



MINUTES

Regular Town Council Meeting

4:00 PM - Tuesday, December 8, 2020
Council Chambers

The Regular Town Council of the Town of Beech Mountain was called to order on Tuesday, December 8, 2020, at 4:00 PM, in the Council Chambers, with the following members present:

COUNCIL PRESENT: Mayor Barry Kaufman
Vice Mayor Jimmie Accardi
Councilmember Weidner Abernethy
Councilmember Kelly Melang
Councilmember Erin Gonyea

COUNCIL EXCUSED:

STAFF PRESENT: Attorney Stacy Eggers, IV
Town Manager Bob Pudney
Town Clerk Tamara Mercer
Director of Special Projects Riley Hatch

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

2.1. Mayor Kaufman requested an adoption of the agenda.

Motion

Jimmie Accardi made a motion to adopt the agenda and Erin Gonyea seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. PUBLIC HEARING- PROPOSED ORDINANCE FOR THE APPLICATION OF UTILITY PAYMENTS

4.1. Mayor Kaufman requested a motion to open the Public Hearing on the proposed Ordinance for the application and procedures for collecting utility payments. Councilmember Melang made a motion to open the Public Hearing and the motion was seconded by Councilmember Gonyea.

Mayor Kaufman inquired into the Public Notice for the Public Hearing for

the proposed Ordinance to set forth the application and collection procedures of Utility Payments. Ms. Mercer replied that this agenda item was advertised in the Watauga Democrat, the Avery Journal, and the Mountain Times pursuant to G.S. §160A-364 for two consecutive weeks not less than 10 days nor more than 25 days. The Town Clerk added that no Public Hearing comments have been received for that agenda item nor had any general public comments for the Public Comment portion of the Town Council's meeting.

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to close the Public Hearing and Erin Gonyea seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT- NO COMMENTS RECEIVED

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- 6.1. Adoption of Council minutes of November 10, 2020

Motion

Jimmie Accardi made a motion to adopt the Council minutes of November 10, 2020 and Weidner Abernethy seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

- 6.2. Amendment to the FY: 2020-201 Budget Fee Schedule Late Fee Rate Change

Motion

Weidner Abernethy made a motion to approve the amendment to the FY: 2020-21 Budget Fee Schedule Late Fee Rate Change and Kelly Melang seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

- 6.3. 2021 Town Council, Boards and Committee Calendar and Fiscal Year: 2021-2022 Budget Calendar Schedule

Motion

Jimmie Accardi made a motion to adopt the 2021 Town Council and Boards and Committee meeting calendar schedule and Fiscal Year: 2021-2022 Budget Calendar Schedule and

Kelly Melang seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

- 6.4. FY: 2021-2022 Budget Calendar

Mr. Pudney pointed out the calendar dates for the upcoming FY: 2021-2022 Budget workshop and after discussion there was consensus as to the dates on the schedule and for Mr. Chris May to facilitate the work session.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- 7.1. Water Treatment Dept. Budget Adjustment of \$42,000 FY: 2020

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to approve the Water Treatment Department Budget Adjustment of \$42,000 in the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget and Erin Gonyea seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

7.2. Ordinance to Establish Priority of Utility Billing Payment pursuant to NC General Statute §160A-312

Councilmember Melang requested clarification on the tiers as to how we apply the partial payments for better public understanding. Mr. Pudney replied that the purpose of the proposed Ordinance delineates exactly how customer partial payments are applied. So, fines or fees were not paid, customers paid the bills and this Ordinance and structure allows us to collect the fines and fees, designating where the first dollar goes. Utility billing includes sanitation, wastewater, and water. The monies collected will be applied to the late fees or fines before the water usage and we can legally apply that first dollar of payment to the outstanding fines or fees first.

Motion

Erin Gonyea made a motion to open discussion and Jimmie Accardi seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to approve the Utility Billing Collection Ordinance amendment and Erin Gonyea seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

8. TOWN MANAGER AND STAFF REPORTS

8.1. October Budget and Finance Report

Mr. Pudney reviewed the Financial Report and pointed out that we are at the budget benchmark of 33.33% and we have collected a substantial amount of tax revenue. The expenditures are at 41.9% and this figure is screwed due large expenditures spent during the early part of the budget for infrastructure projects. We are expecting to receive the North Carolina grant for the Fire Department expenses so we are over in that budget there as well as in the Planning Department for Beech Mountain Parkway sidepath and the Parks and Recreation Department for Shane Park. There will be a budget adjustment which will reflect the projects close out, allowing us to better see the various Departmental budgets. Public Works Wastewater and Water revenues are at the benchmark revenues.

