

**MINUTES  
BEECH MOUNTAIN TOWN COUNCIL  
PLANNING RETREAT  
April 1, 2005**

***Call to Order***

Mayor Rick Owen called a special meeting of the Beech Mountain Town Council to order at 9:30 a.m. in the office of Region D Council of Governments Conference Room in Boone. Other Council Members present were Gil Adams, Pete Chamberlin and Paul Piquet. Also present were Town Manager Seth Lawless, Public Works Director Riley Hatch and Planning Board Chairperson Randy Corn. Bill Wilder of Wilder Consulting was also in attendance.

***I. Pay and Classifications Study – Bill Wilder*** – Mr. Bill Wilder of Wilder Consulting addressed the Council with the results of the pay and classifications study for the Town. Mr. Wilder recommended the following changes: a. Title changes for eleven job class titles; b. Increase the spread of all pay grades; c. Cost of living increase for the upcoming fiscal year; d. 22 job classes be adjusted to higher pay ranges. Mr. Wilder indicated that the purpose of the aforementioned adjustments would make the Town's pay plan more competitive. Mr. Corn asked if the Town had an automatic progression in pay to which Mr. Lawless responded that the pay increases were based on a merit system at evaluation time in December or January. Mr. Hatch noted that departments were given 1¼% of payroll to distribute to deserving employees. Mr. Chamberlin asked if the benefits offered to Town employees were comparable to other towns in the area to which Mr. Wilder indicated that in some cases, they were better, but not excessive. Mr. Chamberlin then noted that the Town offered a great environment for employees and that turn over was not high. Mr. Piquet suggested that the recommendations made by Mr. Wilder be implemented. Mayor Owen asked what it would cost to implement the recommended changes to which Mr. Lawless indicated that he would do some research to come up with an approximate cost to the Town.

***II. Financing Pond Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade – Seth Lawless*** – Mr. Lawless gave an update on the repairs to the Pond Creek Wastewater facilities noting that the total projected cost was \$1,229,100, however it was possible that this figure could be lower. Mr. Lawless further indicated that the engineering design cost of \$55,000 had been paid in Phase I of the rehabilitation project. Mr. Lawless then called the Council's attention to the proposed additional operation and maintenance cost scheduled. The Town Engineer, Ed Powell, had suggested a rate increase of \$4 to \$5 to cover the additional expenses, however, Mr. Lawless felt small increases on a yearly basis, along with an increase in the connection fees charged at the time a new building permit was issued would be sufficient. The Council agreed with the plan Mr. Lawless had outlined to cover the cost of the Pond Creek upgrades. Mr. Chamberlin asked how soon the Town would have to do upgrades to the water system to which Mr. Hatch responded that the current situation with the water supply was not a problem, other than some 2" and 4" lines that would need to be upgraded due to the fire hydrant requirements. Mr. Hatch also expressed his desire to have a hydraulic model of the water system to show where the system needs upgrading. Mr. Lawless noted that the Town would be facing another expenses with the water system in the



future with radio read meters. Mr. Hatch explained that the Town would be able to have monthly billing for the water used with minimal expense in reading the meters.

**III. Planning Board Role – Randy Corn**—Mr. Corn, Chairperson for the Planning Board expressed his desire to have a Board that acted, not reacted, to issues facing the Town. Mr. Corn also felt it would be in the best interest of the Town to have an on-staff Planner or Engineer to assist in the growth of the Town. The Council liked the concept of an on-staff Planner or Engineer but felt the Town could not afford one at this time. Mr. Lawless was asked to contact Region D with regards to their Community Assistance Program for planning. Mr. Piquet asked that the Council recommend that the Planning Board review the density requirements for condominiums.

**IV. Appearance Commission – Randy Corn**—Mr. Corn asked the Council if there was any support for an appearance commission such as those in Banner Elk and Blowing Rock. After a brief discussion the Council agreed that the Tourism Development Authority was the entity to deal with items such as Christmas decoration and flowers, which were funded by the TDA, and that a traditional appearance commission was not desired at this time.

**V. BMC – Town Joint Project – Randy Corn** – Mr. Corn presented the Council with a proposal for a Beech Mountain Club and Town indoor swimming pool. After a lengthy discussion, the Council asked that Mr. Corn approach the Club and then return to the Council with their proposal.

**VI. Summer Work Plan – Riley Hatch**— Mr. Hatch went over the list of items that he intended to do over the summer. Mr. Adams asked about road sweeping to which Mr. Hatch responded that they had been waiting for the last snow before getting started. Mr. Lawless noted that he and Mr. Hatch would be compiling a list of roads for striping.

**VII. Budget Issues –**

**1. Street Resurfacing Schedule** - Mr. Lawless reported that Mr. Powell would be getting an estimate to gather for resurfacing cost to be included in the 2005/2006 budget. Recommendations for resurfacing were Beech Mountain Parkway from the entrance to Ski Beech to Lake Road, Hornbeam Road, Charter Hills Road to Tamarack Road and St. Andrews Road from Pine Ridge to the Fire Station II. Mr. Piquet asked when the state planned to repave Beech Mountain Parkway to which Mr. Lawless reported that he had been in contact with Mr. Jerry Combs of the D.O.T. and their plans were to seal the road. No paving was scheduled at this time.

