

BANNER ELK TOWN COUNCIL

November 13, 2017

MINUTES

The Banner Elk Town Council met Monday, November 13, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at the Banner Elk Town Hall for their regular scheduled meeting.

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

Staff present: Town Manager Rick Owen, Cheryl Buchanan, Lieutenant Orrie Smith and Attorney Four Eggers.

Call Meeting to Order

At 6:00 p.m. Mayor Lyerly called the regular monthly meeting of November 2017 to order.

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Invocation

Council Member Bolick opened the meeting with prayer.

Approval of the Minutes

Mayor Lyerly asked if there was a motion to approve or amend the October 2017 Town Council Minutes. Council Member Lecka motioned to approve the October Town Council Minutes as written. Council Member VonCanon 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 the November agenda. Council Member Dunn motioned to approve the November 2017 agenda as written. Council Member Tufts seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

State Grant-In-Aid to the Historic Banner Elk School Project

Mr. Owen reported that in this year's State budget \$25,000 was appropriated at the request of Senator Deanna Ballard to aid the Town of Banner Elk in renovations and projects associated with the Historic Banner Elk School. The budget was adopted and approved so the Town now has \$25,000 available to the Town out of the State budget. He noted that included in Council's packet is a copy of Agreement #7971. Mr. Owen stated that one key element is for Council to accept the grant along with the terms of the agreement and he also needs for Council to identify how the funds will be used. He is hoping that building maintenance will be considered as part of the "scope of work" in the agreement. The less definition and the more defined he can keep the receipts, the easier the paperwork which is a requirement of the

agreement. Mr. Owen noted that one maintenance project which comes to mind is the water lines in the building. If Council agrees on maintenance projects, the Town has two years to use the funds. Mayor Lyerly asked for a motion to accept the grant and terms of the agreement. Council Member Bolick motioned to accept the grant and terms as listed. Council Member Dunn seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed. There were discussions among Council Members on projects for the school that could use some of the money from the grant. Council Member VonCanon stated that the boiler room needs cleaned, filled in and items taken out and taken to the scrap yard. Council Member Bolick stated that he is looking at redecorating and installing new cabinets in the old teachers' lounge. He went over the details of the renovation and noted that he received quotes totaling \$6,875.00. If approved to use part of the \$25,000 grant for this renovation, he would then like to rename the room to "conference room". Other ideas that were discussed was the renovation of the bathrooms and paving. There was further discussion regarding the renaming of the teachers' lounge and the \$6,875 quote and concern over the State's specific requirements with the use of the grant money (maintenance vs. a specific project). Attorney Eggers noted that generally, State grants are fairly broad. The Department of Administration wants to make sure the criteria is set forth and the budget act has been met. The department would be satisfied that the money was spent on the project that has been earmarked; in this case, the Historic Banner Elk School. He stated that they will need to see invoices and bills related to expenses incurred from the project. Council Member Lecka motioned to use the grant money for maintenance purposes. Council Member VonCanon seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed. Council Member Bolick motioned to use the money for a new conference room remodel. Council member VonCanon seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed.

Public Parking Discussion

Mr. Owen reported that prior to the purchase of the Historic Banner Elk School, one of the Town's goals was more public parking in the downtown area. Now that the town owns the school property and the stormwater vault behind the Banner Elk Volunteer Fire Department is completed the additional parking areas have been working out well for Ensemble Stage, art shows, etc. One of the issues affecting the Town is that it is very convenient parking for those not using businesses within the Town. Mr. Owen is asking Council's feedback on the matter, but would like to propose that the Town identifies the parking spaces at the Historic Banner Elk School by posting signage stating "no overnight parking". This should solve the crux of the problem. At present the Town has approximately 20-30 cars that use the area for parking 24 hours a day. Mr. Owen noted that most of the cars belong to students at Lees-McRae. There were several discussions regarding this issue (i.e. placement of signs, communicating with LeesMcRae the effective date of the no overnight parking rule on Town property, etc.). Mr. Owen stated that staff has not come up with an enforcement penalty (i.e. warning tickets, Town tickets, citations, etc.) Attorney Eggers stated that the Town needs to give proper notice before a ticket or enforcement is issued. He also noted that no motion is needed and that any action on this issue can be done administratively. Mr. Owen noted that he will handle the issue and keep Council informed.

Consider Equipment Loan

Mr. Owen stated that Council approved the purchase of new equipment in this year's budget. The equipment includes a new salt spreader, snow plow, pickup truck and mower deck. He noted that the Town received a proposal from BB&T and the financing term was very good. Mr. Owen presented Council with a resolution for their approval. Council Member Lecka motioned to accept the Resolution

Approving Financing Terms. Council Member Tufts seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed.

Historic Banner Elk School Project Updates

Mr. Owen reported that the Banner Elk had two successful events in the month of October; the Woolly Worm Festival and Trunk or Treat.

Mr. Owen stated that the renovation to the heating system, that Council approved, in the four classrooms at the end of the hallway has been completed and is working.

