

MINUTES
Town of Blowing Rock
Town Council Meeting
February 12, 2019

The Town of Blowing Rock Town Council met in regular session on Tuesday, February 12, 2019, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting took place at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street, Blowing Rock, N.C. Present were Mayor Charlie Sellers, Mayor Pro-tem Albert Yount and Council Members Jim Steele, Sue Sweeting, Doug Matheson and Virginia Powell. Others in attendance were Interim Town Manager Jim Freeman, Town Attorney Allen Moseley, Town Engineer Doug Chapman from McGill Associates, Finance Officer Nicole Norman, Interim Public Works and Utilities Director Matt Blackburn, Fire Chief Kent Graham, Interim Police Chief Aaron Miller, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Building Inspector John Warren, Parks & Recreation Director Jennifer Brown and Town Clerk Hilari Hubner, who recorded the minutes.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sellers called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

The Pledge of Allegiance

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mayor Pro-Tem Yount made a motion to adopt the agenda, seconded by Council Member Sweeting. Unanimously approved.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Paul McGill 516 Morninside Dr. spoke on behalf of St Mary of the Hills Episcopal Church. Mr. McGill advised in the past the church has always been able to use the parking spots across from the church on Main Street which are now stripped and marked for motorcycle parking. Mr. McGill asked the board to review and consider permitting the church to use those spaces on Sunday mornings, weddings and funerals that are held at the church.

Ian Broadhand 110 Sunset Drive spoke on behalf of several businesses located on Sunset Drive. He advised they would like for Council to consider not closing Sunset Drive as a budgetary measure for the upcoming streetscape project. He further advised if this were to happen at least two of the business will most likely close and relocate to another location.

Mayor Sellers thanked the citizens for their input.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council Member Sweeting made a motion to approve the minutes for the regularly scheduled meeting held on January 8, 2019, seconded by Council Member Matheson.

Council Member Sweeting made a motion to approve the minutes from the Retreat January 20-22, 2019 with the following correction: page 15 regarding the art policy, the original one from September 2017 was the one approved, not the one with the additions from BRAAC", seconded by Council Member Matheson. Unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. Budget Amendment Ordinance #2019-04 Recreation Center & Memorial Park**

Budget Amendment Ordinance to account for various items. **Budget Amendment Ordinance#2019-02 – Attachment A**

2. Tax Release - #2018 – 07 – Ghosn

Various tax adjustments over time become apparent and present themselves in the form of requests for releases (adjustments). One tax release totaling \$506.98 has been identified for Council approval. **Tax Release – Attachment B**

Council Member Steele made a motion to approve consent agenda as presented, seconded by Council Member Matheson. Unanimously approved.

Public Hearing

1. Land Use Ordinance Amendment Central Business and Town Development Standards

Planning Director Kevin Rothrock presented background of the request. At the request of Town Council at the June 25 mid-year retreat and during the August 2018 Planning Board meeting, an ad hoc subcommittee was formed to study the current development standards for Central Business and Town Center. The subcommittee was also asked to consider future development potential for the 321 Bypass and the standards that would govern that development.

Over the past several months, the subcommittee consisting of Pete Gherini, Mike Page, Wes Carter and David Harwood, met to discuss the development standards in downtown. The group also incited Sue Glenn as she had compiled substantial research on building heights and floor area ratios (FARs) in the downtown.

The group walked Main Street to visually understand the existing conditions of building heights, setbacks, sidewalk widths, mass, landscaping, design, etc. The group even had an opportunity to walk inside the JW Tweeds building to examine the three (3) levels of the building and the mezzanine constructed on the main floor. This building measures thirty-one (31) feet high from the sidewalk elevation and is the tallest building on the east side of Main Street. The walk proved to be beneficial to more closely understand the relationship of buildings along both sides of Main Street and to conclude that east and west Main Street have a different character. The 2014 Comprehensive Plan urges a recognition of the different sides of Main Street by establishing development standards that are unique to each.

