

**MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING
BOONE TOWN COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 10 , 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Boone Town Council was called to order at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, September 10, 2025, at the Jones House Community Center located at 604 West King Street in Boone. Mayor Tim Futrelle presided. Town Councilmembers present included Mayor Pro-Tempore Dalton George, Councilmember Todd Carter, Councilmember Edie Tugman, and Councilmember Virginia Roseman. Staff present included Amy Davis, Town Manager, Todd Moody, Director of Public Works, Jane Shook, Director of Planning and Inspections, Brandon Wise, Deputy Director of Planning and Inspections, Amy Snider, Commercial Zoning Administrator (Virtual), Jimmy Isaacs, Fire Chief, Mike Teague, Deputy Fire Chief, Daniel Duckworth, Police Chief, George Santucci, Sustainability and Special Projects Manager, Guy Miller (Virtual), Finance Director, Lane Moody, Downtown Boone Development Coordinator (Virtual), Laney Wise, Grants Coordinator/Communications, and Tina Gragg, Human Resources Administrative Assistant (Virtual). Allison Meade, Town Attorney, was presented as well.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Futrelle called for a brief moment of silence.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. OFFICE OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Mayor Futrelle invited State Fire Marshal Brian Taylor to present. Fire Marshal Taylor thanked the Boone Town Council for their time and announced that the Boone Fire Department had achieved an Insurance Services Office (ISO) Class 1 rating for the Town of Boone Fire Department service district, along with an ISO Class 2/9E rating for the Rural Fire District. He noted that only thirty-five fire departments in North Carolina hold an ISO Class 1 rating, and only 350 nationwide have earned this distinction.

Fire Marshal Taylor explained that the Town of Boone Fire Department service district's rating improved from Class 2 to Class 1, while the Rural Fire District improved from Class 3 to Class 2. He then presented the official proclamation recognizing this achievement to Chief Isaacs and Assistant Chief Teague.

Chief Isaacs thanked Fire Marshal Taylor and the Boone Town Council, emphasizing that this accomplishment would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work of the department's staff.

Councilmember Carter asked how the Town of Boone could continue to maintain the ISO Class 1 rating. Fire Marshal Taylor responded that once Fire Station 4 is constructed and operational, maintaining the Class 1 designation should become easier, as the rating system considers adequate staffing and equipment.

Councilmember Roseman asked whether the Town should strengthen its relationship with Appalachian State University. Fire Marshal Taylor explained that while the State insures the University, he would recommend discussions with Boone's representatives about increasing the stipend App State provides to the Town for fire services. He further noted that the Boone Fire Department has consistently supported disaster response efforts across North Carolina and thanked Chief Isaacs for allowing fire personnel to be deployed when needed.

Mayor Futrelle thanked Fire Marshal Taylor for his presentation and moved to the next announcement.

2. *ANNOUNCEMENT OF BOARD VACANCIES*

Mayor Futrelle announced the following vacancies:

POSITIONS OPEN

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

One regular position, three alternate positions

CULTURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY BOARD

One Student Position

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Three regular positions

PLANNING COMMISSION

One regular position

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Two regular positions, three student positions

Councilmember Roseman commented that one of the best ways for community members to serve their community is by serving on a Town of Boone board and encouraged Boone residents to apply for a position. With no further comments, Mayor Futrelle moved to the next item on the agenda.

TENTATIVE AGENDA ADOPTION

Mayor Futrelle asked if there were any comments regarding the agenda as presented. Hearing none, Mayor Futrelle asked for a motion to adopt the agenda as presented.

Councilmember Roseman made a motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Tugman, to approve the agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye: Dalton George, Todd Carter, Edie Tugman, Virginia Roseman
 Nay: None

Absent: Eric Plaag

APPROVAL OF PROCLAMATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

Mayor Futrelle announced the following proclamations and resolutions: Constitution Week Proclamation, Hispanic Heritage Month Resolution, Honoring One-year Milestone of Hurricane Helene Proclamation, and Resolution Honoring Former Mayor Wade Wilmoth. Mayor Futrelle then asked Councilmember Carter to read the Hispanic Heritage Month Resolution and Councilmember Tugman to read the Resolution Honoring Former Mayor Wade Wilmoth, in which they both agreed. The following proclamations and resolutions were read into the record:

Proclamation for Constitution Week

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the United States of America, the guardian of our liberties, embodies the principles of limited government in a Republic dedicated to rule by the law; and

