

**MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING  
BOONE TOWN COUNCIL  
FEBRUARY 20, 2009**

A special meeting of the Boone Town Council was called to order at 8:39 a.m., Friday, February 20, 2009, in the Council Chambers, 1500 Blowing Rock Road. Mayor Loretta Clawson presided. Council members present were Mayor Pro-Tem Lynne Mason, Liz Aycock, Stephen Phillips, Rennie Brantz, and Janet Pepin. Staff members present were Town Manager Greg Young, Town Clerk Freida Van Allen, Deputy Town Clerk Kim Brown, Assistant to the Manager Jim Byrne, Finance Director Amy Davis, Human Resources Director Peri Moretz, Public Works Director Blake Brown, Police Chief Bill Post, Public Utilities Director Rick Miller, Development Services Director John Spear, and Fire Chief Reggie Hassler. Town Attorney Sam Furgiuele was also present. Frank Ruggiero and Melanie Davis of Mountains Times Publications were present as well as Tuesdae Rice of the DBDA. Dennis Morgan, representing McLaurin Parking Company, was in attendance. Adrian Tait, Chair of the Community Appearance Commission, was also present.

The purpose of this meeting was the Council's annual retreat.

**CAPITAL PROJECTS/BUDGET REVIEW**

Town Manager Greg Young presented a PowerPoint presentation (**copy permanently on file in Clerk's office**) regarding the following topics:

- \$ Sustainability
- \$ US Post Office Building - King Street - Discussion ensued concerning the necessary repairs to the building, including the need for a heating system update and boiler replacement and a decision concerning the future use of the building.
- \$ Greenway/Wilson Drive - Discussion ensued concerning the redesign of the project to allow for a culvert extension.
- \$ Howard Street - Discussion ensued concerning coordination efforts with utility contractors for underground utility work in the Town of Boone right-of-way. Additionally, discussion occurred concerning pending easements and deed concessions (parking, for example) in regard to the project.
- \$ Horn in the West 2009 Improvements - Storm Water Management
- \$ Storm Water
- \$ ASU Interconnection - The design has been approved, and the project is now being considered by State officials prior to the project being put out for bid. The project is anticipated to be underway by mid-summer 2009.
- \$ Blowing Rock Interconnection - The Town of Boone has yet to receive an grant agreement for this project because documentation from the Town of Blowing Rock is pending.
- \$ Highway 421/King Street Widening Project - Additional funding received by the State has allowed the acquisition of rights-of-way to resume. The project is anticipated to put out for bid in May or June of 2009 instead of the original April bid date.
- \$ Water - Funding from the federal economic stimulus package is anticipated but unsure yet of the amount and for what designated projects.

Mayor Clawson declared a break at 10:15 a.m. Council reconvened at 10:25 a.m.

### **DOWNTOWN BOONE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION**

Council Member Aycock presented a request for additional funding in the amount of \$55,000 to be included in the FY09/10 budget for Phase I of the Downtown Streetscape Project. Council Member Mason stated that an integrated plan for the Downtown project and the Howard Street project should be created. Adrian Tait, Chair of the Community Appearance Commission, stated that the commission will be making a final decision on recommendations for the project at the next regular meeting the last week in February. Town Manager Greg Young pointed out that a change in the amenities for the Howard Street project will be reflected in the costs for engineering services due to redesign of the plans.

### **DOWNTOWN PARKING/PARKING DECK**

Council Member Aycock stated that there is a need for additional parking and/or a parking deck in the downtown area. She suggested that the Town could create more revenue by charging for parking spaces in a parking deck in the downtown area and stated that this issue needs to be investigated. Development Services Director John Spear stated that the ASU Master Plan does include the idea of investigating a shared parking deck with the Town of Boone, possibly located near the First Presbyterian Church. Council Member Mason cautioned that the downtown parking issue warrants careful and thorough planning and coordination.

Council Member Aycock questioned why the Town does not manage the parking control downtown. Town Manager Greg Young explained that parking management was originally handled by the Police Department but that it became apparent that a public/private partnership management of the parking enforcement would be more efficient. Dennis Morgan, of McLaurin Parking, stated that the company has developed a new IT program for better collection of outstanding tickets and fees. He stated that he would like to offer it to the Town of Boone for a trial use but that a change to the Town's parking control ordinances would first be necessary. Council Member Aycock asked to consider not renewing the contract with McLaurin Parking Company or at least to just renew the contract for a shorter time period. Council Member Mason advised that the Council consider the parking issues from all angles and gather such information as cost, ordinance changes, etc. before a decision is made.

