



MINUTES

Regular Town Council Meeting

4:00 PM - Tuesday, January 11, 2022
Council Chambers

The Regular Town Council of the Town of Beech Mountain was called to order on Tuesday, January 11, 2022, 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 Clerk Tamara Mercer
Town Manager Bob Pudney
Director of Special Projects Riley Hatch

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

2.1. Mayor Kaufman requested a motion to adopt the agenda.

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to adopt the agenda and Erin Gonyea seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

3. INVOCATION- DEWEY CYCLONE BRETT

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

5. PUBLIC COMMENT-

5.1. No one signed up or elected to speak during the public comment portion.

6. FEATURED LOCAL BUSINESS- 4 SEASONS AT BEECH AND VCI RENTALS, CALDER SMOOT

- 6.1. Business owner Calder Smoot, of VCI rentals and 4 Seasons reviewed the history of the hotel property starting with developer Grover Robbins, timeshare condos, and his tenure as manager for Beech Mountain. Mr. Calder serves as Vice-Chairman on the TDA board, the Chamber of Commerce, and as a Board of Elections local branch poll volunteer. He thanked the Council and community for recognizing the business and community service.

7. **CONSENT AGENDA**

- 7.1. Adoption of Minutes- December 14, 2021
- 7.2. Private sale of Surplus Property
- 7.3. Planning and Inspection Fee Schedule Amendment

Mayor Kaufman requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items.

Motion

Jimmie Accardi made a motion to approve the consent agenda consisting of the following: adopt regular Town Council meeting minutes of December 14, 2021, and the Private Sale of Police Surplus Property, and the Planning and Inspection Fee Schedule amendment and Weidner Abernethy seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

- 8.1. Public Hearing for Comprehensive Plan Amendment CP 2021-11 (LU.G1.P1.S4)

Mayor Kaufman requested a motion to open the Public Hearing for the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment CP 2021-11 (LU.G1.P1.S4) and Vice Mayor Accardi made a motion to open the Public Hearing and Councilmember Abernethy seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

No one elected to speak, and Mayor Kaufman requested a motion to close the Public Hearing.

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to close the Public Hearing on the Comprehensive Plan Amendment CP 2021-11 (LU.G1.P1.S4) and Erin Gonyea seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

- 8.2. Resolution 2022-03 to Amend the 2020-2035 Comprehensive Plan CP 2021-11 (LU.G1.P1.S4)

Planner Preston Yates provided the Resolution to add a new strategy under an existing goal and policy of the Land Use chapter that supports the development of workforce housing.

Mayor Kaufman requested a motion to approve Resolution No. 2022-03.

Motion

Weidner Abernethy made a motion to approve the Resolution to amend the 2020-2035 Comprehensive Plan and Kelly Melang seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

8.3. Resolution Support for Existing High Country Workforce Development Area

In response to Councilmember Abernethy's inquiry, Mr. Pudney stated that this Resolution supports the existing structure in the High Country Local Workforce Development area which is zoned to be the seven counties comprised of Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey counties as suggested by the High Country Council of Government.

Motion

Erin Gonyea made a motion to adopt the Resolution Support for Existing High Country Workforce Development Area and Weidner Abernethy seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

9. TOWN MANAGER AND STAFF REPORTS

9.1.

Mr. Pudney reviewed the Manager's report:

- Covid-19 update-
- Omicron case numbers rising in Watauga and Avery counties
- No additional mandates from the State
- Town employees and first responders continue to use appropriate PPE equipment and monitor health
- Second Annual Christmas Parade sponsored by Parks and Recreation and the TDA
- Sled Hill and Easy-pay parking lot – The program is on-track for expected capacity as 447 spaces were purchased over Christmas week

Mr. Pudney requested Town Council to address an issue with the Republic dumpster customers. He proposed a change to procedure to allow dumpster customers with dumpster overflow to be able use of the Convenience Center. Cost was suggested at \$250 per dump for a full dumpster. This fee could be billed on the utility invoice.

Mr. Pudney reviewed the solid waste procedures for multi-family and business customers, and he suggested that we control the overflowed dumpsters and allow them to deposit at the Convenience Center when Republic cannot add the extra pickup. If we allow for example the Resort or the Pinnacle and smaller businesses to dump at the Center for an added fee, we have the instant ability to clean up the Town. This is an added solution or option. Vice Mayor Accardi agreed as his business cannot get extra pickups from Republic when the dumpster is overflowing. Mr. Pudney explained the

process for adding the fees into the fee schedule, as currently it is not in the fee schedule. Councilmember Gonyea agreed to add this as an option but is the answer more dumpsters or more frequent servicing.

