

Minutes-Special Meeting of the Boone Town Council

Water Use Committee

May 9, 2011

A special meeting of the Boone Town Council was called to order at 5:30 p.m., Monday, May 9, 2011, in the Council Chambers, 1500 Blowing Rock Road. Mayor Loretta Clawson presided. Council Members present were Mayor Pro-Tem Lynne Mason, Jamie Leigh, Rennie Brantz and Andy Ball. Members of the Water Use Committee present were Tim Wilson, Pam Williamson, Patrick Beville, Dr. Kristan Cockerill, Kimberly Marland, and Dr. James Buchanan. Staff Members present were Greg Young- Town Manager, Rick Miller- Public Utilities Director and Lane Weiss- Water Conservation Program Coordinator. Town Attorney Sam Furguiele was also in attendance.

Mayor Clawson called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

Discussion of Proposed Text Amendments to Ordinance 11-01 Pertaining to the ASU/Town of Boone Inter-Connect

Public Utilities Director Rick Miller opened the discussion and noted that this was in regards to the Town of Boone and ASU Interconnect and the amount of water that the Town credits back to ASU for several of its off-site structures, a total of 14,479 gallons per day. Mr. Miller indicated that the credit amount could, at Council's direction, be allocated back into the general allocation pool. Town Attorney Sam Furguiele noted that at the previous Boone Town Council Meeting, Town Council had added water back into the allocation pool as well as in a reserve fund for the old high school property. Mr. Miller expanded that recently Town Council had taken action to place 130,000 gallons back into the allocation pool, with 80,000 of the gallons being earmarked for the old high school property and the other 50,000 gallons going into the 2011 general allocation pool. Committee Member Beville inquired as to the circumstances which lead to the Council finding and adding the additional water to the pool and the earmarking of 80,000 additional gallons per day for the old high school property. Public Utilities Director Rick Miller explained that he had been requested to review current water usage numbers and suggest a reasonable amount of water that could be placed back into the allocation pool. Mr. Miller felt comfortable with 200,000 gallons per day and he took this number to Council; of that number 130,000 gallons per day was allocated: 80,000 to the reserve fund and an additional 50,000 to the general allocation pool. Town Attorney Sam Furguiele added that a request, in the form of a letter to The Mayor and Town Council, had been made by the County Commissioners for a specific amount of water to be placed in a reserve fund for the old high school property. Boone Mayor Loretta Clawson indicated that the allocation in question was conducted under unusual circumstances and Council Member Jamie Leigh noted that it was not a unanimous vote. Mr. Miller clarified that the initial request from the County Commissioners for the old high school property was for 200,000 gallons. He added that at a previous Water Committee meeting 70,000 gallons was set aside for the property and that the last Council Action had added another 80,000 gallons, bringing the total reserve fund to a total of 150,000 gallons per day. Committee Member Beville inquired as to whether or not there were some time constraints or other need for urgency that would explain why the topic was not brought before the Water Committee. Council Member Lynne Mason explained that the Boone Town Council had not received the letter from the Commissioners requesting the reserve amount until after the last Water Committee Meeting. The County Commissioners were expecting a bid from a possible buyer and wanted more specific details regarding the amount of water available for the property. Council Member Mason also noted that at the time the Town of Boone was working with the County Commissioners to secure a letter of support for the reclassification of the New River for the proposed new intake. Committee Member Beville voiced concern that the two different needs were being unnecessarily tied together for approval. After continued discussion, Council Member Leigh noted that when the 130,000 gallons was added back to the allocation pool, there was some confusion concerning the 50,000 gallons that was not earmarked and added back to the allocation pool, stating that she had inadvertently made an amendment to a motion that caused it and did not wish at the time for any water to be added back into the general allocation pool. Town Attorney Sam Furguiele took a moment to remind the Committee that sometime in the near future the Water Committee must meet to discuss the sun-setting of Ordinance 11-01. Public Utilities Director Rick Miller clarified that as he could understand it, the Committee was concerned with the extra 50,000 gallons that was placed back into the allocation pool, with the possibility of removing that water from the allocation pool and that the

Committee was slightly apprehensive with the numbers that he had given the Committee. Committee Member Beville stated that he actually felt quite confident with the numbers that Mr. Miller had provided; however, he had concern that giving the old high school property the large amount of water allocation would be giving the perception that the Town was partial to large developers at the expense of local developers. Mr. Beville also noted that this would be a good time to look at ways to incentivize the use of water-conserving fixtures for local developers. Council Member Mason explained that local developers were not being denied at the rate it was perceived and that the denial of a project is based on a variety of factors. Council Member Mason also noted the need for more information regarding the different types of housing that are currently needed. Discussion ensued regarding different ways to incentivize the use or retro-fitting of water-conserving fixtures. After continued discussion Council Member Leigh made a motion that the Committee recommends to Town Council that the 130,000 gallons allocated at the last Town Council meeting be reduced to 80,000 that was earmarked for the old high school property, thus removing the extra 50,000 gallons that was placed into the general allocation pool. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Buchanan.

Vote: Aye- 9 (L. Clawson, A. Ball, J. Buchanan, K. Marland P. Williamson, R. Brantz, J. Leigh, L. Mason, P. Beville, K. Cockerill)

Nay- 1 (T. Wilson)

Council Member Leigh also made a motion that the Committee recommends to Council that the 15,000 gallons from the credit of the ASU/Boone Interconnect be added back to the allocation pool for 2011. This motion was seconded by Committee Member Williamson and had a unanimous vote.

Public Utilities Director Rick Miller noted that prior discussion covered agenda items numbers II and III, stating that the committee could move to agenda item number IV "Discussion of Other Matters".

Discussion of Other Matters

Committee Member Beville inquired from Public Utilities Director Rick Miller if recommendations from the Sub-Committee could be reviewed at this time. Mr. Miller stated that the recommendations in question were scheduled to go before Council during the May Town Council Meeting; however if the Committee would like to amend the agenda, they could be discussed at this time. Committee Member Williamson took a moment to clarify some of the circumstances surrounding the water allocation for the old high school property. Discussion then moved to that of the current reclassification of the South Fork of the New River in relation to the proposed new intake project. Town Manager Greg Young and Public Utilities Director Rick Miller took a moment to update the Committee as to the status and a general time frame of the New Intake Project. After some discussion, Committee Member Beville asked what would be the best course of action when seeking a way to incentivize water conserving devices in relation to water allocation fees. Committee Member Williamson suggested that Mr. Beville research the topic and then present his findings to the Committee. Town Manager Greg Young commented that currently the Town has a tiered rate structure that promotes water conservation and currently the Town is investigating a plan to budget in a Toilet Rebate Pilot Program to serve as another water conservation incentive. After continued discussion it was decided that this topic be discussed at a future meeting.

Committee Member Buchanan made a motion to adjourn. This motion was seconded by Committee Member Williamson and had a unanimous vote.