



# Around the Rock

Highlights of What's Happening Around Town

Town of Blowing Rock  
Bi-Monthly Newsletter

Volume 8, Issue 3

www.townofblowingrock.com

### Important Numbers

Town Hall.....295-5200  
 Planning & Inspection.....295-5240  
 Water/Sewer/Garbage.....295-5200  
 Parks & Recreation.....295-5222

### Non-Emergency

Police Administration.....295-5212  
 Fire Administration.....295-5220  
 After Hours/Weekend Water or Sewer  
 Emergency.....295-5210  
 Emergency Police & Fire.....911

### Upcoming Meetings

#### Town Council

07/08/2014 5:30 p.m.  
 08/12/2014 5:30 p.m.

#### Planning Board

07/17/2014 5:30 p.m.  
 08/21/2014 5:30 p.m.

#### ABC Board

07/17/2014 3:00 p.m.  
 08/21/2014 3:00 p.m.

#### TDA

07/01/2014 3:30 p.m.

### Upcoming Events

#### Offices Closed for Independence Day:

July 4th

#### Monday Night Concert Series:

July 7th & 21st at 7:00 p.m.  
 August 4th & 18th at 7:00 p.m.



#### Art in the Park:

July 19th & August 16th

#### Charity Horse Show:

July 22nd– August 3rd



#### Kinder Soccer Registration:

Taxpayers– July 28th  
 Open Registration– July 29th

#### Community Foundation's

#### Golf tournament: August 23rd

#### Groovy Nights:

August 10th at 7:00 p.m.  
 August 12th at 7:30 p.m.  
 August 15th at 7:30 p.m.



\*The Community Foundation Golf Tournament and Groovy Nights will be held at the Blowing Rock Country Club.

## *David Anthony "Tony" Jones Selected as New Police Chief*



Tony Jones was selected from a pool of 24 applicants to serve as the Town of Blowing Rock's next Police Chief. Jones relocated from Taylorsville, NC where he served as the Chief of Police for 17 years. Tony became a sworn law enforcement officer in North Carolina in 1988 and began his law enforcement career in Taylorsville in 1989 as a patrol officer. He was promoted to Police Chief in 1997. Some of the programs that he initiated in Taylorsville included a neighborhood traffic safety program, a physical assessment for officers, bicycle patrol, a neighborhood and downtown foot patrol, and a holiday outreach program to coordinate charitable donations of food, toys, and household items to those in need. Tony graduated from Gardner-Webb University in 1996 with a Human Services degree prior to his earning a Masters Degree in Management from Pfeiffer University in 1999. He is currently a member of the NC Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Association of Chiefs of Police, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police. Tony's first day with the Town of Blowing Rock was Tuesday, May 27th.

## *Comprehensive Plan Update*



The Comprehensive Plan Draft will go before Town Council at the July 8, 2014 meeting. Through the plan development process, the following ten high priority areas were identified as being the most important to focus on during plan implementation.

- Planning for Downtown Overhead Utility Relocation
- Middle Fork Greenway Extension (through Town)
- Multi-use path from Downtown to Bass Lake
- Valley Boulevard Gateway Enhancements
- Illustrated Architectural and Site Design Standards
- Complete Downtown Streetscape Project
- Continue Utility Facilities Plan Implementation
- Expand Culture/Arts Use of Town Facilities
- Develop Arts/Cultural Center on Park Ave
- Middle Fork Greenway Completion (to Boone)

## *2014-2015 Budget Year Starts July 1, 2014*

Following three budget work sessions and a public hearing, the Town of Blowing Rock Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Budget was adopted at the June 10, 2014 Town Council meeting. The Recommended Budget and the list of changes, which together constitute the adopted budget, are available on the town website [www.townofblowingrock.com](http://www.townofblowingrock.com).

The FY 2014-2015 Budget totals \$9.4 million, including \$6.2 million for the general government activities, \$1.7 million for the water and sewer operations, and \$1.5 million for capital projects. The budget includes a mix of tax and fee increases to help raise revenues to fund the upcoming budget. Watauga County's property revaluation effective January 1, 2014 resulted in a 2.4% lower tax base town-wide. The tax rate of \$0.287 is necessary to generate the same revenue, referred to as the revenue neutral rate. The tax rate changed beyond the revenue neutral rate of \$0.287 per \$100 value following the Watauga County revaluation to \$0.31 per \$100. This increase results in an additional tax amount owed of \$115.00 per year for a home valued at \$500,000.00. In terms of utility rates, our customers demand for water has been gradually declining over the past decade and our utility customer base has remained fairly steady, offering fewer gallons among which to spread the largely fixed costs of providing dependable water and sewer services. To help ensure the system is able to recover its costs and not be subsidized by tax revenues, there is a \$2.00 base increase for both water and sewer, along with a \$0.25 increase in the per thousand gallon rate for gallons consumed greater than 5,000 per two month billing period. This is expected to increase a typical customer's bill by 5.4%. In helping to streamline the billing process, the current \$37.00 base fee for Non-Benefited Users (NBU) is being eliminated. The interconnection fee of \$1.00 per month is being reduced to \$0.50 as sufficient interconnection revenues have been collected so far to warrant the reduction and still be able to meet the related debt service payment. Please contact Town Hall, 828-295-5200, if you have any questions.