WHEREAS, September 17, 2025, marks the two hundred and thirty-eighth anniversary of the framing of the Constitution of the United States of America by the Constitutional Convention; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper to accord official recognition to this magnificent document and its memorable anniversary, and to the patriotic celebrations which will commemorate it; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 915 guarantees the issuing of the proclamation each year by the President of the United States of America designating September 17 through 23 as Constitution Week,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tim Futrelle, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the town of Boone, North Carolina, do hereby proclaim the week of September 17-23rd as CONSTITUTION WEEK, and ask our citizens to reaffirm the ideals the Framers of the Constitution had in 1787 by vigilantly protecting the freedoms guaranteed to us through the guardian of our liberties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Town of Boone to be affixed this 10th day of September of the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-five.

Mes de Herencia Hispana - Hispanic Heritage Month

Considerando que el mes de la herencia hispana es celebrado a nivel nacional en Estados Unidos del quince de septiembre al quince de octubre con la intención de reconocer los logros y aportes de la comunidad hispana en este país.

Whereas the Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated at the national level in the United States of America from September 15th to October 15th with the intention to acknowledge the achievements and contributions of the Hispanic community in the country.

Considerando que el quince de septiembre inicia la celebración como un referente de las celebraciones por la independencia en países centroamericanos como Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras y Nicaragua; así como los países de México y Chile, en los cuales se celebra la declaración de independencia en los días quince, dieciséis y dieciocho de septiembre.

Whereas the 15th of September is the start of celebrations of independence of Central American countries, like Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Nicaragua; as well Mexico and Chile, whose Declarations of Independence are celebrated on the 15th, 16th, and 18th of September.

Considerando que aun cuando la independencia fue declarada en estas regiones, los sistemas de opresión y el racismo sistemático todavía estaban enraizados en nuestras sociedades y siguen presentes hoy en día. La historia de las naciones hispanoamericanas está llena de infamias, desde el origen mismo de la fusión de culturas, donde los europeos llevaron casi al exterminio a los pueblos originarios, desarrollando con el tiempo un variado mestizaje de culturas.

Whereas although independence was declared in these regions, the systems of oppression and systematic racism were still rooted in our societies and continue to be present today. The history of the Hispanic-American nations is full of atrocities, from the very origin of the clash of cultures, where the Europeans almost exterminated the Indigenous Peoples. Although with time, a varied mixture "mestizaje" of cultures was developed.

Considerando que este continente en el que ahora vivimos y nacemos, que hoy está poblado por una variedad de etnias provenientes de todo el mundo, es conocido como Abya Yala por algunos activistas indígenas. Abya Yala proviene del idioma Guna de la etnia indígena Kuna de Panamá y Colombia que significa "tierra florecida". Este término se ha utilizado para nombrar al continente como una alternativa al nombre de origen europeo (América).

Whereas this continent on which we now live and are born, which today is populated by a variety of ethnicities from all over the world, is also known as Abya Yala. This name was given by some indigenous activists, its origin is the Guna language of the indigenous Kuna People from Panama and Colombia. Its meaning is blossomed land. This term has been used to name the continent as an alternative to the name of European origin (America).

Considerando que estas naciones que estamos celebrando hoy no son homogéneas y que el término hispano/latino para nombrar a estos diversos grupos étnicos es un término impuesto por la colonización europea.

Whereas these nations we are celebrating today are not homogeneous, and the term hispanic/latin to name these various ethnic groups is a term imposed by European colonization.

Considerando que en los últimos años, los hablantes del castellano han empezado a utilizar el término "latinx/e" como un vocablo de género neutro o no binario, usando la "x" para quien no se identifica con alguno de los dos géneros tradicionales, tomando la concepción de un género más inclusivo. Sin ser todavía de uso general, es una forma de mostrar respeto por las identidades personales en la convivencia social.

Whereas in recent years, Castilian speakers have begun to use the term “latinx/e” as a non-binary and gender-neutral term, using the “x” or “e” for those who do not identify themselves with either of the two traditional genders, thereby introducing a more inclusive gender. Without being of general use yet, the use of non-binary terms are a way of showing respect for personal identities in our communities.

