

**MINUTES**  
**BEECH MOUNTAIN TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Special Meeting – March 18, 2016**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor E. 'Rick' Miller called the special meeting of the Beech Mountain Town Council to order at 9:00 a.m., Friday, March 18, 2016 at the Foscoe Grandfather Community Center located at 233 Park Road Banner Elk, NC 28604. Other Council Members present were Paul Piquet, Rick Owen, Wendel Sauer, and Renee Castiglione. Town Attorney Stacy C. Eggers, IV. was not present. Staff members present included Town Manager Ed Evans and Town Clerk Jennifer Broderick.

**II. What is your vision for Beech Mountain's future** – Manager Evans stated that this is an opportunity to let one another know what you hope or see as Beech Mountain's future. There will be moments where we agree and moments when there are divergent opinions.

**a. Dreams**

**i. What do you want Beech Mountain to look like**

**1. How do you want it to stay the same** – Council discussion revolved around the small intimate feeling that Beech Mountain gave, the nice individuals that lived in the community, the safety, fluctuating population size, and overall feeling of home. It was noted that all of the things discussed have not changed and that what has changed are the things needed to provide services such as water and policing.

**2. How do you want it to change** – Council discussed perception being an important issue that the Town needs to focus on. Healthy discussions are good but quashing negativity is important for the community's health.

**ii. What would we do if money was not a factor** – Council discussed the importance of improving water and sewer lines along, paving more roads, and relocating facilities.

**b. Reality**

**i. What can we accomplish given money is a factor** – Council discussion focused on the ability of the Town to improve water and sewer lines, paving more roads, and relocating facilities.

**c. How to get there**

**i. How do we prioritize and dedicate resources to accomplish** – Manager Evans provided an explanation of which funds could be used towards what types of projects.

- ii. **Capital Spending Plan** – Manager Evans recommended a minimum goal of 5 (five) years be set for a Capital Spending Plan. Council held discussions on current and future revenue sources.

**III. Departmental Goals**

- a. **Police Department** – Manager Evans stated that the Police Department would be providing their departmental goal presentation to Council at a future date.
- b. **Fire Department** – Fire Chief Bob Pudney provided a briefing to Council on the Fire Department needs for the next three (3) to five (5) years. Fire Chief Pudney explained how insurance rates are tied directly into how the Fire Department performs; noting that the Town will be rerated in the next three (3) to five (5) years. Fire Chief Pudney stated that the Town’s current fire rating was in the appropriate range that the Town should strive to stay within. Fire Chief Pudney stated that the Town’s water system is forty-percent of the Insurance Service Office rating system. Fire Chief Pudney encouraged Council to continue to work on improving the Town’s water for optimal water flow. Fire Chief Pudney discussed departmental apparatus service lives and how these service lives need to be properly maintained through an apparatus schedule. Once an apparatus service life is over it no longer qualifies for credit towards the Insurance Service Office rating system even if the apparatus is still in good workable condition. A fire truck, for example, has a service life of twenty (20) years. Fire Chief Pudney stated that the Fire Department has received grants and continues to max out these dollar opportunities.

**IV. Recess** – Mayor Miller recessed the meeting at 10:59 a.m. Friday, March 18, 2016.

**V. Reconvened** – Mayor Miller reconvened the special meeting of the Beech Mountain Town Council at 11:07 a.m., Friday, March 18, 2016 at the Foscoe Grandfather Community Center located at 233 Park Road Banner Elk, NC 28604. Other Council Members present were Paul Piquet, Rick Owen, Wendel Sauer, and Renee Castiglione. Staff members present included Town Manager Ed Evans and Town Clerk Jennifer Broderick. Mayor Miller stated that Council would pick up on the agenda with the Water and Wastewater.

- c. **Water/Wastewater** – Mayor Miller informed Council that they have a handout in front of them depicting the Town’s Utility Projects from 2010-2015 that have been completed, projects to be completed through July 2016, and a project schedule for July 2016 thru June 2017. Public Utilities Director Robert Heaton explained to Council the project matrix for the Town’s utility infrastructure is based on Marion Rothrock’s Study which is based on water quality. Mr. Heaton explained the importance of the upcoming Spruce Hollow to Beech Mountain Parkway Water Line Replacement Project in that this line feeds eighty-percent (80%) of the mountain. Chief Water Plant Operator Daniel Davis explained to Council the improvements in water flow that this new twelve inch (12”) pipe installation would provide. Mayor Miller directed staff to provide advance notice to the public about this project once the project is bid. Manager Evans stated that the Town’s new CodeRED system will be used for communication purposes along with other information outlets. Mr.

