



MINUTES

Regular Town Council Meeting

4:00 PM - Tuesday, March 12, 2024
Council Chambers

The Regular Town Council of the Town of Beech Mountain was called to order on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 4:00 PM, in the Council Chambers, with the following members present:

COUNCIL PRESENT: Mayor Weidner Abernethy
Vice Mayor Kelly Melang
Councilmember Alan Villanova
Councilmember Art Beckmann
Councilmember M.W. Stanford

COUNCIL EXCUSED:

STAFF PRESENT: Town Manager Bob Pudney
Town Clerk Emily Haynes

1. CALL TO ORDER

- 1.1. Mayor Abernethy recognized the Beech Mountain Volunteer Fire Department for their dedication and time put into the town.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

- 2.1. Councilmember Alan Villanova requested to amend the agenda to move item 6.3 2024 Budget Ordinance Amendment # 2024-06 to New Business for discussion, to which Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to amend the agenda.

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to amend the agenda to move item 6.3 2024 Budget Ordinance Amendment #2024-06 to New Business and Art Beckmann seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

3. INVOCATION- DEWEY CYCLONE BRETT

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

5. SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

- 5.1. Mayor Abernethy informed the town of the phase one FEMA grant money in the amount of 1.6 million that the town received with the possibility of receiving more in phase two of the grant.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

- 6.1. Nick Wilson of 513 Charter Hills- I would like to thank a group of people who are always behind the scenes and anonymous. Thank you to our 911 dispatchers; David Davis, Anita Presnell, Jennifer Smith, Cole Hughes and Isaiah Courtner. The professionalism and care each these people put into every phone call is much appreciated. I have a few other concerns I would like to address first being the continuously growing deer population. Next, please consider lowering the tax rate. Lastly I would like to suggest that each of you set up a time every month for residents to express their concerns and make suggestions other than speaking during public comment at the council meetings.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

- 7.1. Adoption of Minutes
- 7.2. 2024 Budget Ordinance Amendment #2024-05

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to approve the consent agenda Alan Villanova seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- 8.1. Resolution of Appreciation- Megan Phillips and the NC DOT

Motion

M.W. Stanford made a motion to adopt the Resolution of Appreciation Art Beckmann seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

- 8.2. Public Hearing for Rezoning of Town Owned Property

Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to open the public hearing for Rezoning of Town Owned Property and Vice Mayor Melang moved to open the Public Hearing and Councilmember Stanford seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Motion

M.W. Stanford made a motion to close the Public Hearing on the Rezoning of Town Owned Property Kelly Melang seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

8.3. Ordinance to Rezone Town-Owned Property to PS Public/Private Service

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to approve the rezoning ordinance for town-owned property to PS Public/Private Service Art Beckmann seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

8.4. 2024 Budget Ordinance Amendment #2024-06

Councilmember Alan Villanova thanked the TDA for their generous contribution to the town for the replacement of the current boiler system at Buckeye Recreation Center. This will be a huge improvement for the town's only indoor recreation.

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to approve Budget Ordinance Amendment #2024-06 M.W. Stanford seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

9. TOWN MANAGER AND STAFF REPORTS

9.1. Town Manager's Comments:

1. FEMA grant phase 1 approved.
2. Ski Loft Project – final neighborhood meeting scheduled for Thursday 3/14 at 4:00 pm. Answer questions and update the property owners on the project. Project begins April 1st, with the disconnection of all utilities. The meeting will be televised and recorded, has been advertised if the council would like to attend.
3. Pinnacle Ridge well is operational, final testing completed yesterday. 12,000 gal per hour. (100k per day.) Waiting for a state permit.
4. Work on Tamarack and Charter Hills with water service taps. Full speed ahead, three crews will be working. Paving to begin second week of April. Notice and signage have been out.
5. Lake Coffey is progressing well, final dam design expected this month. (state funding (14k) has been approved for out-of-pocket costs)
6. Town Hall / Visitor Center, well behind schedule, now working on the existing building renovations.
7. I invited the TDA to meet with the council on March 28th at the budget meeting. We will present the financial model as well as the preliminary budget. TDA would like to support the town. We had a good TDA budget retreat (2/28) where I expressed the impact to the town. TDA was

provided with suggestions to assist the town.

8. Joint tour of the town's recreation facilities with council, recreation committee and TDA. April 4th at 0900 hrs. This has been advertised.
9. Deer herd study – NC wildlife resources commission decline to move the deer herd study sooner, in fact they did not anticipate coming back anytime soon, unless there is a **“significant change in herd density”**. **“There hasn't been notable change in the herd status around beech mountain relative to biological carrying capacity.”**
10. System development fee study to reflect changes in the cost to operate the utility. Permission to advertise for an engineering firm?
11. Page 59. Waste water issues – both sewer plants have been operating at or above 100% of permitted flows for the past four months. Some are attributable to I&I (inflow and infiltration) however it also corresponds with influx of occupants. (water sales). This is a red flag for the future. Utilities are working to reduce I&I with the newest sewer project.

- 9.2. January 2023 Finance and Budget Report
- 9.3. Recreation Report February 2024
- 9.4. Police Department Monthly Report
- 9.5. Fire Department Monthly Report
- 9.6. TDA Report - March 2024
- 9.7. Planning and Inspection Monthly Report 2024-02
- 9.8. Public Works Report

10. TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

- 10.1. Town Council discussed the need for the system development fee study and gave Town Manager Pudney the approval to begin the study process.

Councilmember Alan Villanova: Art Beckmann and I were able to attend the TDA Budget Retreat and I myself was very pleased with the turn out. We are very appreciative of the work the TDA is doing. We look forward to working with the TDA Board.

Councilmember Art Beckmann: When attending the TDA Budget Retreat i believe Bob Pudney made it clear that there are expenses that that taxpayers are absorbing that are directly attributed to the high volume of visitors during the holiday weekends. The TDA takes that into consideration and first thing agreed to pay for the new unit at Buckeye Recreation to replace the current boiler system. That itself is a great blessing and opens the door for this council and the TDA to expand their relationship. Thank you Jana Greer and the board members of the TDA.

Councilmember M.W. Stanford: Thank you to the TDA for your support to the town. I will be available at the coffee shop Thursday, March 21st from 10:30am-12:00pm please stop by. I will be happy to have discussion and hear the needs of taxpayers.

Vice Mayor Kelly Melang: Just a reminder that the system at Buckeye Recreation was one of our bucket list items in our budget retreat. Alan Villanova did a great job pushing that forward and getting that project funded. Thank you TDA Board. Thank you to the fire department members for attending today's meeting you are a wonderful part of this community.

Mayor Weidner Abernethy: I want to remind everyone what the BRIC stands for as we mention that often, its Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities. Council attends monthly meetings with the EDC, Mayors Roundtable, High Country Council of Government that we are also involved in. These meetings are off of Beech Mountain that we represent our town for all through the county. Thank you TDA for the financial contribution. I would like to take this time to recognize Lees Mcrae College, they have had a club sport for ski/snowboard team for numerous years and are continuously ranked number one and top 5 in the nation. I would like to announce that they are moving to a varsity sport that will be recognized on a collegiate level. Councilmember Stanfords' son is on the Snowboarding team at Lees Mcrae that placed number one in the nation.

11. ADJOURNMENT

11.1. Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to adjourn.

Motion

M.W. Stanford made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:56pm Kelly Melang seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

Town Clerk

Mayor, Town of Beech Mountain