Considerando que el desconocimiento y los prejuicios tales como la discriminación, la segregación, el racismo y otros continúan vigentes en algunos sectores de la población de cualquier país, los cuales son utilizados por líderes políticos, quienes utilizan una retórica destructiva y falaz para mantenerse en las posiciones de privilegio. Tomando como ejemplo las leyes SB1718 en el estado de Florida, la que provocó un éxodo masivo de trabajadores y familias migrantes, y como efecto colateral un colapso en la fuerza laboral agrícola y de servicios, afectando también la construcción y el transporte. O, la constante amenaza de las iniciativas de ley HB10 y SB50 en el estado de Carolina del Norte, pretendiendo forzar a las agencias locales de seguridad pública a colaborar con las autoridades migratorias, provocando inestabilidad emocional y angustia en la comunidad migrante por la constante amenaza de la separación familiar.

Whereas ignorance, prejudices, discrimination, segregation, racism and others continue to be active in parts of society of any country. They are used by some political leaders to develop harmful and false rhetoric to stay in privileged positions. Taking as an example the law SB1718 in the state of Florida, which caused a massive exodus of migrant workers and families, and, as an effect of this, a collapse in the agricultural and service labor force, also affecting construction and transportation. Or, the constant threats of the bills HB10 and SB50 in the state of North Carolina, attempting to force local law enforcement to collaborate with the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency, causing emotional instability and anguish in the immigrant community due to the constant threat of family separation.

Considerando que en una sociedad justa, incluyente e informada no tienen lugar la retórica incendiaria de racismo y segregación, los estereotipos ni las falacias basadas en los prejuicios.

Whereas in a just, inclusive, and informed community, there is no place for the incendiary rhetoric of racism and segregation, stereotypes and fallacies based on prejudices.

Considerando que la municipalidad de Boone ha reconocido el trabajo y dedicación de la comunidad latinx por su aporte a la economía local, como emprendedores de negocios y generadores de empleo, así como una parte importante de la fuerza laboral, y al enriquecimiento cultural en esta región en la oferta gastronómica y cultural, y con ello muestra una administración de enfoque humano, inclusivo, proyectándose hacia una sociedad comprometida con el bienestar y el progreso comunitario de todos sus habitantes, buscando un modelo más justo e incluyente.

Whereas the Town of Boone has recognized the work and dedication of the Latinx community for their contribution to the local economy, as business entrepreneurs, creating jobs in the community, as well as an important part of the labor force, and to cultural enrichment in this region in their gastronomic and cultural offers. This shows an administration with a human, inclusive approach, projecting itself towards

a society committed to the well-being and community development of all its inhabitants, seeking a fairer and more inclusive model.

Considerando que este día honramos especialmente a nuestros vecinos quienes continúan aportando su cultura, legado histórico, arte, tradición y mérito en los aspectos propios de cada actividad que realizan. Por eso ahora y en adelante es resuelto que en este día trece de septiembre de dos mil veintitrés, el municipio de Boone proclama el Mes de Herencia Hispana del quince de septiembre al quince de octubre.

Whereas this day we honor our neighbors who continue to contribute their culture, historical legacy, art, tradition and merit in each aspect of their daily lives and the activities they carry out. For this reason, now, therefore, be it resolved that on this thirteenth of September two thousand and twenty-five, the municipality of Boone proclaims Hispanic Heritage Month from September fifteen to October fifteen. This the 10th day of September, 2025

Proclamation Honoring the One-Year Milestone of Hurricane Helene

WHEREAS, on September 27, 2024, Hurricane Helene struck Western North Carolina and the High Country region with devastating force, bringing unprecedented flooding, widespread property damage, power outages, and tragic loss of life; and

WHEREAS, the people of Boone demonstrated extraordinary perseverance and resilience in the face of destruction, coming together as neighbors, friends, and community members to support one another and begin the long process of recovery; and

WHEREAS, Town of Boone staff worked tirelessly before, during, and after the storm to protect lives, restore essential services, and provide resources to those most in need, reflecting the highest standards of public service and dedication; and

WHEREAS, emergency response workers, including first responders, utility crews, medical professionals, and countless volunteers, bravely placed themselves in harm's way to protect the community, rescue those in danger, and deliver life-saving aid; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Boone acknowledges with deep compassion those who continue to struggle in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, including families who lost loved ones and residents who suffered the destruction of homes, businesses, and personal property; and

WHEREAS, on the one-year milestone, the Town of Boone reaffirms its commitment to ongoing recovery, preparedness, and resilience, ensuring that our community is stronger, safer, and more united in the face of future challenges; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that I, Tim Futrelle, Mayor of the Town of Boone, on behalf of the Boone Town Council, do hereby honor the one-year milestone of Hurricane Helene,

recognize the perseverance of Boone residents, commend the tireless efforts of Town staff, and extend our deepest gratitude to all who served our community during its time of need.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand and caused the Seal of the Town of Boone to be affixed this the 10th day of September, 2025.