**2. Water Line Replacement Program** – Mr. Chamberlin requested the water line be placed on long term goal plan for, perhaps 2006, to start replacing the 2” and 4” lines.

**3. Other** – Mr. Lawless reported that he planned to include a cost of living increase of 3% for the employees and proposed to change the stipend given to the Council to a monthly pay as opposed to the per meeting pay fee.



4. ***Set Budget Meeting Date*** - The Council agreed on the following dates:

Tuesday, May 31<sup>st</sup> 4:00 p.m. Present 2005/2006 budget to Council  
Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> 6:00 p.m. Budget workshop  
Tuesday, June 14<sup>th</sup> 6:00 p.m. Public hearing  
Tuesday, June 21<sup>st</sup> 6:00 p.m. Budget workshop

***VIII. Other Business*** – The Council discussed the appearance of the area around the Genesis Wildlife Center at Buckeye Lake noting that the original use of the area had been designated as an educational center. After a brief discussion, Mr. Lawless was asked to write Leslie Hayhurst a letter reiterating the original intent of the Council for the area.

***IX. Adjournment*** - There being no further business to come before the Council, Mr. Piquet moved the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Chamberlin seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Town Council on 4/12, 2005.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Town Clerk

**MINUTES**  
**BEECH MOUNTAIN TOWN COUNCIL**  
**April 12, 2005**

***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 Council Chambers. Other Council Members present were Gil Adams, Pete Chamberlin and Paul Piquet. Also present were Town Manager Seth Lawless, Police Chief Jay Hefner, Public Works Director Riley Hatch, Building Inspector Keith Cook, Tax Administrator Missy Norwood, Town Engineer Ed Powell and Town Attorney David Paletta. There were a number of interested parties in the audience.

***Invocation*** – Dominic Simon opened the meeting with scripture reading and prayer.

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

***1. Adoption of Agenda*** – The Agenda was adopted with the addition of the Budget Amendment for a telephone system for Town Hall as item B under #6 New Business. Mr. Piquet moved to accept the Agenda as amended. Mr. Chamberlin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

***2. Consent Agenda – Minutes of March 8<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting and Minutes of April 1<sup>st</sup> Special Meeting*** – Mr. Piquet moved to approve the minutes of March 8<sup>th</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup> as submitted. Mr. Chamberlin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

***3. Person's Wishing to Address Council – Barry Schorr*** – Mr. Barry Schorr of 205 Foxgrape Hollow Road addressed the Council with regards to the Town roads during inclement weather. Mr. Schorr felt the maintenance during the winter months was inadequate and gave an overview of the instances that he and his family were unable to navigate the roads and Town employees failed to give assistance. Mr. Schorr further noted that his wife, Carolyn, slid off the road and totaled their 4 x 4 vehicle. Mr. Schorr informed the Council and audience that he had been in contact with the Town Manager and Mayor, both orally and in writing, without satisfaction. Mr. Schorr felt the accident could have been prevented had the Town heeded his concerns and taken pre-emptive action. Mayor Owen assured Mr. Schorr that the Town would take his concerns into consideration.

***4. Special Presentation – Occupancy Tax Collection and Enforcement: Melissa Norwood and David Paletta*** – Ms. Melissa Norwood, Tax Administrator, addressed the Council and audience giving an overview of the system set up to deal with Occupancy Tax evaders. Ms. Norwood noted that she and Mr. Paletta had revised the letter of notification making it more of a notice of violation to encourage home owners to comply with the law to collect and report occupancy tax when renting their property on a short term basis. Mr. Paletta indicated that it was important for the Council to understand the process that he and Ms. Norwood followed in collecting the occupancy tax and also noted that he had a 100% collection rate on non compliance notices he has had to deal with. Mr. Paletta further noted that the only other step that could be taken when dealing with violators was to report them to the state for tax evasion, which he felt was not necessary because this would not help the Town in dealing with the issue.

Mr. Paletta noted that the challenge in collecting occupancy tax was identifying the offenders and the discovery methods currently used were successful, however suggestions from the Council were encouraged. Mr. Piquet felt it would be helpful to have Ms. Norwood state in her letter that the Town would be reporting the offender to the state for further action. Mrs. Eva Jones felt that the public was not educated on the occupancy tax issue and asked if the Town could produce a brochure for realtors to pass out. Mr. Andrew Porter suggested a note be placed on outgoing tax bills advising homeowners that there was an occupancy tax if they rented their property. The Council agreed that public participation in finding offenders was essential in collecting occupancy tax. After a brief discussion, the Council agreed that Ms. Norwood and Mr. Paletta should work together to revise the 'notice of violation' letter to include the warning about the state being notified for violation on sales tax requirements.