### **RENEWABLE ENERGY INITIATIVES - RECYCLING/COMPOSTING POSSIBILITIES & ZERO WASTE**

Council Member Aycock suggested a \$5 Town fee toward a renewable-energy fund for Town buildings. She noted that Fire Station #2 could be updated for solar/thermal energy use. Furthermore, she suggested that money spent on creating and mailing out Town calendars can be used for developing ways to increase energy efficiency. Development Services Director John Spear advised that the Land Use Master Plan recommends establishing a renewable energy plan. Council Member Mason suggested coordination with officials from Watauga County and ASU on efforts for recycling and zero-waste opportunities. Council Member Phillips informed the

Council of an informal committee composed of representatives from Watauga County, ASU, and the Town of Boone who meet to discuss renewable energy initiatives. It was advised that the Town Council make this informal committee an official Town committee.

## **SPACE NEEDS**

### **§ Post Office Renovation**

A lengthy discussion ensued concerning the necessary renovations to the Downtown Post Office building in order to comply with ADA Standards and improve energy efficiency to the building. Council Member Pepin stated that as part of the committee who investigated the purchase of the building, it was the consensus that the building would be best used to house the Development Services Department. She noted that all other departments require more square footage than what is available in the building. Jim Byrne noted that it is not feasible to add to the square footage of the building because of the post office loading dock and the topography at the rear of the property. It was the consensus of the Council to determine which department would make the best possible use of the building. Furthermore, in order to decide the most efficient form of heating system for the building, it is necessary to determine the use of the building. It was determined that the building will be used for Town offices, the specific office to be determined as soon as possible.

### **§ Brown Building**

It was the consensus of the Council that due to structural issues, this property should be the first property made available for sale when possible.

## **COMMUNITY APPEARANCE**

Council Member Mason reiterated the importance of the citizens and residents of this area to take pride in the community. Public Works Director Blake Brown informed the Council that only seven streets remain in the town limits which have not been adopted as part of the Adopt-A-Street program. He stated that he is currently developing a letter for the Mayor to send inquiring why the Department of Corrections does not use workers to collect litter on roads within the town limits. He also stated that he has noticed a decrease in the number of community service workers sent to the Public Works Department. Council Member Brantz suggested more involvement of student groups from ASU would be beneficial. Council Member Mason also suggested working with Appalcart to keep the bus stops clean.

## **GREENSPACE PRESERVATION**

Council Member Mason stated that the Council needs to set goals, devise a plan for priorities in land area for greenspace, and forward the information to the Greenway Committee for further study.

## **OUTSIDE AGENCY FUNDING**

It was the consensus of the Council that transparency is important in deciding which outside agencies receive funding. Furthermore, it was decided that further evaluation is needed regarding funding non-profit agencies and other agencies which provide a service not being provided by the Town.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

It was the consensus of the Council to continue to work together with officials from Watauga County and Advantage West to encourage economic development for the area.

### **ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION**

A brief discussion ensued on current efforts to create more opportunities for alternative transportation including the connection of the Greenway Trail at the new Watauga High School site, the Wilson Drive project, and the installation of walking/hiking trails at the new park off Hunting Lane.

### **TOWN/COUNTY COOPERATIVE OPPORTUNITIES**

Council Member Brantz stated that the Council needs to investigate ways in which the Town of Boone can work together with officials from Watauga County to maximize services including the following:

- \$ recycling/composting
- \$ parks & recreation
- \$ safety
- \$ housing
- \$ cultural activities
- \$ transportation needs
- \$ water.

### **POLICY ENFORCEMENT - SIGN, POLICE, OCCUPANCY, LITTER/COMMUNITY APPEARANCE**

Council Member Mason pointed out that much of the Town's policy enforcement is complaint-driven. She stated that the Town needs to develop a plan for consistent policy enforcement. Development Services Director John Spear did agree that most of the policy violations which his department investigates are complaint-driven; however, he also noted that his personnel do investigate blatant violations when noticed throughout the town, specifically sign violations. Discussion ensued on ways to improve policy enforcement including:

- \$ increased cross-departmental communication
- \$ creation of a process that allows for anonymous complaint filing
- \$ creation of a code enforcement officer position.

### **HISTORIC STRUCTURES**

Council Member Brantz informed the Council that the Historic Preservation Commission is currently developing language for an ordinance which will contain criteria for designating historic structures and districts.

**REVIEW OF APARTMENT RENTAL REGULATIONS**

Discussion ensued concerning enforcement issues. The following ideas were offered for consideration:

- \$ an enforcement officer
- \$ more authority to enforce ordinance regulations
- \$ recording of rental contracts
- \$ requirement of bonds from landlords
- \$ rental property licensing
- \$ rental registry.

