

BURNSVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
Special Meeting – Thursday, January 10, 2019

On Thursday, January 10, 2019, the Burnsville Town Council, with members Mayor Theresa Coletta, Judy Buchanan (via Skype), Russell Fox and Bunnie McIntosh present, held a regular meeting at the Burnsville Town Hall. Also in attendance were town staff members Brian Buchanan, Leslie Crowder, Jon England, Chad Fox, Niles Howell, Jeanne Martin, Phillip Smith, and Ronnie Tipton; Town Attorney Heather Hockaday; and visitors, Denise Collier, Jerry D’Aquin, Jody Higgins, Claudia Honeycutt, Mike Hopson, Jack Lentz, David Graham, Phyllis Pippins, Angie Rash, Calvin Rash, Phil Trew, Joyce Watts, and others. Councilor Shannon Peterson was absent from the meeting. The Mayor, who presided, stated that the purpose of the meeting was to conduct regular business for the month of January, 2019.

▪ **Public Comment**

Jack Lentz, the owner of a retail business located adjacent to Todd Bailey’s office, spoke about the barriers that have been placed around the sidewalk from his business to Appalachian Java in response to windows that have fallen out of the Bailey Building. He said the barriers affect foot traffic to his business, forcing people to walk in the street where glass is still present, and face the hazard of moving vehicles.

Jerry D’Aquin, the owner of a car that was parked at the Bailey Building when the window fell, complained that there is no ordinance in Burnsville to govern the condition of existing buildings. He said he feels the barriers are appropriate, but agrees they create another safety hazard. He said this is not the first time a window has fallen out of the building.

▪ **Shannon Peterson (farewell)**

Russell Fox read a letter from Councilor Peterson announcing his resignation from the Town Council due to his family’s recent move to a home outside the town limits. Council members shared their regret on losing their fellow council member. His replacement will be considered at the January worksession.

- **Adoption of Agenda** – Bunnie McIntosh moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Russell Fox seconded the motion, which carried.

- **Consideration of Minutes** – Available for review were minutes from the following meetings:

1. Regular meeting held December 6, 2018
2. Special meeting held November 29, 2018

Russell Fox moved to adopt the minutes of the aforesaid meetings. Bunnie McIntosh seconded the motion, which carried.

- **Parking Issues** – This issue was tabled until the February, 2019 meeting due to the illness of the speaker.

- **Town Lighting**

Burnsville merchant Claudia Honeycutt spoke about lighting throughout the town, mentioning that charming lights help to differentiate one town from another. She said the town's parking areas that are used by merchants' employees and visitors are not lit, and asked the Council to consider additional lighting for aesthetic and safety reasons.

At the Mayor's request, Phil Trew, High Country Council of Governments, spoke about funding that is available through the ARC for sidewalk repair for economic development goals. The Mayor said the Town could work with the EDC on an application. The funding cycle begins in April, and applications are due in July. A 30% match is required, and \$300,000 is the maximum funding from the ARC. Judy Buchanan moved to pursue ARC grant funding for sidewalks that will further our economic development goals. Russell Fox seconded the motion, which carried. Letters will be necessary from businesses to support the funding application.

- **Planning Board** – Kim Simpson, Chair

No report was available from the Planning Board.

- **Mobi Award Nomination**

David Graham, High Country Council of Governments, explained the NC DOT's inaugural Mobi award, for which the Highway 19E project qualifies. The deadline for applications is January 27th, and award recipients will be honored at a luncheon with the State Transportation Secretary in Raleigh on April 3rd. Bunnie McIntosh made a motion to pursue this award. Theresa Coletta seconded the motion, which carried.

- **Administrative Report** – Russell Fox reported:

1. In order to accommodate Councilors' attendance, Bunnie McIntosh moved to change the date for the work session scheduled for January 22nd to Thursday, January 24, 2019, at 3:00 p.m., at the Town Hall. Russell Fox seconded the motion, which carried. One item on the agenda will be consideration of appropriate system development fees specific to the Town of Burnsville's water and wastewater system.
2. Follow-up on falling down building – After discussion with the owners, we are confident that demolition will begin in the very near future.
3. Yancey Chamber of Commerce – Crafts Fair update (Russell Fox and Ronnie Tipton) – Councilors learned that Ronnie Tipton and Brian Buchanan presented a spreadsheet of actual crafts fair costs to the Chamber Board at their meeting earlier this evening. Board members were assured that the Town is supportive of the event, but the costs are a financial burden. The Chamber Board was receptive to helping with the costs, and was encouraged to make a decision prior to the Town's budget considerations this year.
4. Fire Department options (Russell Fox) – we are 5 to 6 days from real numbers as we wait for responses from subcontractors.

Phil Trew reported that although FEMA and GoldenLeaf have several programs to assist fire departments, it doesn't appear that Burnsville's project will qualify. He suggested we research municipal capital project financing through United Financial, where Blowing Rock recently financed a building. Russell Fox thanked Mr. Trew for his work on this project.

