

BANNER ELK TOWN COUNCIL

**April 9, 2018
MINUTES**

The Banner Elk Town Council met Monday, April 9, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. at the Banner Elk Town Hall for their regular scheduled meeting.

Council Members present: Mayor Brenda Lyerly, David Lecka, Mike Dunn, Robert Tufts, Allen Bolick and Charlie VonCanon.

Staff present: Town Manager Rick Owen, Cheryl Buchanan, Police Chief Kevin Hodges and Attorney Four Eggers.

Call Meeting to Order

At 6:00 p.m. Mayor Lyerly called the regular monthly meeting of April 2018 to order.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Lyerly led those in attendance with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Invocation

Council Member VonCanon opened the meeting with prayer.

Approval of the Minutes

Mayor Lyerly asked if there was a motion to approve or amend the March 2018 Town Council Minutes. Council Member Bolick motioned to approve the March Town Council Minutes as written. Council Member Dunn seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed.

Approval of the Stated Agenda

Mayor Lyerly asked if there was a motion to approve April agenda. Council Member Lecka motioned to approve the April 2018 agenda as written. Council Member Dunn seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed.

Public Comments

Mayor Lyerly recognized Jim Swinkola. Mr. Swinkola reminded Council of Kiwanis One Day, which will be held on Saturday, April 14th at 9:00 a.m. The Kiwanians and community volunteers will be putting together the new playground equipment in the Tate-Evans Park geared to children ages 2 to 5. He noted that through the help of Nancy Owen, a work force team was put together. He read the list of people who have volunteered to help.

Ensemble Stage Presentation

Mr. Gary Smith, Artistic Director of Ensemble Stage, reported to Council that Ensemble Stage has had a successful and exciting first year. He thanked Council for their support and thanked the Town of Banner Elk. He noted that attendance has gone up 13% and that the last 16 out of the 17 performances were sell outs with waiting lists. Mr. Smith stated that this season they have actors coming from New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, West Virginia, Tennessee, Florida and Maryland. He noted that they are promoting Ensemble Stage and Banner Elk through various advertisements, adding additional performances, etc. Mr. Smith reported that Ensemble Stage is

hosting the Chamber's Afterhours event on May 9th and will be holding a "friend raiser" event on June 2nd, inviting everyone to come. He noted that they are also involved in making some aesthetic improvements to their premises (i.e. funding for an AC system, raising the risers on the back three rows, etc.). Mr. Smith stated that Ensemble Stage is here for the Town of Banner Elk and is honored to be a part of the community. Mayor Lyerly thanked Gary Smith, Lisa Lamont and the entire Ensemble Stage.

Woolly Worm Resolution

Mayor Lyerly read the *Resolution Supporting Designating the Woolly Worm Festival in Banner Elk as the State's Official Woolly Worm Festival*. Council Member Robert Tufts motioned to accept and adopt the resolution. Council Member VonCanon seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed. Mr. Owen reported to Council that the Woolly Worm Festival celebrated its 40th year this past October. The Mayor and Town Staff felt a need to recognize this festival and its contribution to the Town over the years. The Town looked into legislation which would officially recognize the Woolly Worm Festival as a State festival. He noted that the Town drafted a proposal and has been working with Senator Ballard to having this bill introduced. Given the timing of the current session, it could not be introduced as a stand-alone bill. So they are working at introducing it with another piece of legislation and asked us to produce and pass a formal Resolution of Support. This would make it the official State Woolly Worm Festival.

Mayor Lyerly took a moment to introduce and welcome Savannah Tanner, an intern with the Avery Journal, who will be reporting on this meeting this evening for the Avery Journal.

Proclamation Declaring May National Bike Month

Ted Silver, chairman of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, introduced Deana Acklin, a newly appointed member of the committee and also a graduate of Lees-McRae College. Mr. Silver read the *Proclamation Declaring May National Bike Month*. Council Member VonCanon motioned to accept the proclamation. Council Member Bolick seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed.

Mayor Lyerly introduced Kathy Boone, chair of the Woolly Worm Festival Committee and noted that the resolution was approved and adopted.

Reschedule Public Hearing – Ordinance Amendment, Home Occupation

Cheryl Buchanan reported that she missed filing the notice for the public hearing for the ordinance amendment in time for the April meeting. She requests that Council reschedule the public hearing to its May meeting. Council Member VonCanon motioned to reschedule the public hearing to May's Council meeting. Council Member Dunn seconded. All were in favor. No one opposed.