Resolution Honoring the Life and Legacy of Former Mayor Wade Wilmoth

WHEREAS, the Town of Boone pauses with gratitude to honor the life and legacy of former Mayor Wade Wilmoth, who passed away peacefully on September 2, 2025, at the age of 90; and

WHEREAS, Wade was born in Surry County, North Carolina, and carried with him throughout his life a sharp wit, a sunny disposition, and a love of community that was felt by all who knew him; and

WHEREAS, after service to our country in the United States Army, Wade pursued higher education, began a successful career in real estate, and quickly became a trusted friend and counselor to neighbors and newcomers alike; and

WHEREAS, Wade's devotion to public service was evident in every stage of his life: he served with distinction on the North Carolina Property Tax Commission for twelve years, represented his community in the North Carolina General Assembly, and was recognized with the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, one of the state's highest honors, as well as the Distinguished Service Award from the President of the Jaycees; and

WHEREAS, Wade further gave of himself to the people of Boone through his time as Mayor, where his steady leadership, warm humor, and commitment to community left a lasting mark on the Town; and

WHEREAS, beyond his many titles and accolades, Wade will be remembered just as fondly for his time at the old Boone Drug Downtown, where he was a beloved member of its famous "Coffee Club". There, amid laughter, friendly debate, and shared stories, Wade embodied what it meant to be part of a true community. He was always quick with a joke, a word of encouragement, or a bit of wisdom that made others feel welcome; and

WHEREAS, Wade's life reminds us that leadership is not only measured by positions held, but by kindness shared, friendships built, and the ability to brighten a room simply by being present.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of the Town of Boone does hereby honor the memory of Mayor Wade Wilmoth for his dedicated service, his joyful spirit, and his lasting contributions to the civic and cultural life of our community and sends heartfelt condolences to his family. This is the 10th day of September, 2025.

Once all proclamations had been read, Mayor Futrelle asked if any Councilmember wished to discuss them. Councilmember Virginia thanked the Human Relations Commission for developing the Hispanic

Heritage Month Proclamation and emphasized the importance of approving it given today's cultural climate. Mayor Pro-Tem George expressed appreciation for the one-year milestone proclamation recognizing Hurricane Helene and thanked staff for their continued time and effort in supporting recovery efforts. Councilmember Carter concurred with Mayor Pro-Tem George's remarks. Mayor Futrelle noted that the vigil hosted by the Town of Boone would be held on September 28th at 7:30 p.m. to accommodate other milestone activities taking place in Boone. He then asked for a motion to approve the proclamations and resolutions as presented.

Councilmember Tugman made a motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Roseman, to approve the proclamations and resolutions as presented..

VOTE: Aye: Dalton George, Todd Carter, Edie Tugman, Virginia Roseman
 Nay: None
 Absent: Eric Plaag

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Futrelle asked if anyone in attendance would like to provide public comment. Hearing none, he moved to the next item on the agenda.

REQUESTED APPEARANCES

1. SAUL CHASE- NEW RIVER CONSERVANCY

Mr. Saul Chase introduced himself as a current board member of the New River Conservancy and a former Boone Town Councilmember, having served on the Council for eight years beginning in 1985. He stated that he also served as Chair of the Boone Greenway Committee for 19 years and helped plan the creation of the Boone Greenway. After providing a brief history of the Boone Greenway Trail, Mr. Chase noted that, as the New River Conservancy celebrates its 50th anniversary, he wanted to share that the Boone Greenway may be the only Greenway Trail located along the banks of the New River. He thanked the current staff and administration of the Town of Boone for their continued efforts in maintaining the Boone Greenway Trail.

Mr. Chase then introduced Joe Johnson, the New River Conservancy's Director of Operations and Projects, who would provide an overview of the Conservancy's work since Hurricane Helene. He noted that Mr. Johnson was hired just prior to the hurricane and has been a valuable asset to the organization during this period of recovery.

