

Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission  
Minutes  
April 6, 2017

BRAAC Members Attending: Curt Andrews, Bo Henderson, Melissa Pickett

BRAAC Members Absent: Deborah McDowell and Jennifer Chick

Staff Members: Jennifer Brown, Chris Pate, Ed Evans, and Autumn Goheen

This meeting was called to order by Bo at 5:37 p.m.

**Approve January 5, 2017 Minutes:** Melissa made a motion to approve the minutes, Curt seconded, and it was a unanimous vote to approve.

**Chairman and Vice-Chairman:** Melissa volunteered to serve at BRAAC Chairman and Bo expressed his interest in continuing his role of Vice-Chairman. Bo made a motion to approve the new appointments, Curt seconded, and it was a unanimous vote to approve.

**Budget Update/Annual Fundraising Collection/Hanging Basket Collection:** To date \$27,355 has been collected and \$5,244.27 has been spent. Out of fund balance, the oak tree in Memorial Park, the Broyhill Rock Wall, and Ez-Go have been purchased. Jennifer stated that a large sum will be spent soon on flower orders. Curt asked if separating and itemizing the letter to include hanging baskets and planters helped with donations. Jennifer stated she believes this did have a positive impact on donations. Bo asked when the hanging baskets will go out and Chris stated after Mother's Day. There will be approximately 86 baskets this year but possibly more as the Police Department has expressed interest in purchasing some. Bo asked if more planters were being purchased and Chris responded by stating he is still identifying possible locations for planters, however benches and recycling bins also must go out so there may not be room for more.

Bo stated he had been approached by numerous people complimenting the rock work that has been done in Broyhill Park. Both Ed and Bo have been asked if the rock work will continue around the entire lake. Chris stated that what has been done was approximately \$30K and funding would need to be secured to continue around the perimeter of the lake. Melissa asked if dredging will take place this year. Ed stated no one bid on the project and he is waiting to hear from a few more companies before we will know for sure. He continued to state the funding is coming from the bond so it may take place next year.

**Clean-Up Day 5-6-2017:** Jennifer suggested the use of the Recreation Center for Clean-Up Day as the American Legion is rented on that date. Jennifer then posed the question of if lunch should be provided this year. Curt suggested we forego providing lunch this year as the numbers for participation for last year did not support the need to provide food. Autumn suggested partnering with a local business to provide a discounted meal or beverage for participating in the Clean-Up Day event and Melissa thought that was a great idea. Curt and Bo supported this idea and Melissa volunteered to facilitate the logistics. Curt then asked what advantages for this event would we gain by partnering with various groups throughout town. Jennifer stated it would be a great idea to pursue. Bo volunteered to craft an editorial to advertise for Clean-Up Day as well as a "Thank You" for donations to BRAAC and for hanging baskets and planters to recruit more participants.

**Garden Club:** Jennifer stated that the Garden Club has approached Chris and expressed interest in partnering with BRAAC and having a liaison. They requested that BRAAC have a member attend the Garden Club meetings to bridge the communication gap. Bo said that he would volunteer to be the liaison. Chris stated that himself and Ricky will be attending the May Garden Club meeting to discuss their goals and relationship. After further discussion, the board agreed on the need to find more strong community partners to be invested in BRAAC.

**By-laws Discussion & Update:** Jennifer distributed a copy of the updated ordinance that had been approved by Town Council at retreat. She stated that BRAAC is officially a 5-member board requiring only 3 members for a quorum. Curt asked if Town Council had concerns regarding the stability and longevity of BRAAC because of the request to reduce the number of board members. Melissa stated the reduction of members is not unique to BRAAC and that other Town boards were experiencing the same difficulties in recruiting participation. Bo added that it's not unique to Blowing Rock but he's seen this trend across various municipalities.

Bo suggested the removal of the Secretary and Treasurer duties listed in the ordinance in lieu of Chair and Vice-Chair positions. Curt also suggested the removal of spring and fall planting days from the ordinance since they are currently not being conducted. Curt, Melissa and Jennifer were in support of the change. Curt then addressed page 2, numbers 2 and 4, of the ordinance and asked if other groups were aware of the role and responsibilities of BRAAC. Melissa stated that in previous years BRAAC was not a Town organization and now that BRAAC is an official Town board, the citizenry needs to be educated on the roles and responsibilities. After further discussion, the decision was made to add information regarding the role of BRAAC to the upcoming editorial to be written by Bo. Jennifer stated that in the future, any plans dealing with the beautification of Blowing Rock will be directed to BRAAC for approval before such projects and plans are presented to Town Council. Chris recommended that the needs of the Town should be taken into consideration when reviewing projects to ensure that needs are being met before miscellaneous wants.

Melissa inquired about the definition of "faithful attendance" in the ordinance under membership and vacancies. Jennifer stated that attendance records are given to Town Council prior to retreat and she is unsure of what council considers "faithful attendance" to be. Ed recommended providing clarification by placing concrete numbers in the ordinance with an understanding of extenuating circumstances such as illness. Curt stated that quality of participation should also be considered in this matter as to him, attendance isn't as important as quality of participation. Ed suggested all board members submit their adjustments to the wording for discussion at the next BRAAC meeting. There was then discussion regarding the signing of a Mission, Ordinance and Ethics Statement upon appointment to BRAAC in the future.

Curt addressed Article 3, Section 1- Ex Officio non-voting members, asking about increasing participation in BRAAC. Melissa stated that Barbara holds lifetime member voting rights and acknowledged the presence of interested in participation among non-citizens. Ed stated Town Council would have to decide if non-citizens would be invited to serve as non-voting members.

**Other Business:** Bo requested the board be given copies of the tree survey that was completed last year to use as an education tool throughout the community to highlight the need of tree removal in Memorial Park. Curt stated that this is a safety issue and it's not just about park esthetics anymore. Bo

suggested the replacement trees be of various species to avoid the occurrence of simultaneous death in the future.

Jennifer discussed the Planning Grant awarded to the Town. Autumn stated the site visits for the creation of a conceptual design for the stairs and bank surrounding the American Legion will begin in May. This conceptual design will consider the design of Broyhill Park and provide congruency. Jennifer continued to discuss the potential of monies donated by the Broyhill Foundation funding the implementation of this project and that a presentation will be made to BRAAC in the future.

Jennifer stated the need of a "Thank You" letter to be sent to the Broyhill Foundation including photos of the work that has been completed in Broyhill Park. Melissa suggested we create a list of future projects to highlight what the second \$30,000 donation will go towards.

Chris stated he has spoken to Mary Bost Gray regarding Annie Cannon. He is planning a meeting with her to discuss renovations he would like to see done. He has also obtained pricing for the wall that has been proposed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 4, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.