**POSSIBLE ITEMS FOR ACTION BY COUNCIL**

**\$ Does Town Council want to re-prioritize funding allocated previously?**

After lengthy discussion, Council agreed by consensus to re-prioritize funding as follows:

**Status of Priorities - Funding**

<b>Project</b>	<b>07/01/08 Balance</b>	<b>Spent Y-T-D</b>	<b>Current Balance</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Action</b>
Capital Reserve - Town Facilities	\$1,465,000	(\$1,252,445)	\$212,555 \$405,000-grant	King Street USPS purchased -09/08	Move \$405,000 to Hwy 421 project
Capital Reserve - Raw Water Land	\$981,000	(\$873,719)	\$107,281	Property closed on 2/18/09	
UDO/Comprehensive Plan Update	\$155,232	(\$107,138)	\$48,094		
Stream Bank Restoration	\$50,000		\$50,000	\$5,000 Mall - ??? Jimmy Smith Park	Move \$40,000 to Hwy 421 project
Park/Greenspace Fund	\$143,500	(\$1,000)	\$142,500	Earnest \$ - Brown Property 01/09	
Sidewalk Expansion	\$100,000		\$100,000		
Howard Street	\$360,000	(\$3,455)	\$356,545	Addn'l engineering - WK Dickson	Move \$168,661 to Hwy 421 project

Clawson-Burnley Park	\$226,050		\$226,050	Funds needed to continue \$176,050	Move \$50,000 to Hwy 421 project
Storm Water	\$48,339		\$48,339	\$12,000 local match required	Move \$36,339 to Hwy 421 project
King Street/Downtown Amenities	\$20,000		\$20,000	\$20,000 DBDA match	
NC DOT Related Projects	\$500,000		\$500,000	\$1,000,000 needed (\$780,000 does not include sidewalks)	\$1.2 million Streetlights, fencing, decorative amenities (increase by \$700,000)

It was the consensus of the Council to allocate 1.2 million dollars to the Highway 421 project.

§ **NC DOT**

- 1. Town Council needs to execute agreement for utility upgrades. Project 4020 still not be let until this agreement is received.**

Upon a motion by Council Member Pepin, seconded by Council Member Mason, Council moved to authorize the Mayor to execute an agreement with the NC DOT for utility upgrades (**copy of contract permanently on file in Clerk's office**).

VOTE: Aye - All  
Nay - None

- 2. Sidewalks to new high school - the Town has been advised that it will receive \$200,000 from the General Assembly; however, at this time no documentation has been received. Cost of the water line relocation associated with this project is approximately \$77,000.**

It was the consensus of the Council that the \$77,000 needed for water line relocation can be included in the \$1.2 million for the Hwy 421 project.

- 3. What direction does the Town Council want to take regarding the Daniel Boone Parkway?**

It was the consensus of the Council to delay action on this issue until information can be received as to the decision made by the Watauga County Board of Commissioners and then to forward this information to the Transportation Committee at the March meeting.

§ **Action on Wilson Drive/Greenway Project**

Upon a motion by Council Member Phillips, seconded by Council Member Aycock, Council moved to proceed with the project in order to prevent grants funds from being canceled and to proceed with the redesign of the project to include a culvert extension to satisfy NC DOT specifications for the Greenway. Council Member Mason stated that the Council should be cautious in applying for these types of grants in the future.

VOTE: Aye - 4 (Aycock, Phillips, Mason, Brantz)  
Nay - 1 (Pepin)

§ **Direction on Engineering Costs for Howard Street Project**

Upon a motion by Council Member Mason, seconded by Council Member Pepin, Council moved to approve \$25,000 for the following engineering costs to WK Dickson for the Howard Street Project and to include all CAC standards:

§  
§  
§  
§  
§

Natural  
Redesig  
Kraut C  
Plan &  
ECSR s

VOTE: Aye - All  
Nay - None

§ **Redefining legislative goals for lobbyists**

It was the consensus of the Council to direct the Town's lobbyist to campaign for the following issues:

- § occupancy tax
- § affordable housing
- § economic stimulus aid.

Council Member Pepin asked that the Town request a letter of support from ASU to actively support and lobby for funds for a new fire truck for the Town of Boone due to safety issues in providing fire protection to ASU properties.

**OTHER MATTERS**

Fire Chief Reggie Hassler informed the Council that one of the fire trucks did not pass the certification test and will require either replacement or refurbishment to meet the certification standards. He stated he will present cost information for both options to the Council.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no other items for consideration, Mayor Clawson adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

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Deputy Town Clerk

Mayor