Beyond the discussion of measurable standards (height, setback, etc.), staff introduced the idea of eliminating residential density in the CB and TC districts. The thought is that if the building mass is controlled by height and setbacks and parking, why does it matter how many residential dwelling units are on the building? If a hotel can be built under the same height/setback standards at 21-22 rooms/acre, why not mixed-use building with a residential density equal to that of a hotel? Although hotels and residential dwelling units are different in terms of purpose, the same commercial design, setback, height, landscaping, parking, and storm water standards apply to both types of construction. All of these standards limit the size and mass of the building, not just residential density. The 2014 Comprehensive Plan recommends allowing at least eight (8) residential units per acre in downtown where residential developments are allowed. This proposed ordinance takes that a step farther and suggests eliminating the residential density restriction altogether with other development standards limiting building mass and scale.

Mr. Rothrock reviewed the draft ordinance amendment with Council.

Planning Board Chairman David Harwood thanked the Planning Board and Sub-committee for all their hard work they have put into this. Mr. Harwood advised this task wasn't something that had been taken

lightly and indeed a lot of hard work had gone into it. He also thanked Ms. Sue Glenn for her help as well as Mr. Rothrock and Planning and Zoning staff.

Mr. Harwood explained that Planning Board's "Marching Orders" were to look at these development standards and make recommendations to Council, which is what he feels Planning Board has done. Mr. Harwood further explained he felt the only reason this had come for review is because the Town was receiving lots of variance requests. Some of the variance request had been for density and height. So that gave rise for the Town to look at the developmental standards keeping with the Comprehensive Plan, and are they hampering development, are they encouraging development, so that was all taken into consideration. Mr. Harwood noted that the Town is not required to have a Comprehensive Plan, only zoning regulations and so thus the Comprehensive Plan is a guideline. He further noted that it should be the Town's primary tool. Mr. Harwood advised this is what the Planning Board and Sub-committee used for their "marching orders".

Mr. Harwood reviewed some photo examples via PowerPoint.

Council Member Steele asked Mr. Harwood to review a few points from his letter he had written.

Mr. Harwood gave the definition of Density: the number of units in a given area. Mr. Harwood stated there had been number of calls and emails floating around with this "hot topic" that the elimination of residential density in these two (2) zoning districts would somehow be unrestrained in their size and mass is just inaccurate. Because of the other development standards the Town has and controls is why that is inaccurate.

Council Members Matheson and Powell had a few questions about parking and the ability for owners to pay into the parking fund in lieu of providing enough parking spaces.

Mr. Harwood asked them to remember anything in these two (2) districts, even if it 100% complies with the code must still go through the CUP process. He explained Mr. Rothrock cannot just "wave his wand" and administratively approve them, they absolutely must come through the CUP process regardless if a variance is needed or not. He further explained at that point Council can have the control of the parking issue.

Council Member Matheson stated to Mr. Harwood, Planning Board was given marching orders and asked if he felt like they came up with the best plan that could have been come up with. Furthermore, if Planning Board didn't have marching orders would they have come up with the same plan. Mr. Harwood advised he felt the code was unnecessarily complicated that it needed some attention and to be updated. He further advised if anything the changes would simplify and make easier for potential investors/developers.

Mayor Sellers asked how this would benefit our Town. Mr. Harwood posed the question is the Town growing or dying, and what can be done to facilitate the growth and keep the Village Character. He further stated the Town is going to continue to change and we have things in place to protect the commercial standards.

Mr. Rothrock commented not many changes are being posed to the ordinance, just a couple of "tweaks" and the biggest is the residential change.

Council Member Sweeting asked hypothetically if someone were to purchase the Sunset Tee's and Hattery building with the current standards could they tear the building down and build a much taller building back. Mr. Rothrock advised they could.

Mayor Pro-Tem Yount stated he first wanted to say he didn't have a "beef" with Mr. Harwood and that density is like Art, which was the last war fought. He further stated a few facts are:

- Since 2012 Council has approved over \$48 million dollars' worth of downtown construction
- Since 2013 the Town has had nineteen (19) accommodations downtown. The first was best small Town in North Carolina by Southern Living and the last was the greatest place in North Carolina.

Mayor Pro-Tem Yount advised he thinks we are doing pretty good.

Mayor Sellers opened the floor for public comment.

