

MINUTES

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

2006 RETREAT

January 16-17, 2006

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Blowing Rock met in special session on Monday, January 16, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. at the Grove Park Inn in Asheville, North Carolina. Present were Mayor J. B. Lawrence, Commissioners Barbara Ball, Terry Lentz, Keith Tester, Rita Wiseman, and Tommy Klutz. Also present were Town Manager Scott Hildebran, Town Clerk Sharon Greene and Finance Officer Margaret Pierce. At 6:00 p.m., Mayor Lawrence recessed the meeting for the evening. On Tuesday, January 17, 2006, Mayor Lawrence reconvened the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

(Note: McGill Associates Representatives Andy Lovingood and Doug Chapman were also in attendance on Monday, January 16 from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.)

The purpose of the meeting was to hold a retreat to discuss key issues, initiatives and long-term planning. An issue-based process was used to help update the Town's FY 2006-07 goals and initiatives. The following major issues and topics were discussed during the sessions and the action plan below resulted:

2006 – RETREAT PRIORITIES & ACTION PLAN

Board Appointments

It was the consensus of the Board that the following persons be asked to serve on volunteer boards as shown below.

- **Planning Board**

- Jim West, reappoint to a three-year term ending 2009
- Web Alexander, appoint to a three-year term ending in 2009
- Dennis Quinn, reappoint to an unexpired year term ending 2007
- Ron Mace, request Watauga County to reappoint to a three-year term ending 2009 as

ETJ Member

- **Board of Adjustment**

- Jerry Starnes, reappoint to a three-year term ending 2009
- Annie Whatley, reappoint to an unexpired term ending 2007
- Ron Mace, request Watauga County to reappoint to a three-year term ending 2009 as

ETJ Member

- **ABC Board**

- David Greene, appoint to a three-year term ending in 2009
- N/A, appoint to an unexpired term ending 2007

- **TDA Board**

- Phil Pickett, reappoint to a three-year term ending 2009 (Lodging)
- Keith Tester, reappoint to a three-year term ending 2009 (Business/Tourism) (Council)

- **Watauga County Parks & Recreation Commission**

- Keith Tester, request Watauga County to reappoint to a three-year term ending 2009
- Tommy Klutz, request Watauga County to appoint to a three-year term ending 2009

No final action was taken on these proposed appointments, pending contact with these citizens and final action to be made at the February 14, 2006 Council meeting.

Fiscal Management (Administration/Budgetary) Issues

- Provide a financial spreadsheet with the monthly financial summary report

Administration

- Consider Town Hall Roof Repair in FY 2006-07 budget process
- Consider Computer Hardware/Software Upgrades in FY 2006-07 budget process
- Consider Cleaning/Janitorial contract position upgrade to full-time position in FY 2006-07 budget process (consider including Park Restrooms and TDA building in cleaning)
- Consider Meter Reading Handheld Units/Software Replacement in FY 2006-07 budget process

Budgetary

- Evaluate Electronic Payment Acceptance and provide options for Council consideration
- Acquire Software (DreamWeaver/Front Page) for web-based quarterly town newsletter (include TDA information) and distribute at Town Hall/Post Office and develop mailing list
- Place increase in travel reimbursements for meals on agenda for consideration
- Monitor impacts of Watauga County Property Revaluation
- Place Tax Releases/Refunds Policy (delegation up to \$100 to staff) on agenda for consideration
- Continue to monitor the need for flood insurance
- Proceed with Emergency Services Building Debt Funding Plan and segregate debt cost on tax bill – estimated at \$.03 per \$100
- Continue to maintain and fund debt service schedule
- Continue to maintain and fund Fleet Capital Replacement Schedule (FY 2006-07 includes 3 police vehicles and PW truck)
- Continue TDA set aside of 1/3 monies for town and monitor as TDA budget grows (continue to place emphasis on beautification and maintenance)
- Perform Enterprise System Rate Study in concert with Water/Sewer Capital Improvements Plan
- Forward 2005 Town Accomplishments List to newspapers