Mr. Johnson thanked Mr. Chase and gave a brief overview of the Conservancy's accomplishments over the past year. He explained that the New River Conservancy plans to begin the South Fork Confluence Revitalization Project in 2026 in partnership with the Town of Boone. Additional projects within the Town include the daylighting of Boone Creek at the Temple of the High Country, with construction anticipated to begin in May 2026, and ongoing discussions regarding daylighting Boone Creek at the Peacock Parking Lot. Mr. Johnson also noted that the New River Conservancy is working with the Blue Ridge Conservancy to determine the best methods for restoring riparian buffers along the Middle Fork Greenway.

In reviewing recovery efforts, Mr. Johnson reported the following activities:

- 50,000 pounds of trash have been removed from the New River within the recovery area, with 100,000 pounds of trash removed from the river basin as a whole;
- Over 30,000 native plants have been planted alongside the riverbanks of the New River;
- In North Carolina alone, over 2,000 feet of streambank restoration has been completed.

Mr. Johnson invited Boone Town Councilmembers to contact him for additional information.

Mayor Pro-Tem George thanked Mr. Johnson for his work and recognized the importance of the Conservancy. Councilmember Roseman asked whether the Town could partner with local river rafting companies to help care for the New River. Mr. Johnson explained that the New River Conservancy is currently partnering with Keep Ashe Beautiful to encourage tubers to collect trash while floating and suggested that the Town could help promote trash removal along riverbanks.

Mr. Santucci highlighted the importance of the Town of Boone's Adopt-a-Stream program, with Mr. Johnson expressing his agreement. Mayor Futrelle thanked Mr. Johnson for his presentation and proceeded to read the following proclamation.

Proclamation Honoring the 50th Anniversary of the New River Conservancy

WHEREAS, the New River Conservancy was founded in 1975 with the mission of protecting the waters, and surrounding woodlands and wildlife of the New River and its tributaries, one of the oldest rivers in the world and a vital natural resource for our region; and

WHEREAS, for fifty years the New River Conservancy has worked tirelessly to safeguard water quality, restore riverbanks, conserve habitat, and engage communities in stewardship of the river, ensuring that future generations may continue to enjoy its beauty and benefits; and

WHEREAS, within the Town of Boone, the New River Conservancy has been a steadfast partner in protecting the South Fork of the New River, a treasured natural feature that runs through the heart of our community; and

WHEREAS, the Conservancy has led many important projects within Boone's town limits, including streambank restoration efforts, stormwater mitigation, the removal of invasive species, and the promotion of environmentally responsible land use practices, all of which strengthen the ecological health and resilience of our community; and

WHEREAS, through educational programs, volunteer opportunities, and partnerships with local organizations, the New River Conservancy has fostered a spirit of environmental stewardship among Boone residents, encouraging our community to care for and connect with the river; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Boone recognizes and celebrates the tremendous contributions of the New River Conservancy to the health, beauty, and vitality of our natural environment, and expresses gratitude for their fifty years of service and leadership;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that I, Tim Futrelle, Mayor of the Town of Boone, on behalf of the Boone Town Council, do hereby honor and commend the New River Conservancy on the occasion of its 50th Anniversary, and encourage all residents to join in celebrating the Conservancy's achievements and in continuing the vital work of protecting and cherishing the New River for generations to come.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the Town of Boone to be affixed this 10th day of September, 2025.

Mayor Futelle then asked for a motion to approve the proclamation as presented. Mayor Pro Tem George made a motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Carter, to Approve the proclamation as presented.

VOTE: Aye: Dalton George, Todd Carter, Edie Tugman, Virginia Roseman
 Nay: None
 Absent: Eric Plaag

2. INFORMAL DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED MULTIFAMILY DEVELOPMENT AT 736 GREENWAY DRIVE

Mayor Futrelle asked Mr. Wise to introduce Mr. Tom Brasse, Mr. Russell Ranson, and Mr. Matt Langston of Landworks Design Group and RK Investors, and requested that he explain the purpose of their visit.

Mr. Wise provided a brief introduction and explained that, with the Town of Boone's updated Comprehensive Plan, the Town Council had authorized the creation of a Conditional District process. In this case, Landworks Design Group and RK Investors requested an informal discussion regarding a potential development at 736 Greenway Drive, also known as the former IRC site.

Mr. Brasse then began the presentation. The full presentation can be found on agenda packet pages 22-40. Following the presentation, Mr. Brasse invited questions from Council.

Mayor Futrelle noted that previous conversations had been held with the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ), during which the Town was advised that this property would be difficult to develop for residential use because it is a brownfield site. Mr. Langston acknowledged the challenge but explained that he and his team had conducted preliminary discussions with NCDEQ and developed a rigorous remediation plan that would allow for the safe development of the property.