Brian Beaty, 518 Greenhill Circle spoke, he advised he is a part time resident and plans on being a full-time resident in the future. He further advised that he was on Council, was Mayor Pro-Tem and on Planning Board in Marvin, NC. He explained he had dealt with every type of developer that you could think of. What really brought him to the meeting was the idea that Council would just "throw away residential". He explained from his point of view, developers would come in and completely tear down and re-do the downtown and not think twice about it. He gave an example of the town of Waxhaw, NC and how developers came in and ruined that quaint little Town. Mr. Beaty conclude it is not worth it and felt Council would lose power if they chose to go through with the changes.

Marshall Sealey, 268 Norwood Circle representing the Blowing Rock Civic Association (BRCA). Mr. Sealey advised BRCA had legal concerns; no public notice of the formation and activities of sub-committee, no meeting minutes from these meetings available for public review. Mr. Sealey further advised BRCA feels there is insufficient if any impact analysis on the proposed changes. Mr. Sealey advised the final report needs to identify how the proposed changes implement the comprehensive plan. He further advised there are conversations that need to happen first, and this meeting was originally scheduled for January until BRCA said "wait nobody has seen this yet". Mr. Sealey further advised what the Town currently has works, there are projects going on, ones that are ready to start and some that have been put on hold and that all have gone through the proper process, which is a positive. He commented Council's controlled what's happened and that is the way it needs to be. Mr. Sealey asked how do the proposed changes improve the public health, safety and welfare. Mr. Sealey further asked what problems these proposed changes solve. BRCA feels the code does what it needs to do. Mr. Sealey advised many residents are concerned these changes are being proposed when the majority of the residents are not here. He further advised there is a genuine concern the proposed changes will change the Town's appearance. Mr. Sealey commented green space is what attracts visitors and change takes control out of Council's hands. Mr. Sealey concluded that BRCA sees no need currently for any changes to the Town Land Use Code.

Bill Carter, 401 Tarry Acres Circle advised he had carefully read and studied the proposed changes and cannot see from a professional stand point where they would advance the welfare or goodwill and desirability of the village and visitors to our village. Mr. Carter advised a few of his concerns are: leave our village with a stacking of rental units on small pieces of property, as he understands from professional planners' standpoints the elimination of density is almost unheard of, increased traffic, proposed change would have a reduction in greenspace. Mr. Carter explained our residents and visitors come to enjoy our beautiful mountains, trees, greenery, cool breeze and ambiance. Mr. Carter mentioned the proposed changes effect the building heights and would cause what he referred to as a "jack o lantern effect". Mr. Carter further advised Blowing Rock has something special here and reminded of Jan Caron's famous book series "Midford" and how that "dream" is what draws people into our village. In conclusion Mr. Carter stated the steak holders here task Council with protecting what we have here.

Emma Carol Dabbs, 190 Mayview Rock Road advised her and her family have a long history here in Blowing Rock. Ms. Dabbs explained she felt Mr. Harwood's statement about change, do you want to be in the past or present. She would like to just be in every time frame Blowing Rock has ever been in. She concluded with the statement "Council, we are counting on you".

Linda Lassiter, 559 Morningside Dr. stated, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it".

Ann Rhyne, 148 Globe Road advised her thoughts are if we end up with more and more residential downtown and less shops, what are or day trippers going to do. She explained they come to walk the streets downtown, sit in the park and eat their ice cream cones. She reiterated that is what they come for and if we destroy that part of our town then we are losing those people.

Bunky Davant 378 Chestnut Circle stated he has lived in Blowing Rock since 1948, he left briefly and came back forty-three (43) years ago to practice medicine. Mr. Davant advised he spent fifteen (15) years on Planning Board and of those years about half of it was as Planning Board Chairman. He further advised that for the past six (6) years he has served on Board of Adjustments as Chairman. Mr. Davant advised he said all that because he knows what the Boards have been going through with variances and such. Mr. Davant used a hypothetical scenario of increasing residency could lead to issues with parking problems, noise and destruction issues. Mr. Davant stated he felt it would be a grave mistake to turn decisions of what is to be built in Blowing Rock over to anyone other than an elected board. He further stated the people elected Council to make these decisions.

Michael Moore, the managing partner for the Martin House, advised he has owned that property since 1984 and had a lot of deep feelings for Blowing Rock. Mr. Moore explained he felt the proposals are well meant, but think they have some unfortunate consequences. Mr. Moore motioned parking was a huge problem as it's something that cannot be controlled now and is only going to get worse. Mr. Moore stated he hoped Council will take the citizens comments seriously.