Arbor Day Proclamation

Cheryl Buchanan reported that Banner Elk is beginning its 4th year as a Tree City USA. One of the requirements of holding on to this title is that the Town recognize Arbor Day. She noted that April 27th is recognized as National Arbor Day. Ms. Buchanan stated that the Planning Board, which is also the Tree Board, has decided to plant and replace some of the trees at the Banner Elk Elementary School; a way to celebrate and recognize Arbor Day in our Town. Cheryl Buchanan read the *Arbor Day Proclamation*. Council Member Lecka motioned to approve the proclamation. Council Member Bolick seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed.

Historic Banner Elk School Project Updates

Mr. Owen reported that as mentioned earlier, Ensemble Stage is working on getting air conditioning installed in the gymnasium area. He noted that several options were discussed and in so doing, preserve the historical value of the building. Ensemble Stage is proposing to install four mini Mitsubishi Split system units in the gymnasium. These units are currently being used in the Historic Banner Elk School (i.e. Mayland area, front classrooms). Mr. Owen wanted to make Council aware that the units will hang on the interior walls, two on either side of the long wall of the gymnasium. He described the installation process to Council and noted everyone's concern about the not making any substantial changes to the building itself.

Mr. Owen reported that another project that has been discussed several times is the need to upgrade the water lines in the building. It is an extensive project and Council Member Bolick has met with plumbers to work out options and pricing. Mr. Owen noted that money for this project will be an issue. There are two areas which could help fund the project: (1) the \$25,000 State Grant (\$6,000 has been spent so far on renovations, and (2) the Town's naming rights from Frank Bragg in honor of the Hahn's. Mr. Owen distributed a handout summarizing this plumbing project.

Council Member Bolick reported to Council. He went over the layout of the Historic Banner Elk School, the location of all water fixtures and lines and described in detail the process involved in installing the new plumbing and hot water system. Council Member Bolick stated that several new items are included in the quote, such as: a gas commercial tankless hot water heating and circulating system, water filter system, washer and dryer, additional utility sink, etc. There were questions and discussions regarding the electrical services, time involved to complete the project, etc. Mr. Owen stated that if Council is comfortable with the information regarding this project, he would like a consensus from Council. All Council Members agreed to proceed with the project.

Manager's Update

Mr. Owen reported that included in Council Member's packets are the financial summary report for nine months ending 3/31/18, planning, zoning and tax collection reports. Chief Hodges distributed to Council the police report. Also attached is a draft copy of the April 2, 2018 Planning Board Meeting minutes and a copy of the February 8, 2018 High Country ABC Board Meeting Minutes. He stated that if there were any questions regarding these reports to let him or the staff know.

Mr. Owen reminded Council that Town Hall Day will be held on Tuesday, May 29th in Raleigh and it is a dinner meeting (5:30 – 8:00). He noted that if anyone is interested in attending to let him know.

Mr. Owen stated that the High Country Municipal Association meeting will be held on Thursday, April 19th at Beech Mountain. There was discussion on who would be attending. Three Council Members will be attending the meeting.

Mr. Owen reported that in January, the Town was placed on voluntary water conservation due to leaks in the system from water line breaks. Another leak was discovered a couple of weeks ago on Balsam Lane. He noted that the leak was repaired, and it made a substantial difference in water usage, so the Town lifted the voluntary water conservation.

Mr. Owen recognized Police Chief Kevin Hodges. He completed the Law Enforcement Executive Program sponsored by the Public Safety Leadership Initiative in the School of Public and International Affairs at NC State University. He noted that Kevin graduated the class and he commended Chief Hodges for taking on the task and completing the class.

Mr. Owen reported that several months ago, he relayed to Council that the Town had an opportunity to receive donations in order to complete a large portion of the Corner Project. Since that time, two donations have been received. Mr. Owen asked Council to adopt a budget amendment recognizing the donations received and giving the Town the authority to begin the construction of the project (covered seating area which is a colonnade; rock wall with a timber frame structure and metal roof). The Town was fortunate to receive \$100,000 in donations. One of the donors would like to make their donation over two years. Mr. Owen noted that this is shown on the budget amendment as a donation in the amount of \$87,500 and a \$12,500 contribution from the general fund balance. This will be repaid next year when the second payment is received from the donor. Council Member VonCanon motioned to approve Budget Amendment #20180409 for the Capital Project Ordinance. Council Member Bolick seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed. Council Member Tufts motioned to proceed with the construction of this capital project at the Corner on Main. Council Member Lecka seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed. Mr. Owen noted that the Town's goal is to have this project completed by July.

Mayor Lyerly asked Attorney Eggers if there was any business for closed session. There being no further business, Mayor Lyerly asked for a motion to adjourn this evening's meeting.

At 6:48 p.m. Council Member Dunn motioned to adjourn the April 2018 Town Council meeting. Council Member Lecka seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed.

Adjourn

The Banner Elk Town Council meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Mayor Brenda Lyerly

Attested

Approved: May 14, 2018