

BURNSVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
Regular Meeting
Thursday, April 3, 2014

The Town Council, with members Mayor Theresa Coletta, Ruth Banks, Judy Buchanan, Ron Powell, and Bill Wheeler present, held a regular meeting on Thursday, April 3, 2014, at the Town Hall. Also in attendance were town attorney Heather Hockaday, town staff members Brian Buchanan, Leslie Crowder, Anthony Hensley, Niles Howell, Jeanne Martin, George Nero and Ronnie Tipton; and visitors Jesse Gardner, PE, with Design Concepts, Dean Gates, Jody Higgins, James Holland, Wanda Proffitt, Andrea Surface, Thom Morgan, and others. The Mayor, who presided, called the meeting to order, stating that the purpose of the meeting was to consider regular business for the month of April, 2014.

- Public Comment
 - James Holland said he wanted town water to taste better. He currently uses either bottled or spring water.
- Adoption of Agenda and Consent Agenda – Ron Powell made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Judy Buchanan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Consent Agenda – April 3, 2013

1. Consideration of Minutes
 - a. Regular meeting held March 6, 2014
 - b. Closed session held March 6, 2014
 - c. Special meeting held March 27, 2014

Council action requested: Approve aforesaid minutes

2. Status Updates:
 - a. Administration
 - 1) Unpaid Balance Report, pursuant to G.S. 105-369(a) (Tax History) dated April 1, 2014 is provided as an update of uncollected revenues. A variety of collection efforts are underway.
 - 2) Request to release taxes and issue refund:
 - Parcel #081016942384000 – Earl Grant – refund of \$1,588.40
 - G.S. 105-381 authorizes a refund of this tax because it was illegally imposed - the property is outside town limits.

Council action requested:
Release tax as explained above and issue refund

b. Police Department

- 1) Our police department has settled back into normal operations after filling our open position last month. Officer Garland has completed his field training and has also completed most of the in-service training for patrol officers.
- 2) We are making plans and preparations for the upcoming spring and summer months which are always filled with activities and events on the square.

c. Public Works

- 1) East Yancey Sewer District (Yancey County) – The treatment plant is getting very close to completion. The contractor is working on the influent pump station and piping. Our staff attended training on March 5th as related to start-up of the plant. The line work is still on hold but will be re-bid as soon as the required permits are issued from NC Fish and Wildlife.
- 2) Micaville Water Line Extension (Golden LEAF) – The water line is almost finished to the end of the DOT's road project. The second reimbursement from GoldenLEAF has been received and DOT has been paid for partial invoice #1. We are continuing to seek additional funding for the project.
- 3) I & I Remediation Projects (NC Infrastructure Finance Section / McGill) – This project is in the close-out phase.
- 4) Lincoln Park Pump Station (McGill) – The pump station is complete. Start-up was performed on March 5th.

d. Other

- 1) Small Town Main Street – There was no meeting held in March. The annual meeting in New Bern was held March 31st and April 1st. Dean Gates attended for the town. Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 15th at 5:30 p.m. before the Planning Board meeting.
- 2) NC STEP / BDG – We met on Monday, March 24th in Town Hall. ExploreBurnsville.com, the GearUp event for youth entrepreneurship, the Celebration of Public Art event, town beautification, and in-town Explore Burnsville events were discussed. The next quarterly meeting will be held on the third Monday in June.

Ron Powell made a motion to adopt/approve items on Consent Agenda that were identified for Council action. Judy Buchanan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

- U. S. Forest Service – Burnsville Administrative Property – District Ranger Matthew McCombs addressed Council, asking for clarification about the town's interest in the purchase of the Forest Service's Administrative Property located on the 19E Bypass. Fire Chief Niles Howell explained that while the property initially appeared to be a good fit, it now appears to not be the most practical or appropriate option, and for this reason, the department is declining the opportunity.

Ron Powell made a motion to authorize the Mayor to write a letter declining the option on the aforesaid property. Ruth Banks seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved. Ranger McCombs thanked Council for freeing up the property for other opportunities.

- Forest Plan Revision – Ranger McCombs explained the scope of his responsibilities and the territory represented. He told said his office is now in Mars Hill and is a good resource for information. He invited Council to visit the office and share any concerns they many have about how forest land is managed.

Council heard that a Forest Plan revision was kicked off in 2013 and input into the planning of forest development and resource management will be accepted until the end of April.

- smART Grant Update – Denise Cook, Toe River Arts Council, updated Council on the smART initiative that is based on “creative placemaking.” Ms. Cook provided a written overview of the scope of the project and focus points spanning two years. She said principals in the initiative have been working with the D.O.T., the Burnsville Public Art Design Board, and others to develop clean, aesthetically pleasing entrances to town. An RFQ has been advertised for artists interested in developing a vision for these entrances after learning about the community’s history and plans for the town. She said eleven strong candidates have submitted qualifications for review, and the chosen artist will receive a two week residency. The artist will be chosen by May 1st, and the residency will occur in the summer, with implementation planned for next year, in tandem with highway work.

Ron Powell said that as the project moves along, there will be public meetings, and Council will be involved in decisions.