## American Legion Renovation Project

During the June 10th Town Council meeting the American Legion Renovation project received a \$25,000 donation from the Blowing Rock Historical Society and in addition it was announced that the Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission pledged \$5,000 to assist with the landscaping. To help the fundraising process, they suggested donors to the renovation project be provided with the following naming opportunities:

- \$200,000** Entire Building including "The American Legion" as part of the name
- \$100,000** Two opportunities at this level: the Fitness Room and the Multi-Purpose Room
- \$50,000** Outdoor Deck around all three sides
- \$25,000** Kitchen rehabilitation and appliances
- \$10,000** Two opportunities at this level: the Women's and Men's Restrooms

All donation amounts are welcome and are tax deductible. If you would like to contribute, please make your check payable to Town of Blowing Rock and include AL Building in the memo line of your check.

In February, 2014, Town Council officially rejected all bids associated with the American Legion Building Renovation project as they all totaled more than the budgeted funding available for construction. The Town has been awarded a grant of \$142,500 from the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund. Including funds to match the grant of \$142,500, the Town has budgeted \$367,010 for the project. Following design spending related to preparing the project for bidding, the Town has funding of \$331,583 for remaining project expenditures. The goal of the fundraising effort is to raise at least \$211,822. The project has raised \$30,650 controlled/pledged for it thus far. In order to meet the grant requirements, the facility must be open by September 30, 2015 which means the rebidding needs to take place by January, 2015 to allow for bid award and an anticipated six month construction process. The current goal is to assess where the fundraising efforts are at the end of September, 2014 and hopefully put the project back out for bid and begin construction in November, 2014. This timeframe would help reduce the likelihood of conflicts with Art in the Park in 2015. Below is a rendering of the front of the renovated building.



## Mountainleaf

Catellus Group, LLC applied for a conditional use permit to construct a mixed-use project on a 7.359 acre parcel located on the corner of Main Street and Hill Street. They are proposing to build a 112 room hotel with conference space, up to 20 condos, a spa, restaurant and retail space.

## Downtown Parking

The Blowing Rock Police Department has begun its summer parking initiative, enforcing 3 hour parking along Main Street. If more parking time is needed, please use the American Legion Parking Deck, BRAHM Parking Deck or Maple Street Lot.



## Fire House Theatre Project

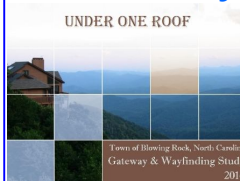


On Tuesday, June 17, 2014 plans for the new Fire House Theatre, that would be located in the old Blowing Rock Fire House on Park Ave, were unveiled in a press conference. The new theatre is planned to have 121 seats, rehearsal space, offices, a box office and lobby. It would be the new year round home for the Ensemble Stage Company. If the fundraising effort goes as planned, Town Council will be presented with final plans in September 2014 and the grand opening of the theatre would be May 1, 2015. Visit [www.firehousetheatre.net](http://www.firehousetheatre.net) for more details on the project, such as a project schedule and naming opportunities of the theatre.

## Chestnut Ridge Post-Acute Care Facility

In 2012 Appalachian Regional Healthcare System was granted a Certificate of Need by the State of North Carolina to build a 112 bed post-acute care facility. On June 17, 2014 the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration awarded the Town \$426,945 of grant funding to help to construct wastewater infrastructure needed to serve the new facility. The groundbreaking ceremony for this facility, located at the intersection of Edmisten Road and US 321 in Blowing Rock, was held June 24, 2014. This new post-acute care facility will save 110 jobs, create 59 new positions and is expected to serve as a catalyst for additional healthcare-related businesses in the future.

## Gateway Project- Under One Roof



In the fall of 2013 the Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce approached ASU about the potential of a gateway project for the entrances to Town along Highway US 321. One of ASU's graduate planning studios completed the analysis and created a presentation and a report, both of which are now on the Town's website [www.townofblowingrock.com](http://www.townofblowingrock.com).

## Do's and Don'ts for Disposal of Grease

Fats, Oils, and Greases aren't just bad for arteries and waistlines; they're bad for sewers, too. Sewer overflows and back-ups can cause health hazards, damage home interiors and threaten the environment. An increasingly common cause of overflows is sewer pipes blocked by grease. Below are some helpful tips to keep in mind when disposing of oil & grease.



- Put oil, grease and food scraps in collection containers
- Remove oil and grease from kitchen utensils, equipment and food preparation areas with hot water and scrapers/towels
- Have grease traps cleaned at least every 30 days
- Wash fryers/griddles, pots/pans and plates with water until oil and grease are removed
- Don't Pour oil and grease down drains (Keep grease out of wash water)
- Don't put grease in buckets in the trash collection

\*Reminder: Please remember when piling debris at the curbside not to block any ditches, culverts, drains, or roadways.