



MINUTES

Regular Town Council Meeting

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

The Regular Town Council of the Town of Beech Mountain was called to order on Tuesday, November 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 M.W. Stanford

COUNCIL EXCUSED: Councilmember Art Beckmann

STAFF PRESENT: Attorney Stacy Eggers, IV
Town Manager Bob Pudney
Town Clerk Emily Haynes

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.1. Mayor Abernethy called the November 12th Town Council meeting to order at 4:00PM.

1.2. Mayor's message:

- Thank you, veterans, for your service to our country.
- Please consider donating to the Beech Mountain Police Department Shop with a Cop event. Individual officers "partner" with children one-on-one and accompany them on a shopping trip to spend money on items they choose.
- A Christian ministry Group that travels to areas that have been affected by disasters with a mobile kitchen will serve 3,000 Thanksgiving meals on Wednesday, November 27th, 2024, beginning at 10:30 AM first come, first served at Cranberry Middle School.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

Motion

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

3. INVOCATION- DEWEY CYCLONE BRETT

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

5.1. Fred Pfohl of 501 Beech Mountain Parkway- Thank you Cyclone for each invocation that you stand and teach us each council meeting. I'm here to publicly thank everyone who has had a hand in the recovery phase of Beech Mountain since the storm. I'm blessed to live in this community.

Nick Wilson of 513 Charter Hills Road- We have an inconvenience or two but overall the mountain is in great shape. The Public Works Department and the Police Department in particular have done a marvelous job for us. The police are doing extra rounds just to keep a closer watch on all properties. We are functional. I feel safe in this community. We have gotten through about the first month of recovery and I am interested to hear the next steps for the future both near and far. Thank you all for what you do.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- 6.1. Adoption of Minutes
- 6.2. Sale of Town owned Real Property
- 6.3. Capital Project Budget Ordinance Tropical Storm Helene
- 6.4. Tax Release
- 6.5. FY2025 Annual Budget Amendment #3
- 6.6. Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Motion

M.W. Stanford made a motion to approve the consent agenda Kelly Melang seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

7. OLD BUSINESS

- 7.1. Public Hearing on proposed amendments to Kitchens and Guest Suites.

Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to open the Public Hearing on proposed amendments to the Kitchen and Guest Suites. Councilmember M.W. Stanford made a motion to open the Public Hearing and Vice Mayor Kelly Melang seconded the motion.

No one elected to speak on the proposed amendments to the Kitchen and Guest Suites.

Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to close the Public Hearing on Proposed amendments to the Kitchen and Guest Suites. Vice Mayor Kelly Melang made a motion to close the Public Hearing and Councilmember M.W. Stanford

seconded the motion.

7.2. Public Hearing on Proposed Amendments to Off-Street Parking and Loading

Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to open the Public Hearing on proposed amendments to Off-Street Parking and Loading. Vice Mayor Kelly Melang made a motion to open the Public Hearing and Councilmember Alan Villanova seconded the motion.

No one elected to speak on the proposed amendments to Off-Street Parking and Loading.

Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to close the Public Hearing on proposed amendments to Off-Street Parking and Loading. Councilmember M.W. Stanford made a motion to close the Public Hearing and Vice Mayor Kelly Melang seconded the motion.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1. Bat Survey, Lake Coffey Project

Motion

M.W. Stanford made a motion to approve the Bat Survey, Lake Coffey Project Alan Villanova seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

8.2. Emergency Generator, Fire Station #1

Motion

M.W. Stanford made a motion to approve the Emergency Generator for Fire Station #1 Alan Villanova seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

8.3. RFQ Engineering Buckeye Lake Assessment

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to select engineering firm Mattern and Craig for the Buckeye Lake Assessment M.W. Stanford seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

8.4. RFQ Engineering Charter Hills Rd. Helene Damage

Motion

Alan Villanova made a motion to select engineering firm Mattern and Craig for Charter Hills Road Helene Damage Kelly Melang seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

9. TOWN MANAGER AND STAFF REPORTS

9.1. Police Department Monthly Report

9.2. Town Manager Report-

1. DEQ 3 million 0% loan. Applied, waiting approval. This is a revolving zero interest loan to be repaid when FEMA funds are received. Can only be used for utility work. Water and sewer. May not require LGC approval.

2. North Carolina state funding- 640 million is available, waiting for NCDPS instructions, this again is designed to be a loan to be paid back after FEMA reimbursements.

3. FEMA progress, the town has submitted two "expedited" funding requests based upon our emergency response (category B) and the debris removal (category A) to FEMA, both are in process. Totals 5.6 million dollars to be paid at 50%. (2.8 million)

4. Contracted with Southern Disaster Recovery (SDR) for debris pickup. After a slow start they responded with equipment and personnel. As of 11/10 they have hauled 171 loads totaling 5,032 cubic yards. Property owners are advised to bring debris to the town right of way and separate it into three piles, vegetative, household/construction debris and hazardous waste. The process will continue until a total of three passes and all debris has been picked up.

5. Roadways, NCDOT advised the state road will have repairs made prior to December 1st. The town continues to make repairs based upon priority with travel lanes, culvert crossing the highest priority. Gravel shoulders and driveway connections will be a lower priority. The debris piles impact work on the shoulders. Charter Hills Road will be closed for several weeks until the engineers can inspect and devise a repair.