Jim McDowell, 827 Main Street stated he personally knows almost everyone on Planning Board and there are no citizens in this Town that love the Town more than the people on that Board. He further stated he wanted the Town Council to be very careful what they ask for because these Board members have given a lot of their time, energy and effort into this task. He further stated he doesn't like to see someone working so hard and when it's not exactly what you want it's a waste of their time.

Sue Glenn, 5970 Blowing Rock Blvd advised she is an active real estate broker in Blowing Rock since 1972. Ms. Glenn advised she has done a lot of work and research on a density study for the downtown which she had copies she made available to anyone in the public who wanted one. Ms. Glenn reviewed some history of the building standards downtown. She advised in August at the Planning Board meeting, the Board members discussed the assignment they had been given and asked for volunteers for a sub-committee to examine the ordinance and make recommendations. She explained this came at the end of the meeting and she was the only person from the public left in the audience and reiterated this was in August. She further explained because of her interest and the work she had put into these issues, Mr. Harwood asked her to sit in sub-committee sessions. Ms. Glenn stated she was sure Mr. Harwood would have been glad to include anyone else if they would have expressed interest to be included. Ms. Glenn said at the December Planning Board meeting the board met to consider the proposal and voted on it, other than a few Council Members, she was again the only one from the public left in the audience when the vote came out. Ms. Glenn stated all these meetings are public meetings, there is no conspiracy to do something behind someone's back. She has heard rumors that there is someone plotting to get the ordinances changed so that big outside developers can come in and make big changes to our Town, which is not economically viable. She stated, "this is a myth and a boogie man". Ms. Glenn explained what makes Blowing Rock commercially attractive is it's well maintained, easily walkable village, with

unique shops, good restaurants and near by lodging. She recognized that inadequate parking is a persistent complaint. She further explained the seasonal nature of our economy is still very limiting for how much someone is willing to invest in commercial property in our Town. She commented "there is not a pot of gold here unless you brought it with you in the first place". The Planning Board has tackled a "messy" ordinance that did not reflect what the Town actually have and actually prize in this community as well as give good direction for the community's future development. She stated she believes Planning Board has done an excellent job proposing changes to the ordinance and felt it should be adopted. Ms. Glenn concluded, in her opinion, the idea that Council would give up their control if these changes were to be adopted is simply not true.

GiGi Poole, 147 Dogwood Lane thanked everyone for the work they had done and thanked Council for reading over and studying the changes. She explained the questions she asks about this topic is; what's the motivation, have there been too many variance requests, is there a feeling of not wanting to have as many meetings or is it better to just have a blanket statement rather than going back and forth with developers. Ms. Poole stated in her opinion she feels Council would lose control. She further stated the citizens are the ones who elected the Council Members and put their trust and faith in each of them. She advised she wanted to personally thank Council and let them know how much she appreciates them and for all the time they put into all they do for the Town, as she knows they put a lot of time and energy into various issues. Ms. Poole cautioned Council to think about what has happened in the two Towns mentioned, Marvin and Waxhaw, and to think about the changes that have happened in Boone and not let those same things happen to Blowing Rock. Ms. Poole further reminded Council that a substantial amount of the revenue that Blowing Rock receives from residents that are not here this time of year. Ms. Poole further commented she had just learned the initial request was asked for in August and then was supposed to be discussed in January and felt this was an important topic. She explained part of the 2014 comprehensive plan was to embrace change while remaining vigilant to ensure our Town's unique character and quality of life is not compromised. She further explained the Town is in a memorable setting that cannot be duplicated elsewhere so maybe that means "you don't have certain things". Ms. Poole asked Council to deny the ordinance request.