Planning Issues

- Develop Big Box regulations for Council consideration
- Prepare Landscape/Tree Ordinance Revisions for Council consideration
- Review Downtown Parking Requirements and make recommendations to Council
- Review Parking Study and make recommendations on future parking planning to Council
- Consider CUP Tracking Database Software in FY 2006-07 budget process
- Review and Maintain Town Comprehensive Plan
- Review Outside Dining Regulations/Outside Display of Merchandise and make recommendations to Council
- Continue GIS layer development
- Move forward with Gideon Ridge Annexation Process and refer to Planning Board for next step

Parks/Recreation & Landscape/Town Beautification Issues

- Improve telephone etiquette
- Proceed with Swimming Pool Engineering Study/Recommendations and present plan to Council
- Pursue PARTF Grant for Swimming Pool Project
- Improve/Enhance overall park maintenance and town beautification
- Increase Part-time funding for landscape/beautification
- Increase Tree Planting funding on Main Street and in Parks (Plant larger caliper trees) & seek Tree City, USA designation
- Continue support to American Legion for building (\$3,000)
- Continue to work with BRAAC in beautification of the Town
- Work with Watauga County Parks & Recreation on maintenance of Davant Field
- Continue P&R Master Plan Implementation

Public Safety Issues (Police/Emergency Services)

Police

- Initiate process for selection of police chief - due to pending retirement
- Consider In-car camera units replacement funding in FY 2006-07 budget process
- Consider Part-time staffing funding increase in FY 2006-07 budget process
- Implement Police Department building renovation funding

Emergency Services

- Proceed with Emergency Services Building Project
- Continue negotiations with County regarding Medic Base co-location
- Consider Part-time staffing funding increase in FY 2006-07 budget process
- Continue with House Numbering Project – look at all options

Infrastructure Issues (Public Works/Water/Wastewater)

Public Works

- Continue Street Pavement Plan Implementation (Green Hill Circle/West Green Hill Drive)
- Continue sidewalk repair/maintenance (Sunset Street/Main Street)
- Proceed with BREMCO on Streetlight Pole Replacement Project
- Consider Part-time position upgrade to Full-time in 2006-07 budget process
- Consider Equipment Replacement in 2006-07 budget process (Snow Plows/Spreaders)
- Continue to pursue NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund Grant for a Storm Water Study and complete the remainder of Sunset Drive Storm Water Improvements
- Work with McGill Associates to develop Main Street Streetscape Plan
- Consider contracting of trucks for asphalt paving by Town Crew
- Solicit additional vendors for paving project bids

Water/Sewer

- Continue to pursue land exchange with U.S. Park Service for Town Reservoir property
- Place 2006 Water/Sewer Capital Improvements Plan on agenda for Council consideration
- Prepare financing package to implement Capital Improvements Plan

Tourism Issues

- Continue Town/TDA funding relationship
- Schedule annual meeting with TDA to review Annual Report (February)
- Seek state legislation to permit BRAHM to bid and construct parking facility in conjunction with museum construction project
- Request update from BRAHM on museum project and parking facility design
- Implement Phase III of Master Signage Plan and explore non-profit changeable copy sign for Council consideration
- Pursue Occupancy Tax Agreement with Watauga County on adjacent out-of-town lodging inclusion in Blowing Rock TDA

Other

- State statutes preclude a Town Smoke-Free Restaurant Ordinance
- Continue to stay abreast of the N.C. Department of Transportation U.S. 321 (Valley Boulevard) Widening Project and strive to insure quality redevelopment on the corridor
- Continue to research possible parking locations in the downtown area
- Investigate the future use of the Ice House once the Blowing Rock Stage Company vacates

There was no further business, and Mayor Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Mayor _____

J.B Lawrence

Attest:

Town Clerk _____

Sharon Greene