6. The town has posted 26 structures due to damage from the storm. 7 structures are posted "notice of unsafe conditions" due to lack of sewer connections or lack of safe egress due to tree damage. 19 structures are posted with a "minimum housing notice". We are working to get these properties into compliance as soon as possible.

7. Repairs to the sewer plant have been completed, we are refilling the tanks and getting the plant back into operation.

8. Orange water and sewer authority (OWASA) is on site doing a CCTV damage survey of our Pond Creek sewer infrastructure. This section was washed away exposing sewage to the creek. The town has made temporary repairs to all breaks that were visible, this project should identify internal damage.

9. Buckeye Lake debris, FEMA has visited the site, an engineering firm has been approved and a detailed analysis will be made to determine the amount of debris, damage to the spillway, operation of the drain valve and water plant intake impact. Until the lake is brought back to capacity, we will implement stage 1 voluntary conservation.

10. Shane Park – the debris contractor (SDR) will be conducting the debris

removal. Repairs to the building are being determined.

11.NCLM insurance adjusters have visited all damaged town facilities to determine what insurance benefits, if any, are due.

12.The Hagerty group has been instrumental with the town's FEMA response, they have been onsite as well as regular conference calls and communications.

13.Skiloft Road- Completed! Special thanks to Eggers Construction and Mountain Electric. This was an aggressive project that came in on time and under budget.

14.Town Hall / Visitors Center – progress, finishing up the last details and punch list. Expect to have a substantial completion before Christmas.

15.Lake Coffey (handouts) – more important than ever with the impact on Buckeye Lake. See the engineers' report on progress to date. A lot of work has been completed as well as a great deal of work to go. The town received a grant of approx. 1.7 million dollars (FEMA) for engineering and planning. (phase 1). I have sent a copy to Mr. Costin at the resort for his review and comments. In the interest of time, I can have the engineer here in December to provide an in-person update after you have had a chance to review the documents.

16.The economic development study for the town's commercial district has been postponed until January 31, 2025, due to the impact from the storm. We expect to receive several proposals and will bring a recommendation back to the council in February.

17.The winter traffic study has been postponed until November 2025 to capture a more accurate traffic pattern due to the potential impact by the storm.

18. Sledding Hill operations – Snowmax to be used this year. 40% increase in snow production, raises the melting point, should last longer, able to make snow at higher temperatures, uses less water, expect to be more efficient and conserve our well and tank water. This year's expense is \$2,000.00.

19.Board appointments are due in December. Emily is calling current members to ask if they wish to be re-appointed. Interested residents should complete an application if they would like to volunteer. Applications are on the town's website or contact the Town Clerk.

20.Beech Mountain Resort plans to open Friday, November 29th, the day after Thanksgiving!

21.Christmas Parade – December 19th at 4:00 pm. "Beech Mountain a Winter Wonderland". Time for some good times here in town!

9.3. Finance Report for August and September

- 9.4. Fire Department Monthly Report
- 9.5. Police Department Monthly Report
- 9.6. October 2024 Recreation Report
- 9.7. Planning & Inspections Monthly Report 2024-10
- 9.8. DOI Monthly Report October 2024
- 9.9. TDA Report November 2024

10. TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

- 10.1. Councilmember Alan Villanova- I encourage folks to be patient. FEMA reimbursement is crucial for the town and that requires the town to follow specific guidelines to ensure proper reimbursement. Thank you, employees, Fire, Police, and residents who have assisted in the recovery process of our town. We are blessed to live on Beech Mountain. Thank you Mr. Pudney for all that you do.

Councilmember M.W. Stanford- This is the one-year anniversary for three of us on the Council. I hope that we have lived up to the expectations of the citizens of the town and if we haven't please hold us accountable and reach out.

Vice Mayor Kelly Melang-

- The Holiday Market at Buckeye Recreation Center is on November 30th from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM.
- Beech Mountain Club has put out an email about creating care packages to give to town employees, if you haven't gotten that just let me and I can forward it to you.
- Buckeye Recreation Center is doing an Angel Tree please visit them for more information.
- Brick Oven Pizzeria is holding the annual Friendsgiving event on November 21st from 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM.

Mayor Abernethy-

New county commissioners in Watauga County- Mr. Braxton Eggers is our region's commissioner.

Building relationships with local and state officials is crucial in getting repairs prioritized. The Hagerty Group has been and continues to be instrumental in assisting the town with the FEMA process, thank you Hagerty Group.

I hope the Town Council has represented the town well to the expectations of the citizens.

Please continue to be a watchful neighbor and report anything suspicious to the police department.

Councilmember M.W. Stanford- Music for the Mountain benefit concert to support Avery First Responders that were affected by Helene 2024 will be held at Lees Mcrae on Friday, November, 15th at 5:00 PM.

11. ADJOURNMENT

11.1. Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to adjourn at 5:20 PM.

Motion

Alan Villanova made a motion to adjourn at 5:20 PM Kelly Melang seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

Town Clerk

Mayor, Town of Beech Mountain