Joe Bogdahn, 272 Dogwood Lane gave some of his background in working for the past ten (10) years with a group in Winter Haven, FL on bringing their downtown back to life. Mr. Bogdahn advised he felt you can design and legislate charm. He stated change is happening and it happens all the time, but if you can manage the change and do it right, that is what is important. He further stated that any decision that the Town makes on the development standpoint is "a hundred-year decision" and these are important decisions. He added that he doesn't know if the proposed changes are good for Blowing Rock or if they are bad for Blowing Rock, but he knows there are experts out there that you can engage as you go through the process and follow the comprehensive process. Blowing Rock is a special place and how can the Town go forward and maintain the character of the Town. Mr. Bogdahn stated everyone all agrees Blowing Rock is a special place and the Chamber refers to it as the "Crown of the Blue Ridge". He further stated he would suggest Council deny the ordinance, but don't just ignore it. Mr. Bogdahn agreed the worse thing that can be done is to give someone a task and then "beat them over the head with it" because they did it for you, but at the same time think about how can we maintain the character going forward.

John Aldridge, 292 Morris Street stated he was a bit confused and mystified. He said he agreed with most of the statements that had been said and that one thing is for certain, everyone in the room adores this Town. He advised change is going to happen, it's not a question of if it will or if it won't, it's going to happen. So the question is how are we going to manage that change. Mr. Aldridge advised he felt he knows the opinions and felt the chances are this will be denied or tabled, but he wanted to urge Council to look at how to enhance the likelihood that the Town will have quality down residential. He further advised he felt we have gotten off track, and that the in Town residential is something that is going on in

Towns and villages all across the country. Mr. Aldridge stated he felt there was a “boogie man” that has been created here that this change is going to cause the Town to lose total control. He further stated that is just not true, that any development has to go through the proper planning process and come through Council. He advised we have got to ask ourselves what our goal is. Mr. Aldridge advised this is going to be developed regardless as it is commercial property and that retail develops around residential homes. He gave the example of a European village where you have both the residential and commercial and residents can walk to the shops, market, restaurants etc. He further advised he personally liked this style, it’s safer and has charm. He advised there is a misunderstanding and the vision needs to be looked at. Mr. Aldridge concluded that he urged Council that regardless of what they do, lets look at what we are trying to do and not let fear and misinformation drive the process.

Mayor Sellers asked if there were any further comments or questions. With nobody having any further questions or comments, Council Member Sweeting made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Council Member Matheson. Unanimously approved.

Mayor Sellers reviewed with Council the following options for them to consider:

- a. Approve “or” disapprove the proposed amendment as presented; or
- b. Referencing public comments or majority of voiced Council members concerns, provide the Planning Board the opportunity to assess/validate such and if valid, later present a revised ordinance amendment recommendation to Council; or
- c. Table action to next month’s March regular meeting in order for Council to have time to assess this evening’s presented information.

Council Member Sweeting advised she would like to thank the Planning Board and sub-committee and the reason this was sent to them was because Council had been criticized as a Board for the number of variances that were being allowed or at least being considered for development. This was given to Planning Board to look at the density and height and whether or not there was a issue with this. Council Member Sweeting advised she had concluded that she’s not so sure variances are not a good thing. She advised they allow residential people to be involved in the process and they can help shape what our Town looks like. Council Member Sweeting further advised she does have concerns about decreasing green space from 75% to 40% and she’s concerned of areas where there are lower height buildings could allow to 35-foot buildings next to them. The Neaco Building was one she was concerned about.

Council Member Sweeting made a motion to deny the ordinance to amend the Town of Blowing Rock Land Use Code as presented, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Yount. Unanimously approved.

The following amendment to the motion was made by Council Member Sweeting at the March 12, 2019 meeting: Council Member Sweeting also requested Council look at the vision for downtown and the vision for 321 Bypass and consider asking experts to help with the vision. This motion was seconded by Council Member Matheson, unanimously approved.

Further Discussion:

Council Member Steele advised the purpose of this meeting and why Council had chosen to do it the way they did was to hear exactly what the Planning Board was proposing, involve the public and then appropriately act. He further advised he hoped that everyone had learned something and had learned more than they knew prior to the meeting. Council Member Steele stated what Council has been doing

the last 12-18 years is trying to preserve the Town Center as well as the Central Business areas. He further stated, there will be no “big box” stores, there aren’t any fast food restaurants in this Town and that is because of Council. Council Member Steele commented everyone on this Council loves this Town and there is not enough money for a developer to “buy us”. Council Member Steele advised if any changes were going to be made to the code, it’s going to be better than what is in place right now and will protect what we have right now or it’s not going to be done.

