

**MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING
BOONE TOWN COUNCIL
January 22, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Boone Town Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 22, 2025 in the Boone Town Council Chambers located at 1500 Blowing Rock Road in Boone. Mayor Pro-Tem Dalton George presided. Council members present included Todd Carter, Virginia Roseman, Edie Tugman, and Eric Plaag. Town staff present included Town Manager Amy Davis, Town Clerk Nicole Harmon-Church, Public Works Director Todd Moody, Sustainability and Special Projects Manager George Santucci, Interim Police Chief Daniel Duckworth, Planning Director Jane Shook, Finance Director Guy Miller. Town Attorney Allison Meade was also in attendance remotely.

OPENING CEREMONY BY CUB SCOUTS

MOMENT OF SILENCE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TENTATIVE AGENDA ADOPTION

Upon a motion by Council member Roseman, seconded by Council member Carter, Council voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

APPROVAL OF PROCLAMATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

Upon a motion by Council member Plaag, seconded by Council member Roseman, Council voted unanimously to approve the following proclamations as presented:

1. National Mentoring Month
2. Cub Scouts Pack 100

Council member Roseman thanked the Cub Scout members and their families for instilling strength, unity, and hope into the youth of the world. She then read and presented the proclamation.

REQUESTED APPEARANCES

RYAN SHOWMAN - CUB SCOUTS DEN LEADER

Members of Cub Scouts Pack 100 shared various tasks they had taken on in the past year to help the community, including planting flowers and Valle Crucis Park, cleaning at Junaluska Park, and donating items to the Watauga Humane Society. Other members reflected on exciting events the pack had participated in last year, including a boat race, derby, and climbing the rock wall at Raven Knob. They finished their presentation by asking Council members what inspired them to become Council members and where they received their education.

CRAIG HUGHES - APPALCART

Craig Hughes, Director of AppalCart gave an update on the services of AppalCart. A complete copy of the presentation can be found on the Town of Boone website.

Responding to Council member Roseman, Mr. Hughes stated that route changes due to weather were announced via phone application, social media, and website usually by 5:30 a.m.

Council member Plaag noted that Mr. Hughes was in attendance at the most recent Sustainability Committee meeting when the idea of a trolley/train-themed bus for Boone's hotel circuit was discussed and asked Mr. Hughes to speak briefly to any challenges he was aware of. Mr. Hughes was concerned about the timing of routes due to the spacing of hotels throughout town, which he did not believe would be palatable to visitors. Funding was also noted as an issue and was a lack of staffing. Mr. Hughes indicated he would look into potential agreements with hotels that were situated closely together to avoid stops close together. Overall, Mr.

Hughes was in favor of discussing it further and noted that the idea had been discussed briefly in the past with the organizers of the Antlers and Acorns Festival.

Mr. Hughes announced that the double-decker bus was slated to hit assembly lines next month in Las Vegas with April/May as a tentative completion date.

Council member Tugman asked for clarification regarding the Rural Operating Assistance Program. Mr. Hughes indicated that there simply wasn't enough money to meet needs, so allocations were shifted based on income and population. Due to this change, AppalCart's funding decreased by \$12,000.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Pro-Tem George made a brief announcement regarding the rules of public comment.

Members of a local rugby team appeared to show their support for retaining the Bolick Farm property for recreational use. They proposed a plan for the property to create a green facility that would enable accessibility to additional sporting fields and venues for public events and activities as well as continuing to preserve the natural habitat with a nature preserve. They referred to a lack of suitable recreational fields in the area for the reason behind a petition with 482 signatures to retain the Bolick Farm property.

Council member Tugman confirmed that speakers were aware of the conservation easement on the property. Mayor Pro-Tem George stated that the vote was recent and that he would like to revisit the matter and potentially hold a public hearing. Council member Plaag agreed, and noted that he was on the fence during the initial vote and supported revisiting it to have a broader discussion. In response to a question from Council member Tugman, Public Works Director Moody noted that the Town was in possession of a design for an entire municipal complex, not a stand-alone public works facility which is what was being discussed at present. He indicated that some components of the former design would be used but it would be scaled down significantly. Council member Carter suggested a park and ride set up with Council member Plaag expressing his agreement.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

Upon a motion by Council member Roseman seconded by Council member Plaag Council voted unanimously to approve the following items on the consent agenda:

1. Budget Amendments
2. Contract - Appalachian Architecture
3. Contract - Gopher Utility Service, Inc.

COUNCIL MATTERS

REQUEST TO SCHEDULE BUDGET RETREAT

It was the consensus of Council to schedule the annual budget retreat for February 27, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. at Council Chambers in Boone.

APPOINTMENT TO HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Council member Carter nominated Mr. Morris to serve in a three-year term. Hearing no further nominations, Mayor Pro-Tem George called for a vote:

VOTE:	Aye:	All
	Nay:	None

Mr. Morris's term will expire on January 31, 2028.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Council member Plaag, seconded by Council member Roseman, Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Nicole Harmon, Town Clerk

Tim Futrelle, Mayor