There was a question-and-answer period on this subject. Mr. Pudney listed the advantages of adding this fee. It allows the ability to be flexible with the 50 dumpster customers and businesses and to be able to charge to accept the garbage. Attorney Eggers reviewed the procedure and said we need a motion and a vote to allow for a fee schedule change, and Mayor Kaufman called for a motion and vote.

Motion

Jimmie Accardi made a motion to adjust the fee schedule to include the added charge for solid waste collections from the Republic Services customers' dumpsters and Erin Gonyea seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

9.2. Continued: Town Manager's Report

Mr. Pudney updated the statuses for the Bark Park Bathroom and the EMS Station. The base housing is completed at the EMS Station as well as the new 4x4 ambulance has been purchased. The Town has executed an agreement between Watauga County and Beech Mountain which means the new dispatch protocols are approved and the radio communication equipment installed. The EMS expenses will be listed under the Fire Department's budget and the recent budget amendment of \$100,000 donation to be reflected in the Fire Department budget as well as the expense side of construction and contract fees to Watauga County.

There was a discussion regarding the Watauga County agreement and the Avery County personnel who need to finish working on the Avery County agreement including the Avery County Attorney and County Manager Phil Barrier, stated Mr. Pudney. Once the agreement is clarified with Avery County, the new agreement with Watauga will go into effect.

Mr. Pudney noted that the town as reduced solid waste by reduced 154.2 tons at the Convenience Center. Three months after commercial accounts have moved to Republic Services dumpsters. The Building Department has yielded \$199,469.15 in permit fees for the fiscal year which pays for the department's operation.

The engineering and design for permitting well underway for the Lake Coffey / Lake Santis Reservoir Project. The Watauga County property re-evaluation is on an 8-year cycle, and County Manager, Da will give a presentation at the next Council meeting on February 8th, to explain the changes and appeal process. We expect substantial changes in property values and will discuss this at the Town Council Budget Planning retreat on the 19th.

Mr. Pudney reminded everyone that the upcoming budget and planning retreat is scheduled for Wednesday, January 19th at 8:30 a.m. Mr. Chris May will be the facilitator.

- 9.3. Fire Department Monthly Report
- 9.4. Police Department Monthly Report
- 9.5. DOI Monthly Report
- 9.6. Finance Officer's Report for November 2021

Mayor Kaufman inquired about the reported gains and losses in the Finance budget on page 50, and Mr. Pudney replied that as the property sales increased, the gains were reported.

In response to an inquiry regarding medical calls, Mr. Pudney stated the medical calls were at an all-time record along with emergency COVID-19 response calls due to the increased population.

Motion

Review

- 9.7. December 2021 Recreation Report
- 9.8. Planning & Inspection Department Report 2021-12
- 9.9. TDA Report January 2022

10. TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

- 10.1. Town Council thanked the town employees, roadway crews, Mr. Cyclone Brett, and Police Department for enforcement of traffic. Bear bins at short-term rentals was discussed. Short-term rental enforcement of garbage bins and locating STRs through software and compliance was an issue due to non-compliance. The Holiday Parade was enjoyed by a large crowd as attendance increased noted Mayor Kaufman.

Mr. Pudney stated that road reflector installation is delayed, as the contractor out of Hickory and has been delayed.

11. CITIZENS' AGENDA COMMENTS

- 11.1. Mayor Kaufman asked if citizens had comments regarding the agenda and two people spoke.

There was a question regarding the Republic Services blue dumpsters and fencing requirements, to which Mr. Pudney said fencing compliance will be enforced in March and April. A citizen commended administration for monitoring the vehicle traffic. She said traffic is not backed up during the weekends as it was last year. Mr. Pudney reviewed the traffic patterns for Bark Park Way, the Convenience Center, and the Sled Hill in response to traffic pattern and vehicle circulation concerns. He added that the Fire Department will still respond to EMS medic calls.

12. ADJOURNMENT

12.1. There being no further business, Mayor Kaufman requested a motion to adjourn at 5:06 p.m.

Note: the minutes are not a verbatim transcript of the proceedings.

Motion

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

Town Clerk

Mayor, Town of Beech Mountain