Council Member Steele admitted things do change or it dies, and he is not interested in our Town dying. He explained change must happen, but it has to be managed and if that means “piece milling it” then that is what will have to be done. He further explained one of the marvelous things about our downtown is there are choices, there is residential and commercial, and the charm is we have choices.

Mayor Pro-Tem Yount advised he has been in this Town a long time and he has gotten almost one hundred (100) emails/text and that is not including the contacts at the Post Office and Food Lion. He further advised he’s been through dogs in the park and guns in the park, and he thought he had seen it all. Mayor Pro-Tem Yount stated he has had more contacts over this topic than dogs and guns put together. He further stated that he heard people speaking from the heart and that is what it is all about.

Mayor Sellers thanked everyone for their comments and input, that it says a lot about our community.

Council Member Matheson advised he would like to thank Mr. Harwood, Mr. Rothrock and the sub-committee for their hard work. He acknowledged the Town is due for a comprehensive plan update and he would like to urge Council to take into consideration what Planning Board has brought back. Council Member Matheson stated he took to heart what Mr. McDowell said about not assigning these committees a task if you don’t want to act on it. He further stated that he hoped when Council meets to do the five (5) year comprehensive update that there will be a group as big as this crowd.

With no further discussion the motion stood.

To date the Town Clerk had received nine (9) emails in reference to the proposed Land Use Code amendment. (Tim Gupton, Ken and Donna Lewis, Kelly Smith, Patty Butler, Mark Greene, Jim Bryant, Beth Tuttle, Jim Butler and Raleigh “Lee” Greene).

Council took a 15-minute recess.

Agenda Items:

1. FY 2018-19 Financial Audit Presentation

Misty Watson presented Council with an audit presentation via Power Point.

Council Member Steele made a motion to accept the FY 2018-2019 Audit, seconded by Council Member Matheson. **Attachment C – FY 2018-19 Financial Audit Presentation**

2. Monthly Financial Presentation

Finance Officer Nicole Norman provided a monthly financial overview for the month end January 2019. Council had no questions or concerns and thanked Ms. Norman for her presentation.

3. Board Appointments

Council Members voted on each Board appointment by ballot. The following appointments were made:

Planning Board: Mike Page and Sam Glover

Board of Adjustment: Eli Baxter “EB” Springs and Tom Dixon

ABC Board: Jerry Starnes

TDA: Kevin Walker and Greg Tarbutton

BRAAC: Bo Henderson

Council Member Sweeting made a motion to approve the newly appointed board members, seconded by Council Member Powell. Unanimously approved.

4. Sunset Drive Street Scape Project

Town Engineer Doug Chapman stated at the Council Retreat in January he presented Council the information on the bids that were received for the Sunset streetscape project that included water and sewer replacement. He advised that the lowest bidder was Iron Mountain Construction. Mr. Chapman explained they had gone back to the contractor to reduce some of the costs. Mr. Chapman reviewed and explained with Council some of the cost saving options:

- Lower Unit Prices - \$53,229
- Segmental Block Retaining Wall in lieu of Concrete - \$88,800
- Block by Block Road Closure - \$45,000
- Delete Water Line Crossing Main Street - \$29,604
- Remove 2' Cobble Paver Strip - \$86,630
- Remove Pavers Sunset/Ransom - \$13,966
- Tree Removal (29) by Town Staff - \$38,280
- Extend Sewer South on Ransom - \$43,360

Mr. Chapman advised he was tasked with finding cost saving options, he doesn't necessarily feel they are all “good” items, but these are the best cost saving options available.

Mayor Pro-Tem Yount advised he commended Mr. Chapman and felt he had done a good job, but he stands by that he wants to do this project right as it will only be done one time. He further asked if this work would fix the drainage problem at the Baptist Church. Mr. Chapman advised the things in the project related to sewer will help that problem.

Council Member Sweeting asked where exactly the estimates were off since this bid was \$1 million dollars over budget. Mr. Chapman advised it wasn't one particular area, it was all across the board. He explained street scape was higher than water and sewer. A factor could be some contractors don't like to work on streetscape projects because they are more challenging, some it's the location and some is the work load. Mr. Chapman stated over all he felt good about the bids being three (3) competitive bids.