▪ **Other**

1. Administration (Jeanne Martin)

- a. Pursuant to GS 105-369(a), *Tax Delinquent Report* dated January 9, 2019 was provided as an update of uncollected revenues. A variety of collection efforts are underway, with every delinquent account receiving attention. It was noted that unpaid 2018 taxes have been added to the delinquent list.
- b. Finance Report – A finance report was furnished to Council prior to the meeting. A budget amendment recognizing expenditures to extend the Briggs Estate parking lease and cover Christmas decorations was presented for consideration. Russell Fox moved to amend the budget for the aforesaid purposes. Bunnie McIntosh seconded the motion, which carried.

2. Fire Department (Chief Niles Howell)

- a. A report of Fire Department activities was available for review.
- b. Chief Howell asked for permission to use the \$7,500 that resulted from the recent sale of a fire truck to purchase dress uniforms. Russell Fox moved to approve an expenditure for the aforesaid purpose. Theresa Coletta seconded the motion, which carried.

3. Police Department (Brian Buchanan)

- a. The final police activity report for the year was available for review. It was noted that activity was slightly up from last year.
- b. Tasers and new radios have been ordered from 100% grant funding provided by the Department of Justice.
- c. With the department's detective back to work on light duty, the department is back to full staff.

4. Public Works (Ronnie Tipton)

- a. An activity log was available for review. There was an operational concern when a river intake pump gpm fell off dramatically three weeks ago. The crew worked diligently to diagnose and rule out a pump problem. The firm that maintains and rebuilds pumps performed tests and unfortunately, one needs rebuilding immediately at a cost of \$12,000 to \$15,000. The malfunctioning pump keeps water production way down, and it is a struggle at the water plant to keep enough water on hand.
- b. Zoning Compliance Issue - The window glass falling out of the Bailey Building brought attention to this sort of incident from a zoning perspective. It was noted that the Town's zoning ordinance doesn't cover that sort of thing, and the building is not condemnable but it is a public safety hazard. Mr. Tipton said a similar incident happened before at this site, and it was recommended that The Zoning Director speak with Council.

Heather Hockaday explained the action that has been taken by the Building Inspector who, in the absence of the building's owner, inspected the exterior of the building, posted notice, and barricaded sidewalks. The owner now has an opportunity to abate the situation which can take many forms, including boarding up the windows. In the absence of abatement a Hearing can be held and an Order can be issued giving the owner a period of time to abate. If the Order is not complied with, other legal processes can follow. The Mayor commented that we would like to expedite the process, but we are tied to what the law prescribes. Ronnie Tipton agreed to look into the glass that remains on the street.

In any event, it was clear we would need to wait for Mr. Bailey's response and an indication of his intent to abate. Jerry D'Aquin said the Town should keep people from parking in the vicinity and offered some suggestions. Russell Fox moved to block off the sidewalk and parking spaces. Bunnie McIntosh seconded the motion, which carried.

- c. Peterson Trailer Park and Indian Trail Projects Update – The contractor is very professional and is doing good work. They have done an excellent job of maintaining ingress and egress for so many residents.
 - d. During budget meetings, Council discussed the automatic meter reader (AMR) project. We currently have a contractor replacing meters, at the rate of 140 over the past two weeks. Since the meters can be read without leaving the truck, they are more efficient than two employees taking 10 days to read. Once the project is complete, meter reading will take one man, one day, in one truck, saving a lot of money in manpower.
 - e. Indian Trail/Meadow Road Project – Funds should be released as early as March.
 - f. OMC Pump Station/WTP Upgrades Project – Actual project should begin very soon.
5. Town Center (Chad Fox) – Councilors received a schedule of repeat public events that occur annually. Facility Manager Chad Fox reported that a lot of time is spent promoting the facility and filling in the calendar with private events and concerts.

▪ **Council Members' Reports**

1. Mayor Theresa Coletta

- a. The Mayor reported that merchant Claudia Honeycutt will be going to Charlotte for a trade show. Approximately 10,000 to 12,000 people will attend the show, and she will be distributing information on Yancey County/Burnsville to promote our area.


▪ **Updates from Advisory Boards and Non-Profits**

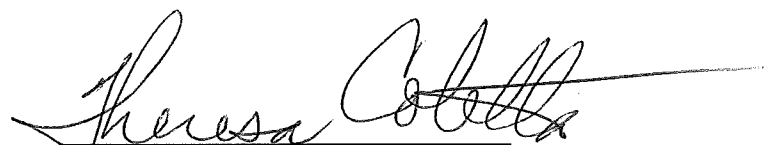
1. Economic Development Commission – Jamie McMahan reported:

- a. Town EDC appointment – Council heard an explanation of the appointment process, and learned there is a seat on the EDC Board that is due for appointment/reappointment by the Town Council, and is assigned to a professional working in education in Yancey County. The seat is currently occupied by Mrs. Cynthia Deyton, and it is her desire to continue to serve as a member of the EDC Board. Judy Buchanan moved to reappoint Mrs. Deyton to the aforementioned seat on the EDC Board. Bunnie McIntosh seconded the motion, which carried.
- b. A year-end update on annual accomplishments by the EDC will be published soon.

2. High Country Council of Governments – minutes and financials were available.

- **Next Regular Town Council Meeting** – The next regular Town Council meeting will be held on Thursday, February 7, 2019 at 6:00 p.m., at the Burnsville Town Hall to consider regular business for the month of February. Council member Bunnie McIntosh moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Russell Fox and approved by all members.


Jeanne Martin, Town Clerk


Theresa Coletta, Mayor