

BRAAC Meeting Minutes
November 6th, 2014

BRAAC Members Present: Bo Henderson, Melissa Picket, Barbra Wright, Curt Andrews, Deborah McDowell

BRAAC Members Absent: Rita Wiseman, Myra Scoggins, Anne Barnes

Staff Members: Jennifer Brown, Chris Pate and Erin Kegley.

The meeting was called to order by Bo at 5:30 p.m.

Approve October Minutes – Deborah made a motion to approve, Curt seconded, and it was unanimously approved.

Budget Update/Annual Fundraising Collection – Bo mentioned to present to the Town Council to possibly approve the quorum percentage be adjusted so BRAAC will be able to have meetings with the full-time Town residents since some members are only part-time residents. Jennifer stated that she would mention this to Scott. Jennifer reported that BRAAC has spent \$500 on contracted services with Lear Powell for the soil sample. Results have not come in yet, and Lear Powell mentioned that this could take a couple of months to receive. \$882.28 has been spent for flowers and landscaping, \$2,931.15 on printing, and \$180.06 on maintenance on the BRAAC Truck. The total we have for the BRAAC Truck repair and maintenance is \$2,500, but that has yet to be posted in the budget update. To date BRAAC has spent \$4,493.49. Jennifer also stated that the Town's Finance Director is out and we were not able to retrieve the revenue for BRAAC, but it is not too much different from last month's revenue. Bo then mentioned light poles, and stated that BRAAC should create a light pole fundraiser. Bo stated that he was told to replace a light pole it would cost approximately \$661.00 and there are 16 poles that would hold hanging baskets. Bo asked if we could create a donor letter as a fundraiser to replace the light poles. Bo also mentioned that he would like to make a proposal to the BRAAC committee and to Town Council to design a plan to put longer and narrower planters in front of Kilwin's to divert kids from running into Main Street and keep them on the sidewalk. Deborah suggested a concern that she has about having no trash cans on Sunset Drive. Deborah stated that there is trash everywhere down Sunset, but nowhere to throw the trash away. Bo asked how much do the trash cans in Memorial Park cost. Jennifer stated that the metal trash cans are expensive. Deborah mentioned that Parks and Recreation staff monitor the trash cans in Memorial Park, see which ones do not get used as much, and move the trash cans that are barely used and put them on Sunset Drive. Bo referred to the bond that just got passed and asked if trash cans could be purchased through that. Jennifer stated that there are certain stipulations and criteria for the bond that we have to follow to be able to use the money, and the money is specifically to be used for the parks in Town. Chris mentioned that the poles will not be a part of the bond either, and if we cannot get the new poles approved, then we need to figure out a new option for the poles because bigger baskets will not be feasible. Melissa stated that once we do figure out the light pole situation, the Chamber would like to hang flags for each festival, season, and holiday. She also asked if the new poles will be able to support the flags. Jennifer stated that with the weather and wind we have, the flags may not be able to handle the weather. Melissa affirmed that there are weather ready flags that have slits in them for areas with high wind, and also the businesses can sponsor and supply the flags without the Town having to pay for them. Bo mentioned to Melissa that she look into that option with the Chamber. Jennifer stated that the budget still needs approval. Deborah made a motion to approve the budget, Curt seconded it, and it was unanimous, approved.

Legacy Garden Quotes- Bo stated that the garden looks great and that the contractor did a great job avoiding traffic while working on it. Chris stated that they did the scope of work; however there are some things that will have to be done in the spring once plants start blooming. Melissa wanted to make sure that everyone on the board was aware that the approval from Town Council to pay half of the bill came out of Parks and Recreation's budget. Curt asked how the budget is decided and if there are guidelines as to how and what money is spent. Jennifer stated that during budget time she requests money based on projects. Once the budget is approved if there are any changes then she has to figure out what project to postpone in order to pay for an unexpected item. Curt asked why the Town

and BRAAC paid for this when the garden is on private property. Bo stated that the property owners would probably be willing to help if they were asked and Bo mentioned writing a letter to the property owners but would like to sit down with Scott first. Melissa then asked if we had a quote for the spring clean up and Chris stated no but it would most likely be less than the fall clean up. Deborah suggested that Chris go ahead and ask for a quote for a spring clean up so we would know what kind of cost to expect.

American Legion- Jennifer stated that three bids were received for the renovation of the American Legion and after all the money that was donated and pledged to this project, the Town was about \$85,000 short. She said that Town Council members Albert Yount and Ray Pickett seemed to agree that with the direction of Scott the remainder of the money could be found to move forward with the project. Bo asked that the \$5,000 that BRAAC pledged be shown on next month's budget update.

Town Hall Update- Jennifer stated that Chris has placed the boulders in front of Town Hall and has installed the lights for up lighting the blue spruce; however more lights would have to be purchased because it is not bright enough to fully light the entire tree. She also stated that the Town has begun informing residents of the plan to light the tree in the Town newsletter, a potential newspaper article, and Mayor J.B. Lawrence will announce it before the lighting occurs. Chris stated that the next phase is to finish planting and to add sod to certain small areas that would not affect the tree.

Bond Referendum Update- Jennifer handed out a sheet that showed how many Blowing Rock residents voted and how many voted for the bonds and how many against. She explained that all of the bonds passed and that the Town has 7 years to spend the money and could possibly get an extension of 3 more years. Curt asked if we spend the entire one million at one time or split it up and Jennifer responded that projects would have to be looked at and prioritized over the seven year period because the taxpayers pay it back by raising taxes each year to cover money spent from the bond.

Other Business- Deborah mentioned that David Rogers with the Blowing Rock News was going to dedicate a page to BRAAC to tell what is going on with BRAAC and information about projects. It was mentioned that there need to be facts about the landscaping that takes place and to show the hard work that Chris does for the Town which in turn explains where the money is going that residents donate.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled to be held Thursday, December 4, 2014 at Town Hall at 5:30 p.m.