Mr. Pudney reviewed the Covid-19 NC State restrictions which increased 11/25/2020. Face coverings are required indoors as well as outdoors. There had been a reduction in available personnel due to Covid-19 cases and the quarantine of staff. He presented an update to the following:

- Policy update for all employees
- Focused on essential mission critical services:
- Public safety
- Water/sewer
- Sanitation
- Roadways – snow and ice.
- All boards and committee meetings cancelled or remote where possible.
- Sled hills Masks required, 50-person limit
- Sled hill #2 across the street is designed to spread the people out, social distancing achieved, and we have a Lease with the adjacent landowners
- Signage both fixed and sign boards.
- TDA is funding these improvements

Mr. Pudney pointed out that the Public Works' New Facility is on schedule, the fencing is complete, the heating system is installed, and the sewer lift station is completed at Shane Park. Mayor Kaufman inquired into the setup for the garbage compactors and there was a discussion regarding the protection of the requirement from the weather elements. Mr. Pudney stated he will confirm the setup and solution with Director, Daniel Davis.

Mr. Pudney reviewed and discussed the procedures at the Convenience Center for the single use passes, rental properties, and residents' feedback. There was a fire at Buckeye Recreation Center on 11/20/2020. The repairs underway. Insurance is filed and the insurance policy will cover the damage. The damage was minimal, and the center is open. The Long-Range Planning group meets each week and a report and the research by staff will be presented to Council on 2/9/2021. Mr. Pudney stated that a settlement has been reached between the Town and AMPS, which was the old health insurance company. Mr. John Pendergast, the mediator negotiated 50% of the billing and we have arrived at a final payment of \$14,286.70. This is acceptable to the Town and Mr. Pendergast is awaiting the acceptance from AMPS.

Annual audit is completed and filed with the LGC. There is a scheduled presentation to Town Council on 1/12/2021 by the auditor PPLC. The Town Staff is working well with the new auditor. We engaged First Tryon Advisors and the debt model and funding models will be presented by the consultants in January as well. The Council adopted the Budget Retreat which is now set for January 28th with the 29th being reserved for any additional business if needed.

The Town of Beech Mountain has the 40th birthday celebration which takes place throughout the year. May 1, 2021 a covered dish Anniversary celebration will take place at Buckeye Recreation Center. Marisa Sedlak is the contact at Buckeye for volunteers. The TDA will be making announcements.

The TDA report to Council includes an added a section regarding “economic development”. Mr. Pudney directed everyone's attention to the last paragraph which referred to our local business community which is providing

products and services during the pandemic. They are innovative and flexible providing their services. We ask that citizens support our local business this holiday season. The Town's first Christmas Parade is scheduled for 12/23/2020 at 4:00 p.m. Signage has been posted and if anyone wants to enter a float, please contact Parks and Recreation to participate.

- 8.2. October Budget and Finance Report
- 8.3. Planning and Inspections Report 2020-11
- 8.4. Department of Infrastructure Reports
- 8.5. Recreation Report November 2020
- 8.6. TDA December Report
- 8.7. Police Department Monthly Report
- 8.8. Fire Department Monthly report

9. TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

- 9.1. In response to Vice Mayor Accardi's inquiry regarding the water wells, Mr. Pudney replied that the draw down from the wells is over the 24-hour period, and staff is surveying the quality, quantity and other issues currently.

Councilmember Abernethy stated that Public Works performed a great job during the last snowstorms. All staff on Public Works are coordinating with other departments doing fine work to which Councilmember Gonyea agreed and reiterated the great work performed by the Police, Fire and EMT responders and their service to the community.

Councilmember Melang noted the successful Ski Resort opening and enforcing the mask mandate and social distancing requirements.

Mayor Kaufman commented that throughout this challenging and interesting year, including the fact that there is a new town manager; the Town has achieved all construction goals and with a very aggressive budget. The council members agreed on those goals and the Town has had a record of five ribbon cuttings in one year. He complimented the construction at the new Public Works building. The trees, mulch. and fencing looks great from the Pinnacle Inn side.

The Mayor requested a motion to move to the executive session pursuant to NC GS§ 143-318.11 (A)(3).

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to enter into closed session for attorney client matters and Erin Gonyea seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

10. CLOSED SESSION - PURSUANT TO NC GS 143-318.11 (A)(3)

ATTORNEY CLIENT MATTERS

- 10.1. Mayor Kaufman requested a motion to reconvene the regular portion of the meeting and Vice Mayor Accardi moved to open the meeting and Councilmember Gonyea seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Kaufman stated that no action was taken in closed session and there being no other business, he requested a motion to adjourn at 5:00 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

- 11.1. Meeting adjournment: Please note the minutes are not a verbatim record of the proceedings.

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting and Weidner Abernethy seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

Town Clerk

Mayor, Town of Beech Mountain