Heaton stated that the Town has two projects that need to be looked at next; Spring Branch/ Overbrook Water Line and the Pond Creek Basin Rehabilitation. Mr. Heaton stated that the Water Intake Project is probably at least five (5) years out and will require individual permits. Manager Evans stated that engineer Benjie Thomas, of West Consultants, has recently provided information on the environmental assessments required for this project at an estimated cost of \$20,000. Mr. Heaton discussed the development of a ten (10) year matrix for the Utility Department stating that this front end planning is necessary to continue the good work that is being completed on the Town's infrastructure.

*d. Tourism Development Authority/Economic Development* – Director of Tourism and Economic Development Kate Gavenus stated that this was the first year that the Tourism Development Authority formalized a Capital Project Plan for the year. Current Town proposals for consideration in the Capital Project Plan are due to the Tourism Development Authority by March 31, 2016. The Tourism Development Authority is required to spend one-third (1/3) of its money in this area. The department is considering future dollars for the Streetscape Project to go towards additional lighting along with collaborating on landscaping efforts. The department is also paying for the kitchen remodel at Buckeye Recreation Center. The Tourism Development Authority has stated their willingness to dedicate \$20,000 over the course of ten (10) years to go towards a future Buckeye Creek Road Paving Project. Council also discussed the lights displayed in Town during the winter.

**VI. Recess** – Mayor Miller recessed the meeting at 12:34 p.m. Friday, March 18, 2016.

**VII. Reconvened** – Mayor Miller reconvened the special meeting of the Beech Mountain Town Council at 12:42 p.m., Friday, March 18, 2016 at the Foscoe Grandfather Community Center located at 233 Park Road Banner Elk, NC 28604. Other Council Members present were Paul Piquet, Rick Owen, Wendel Sauer, and Renee Castiglione. Staff members present included Town Manager Ed Evans and Town Clerk Jennifer Broderick. Mayor Miller stated that Council would pick up on the agenda with the Police Department.

**Police Department (continued from Section III New Business a. Police Department)** – Manager Evans stated that the police car take home program would be good for employee morale and extend the life of the vehicles out from 4 years to 8 years. After further discussion Council determined that they would review this idea further after the Police Department provided them a full report.

*e. Administration*

*i. Format of reports from departments for Council packet* – Council recommended that the Utility Department Report be geared more towards production, major water leaks, and any violations while doing away with the chemical analysis. Council directed staff to change the word 'member' to 'pass holder' on the Parks and Recreation Report and to make this change throughout the department. Councilman Sauer discussed the Police

Department Report, directing Manager Evans to check with the Police Chief to ensure that off mountain travel was being managed properly.

- ii. Supplemental insurance* – Manager Evans informed Council about a Short Term Disability insurance product available through the North Carolina League of Municipalities. The cost is \$12 a month per employee and covers twenty-six (26) weeks. Manager Evans also reviewed three vision plans offered through the North Carolina League of Municipalities. Council directed staff to move forward with providing more information for future Council consideration.
- iii. Susie Knepka* – Manager Evans discussed the work Susie Knepka performed for the Town. Council was very pleased with Mrs. Knepka’s efforts on the mountain.

**VIII. Recessed** – Mayor Miller recessed the meeting at 1:30 p.m. Friday, March 18, 2016.

**IX. Reconvened** – Mayor Miller reconvened the special meeting of the Beech Mountain Town Council at 1:50 p.m., Friday, March 18, 2016 at the Foscoe Grandfather Community Center located at 233 Park Road Banner Elk, NC 28604. Other Council Members present were Paul Piquet, Rick Owen, Wendel Sauer, and Renee Castiglione. Staff members present included Town Manager Ed Evans and Town Clerk Jennifer Broderick. Mayor Miller stated that Council would pick up on the agenda with the Public Works Department.