Councilmember Carter stated that affordable housing is greatly needed in Boone and asked how such units might be incorporated into the proposed development. Mr. Ranson explained that while RK Investors does not manage affordable housing directly, they would be open to partnering with agencies that could manage units designated as affordable. Councilmember Carter

added that accessible housing is also limited in Boone and expressed interest in ensuring that some of the proposed affordable units are accessible.

Mayor Pro-Tem George asked Ms. Shook how she would recommend the Town assist if the project were to be approved. Ms. Shook explained that development of the site would take several years due to permitting and construction timelines. During that time, she and staff would work with Attorney Meade to determine how the Town could play a larger role in addressing affordable housing needs in Boone.

Mayor Pro-Tem George then asked Mr. Langston how many parking spaces would be available. Mr. Langston responded that parking would meet the requirements outlined in the Town's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). A brief discussion followed regarding parking standards and greenspace.

Mr. Langston noted that during public input sessions with residents of the Greenway Drive neighborhood, participants emphasized the need for additional housing stock, particularly family-oriented units. He stated that the proposed development would include such units near Rogers Drive. He also noted that additional bicycle parking would be provided to encourage less vehicle-centered travel and that discussions had begun with AppalCART to establish a new bus stop in front of the development.

Ms. Shook reminded Council that, as this is a Conditional District project, Council has the authority to impose specific conditions provided they are supported by appropriate reasoning. Councilmember Tugman asked whether the Council could require the inclusion of a multi-modal path and bus stop to promote walkability. Attorney Meade confirmed that such requirements would be permissible.

A discussion followed regarding potential involvement from the Northwest Housing Authority. Mayor Futrelle then asked if Council was comfortable providing consensus for the developers to continue planning the project. Council provided consensus. With no further questions, Mayor Futrelle moved to the next item on the agenda.

WORK SESSION

Mayor Futrelle asked if any Councilmember had an item to discuss during work session. Hearing none, Mayor Futrelle called for a break at 10:52 a.m..

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Futrelle resumed the meeting at 11:07 a.m. He then asked for discussion regarding the proposed items on the consent agenda. Mayor Futrelle expressed interest in the Principal Forgiveness Loan Program and thanked staff for their work. Hearing no further discussion, Mayor Futrelle asked for a motion to approve the items on the consent agenda as presented. Councilmember Tugman made a motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Roseman, to approve the items on the consent agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye: Dalton George, Todd Carter, Edie Tugman, Virginia Roseman
 Nay: None
 Absent: Eric Plaag

The following items were approved:

- Resolution of Support for the Town of Boone's Application for the SRF SA-HMW Principal Forgiveness Loan Program for Resilient Water Infrastructure
- Resolution of Support for the Town of Boone's Application for the SRF SA-HMW Principal Forgiveness Loan Program for Resilient Sewer Infrastructure
- Approval of Budget Amendments

COUNCIL MATTERS

1. CONSIDERATION OF LITTLE LIBRARY REQUEST

Mayor Futrelle asked if anyone in the audience was present to discuss the Little Library Request. Ms. Lily Thompson, a student at Watauga County High School, explained that she, along with her classmate Ms. Sophie Parker, who was unable to attend, was requesting to place a Little Library at the Jones House. She noted that they had received a \$500 grant through Rotary Camp to install Little Libraries throughout Watauga County, as she and Ms. Parker believe access to books is essential for children in the High Country.

Ms. Thompson explained that, as part of the project, children would have the opportunity to paint the Little Libraries as a way to connect with their community. She also outlined a plan to maintain the Little Library at the Jones House, along with other libraries in the project, including recruiting additional high school students to monitor the libraries monthly and maintaining an active social media presence. Ms. Thompson concluded by thanking Council for their time and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to speak, regardless of the Council's decision.

Councilmember Roseman thanked Ms. Thompson and noted that access to free literature is an excellent way to help children grow into competent community members. Councilmember Tugman agreed. Councilmember Carter asked about the other locations for the Little Library project and inquired whether Ms. Thompson and Ms. Parker would be willing to include the Boone Jaycee Park and the Boone Greenway as additional sites. Ms. Thompson noted the other locations and explained that she would discuss with Ms. Parker whether adding these libraries could be included in their maintenance plan.

Councilmember Roseman encouraged Ms. Thompson to apply for Outside Agency Funding during the next fiscal year. Mayor Futrelle then asked if there was consensus for approving the installation of the Little Library at the Jones House.