**5. Old Business – Discuss Planning Bd. Rec. of Klonteska Development Proposal** – Mr. Randy Corn, Chairman of the Planning Board, reported their recommendation was for the Council not to approve the revised plat for the Klonteska Development as submitted. The Council agreed with the recommendation.

## **6. New Business**

**A. Review Bid for Road Side Fence** – Mayor Owen gave a brief explanation of the proposal from Rio Grande Fence Company to replace the existing fencing along Beech Mountain Parkway in front of Town Hall, between Wilson King's office and Fred's Mercantile and in front of the putt putt golf across from Town Hall. Mr. Chamberlin reported that he had researched the fence and discovered that it was originally built by the Town 20 years ago as a beautification project and Mr. Chamberlin made a motion that the Town accept the proposal for the fence made from Locust and Hemlock materials. Mr. Piquet seconded the motion. Mr. Lawless noted that the Locust and Hemlock were currently unavailable and the contractor did not have a scheduled delivery date. After a brief discussion, the Council agreed to wait for the materials. The motion passed unanimously.

**B. Consider Budget Amendment and Recommendation for Telephone Service** – Mr. Lawless directed the Council's attention to a memorandum from Chief Hefner outlining the features and cost of a new telephone system from Skyline Telephone. Mr. Lawless noted that some of the advantages of Skyline for the new system was that they were local when service was needed and they provided the phone service to the Town. Mr. Lawless also pointed out that their system would only cost the Town \$3,163.02 because the majority of the cost would be taken from the E-911 Fund, which is state regulated for usage. Mr. Chamberlin made a motion to accept the proposal from Skyline Telephone for a new system for the Town Hall as well as the Budget Amendment to transfer E-911 Funds in the amount of \$7,810. Mr. Piquet seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

## **7. Staff/Consultant Reports**

**A. Town Engineer's Report – Ed Powell** – Mr. Powell reported that the states FONSI (Finding Of No Significant Impact) has been advertised for the Pond Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades and the required 30 day period would end April 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Powell's firm will then be able to submit the plans to the state along with the loan application. Mr.

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Powell also noted that he was working on obtaining bids for resurfacing the following roads: 1. Beech Mountain Parkway from the entrance to Ski Beech to Lake Road. 2. Hornbeam Road, paved portion only. 3. Charter Hills Road to Tamarack Road and, 4. St. Andrews Road from Pine Ridge to Fire Station II. Mr. Powell's report was accepted as submitted.

**B. Public Works Director's Report – Riley Hatch** – Mr. Hatch reported: 1) The Mill Pond water holding tank had been drained and the contractor had started to sandblast the inside and outside of the tank in preparation for painting. 2. The Upper Pond Creek Hiking Trail has been repaired from Tamarack Road to Hornbeam Road with the help of volunteers and the WAMY, a community service organization. 3. The crew is currently trying to get the gravel roads graded and back into shape as well as sweeping the paved roads. 4. Crews were out straightening street signs and metal stop signs will be replaced with the routed type as soon as the weather permits. Mr. Hatch's report is on file with the Town Clerk.

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

**D. Chief of Police's Report – Jay Hefner** – Chief Hefner reported the arson was an empty house at the lower end of Pine Ridge Road. The Fire Martial and S B I. are still investigating with no leads to date. Captain Crawford is working the fraudulent check case and has a warrant. The D.W.I. case is a 22 year with a previous D.W.I. arrest on the mountain. The report is on file with the Town Clerk.

**E. Town Manager's Report – Seth Lawless** – Mr. Lawless reported: 1) The Recreation Center Architect, Contractor and Town Council members met today at the construction site. The block walls are being put up and as soon as that is complete the roof will be put on the building. The center is scheduled to open in 5 months. Plans are being made for programs and staffing to be in place when the center opens. 2) The annual budget meetings will be held on May 31<sup>st</sup> at 4:00 p.m., June 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m., June 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. and June 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 p.m. 3) The NC League of Municipalities will hold a regional update in Blowing Rock on April 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. and Town Hall Day in Raleigh is scheduled for May 11<sup>th</sup>.

**F. Tax Collection Report – Melissa Norwood** – The report is on file with the Town Clerk.

**G. Building Inspection Report – Keith Cook** – The report is on file with the Town Clerk.

#### **8. Other Business –**

**A. Town Clean Up Day** - Mr. Chamberlin reminded everyone that Town clean up day is this Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup>. Sign up sheets are at the Town Hall, Fred's and someone will also be at the Fire Station to pass out orange trash bags.

**B. Pay Phone** – Mayor Owen asked about the pay phone in the Town Hall foyer. Mr. Lawless responded that it had been ordered through Skyline Telephone.

**9. Adjournment** – Upon a motion by Mr. Chamberlin the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Piquet seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Minutes approved by Town Council on May 10, 2005.

Richard H. Dine  
Mayor

ATTEST:

Leba G. Greene  
Town Clerk

Minutes approved by Town Council on May 10, 2005.

Richard H. One  
Mayor

ATTEST:

Reba G. Greene  
Town Clerk