- Planning Board Report
 1. Minutes from the Planning Board meeting held on March 4 and March 18, 2014 were available for review.
 2. Dean Gates reported briefly on the New Bern trip, but a written report may be available at a later date. Next year’s Main Street conference will be held in Morganton.
 3. Mr. Gates thanked various groups for working together in the town’s planning process: EDC, Chamber of Commerce, TRAC, Small Town Main Street, etc.
 4. Mr. Gates read a proposed Resolution of Appreciation for Ron Hancock’s (Department of Commerce) invaluable assistance to the town’s Planning Board. Ron Powell made a motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the Resolution. Ruth Banks seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.
 5. Empty storefronts are a pressing concern, and suggestions will be submitted soon.
- Report on Brush Pickup Policy – Public Works Director Anthony Hensley presented a proposed policy that should help citizens understand brush pickup services and schedules. Ron Powell made a motion to adopt the policy as presented by Mr. Hensley. Bill Wheeler seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved. The policy will be incorporated in the town ordinances.
- Town Administrator Report – George Nero recommended that Council hold two meetings to review the first three quarters of financial activity with Department Heads. Possible dates were suggested for the meetings, but no definite date was agreed upon.

▪ Department Updates:

- Administration – Town Clerk/Tax Collector Jeanne Martin reported:
 - ... The Personnel Policy Committee met this month; the substance abuse policy and job descriptions were the primary focus. The group will meet again on April 17th.
- Fire Department:
 - ... Fire Chief Niles Howell thanked Council for the opportunity to attend the Fire Symposium, where much was learned pertaining to the needs of fire departments, which have a life expectancy of 50 to 75 years. Chief Howell said that when determining future needs, consideration needs to be given to financing, which would include construction costs, testing fees, permits, etc. Consideration must also be given to transitional needs, manpower, information technology, security issues, apparatus expansion space, and training space. Good design information was available at the Symposium for all considerations. George Nero said the dialogue with the Fire Department needs to be ongoing; the town needs to be looking creatively for financing a new department.
 - ... Council reviewed a letter sent by the Mayor to principals with French Broad Electric concerning funding opportunities that could be applied to the Fire Department's project. One opportunity is up to \$300,000 in an interest-free loan, and another is up to a \$2 million loan at 2 or 3%.

The Mayor told Council that she was invited by Jimmy Ray to meet with FBEM to begin the process to explore funding. They are eager to get the town in the process, perhaps with an initial application for a \$300,000 grant which could be refined later. George Nero will follow up on this opportunity and report back to Council.

Chief Howell asked Council to allow the Fire Department to actively pursue another site and look for several architects. He explained the existing property is limited for a variety of reasons, including the double level. George Nero said building expenditures should meanwhile be limited to repairs only.

Ron Powell recommended the establishment of a committee to study this issue. The committee should include George Nero, Anthony Hensley, representatives of the Fire Department and Council, and probably Yancey County. Niles Howell said a "design team" was one of the recommendations made at the Symposium, but at this time a location for the department is the current focus. Mr. Powell asked that George Nero discuss this issue with Yancey County and the EDC at next week's joint meeting. Councilor Judy Buchanan asked to be included on the committee, once it is formed.
- Police Department
 - ... Police Chief Brian Buchanan advised that his update was covered in the Consent Agenda

- Public Works Department – Anthony Hensley, Public Works Director, reported:
 - ... Town is working with D.O.T. on the Academy Street crosswalk and radar speed signs;
 - ... The Lincoln Park pump station is in service. Mr. Hensley suggested a ribbon cutting event, which Council scheduled for 2 p.m. on April 17th.
- Town Center – George Nero provided an update on upcoming events. He remarked that April promises to be a busy month.

▪ Council Members’ Reports

- Mayor Coletta said that during her weekly visits she has heard many concerns from business owners about declining activity in the downtown district, due in part to the 19E road project. A business owner suggested a billboard outside town that would direct tourists to the downtown area. The Mayor discovered an available billboard at Cane River, and suggested participation by the town, the EDC, the Chamber of Commerce and the BDG. In an attempt to demonstrate town support of local businesses, the Mayor made a commitment to secure the billboard for a period of six months.

Chamber of Commerce Director Ginger Johnson told Council that billboard advertising was coincidentally discussed at the last Chamber meeting, and she appreciated the opportunity for a partnership.

Ron Powell made a motion for the town to contribute up to \$1000 for the billboard project. Judy Buchanan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Judy Buchanan thanked the Mayor for her visits to local merchants.

- Councilor Ron Powell announced a public art event that is scheduled for May 23rd beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the Burnsville Town Center.
- Councilor Bill Wheeler advised that his term on the ABC Board expires this month. Ruth Banks made a motion to reappoint Bill Wheeler to the ABC Board for another term. Judy Buchanan seconded the motion. Bill Wheeler was recused from voting.

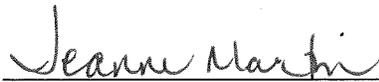
Voting results were as follows:

<u>Ayes</u>	<u>Noes</u>
Ruth Banks	None
Judy Buchanan	
Theresa Coletta	
Ron Powell	

Councilor Bill Wheeler did not vote or participate in the discussion.

- Updates from Advisory Boards and Non-Profits
 - Burnsville Public Art Design (minutes available)
 - Yancey County EDC – no minutes available. Wanda Proffitt thanked the town and fire department for cleaning up around the technology center prior to their open house.
 - Broadband Update – Ms. Proffitt told Council there will be a program on telemedicine soon at the Technology Center.
 - Toe River Arts Council – minutes and financials available. Denise Cook gave an update on upcoming events, and reported that “Our State” magazine recently featured glass artists in our area.
 - Yancey County Public Library (minutes available).
- Anthony Hensley provided a recap of action taken during the meeting.
- Upcoming Town Council Meeting – A regular Town Council meeting will be held on Thursday, May 1, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. to conduct regular business for the month of May, 2014.

There being no further business, Judy Buchanan made a motion to adjourn. Bill Wheeler seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.



Jeanne Martin, Town Clerk



Theresa Coletta, Mayor