



MINUTES

Regular Town Council Meeting

4:00 PM - Tuesday, May 14, 2024
Council Chambers

The Regular Town Council of the Town of Beech Mountain was called to order on Tuesday, May 14, 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

COUNCIL EXCUSED: Councilmember M.W. Stanford

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

- 1.1. Mayor Abernethy announced the change of the June council meeting from June 11th to June 13th at 4:00pm in the Council Chambers as a reminder of the schedule change.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to adopt the agenda Art Beckmann seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

3. INVOCATION- DEWEY CYCLONE BRETT

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

- 5.1. Acknowledgment of Adalynne Tyre- Mrs. Kate Gavenus introduced Adalynne Tyre and thanked her for showing interest in Beech Mountain for her school project. Mayor Abernethy thanked Adalynne and her father for visiting Beech Mountain and encouraged them to revisit and enjoy the many activities the

mountain has to offer.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

6.1. Sandy Carr of 505 Pine Ridge Road- The upcoming Farmers' Market is held in the public parking lot the first Friday of every month June - October. This year's Market will feature 35 vendors adding three new local farms, new artist, ice cream, a petting zoo and much more! Thank you to the town for supporting this community event! We look forward to seeing everyone next month!

Nick Wilson of 513 Charter Hills Road- I have several items I would like council to consider.

1. Water Plant has finished in 1st in taste in the state over the past couple of years. I would like to ask council to provide an updated carcinogenic report.
2. Many of us here today are concerned of the possible closing of the Convenience Center.
3. Rumor that a councilmember is leaving, we do not want that to happen. We elected you to be on this council and want you to serve to the best ways you possibly can.
4. I recommend one or two councilmembers meet publicly with taxpayers monthly to hear our concerns outside of the regularly scheduled council meeting.

Jana Greer of 504 Oz Road- Town councilmembers in a time where negativity often seems to overshadow positivity I feel compelled to express my sincerest appreciation for the dedication and care you consistently invest into our town particularly in matters as crucial as budget allocation. It is evident that you prioritize the well being of our residents and our valued town employees and for that I am truly grateful. The conscientious approach you take in ensuring our town employees are fairly compensated is not only commendable but also essential. I am aware of the challenges faced by employers in retaining talented individuals who demonstrate genuine dedication to their work. Moreover as a member of this community who understands the reality of navigating the ever rising cost of living I am deeply appreciated of your efforts to support our town employees in providing for their families. I also want to extend my gratitude for your diligence in exploring potential avenues in streamlining our budget. It is disheartening to witness the spread of unfounded rumors and unnecessary drama particularly surrounding the discussions about the Convenience Center. Your commitment to conducting thorough research even in the face of unwarranted criticism reflects your unwavering dedication to serving the best interest of our community. I want to reassure you that your efforts do not go unnoticed nor unappreciated. As Beech Mountain continues to evolve and flourish it is assuring to know we have a town council comprised of individuals who not only possess the maturity and professionalism needed to navigate challenges but also embody a steadfast determination to propel our community toward a brighter future.

David Murray of 101 Hollow Tree Road- The sides of the roadways from Fred's General Store to Ski Beech are dangerous. I had an experience when driving in dense fog and trying to slowly follow the white line on the road was very

difficult.

Janet Villanova of 142 Teaberry Trail - I want to share the before you speak THINK acronym with everyone.

T- Is it true?

H- Is it helpful?

I- Is it inspiring?

N- Is it necessary?

K- Is it Kind?

David Saintsing of 100 Skiway Lane- Beech Mountain is a special place to me and my family. One problem I have with Beech Mountain is putting a trash bin outside of my house as a part time resident I'm concerned of others using our bin while we are away and then we are responsible if/when a bear gets into the garbage. I do not encourage closing the Convenience Center. I want my voice to be heard as a part time resident.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

7.1. Adoption of Minutes

7.2. Adoption of Closed Session Minutes

7.3. Golden Leaf Grant, Grantee Acknowledgment and Agreement

7.4. Golden Leaf Resolution of Acceptance and Commitment

7.5. Heavy Equipment Purchase Capital Budget Ordinance

7.6. Amendment to the FY 2024 Town Budget

7.7. 2023 Order to Advertise

Motion

Alan Villanova made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and Art Beckmann seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1. Public Hearing on Proposed Text Amendments (ZTA 2024-0113)

Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to open the Public Hearing on Proposed Text Amendments. Vice Mayor Melang motioned to open the Public Hearing Councilmember Beckmann seconded the motion.

Urs Gsteiger of 124 Raven Road- I am here to speak in favor of these changes as a former chair of the Planning Board. I would like to focus on the STR portion, the feedback i get the most from residents is the problem we have with STR's on Beech Mountain. These changes go part of the way to doing something about the issue, personally I don't think they go far enough. I would encourage you to go back and take a look at the 2021 report that the Planning

Board sent to Council on STR regulation. There are some items in that report that will go further than these changes in regulating these properties. A few items Council could look at that are not in these changes are; 1. Setting maximum occupancy limits for STR's 2. set a higher limit for the number of parking spaces necessary for STR's 3. Setting a cap on the number of STR's in a particular planning district 4. Enforcing the current ordinances in regards to noise and light. I strongly urge you to adopt these changes presented today and perhaps in the future go further.

Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to close the Public Hearing on Proposed Text Amendments. Councilmember Villanova made a motion to close the Public Hearing and Councilmember Beckmann seconded the motion.

8.2. Proposed Text Amendments (ZTA 2024-0113) to the Town of Beech Mountain Code of Ordinances

Motion

Art Beckmann made a motion to approve the text amendments provided herein and Alan Villanova seconded the motion. CARRIED. unanimously.

8.3. Public Hearing, FY 2025 Town Budget

Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to open the Public Hearing, FY 2025 Town Budget. Vice Mayor Melang made a motion to open the public Hearing and Councilmember Beckmann seconded the motion.

Robert McMichael of 710 Pine Ridge Road- As someone who has been adamant about talking to you all regarding the budget, I want to thank Town Manager Pudney and staff for all the hard work they have done on this budget. I think it is an outstanding job. I'm really happy to see changes in how things are reported, so that it is easily navigated and understood. Thank you.

Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to close the Public Hearing. Vice Mayor Melang made a motion to close the Public Hearing and Councilmember Villanova seconded the motion.

9. TOWN MANAGER AND STAFF REPORTS

9.1 Town Managers Comments:

- . 1. Skiloft report – good progress being made, on schedule. Presented drone footage.
- 2. Tamarack report – milling complete, paving scheduled for first two weeks of June weather dependent. Ditches and culverts completed.
- 3. Town wide cleanup and beautification -. Public Works, Parks and recreation have begun the grading, seeding and plantings for spring. Flower baskets to be placed next week.
- 4. Town Hall / Visitor Center – front parking lot to be graded and paved, expect disruption to access during this period. The roof is underway again.

5. Pond Creek Sewer Plant – contractor underway with repairs, hauling sewage off the mountain in tank trucks.
6. Buckeye Recreation Center HVAC – on schedule, end of June.
7. Mountain electric has informed the town that right of way cutting and spraying will begin this summer. Mountain Electric will be working with our public works department to facilitate the removal of debris and cuttings due to this work. This project is designed to increase the reliability of the electrical grid in the town.
8. Budget –
 - a. Workshop May 22nd at 2:00 pm. Will need direction to make any changes.
 - b. Sanitation-
 - i. Budget report indicates operating above the benchmark – (red) (pg. 88)
 - ii. Submitted three options to council.
 1. Across the board rate increase. (\$35 to \$40) (\$121,000)
 2. Close one additional day per week. (5) reduces across the board increase to \$37.90 (saves \$2.10) (saves \$50,000) (raises \$70,000)
 3. Close the garbage portion of the convenience center. Saves (\$239,180.00 annually) reduces fee to \$30.12 per month.
 - a. Requires an implementation period due code enforce required bins (800).
 - b. Requires rescinding the ordinance exemption.
 - c. Provide time for customers to purchase bins.

The Town Council directed Town Manager Pudney to present a budget on May 22nd with closing an additional day per week.

- i. Water rates-
 - i. Submitted an across-the-board rate increase of 5% (\$54.40 to \$57.25)
 1. Submit two options to the council.
 - a. Retain across the board rate increases.
 - b. Adopt a new scale that encourages conservation and does not penalize low usage customers.
 - i. Increasing scale based upon consumption.
 - ii. Minimum system fee.
 - c. moves from a base rate of 3000 gallons to a service charge and commodity charge. (per gallon)
 - d. Can adjust the consumption multiplier by raising the minimum consumption multiplier.

The Town Council directed Town Manager Pudney to move forward with the new scale model that has been presented.

9. Board of adjustment – alternate position needs to be filled. May I advertise this

vacant spot? The council agreed to advertise the alternate position.

10. Farmers market –

- a. First Friday of each month (June to October)
 - i. June 7th 2-6 pm at the parking lot.
 - ii. Free market bags to the first 100 customers.

11. Reminder, June Town Council Meeting changed to June 13th from the 11th.

- 9.2. Finance Report
- 9.3. Police Department Monthly Report
- 9.4. Fire Department Monthly Report
- 9.5. TDA Report
- 9.6. DOI Report April 2024
- 9.7. April 2024 Recreation Report
- 9.8. Planning & Inspections Monthly Report 2024-04

10. TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

- 10.1. Councilmember Villanova- I would like to thank the TDA for their time and effort they have put into working along this council. Please be patient during the budget process, we want to do what is in the best interest of the taxpayer and the town. Town Manager Pudney is the most knowledgeable for questions however please reach out to us on council as well. Thank you Mr. Pudney and town staff.

Councilmember Beckmann- Social media is out of hand. Please go to the correct source for factual information. Please address council with concerns or questions. Beech Mountain is a special place and we want to continue moving toward the betterment of the town.

Vice Mayor Melang- Thanks to the Parks and Recreation Department the town has a brand new trail on Pine Ridge Road.

Mayor Abernethy- The Governors Cabinet meeting was held last month at Buckeye Recreation Center and the amount of contacts Beech Mountain gained from hosting that meeting is crucial in the grant process. I want the taxpayers to know that your voice counts if you are full-time or part-time council wants to hear your concerns and requests. Thank you all for your attendance to today's council meeting.

11. ADJOURNMENT

- 11.1. Mayor Abernethy requested a motion to adjourn at 5:22pm.

Motion

Kelly Melang made a motion to adjourn Alan Villanova seconded the motion.

CARRIED. unanimously.

Town Clerk

Mayor, Town of Beech Mountain