**f. Public Works Department**

- i. Streets* – Public Works Director Riley Hatch stated that the department is working towards paving the top of Pine Ridge Road to below Arrowood Road, Lakeledge Road to Chestnut Way, and Tamarack on Upper Charter Hills Road towards Spring Branch as far as the money permit. Mr. Hatch stated that the department tries to stay away from paving roads that are part of upcoming utility projects as these roads are tackled as the projects are completed. The Town spent \$80,000 on ABC gravel this year which is up from the \$50,000. Mr. Hatch explained that the color of the ABC gravel used is determined during the bidding process. Mr. Hatch stated that he believes he has found a better vendor to purchase paint from for striping the roads. Council encouraged staff to complete the road striping as soon as possible, weather permitting, before the mountain was busier this summer.
- ii. Snow removal* – Public Works Director Riley Hatch stated that staff performs snow removal first on the primary streets followed by the secondary roads. After the roads are scrapped the sand trucks come through dispensing chat. Mr. Hatch explained that there are two sand trucks, one truck working each side of the Town. Mr. Hatch stated that a request will be made in this year’s budget for another vehicle to assist with the snow removal process. Mr. Hatch explained that he has a third (3) vehicle that is a multipurpose truck that is used for sanding too. This vehicle goes out if one of the other sanders

is down for a long time. Mr. Hatch shared with Council 4 different sizes of stone. Mr. Hatch asked which of the choices Council would like put on the road. After further discussion Council determined that with the amount of sand that the Town still had that they would do a mixture until the sand product was used up and then move all the way to the number nine (9) product.

- iii. Buckeye Road Improvement* – Public Works Director Riley Hatch stated that the whole road was graveled in 2014 and that the road has been graded. Grading occurs during the summer months in the range between four (4) to six (6) times.
- iv. Other* – Manager Evans asked that Public Works Director Riley Hatch explain the vehicles for garbage pickup. Mr. Hatch stated that Town staff performs manual dumping into the back of the Town’s sanitation vehicles. Mr. Hatch discussed the bear proof dumpsters at the Recycling Center, noting that lids are very heavy and that staff will be opening the dumpsters for the public use. Due to the weight of the lids these types of dumpsters are not recommended for individual use around the mountain.

***g. Planning – Inspections Department***

- i. Comprehensive Plan* – Town Planner James Scott distributed a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Review that staff had put together for Councils review and future feedback.
- ii. Golf Cart Ordinance* – After much discussion Council determined that they did not wish to move forward with proposed amendments to the Town’s Ordinance to make unlimited golf cart usage permissible.
- iii. Streetscape Project* – Town Planner James Scott stated that Town has recently been awarded a \$250,000 grant to use towards the Streetscape Project. Mr. Scott stated that this year there would be focus on improving the landscaping along the Streetscape and lighting.
- iv. Storm Water* – Manager Evans stated that this was meant to be ‘Erosion Control’. Town Planner James Scott provided information to Council on erosion control and sedimentation plans stating that these were very technical plans. Mr. Scott stated that in the seven (7) years of working for the Town only one (1) project has required this type of plan. Mr. Scott stated that this degree of knowledge requires someone outside of the Town to do the work. After further discussion Council directed staff to work towards repealing the ordinance and having the County take over erosion control.

***h. Recreation Department***

- i. Pool* – Parks and Recreation Director Sean Royal discussed the advantages of aquatic exercise for the Beech Mountain population.

- ii. **Bus** – Council directed staff to bring back costs for a van and a fifteen (15) passenger bus for further consideration.
- iii. **Trails** – Parks and Recreation Director Sean Royall stated that there is five (5) years left on the Emerald Mountain Outback Trail easement agreement. Mr. Royal discussed the possibility of trail expansion on the Town’s Bog Trail and Buckeye Creek Road. Mr. Royal also suggested an idea of expanding Falls Trail, citing requests from the public for larger hikes that are within parking distance of Buckeye Lake. Mr. Royal also suggested putting a full pathway around Buckeye Lake and the potential of camping.
- iv. **Other** – Council discussed the money that the Beech Mountain Bog was to receive due to the ConnectNC Bond being approved. Council discussed the kitchen project at Buckeye Recreation Center. Parks and Recreation Director Sean Royal stated that Buckeye Recreation Center is booking up in June for weddings and would like to request that the kitchen be finished by June 4, 2016 or started after the summer months. Council directed staff to move forward on getting the project ready for bid to see if it could be completed prior to the June weddings.
- i. **Goal setting** – Council asked staff to look into and providing more information on a memorial gardens project that had been initiated some time ago.

X. **Council Closing Comments** – Council thanked staff for their good work. Council requested staff to reschedule Council photos to the regular meeting date in May 2016 of the 10<sup>th</sup> at 3:15 p.m.

XI. **Adjourn** – At 4:25 p.m., Mayor Miller adjourned the meeting.

Minutes approved by Town Council on April 12, 2016.

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E. ‘Rick’ Miller, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Jennifer Broderick, CMC  
Town Clerk