Councilmember Carter made a motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Roseman, to approve the request to place a Little Library at the Jones House.

VOTE: Aye: Dalton George, Todd Carter, Edie Tugman, Virginia Roseman
 Nay: None

Absent: Eric Plaag

2. *CONSIDERATION OF NEW TOWN POLICY RELATING TO TOWN SPEECH ON TOWN PROPERTY*

Attorney Meade began by introducing the policy found in the agenda packet on page 57 regarding Town Speech on Town Property. She explained that the policy states that any displays or other types of expression placed on property owned, leased, or otherwise controlled by the Town shall be considered government speech and shall reflect the official concerns, values, and/or positions of the Town. She further noted that the policy was created to establish consistent and unified messaging and to avoid confusion regarding the source and intent of such displays.

Mayor Futrelle asked if any Councilmember wished to discuss the proposed policy. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the Town of Boone Policy on Displays Placed on Public Property as presented.

Mayor Pro Tem George made a motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Carter, to approve the Town of Boone Policy on Displays Placed on Public Property as presented.

VOTE: Aye: Dalton George, Todd Carter, Edie Tugman, Virginia Roseman
 Nay: None
 Absent: Eric Plaag

3. *CONSIDERATION OF SPECIAL EVENT INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS*

Attorney Meade provided an update to Council regarding her research on insurance requirements for special events, as directed at the previous meeting. She explained that the current Town Code concerning insurance for special events is outdated and that she is preparing a Town Code amendment. The amendment would generally require \$1 million occurrence / \$2 million aggregate in coverage .

She further proposed that the Town Manager, or designee, be given authority to conduct a risk assessment for any special event e based on the size, nature, and scope of the event. Attorney Meade further explained that certain events, such as larger events or those serving alcohol, may require higher coverage amounts, whereas smaller events may not need \$1 million to \$2 million in insurance.

Council unanimously agreed for Attorney Meade to continue her work on the proposed code amendment.

4. *2025 BOONERANG MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL REPORT*

Mr. Freed provided a brief overview of the Boonerang: Music & Arts Festival 2025. He noted the following:

- The inaugural Boonerang Battle of the Bands was a success, with 30 applications received for the first round; 12 were selected, and 4 bands performed at Boonerang. The most attended battles were at Appalachian Mountain Brewery and Booneshine Brewing,

while the least attended were at Lost Province and Southend Brewing. He suggested hosting battles next year only at Appalachian Mountain Brewery and Booneshine Brewing, as the winners would perform in Downtown Boone during Boonerang.

- The inaugural Boonerang International Festival was also a great success, and he proposed continuing it next year.
- Sustain Appalachian diverted 1,000 pounds of compost and 1,000 pounds of recycling from the landfill, and volunteers requested only a Boonerang shirt. Mr. Freed expressed a desire to continue this partnership next year.
- High Country Radio broadcast live on Friday and helped promote the festival. Non-profit beer trailers were consistently staffed with volunteers, and Mr. Freed received only positive feedback from these organizations.
- Despite Howard Street being under construction, the Town's Public Works crew and contracted crews ensured the street remained passable and safe, with no reported incidents.
- Security and emergency services were based out of Appalachian State University's Emergency Operations Center, with no issues reported.
- Boonerang experienced its first lightning delays on Saturday and Sunday; however, both delays were brief and provided valuable training for staff and volunteers.
- Ms. Donna Dolen, the volunteer coordinator, is developing a Boonerang app.
- Mountain Times produced the Boonerang guide this year; however, Mr. Freed noted challenges in selecting a news outlet to create the guide, as there are only two in Boone. He indicated that creating the guide in-house may be considered in the future.
- A survey was submitted to Downtown Boone businesses; however, anonymity options prevented Town staff from addressing concerns. Mr. Freed explained that while Boonerang brings visitors to the area, its primary goal is to celebrate the arts and culture of Boone, rather than serve solely as an economic driver.

Mr. Freed then asked if Council had any questions. Mayor Futrelle noted that this year's festival was the best yet and expressed excitement for 2026. Councilmember Carter acknowledged the challenges in obtaining sponsorships due to Hurricane Helene and the reduced capacity of sponsoring organizations. He also noted that Boonerang is not widely recognized as a Town of Boone event and encouraged increased marketing efforts to highlight the Town's involvement. Mayor Pro-Tem George agreed and thanked staff for their continued work in making Boonerang a memorable festival.

