

MINUTES
BEECH MOUNTAIN TOWN COUNCIL
April 13, 2004

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rick Owen called the regular meeting of the Beech Mountain Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall. Other Council Members present were Gil Adams, Pete Chamberlin, Paul Piquet and Dr. Ed Waligroski. Also present were Town Manager Seth Lawless, Police Chief Jay Hefner, Public Works Director Riley Hatch, Tax Administrator Missy Norwood, Building Inspector Keith Cook, and Town Attorney David Paletta. There were a number of interested parties in the audience.

Invocation – Charlie Bureson opened the meeting with prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance - All present joined in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

1. Adoption of Agenda – Mr. Chamberlin moved to approve the Agenda with the deletion of item #3. Dr. Waligroski seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

2. Consent Agenda – Minutes of March 9th Regular Meeting and the March 26th Special Meeting - Mr. Chamberlin moved to accept the minutes of March 9th as amended and the March 26th meeting as presented. Mr. Piquet seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. New Business

A. Direct Tax Administrator to Advertise Liens - Mr. Piquet made a motion to have the Tax Administrator advertise the tax liens. Dr. Waligroski seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

B. Consider Resolution 04-04-01 – Employee Health Insurance - After a brief review of the Town's health insurance coverage by Mr. Lawless and the noted savings by changing carriers, Mr. Adams moved to adopt Resolution 04-04-01 allowing the Town to obtain insurance from another source. Mr. Piquet seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

C. Review Draft Parks and Recreation Ordinance - Mr. Lawless presented a draft ordinance for Parks and Recreation, with alternative options for the size and number of advisory board(s). Council discussed the positive and negative aspects of having one large committee in an oversight role for all Town recreation as opposed to the creation of a second smaller group focused solely on the new Center. All agreed to consider the matter further and get input from the Recreation Committee.

Peggy Coscia, Assistant to the Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, asked if the Long Range Planning Committee was still in existence. Mayor Owen replied that it had been renamed the Recreation Committee, and included the same members.

Mr. Piquet noted that Roger Bullock, who had chaired the Recreation Committee, would need to be replaced. Mayor Owen recommended that the Recreation Committee hold a meeting, having either Mr. Lawless or a Council member chair the meeting. Mr. Lawless indicated that he would work to set a date for the Committee to meet in the near future.

D. Consider Proposal for Optional Construction Field Tests –Recreation Center - Mr Lawless reported that Mr Dan McDonald of Overcash Demmitt Architects, had recommended that the Town have some individual testing done on the recreational building site for the soil compaction, concrete strength and welded joint strength. Mr. Lawless felt the testing would be in the \$5,000 to \$8,000 range. The cost of the various tests could be taken from the \$50,000 contingency fund for the building. After a brief discussion Mr. Piquet made a motion to have he testing done at the building site. Dr. Waligroski seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Mr. Lawless indicated that he would be in contact with the Council members with regards to the cost of the testing

4. Staff/Consultant Reports

A. Town Engineer's Report. - Mr. Powell was unable to attend the meeting. Mr Lawless indicated that Mr Powell would be in Town April 20th to receive paving bids for the resurfacing projects.

B. Public Works Director's Report. – Riley Hatch reported: 1) The Department was getting ready for spring. Chat clearing had already commenced at the lower elevations of the Mountain; higher areas were saved for a later date due to the chance of snow. 2) The Right of Way crew was clearing a sewer maintenance easement for an outfall line. 3) Iron Mountain Construction Co. is scheduled to start Phase II of the rehabilitation project on May 1st; the project is contracted for 145 days start to finish. 4) Pro Rehab is scheduled to start manhole rehabilitation on May 14th on Lower Snowbird Trail. Mr. Hatch's report was accepted as submitted.

C. Town Attorney's Report. – Mr. Paletta had no report.

D. Police Report – Chief Hefner reviewed the monthly Police Department Activity Report commending Officer Pamela James with the arrest on a credit card fraud case. Chief Hefner's report is on file with the Town Clerk.

E. Town Manager's Report. – Mr. Lawless presented a brief report noting that: 1) A groundbreaking ceremony for the Recreation Center was planned for Saturday, April 17th, at 12:00. Everyone was encouraged to attend. 2) Mr Lawless reported that a sledding hill meeting was held on April 6th, the group was scheduled to meet again in August. 3) Due to weather conditions the water meters were not read in December, the March reading is for six months worth of water usage. 4) F.E.M.A. has agreed for the Town to participate in the flood insurance program, a press release has been sent out to the media and realtors and will be posted in the upcoming edition of the MountainEar. 5) Mr Lawless reported that the Chamber of Commerce had postponed their monthly meeting until Tuesday, April 20th at 9:30 a.m. Mr Lawless' report was accepted as submitted.

F. Tax Collection Report - On file with the Town Clerk.

G. Building Inspections Report - On file with the Town Clerk.

H. Quarterly Financial Report - On file with the Town Clerk.

I. TDA Financial Report - Calder Smoot, TDA Chairperson, reported to the Town Council that the third quarter income looked good even though March had not yet been calculated. Mr. Smoot did point out that the gross revenue was not growing, but the increase in the occupancy tax had resulted in higher income figures. Mr. Smoot also indicated that the TDA was looking into advertising options among other things to increase gross receipts.

Mr. Smoot also reminded the Council and audience that volunteers were need for annual flower planting. Volunteers can contact the Chamber of Commerce or Fred's Mercantile to sign up. Mr. Lawless noted that the Town employees would be putting fresh soil in the existing barrels.

Mr. Chamberlin reported that he had attended the March 31st TDA meeting and noted that the Town was indeed seeing a decline in gross receipts and verified that the TDA was discussing options to bring more people to the Town. The report is on file with the Town Clerk.

5. Other Business -

A. Grant - Mr. Lawless reported on a grant program through the North Carolina Department of Transportation. In order for the Town to apply for the grant a plan would have to be put together dealing with a project for hiking, biking or walking trail that would connect commercial areas to residential. Mr. Lawless indicated that he would have to further investigate the requirements to verify that the trails did not have to be along a state maintained road. An approved grant requires 20% matching funds.

Mrs. Coscia asked if this particular grant program was connected to the beautification plan the Chamber had been looking into. Mayor Owen indicated that it was not and further reported that he had not received a reply to his letter requesting that the state look at Beech Mountain Parkway for the beautification project, he would place a call in a few days to check the progress of the Town's request.

Eva Jones asked if the grant could be used to create a trail between Banner Elk and Beech Mountain, perhaps under the existing electric lines. Mayor Owen indicated that could be researched, however Mr. Lawless did feel the grant could be used in such a manor. Mayor Owen noted that a group called the Municipal Association, which was meeting April 22nd, was the source to consider such a project.


B. Fire Department - Fire Chief Jim Brooks invited everyone to stop by the new fire departments sub station on St. Andrews, the completion date is scheduled for May 1st.

C. Clean Up - Mr. Piquet noted that the annual spring clean up had not been organized. Mr. Lawless indicated that Tim Holland had taken charge of that project in the past and he was currently out of town. Mr. Lawless volunteered to contact Mr. Holland when he returns. Mr. Lawless also noted that Fred Diehl had already picked up the trash on Charter Hills Rd.

Mayor Owen indicated to the audience and Chamber that the item removed 'Special Presentation – Beech Mountain Chamber of Commerce' would be considered on an issue by issue basis and thanked the Chamber for their comments.

6. *Adjournment* – Upon a motion by Mr. Piquet, seconded by Dr. Waligroski the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Minutes approved by Town Council on May 11, 2004.



Mayor

ATTEST:



Town Clerk