Council Member Powell asked why Mr. Chapman didn't see this change over time. Mr. Chapman advised he never anticipated those prices being so high and with the two lowest bidders being so close in costs it shows they are good competitive bids.

Mayor Pro-Tem Yount advised he was satisfied with the bids.

Ms. Norman reviewed funding options available to bridge the cost cap if Council so chose to go that route.

Ms. Norman mentioned to Council in discussions with the Bond Council as well as the Financial Advisor for the bond funding it was suggested Council needed to use the funds on hand prior to issuing any new debt.

Council Member Sweeting asked Ms. Norman to get to Council what funds are still on hand for Council to have a better idea of what's out there and could perhaps be used for projects.

Council discussed pavers vs grass and the pros and cons to both as well as the Gateway was briefly discussed.

Mayor Pro-Tem Yount restated he didn't want to do this but one time and wanted it to be done right.

Council Member Powell made a motion to save on the following options: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 (a cost savings of \$272,229) with a new contract of \$2,327,932, seconded by Council Member Steele. Unanimously approved.

Council thanked Mr. Chapman and Ms. Norman for their hard work. **Attachment D – Sunset Street Scape Power Point**

5. Council's Retreat Priority Plan Status

Interim Manager Freeman reviewed and advised he was reporting back to Council for their information the priorities and the participants that are responsible for each topic. Council thanked Mr. Freeman.

6. Council 2019 Meeting Calendar

Council reviewed the meeting calendar and it was determined there were several conflicts with the budget work session dates. Council asked Mr. Freeman to review a few dates and let Council know..

OTHER BUSINESS

Interim Manager Freeman briefed Council on the following:

- Legacy Trail Stairs: Street Access & Railing.....This past December, NCLM Risk Management consultant noted that the Legacy Trail stairs accessing onto Main Street posed a potential Town liability risk. Such stairs do not have railing and "directly" accessed onto a street. Thereafter, the Interim Manager requested Public Service to close off such access. Since, some elected officials and staff received citizen inquires desiring to have said access re-opened. On January 31st, the Interim Manager discussed with both Parks & Recreation and Public Works providing cost estimates that could address the potential risk. Upon receipt and review of such, staff can then consider pursuing opening or permanently closing the public access of said trail stair opening. Recent NCLM Insurance Risk Management email concerning this matter is provided as information
- Community Events & Town Involvement...Per some Council members conversation and staff reinforced dialogue, it is the Interim Manager's opinion that the Town should consider establishing a community event application policy. Generally, such printed application would include department reviews & comments, assurances and be

completed before scheduling Council meeting “event date(s)” approval. Assigned to research and draft a community event policy are the Police and Recreation Department Heads. Some background information is provided.

- Surplus Equipment Disposal...Referencing Council’s April 11, 2017 adopted resolution regarding disposal of personal Town property valued at less than \$30,000, please find reported a list of such disposal by the Public Works Department. The Interim Manager authorized the disposal to be by way of GovDeals Auction.
- Recycle Route Change.... Pursuant to Section 14 of the Town’s Recycle Agreement with Republic Services (13 Sept. 2016), please be aware of Republic Services upcoming new recycling route (single) change to March 7th. Flyers notifying residents of the new single Thursday route change are to be handed out by Republic Services on February 22nd. It was also meeting suggested that the change be posted on the Town’s web site.
- Virginia Plan Update.... Per Council’s January Retreat discussion, the Recreation Department received engineer estimated costs to begin implementation of the Virginia Tech Plan behind the tennis courts and building waterproofing of the Police and Recreation. Being that these estimates “significantly exceeded” the remaining \$319,000 +/- of project earmarked bond funds, staff is presently reviewing and reassessing options, including funding source possibilities, prior to seeking Council approval consideration

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Council Member Matheson made a motion to adjourn at 10:30 p.m., seconded by Mayor Pro-term Yount. Unanimously approved.

MAYOR _____
Charlie Sellers

ATTEST _____
Hilari Hubner, Town Clerk

ATTACHMENTS

Budget Amendment Ordinance#2019-02 – Attachment A

Tax Release – Attachment B

Attachment C – FY 2018-19 Financial Audit Presentation

Attachment D – Sunset Street Scape Power Point