Council Member Bolick reported on a new renovation project. He noted that commercial gutters, downspouts, splash guards and ice guards will be installed on the main building, which will include all of the cultural arts center, and the gym building. A copy of the project description, contract and map showing the building area that will be affected by this project was distributed to Council Members. Council Member Bolick summarized the project description. He noted that the Town is working on a grant for the installation of a French drain system at the left-hand side of the front of the building which would continue all along that side of the building. Council Member Bolick stated that the contract is with the Sheet Brothers and they hope to complete the work in two days with two crews working on site. He reported that the contract amount is covered through a private donation. He asked Council's approval for this project. Mr. Owen noted that if Council accepts the terms of the project and the private donation, he will need a budget amendment to recognize the revenue and expense. Council Member Dunn motioned to accept the donation and approve the Budget Amendment #20171113. Council Member VonCanon seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed.

Council Member Bolick also noted that the Book Exchange has received a grant to purchase books for the children's section.

Council Member Bolick stated there is a room in front of the former principal's office which we would like to convert to a "meeting room". The room is too small to rent. All furniture and expense items would be donated. The actual principal's office presently contains the fire alarm system, other equipment and miscellaneous items. All Council Members supported the new meeting room concept.

Council Member Bolick was asked to look into and consider installing an electric car charging station in front of the school. He noted that he will research this and see if there is a grant available. Council Members agreed that it was a good idea.

Mr. Owen reported that the Mayor has received from the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources the certificate and report regarding the Historic Banner Elk School being placed on the Historic Registry. He distributed copies to Council Members and noted that the report and application which is also attached is very informative.

Mayor Lyerly congratulated Council Members Dunn and Tufts on their reelection.

Manager's Update

Mr. Owen stated that included in Council Member's packets are financial summary report for four months ending 10/30/17, the police report, planning, zoning, and tax collection report. Also attached is a copy of the October 12, 2017 High Country ABC Board Meeting Minutes and a draft of the November 6, 2017 Planning Board Meeting Minutes. Mr. Owen stated that if there were any questions regarding these reports to let him or the staff know.

Mr. Owen reported that the sidewalk project is complete and in time for the Woolly Worm Festival.

Mr. Owen noted that the siding and painting to the Town Hall is also complete.

Mr. Owen stated that the culvert replacement work on Chime Hill off of Old Turnpike has been completed. M&M Construction (Mike Eggers) completed that work in only a few days. He noted that the two culverts are in place. However, during the work they located a leaking water line. Luckily it was discovered during the culvert work, so it was able to be repaired.

Mr. Owen reported that the cleaning of 20,000 feet of sewer line has been completed. It began after Woolly Worm and was completed in 1-1/2 weeks. The company came down from Elkmont, through Town, through the park and then connect to the area near the caboose where they stopped last year. They then proceeded to the Vistas, down Old Turnpike to the pump station at Elk River. He stated that they also cleaned out from the newest portion of sewer line at Grandfather Home across from Lees-McRae athletic field down to the Mill Pond. Mr. Owen stated that he hasn't viewed the entire video. There were a few issues, but that is the whole purpose of the cleaning. He noted that he will keep Council posted.

Mr. Owen noted that the Town has a position opened and will be advertising for a new Patrol Officer. Nathaniel Calvert is leaving the Banner Elk Police Department on November 23rd to work at the Sheriff's Department.

Mr. Owen reported that the Town's new fix mounted salt spreader was attached to the 2006 model truck. Due to winter wear and tear and rust issues resulting from the salt, the Town has incurred unexpected expenses for maintenance on the truck. The Town is looking at approximately \$10,000 for repairs. Mr. Owen stated that he doesn't need a budget amendment at this time. However, he wanted to forewarn Council of the upcoming expenses involved and stated that he may come back to Council for an amendment if needed.

Mr. Owen stated that JoAnn McMurray is inviting Council Members to ride on the train in the parade to be held on December 2nd as part of the Small-Town Christmas celebration.

At 7:09 p.m. Council Member VonCanon motioned for Council to proceed to closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11. Council Member Bolick seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed. Mayor Lyerly thanked everyone for coming.

Council returned to open session at 7:50 p.m.

Other Business

Mr. Owen noted to Council that the minutes for the October 4, 2017 MAPS Report Meeting need to be approved. Council Member Bolick stated that on page 2 of the minutes he made a mistake with regards to the motion and wants the records to show that he was not voting against the raise for the Town Manager but was voting against the amount of the raise. Mr. Owen noted that the minutes will be amended. Council Member VonCanon motioned to approve the October 4, 2017 MAPS Report Meeting Minutes as amended. Council Member Tufts seconded. All were in favor. No one opposed.

There being no further business, at 7:52 p.m. Council Member VonCanon motioned to adjourn the November 2017 Town Council meeting. Council Member VonCanon seconded the motion. All were in favor. No one opposed.

Adjourn

The Town Council meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Mayor Brenda Lyerly

Attested

Approved: December 11, 2017