

**MINUTES**  
**BEECH MOUNTAIN TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Special Meeting – July 28, 2011**

***I. CALL TO ORDER***

Vice Mayor Piquet called the special meeting of the Beech Mountain Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m., Thursday July 28, 2011 in the Town Hall Council Chambers. Other Council Members present were Rick Miller, Cindy Keller and Alan Holcombe. Staff members present were Town Manager Randy Feierabend; Finance Officer Nancy Johnson and Public Utilities Director Robert Heaton. Marion Rothrock with Rothrock Engineering was present as well.

***II. Adoption of Agenda*** – Vice Mayor Piquet stated the agenda would stand as presented.

***III. New Business***

***a. Budget Amendment for E-911 Fund*** – Councilman Miller motioned to approve the budget amendment. Councilman Holcombe seconded the motion and the vote passed 4-0 with Mayor Owen being absent from the vote.

***b. Water and Sewer Comprehensive Report*** – Marion Rothrock of Rothrock Engineering presented the comprehensive water and sewer study that had been completed for the Town with a power point presentation. Mr. Rothrock stated that water and sewer lines began being installed in the mid 1960's. Mr. Rothrock made the recommendation that the Town purchase a Global Positioning System for Public Works in order for the Town to update its Geographic Information System Map with the location of water lines, meters and manholes. This would enable updates on the Towns infrastructure to be performed monthly.

Mayor Owen arrived at the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

Mr. Rothrock addressed the issues concerning the Towns water and sewer. The Town needs to replace 53 miles of its oldest water lines that are made of galvanized steel with new lines. The Water Plant at Buckeye may be fixed if the solution to repair the rusted tanks can be completed at a cost that is less than replacement. The tube filters can be replaced for \$25,000; leaving a strong possibility that there will be 6 – 10 years more of operational life. Mr. Rothrock recommended that the Town plan on installing tank mixers in at least 3 tanks and look at the others. Mr. Rothrock stated that the August 8, 2011 ultrasound testing would take place on the metal parts of tanks. The Towns sewer system has problems with lines and manholes throughout. During Phase I Mr. Rothrock recommends that the Town replace the Grassy Gap Lift Station as well as 12,400' of sewer lines and 82 manholes. I & I is not sustainable. If no major problems occur then the new Water Treatment Plant would come online in 2020. Design will start in 2016 with construction beginning in 2018. The process needs to be immediately started to have the Watauga River reclassified to a drinking water supply for the Town of Beech Mountain. Normally this process takes 1-3 years. Mayor Owen asked the cost. Mr. Rothrock stated that it would cost approximately \$25,000 to go through the reclassification process but that the upfront cost would be zero. Staff was instructed to place this on the upcoming agenda for Councils regularly scheduled meeting. The cost estimate to build the raw water intake and pipeline to Buckeye Lake is \$2,250,000.

Mr. Rothrock emphasized that the priority list that has been created for the Town is based on the assumption that the Town is going to be able to fix the Water Plant at Buckeye very inexpensively. Priorities are as follows: two filters for the Water Plant at Buckeye with an approximate cost of \$25,000; installation of a new lift station at Grassy Gap with an approximate cost of \$225,000; rehabilitation of the 2 basins that drain to the Grassy Gap lift station and replacing water pumps. Mr. Rothrock stated that the rest of the items on the list are to be completed as financing would permit. Another project that the Town needs to keep in the back of their mind is the construction of a new Water Plant in 2020. Design, permits and contracts for this project will need to be lined up and put into place. The cost will be approximately \$4,982,000. Further down the road the next large item would be the construction of the Waste Water Treatment Plant at Grassy Gap. This needs to be in place by 2024. In 2020 the Town will need to reevaluate and begin the process for the construction expansion. The estimated cost of this project will be \$900,000.

At 7:50 p.m. Council took a 10 minute break.

Mr. Rothrock stated that this is a total cost summary. Water lines and sewer lines are in these numbers. The total for everything over the upcoming years is \$34,500,000. Mayor Owen thanked Mr. Rothrock for his presentation and stated that Council may invite him back after they had time to digest this information. The discussion of revenue being generated from availability fees was discussed amongst Council. Councilwoman Keller stated that she thought that this avenue regarding the availability fees had been exhausted. Manager Feierabend stated that this was not the case but that the process had been started too late in the legislative session. Mayor Owen stated that there were a lot of other communities in similar situations that could benefit from this type of legislation. Councilwoman Keller asked about the possibilities of grants. Mr. Rothrock stated that a lot of grants were drying up. Public Utilities Director Robert Heaton stated that everyone needs to remember that the Environmental Protection Agency and every water system in the country is looking at sustainability. The days of being able to siphon money off of taxes to fund utilities is over. Mr. Rothrock stated that the Environmental Protection Agency has felt this way since 1973 when they stated that if you take a grant from us you will adopt water and sewer rates that are both self supporting and self sustaining, so these rules are not something new. However, it is somewhat new that they are starting to enforce it. Mr. Heaton stated that he has been looking at rates in neighboring communities and these rates are comparable to the Towns.

- IV. Adjourn** – Upon motion to adjourn made by Vice Mayor Piquet and seconded by Councilman Holcombe, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes approved by Town Council on September 20, 2011.

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Richard H. Owen, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Jennifer Broderick, Town Clerk