tester, Wiseman, and Ball. Voting against the motion: Wray. The motion carried.

This item of business was discussed again at the end of the meeting. Please see page 5.

3. Thomas Barrett – Appeal of Sewer Connection Requirement

Mr. Hildebran reported on a request from Tom Barrett, who wishes to appeal the requirement that he connect to sewer within one year of service being made available. Upon motion of Mr. Lentz, second by Mr. Wray, Council members voted unanimously to deny his appeal.

4. Stage Company Ticket Office Lease – Renewal

Robert Miller of the Blowing Rock Stage Company was present to petition Council to renew the lease on the Maple Street "Ice House" used for a ticket office. Mr. Lentz made motion that the lease be renewed for one year under existing terms. Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion and all members voted in favor of the motion.

Lease attached as Exhibit A

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5. Budget Amendments

Mrs. Beach submitted three budget amendments for Council consideration. The first amendment is to recognize the proceeds of a **lease purchase transaction** with First Citizens Bank. In the current fiscal year budget, expenditures were approved for the following new equipment: a Dingo Loader for the Landscaping Department, a new truck for the Street Department, a skid steer for Field Operations, and a turbine pump and new actuator pumps for the Water Plant.

The loan proceeds of \$127,000 must be accounted for, and the budget line items of affected departments debited for the amounts spent for this equipment.

10-3400-333 General Fund Proceeds from Long Term Debt \$ 60,125

10-4260-500 Public Buildings-Landscaping Capital Outlay \$17,044

10-4500-500 Street Dept. Capital Outlay 43,081

30-3400-333 Water Fund Proceeds from Long Term Debt 29,100 30-7120-502 Water - Field Operations 21,600

30-7120-016 Water Plant Operations 7,500

50-3400-333 Water/Sewer Cap Projects-Proceeds from Debt 37,775

50-5000-561 Water/Sewer Cap Projects –Capital Outlay 37,775

Mr. Lawrence asked that the records show that he was not involved in the transaction in his role at First Citizens, and that it was negotiated with loan executives in the banking center.

Property Purchase. Mrs. Beach also reported that a budget amendment is necessary to finance the purchase of the Buxton property on Highway 321 Bypass adjacent to the tract already owned by the Town. The purchase price of the 1.261-acre tract is \$500,000 and the Town would contract with Barry and Debi Buxton to gain the required land for the future construction of an Emergency Services Building. A balance of \$431,400 is set aside in the budget for this purpose. Council needs to authorize the expenditure of funds for this property acquisition and the appropriation of the \$431,400 to be expended for this purpose. The balance of \$68,600 would be taken from fund balance and paid back from future year(s) budgets. Shown below are the proposed budget amendments for this.

DEBIT CREDIT

10-4340-505 Contribution to Emergency Services Bldg. \$68,600

10-3400-399 Fund Balance Appropriation \$68,600

20-5000-501 Gen. Fund Capital Projects-Emergency Svc Bldg. \$ 68,600

20-3400-325 Transfer from General Fund \$ 68,600

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Budget Amendments Continued

China Creek Property Purchase/Clean Water Grant. Mrs. Beach also proposed a budget amendment to account for the Clean Water Grant received in December, which provided funding for the China Creek property purchase. The grant proceeds were \$201,000.

DEBIT CREDIT

10-3300-349 Federal/State Grants \$201,000

10-4260-500 Public Buildings - Capital Outlay \$201,000

Ms. Wiseman moved that all these amendments be approved: 1) the lease purchase with First Citizens, 2) the property purchase in the amount of \$500,000 for the 1.261-acre tract, and the appropriation of monies set aside to fund the purchase, 3) the allocation of grant monies to the line item of Federal/State Grants. Mr. Lentz seconded the motion, and all members voted in favor of the motion.

6. Departmental Reports

Mr. Hildebran noted that the high service pumps will be installed soon at the water plant, and the playground equipment is being set up in Memorial Park. He also announced that he has received calls commending Recreation Director Jamie Saitta for a job well done with the Trout Derby. He also reported that the Town has been reimbursed for the costs associated with the demolition of the condemned structure at the intersection of Highway 321 and Edmisten Road.

7. Closed Session

Mayor Lawrence announced the end of the regular agenda, and upon motion of Mr. Wray, second by Mrs. Ball, Council voted unanimously to convene in closed session by authority of NC General Statutes 143-318.11(5) to discuss acquisition of real property.

8. Sewer Request - Valley View Drive - Patrick Cartwright Project

Upon reconvening, Council members again discussed Mr. Cartwright's request for a sewer extension on Valley View Road. Mr. Lentz moved that the Town accept Mr. Cartwright's offer to pay the full costs of the sewer extension to this area, but deny his request that adjoining property owners be allowed to connect to the line at their discretion. Ms. Wiseman seconded the motion, and members voted unanimously to approve. If Mr. Cartwright agrees to these terms, the Town will approve the request. Mr. Hildebran will notify Mr. Cartwright of the Board's decision.

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Adjournment

There was no further business, and Mayor Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

J. B. Lawrence, Mayor

Barbara G. Beach, Town Clerk