With no further questions, Mayor Futrelle moved to the next item on the agenda.

5. *DISCUSSION OF BOLICK PROPERTY*

Ms. Davis introduced Mr. Kevin Norris, Director of Purchasing and Facilities for Blue Ridge Energy. Mr. Norris explained that Blue Ridge Energy was interested in the Bolick Property to expand operations and create a new laydown yard, noting that Hurricane Helene had highlighted a lack of sufficient space for materials.

Ms. Davis stated that Blue Ridge Energy had submitted an initial offer of \$3.5 million for the Bolick Property, with the initial asking price being \$6.7 million. Attorney Meade noted that commercial properties in Boone typically remain on the market longer than residential properties. Mayor Futrelle asked Council to consider the initial purchase price of \$4.3 million.

Councilmember Roseman stated that she felt \$6.7 million was a fair asking price and noted that proceeds from the property would be used to build a new Public Works building. She emphasized that Blue Ridge Energy is a community partner and preferred to continue dialogue rather than immediately accept or reject an offer, adding that she personally would not accept an offer below \$5.8 million. Councilmember Tugman acknowledged that while she would prefer the property not be used as a laydown yard, she understands the need.

A discussion was held regarding affordable housing on the site. Ms. Davis explained that due to the property's proximity to the landfill, LIHTC funding would not be available. Council and staff then discussed potential ways for the Town and Blue Ridge Energy to negotiate a fair price, including the possibility of electricity credits, with the majority of the sale being cash. Attorney Meade clarified that additional funding sources could be utilized for the Public Works building, and Ms. Davis noted that the Town could still borrow additional funds if necessary.

Mr. Norris thanked Council for the feedback and stated he would relay the discussion to Blue Ridge Energy. Hearing no further questions, Mayor Futrelle moved to the next item on the agenda.

6. *APPOINTMENT TO BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT*

After reviewing the application from Mr. David Luther, Councilmember Carter nominated him to the open seat on the Board of Adjustment. Councilmember Roseman expressed some concern, noting that Mr. Luther had only lived in the Town of Boone for three and a half years. Councilmember Carter responded that Mr. Luther currently serves on the Hospitality House Board and has demonstrated strong dedication to the Boone community. Mayor Pro-Tem George agreed and stated that he had encouraged Mr. Luther to apply.

Attorney Meade confirmed with Ms. Shook that adequate training would be provided for Board of Adjustment members. Mayor Futrelle then asked for a motion to appoint Mr. Luther. Council provided consensus to appoint Mr. Luther to the Board of Adjustment.

7. *APPOINTMENT TO CULTURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY BOARD*

Councilmember Tugman noted that she did not know the applicant and asked Mr. Freed if he had spoken with him. Mr. Freed responded that he had and that Mr. Sean Owens would be a valuable member of the Cultural Resources Advisory Board.

Councilmember Carter stated that he appreciated Mr. Owens serving as a non-traditional student in the student position and nominated him to the open student seat on the Cultural Resources Advisory Board. Council provided consensus to appoint Mr. Owens to the Board.

8. *APPOINTMENT TO HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION*

Councilmember Carter nominated Mr. Alex Castillo to the open position on the Human Relations Commission. Council provided consensus to appoint Mr. Castillo to the Commission.

9. *APPOINTMENT TO PLANNING COMMISSION*

Before Council discussed the application, Ms. Shook explained that Mr. Declan King had submitted an application for the student position, rather than the regular position, and had been notified that no student positions were currently open on the Planning Commission.

Mayor Pro-Tem George noted that while Mr. King's application was impressive, he was cautious about appointing a student to a regular seat, as the workload of the Planning Commission has increased recently. Councilmember Tugman asked if Mr. King would be willing to submit an application for a regular position and suggested deciding on the appointment during an October Boone Town Council meeting.

Councilmember Carter noted that Mr. King has significant planning experience and expressed confidence in his ability to serve on the Planning Commission. Councilmember Roseman agreed and nominated Mr. King to the regular position on the Commission. She acknowledged that Mr. King may decline the appointment, as the term is longer than one year, but stated that she felt comfortable nominating him given his experience.

After a brief discussion, Council provided consensus to appoint Mr. King to the Planning Commission.

10. *APPOINTMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE*

Mayor Pro-Tem George nominated Ms. Emma Crider for the regular position on the Sustainability Committee. Council provided consensus to appoint Ms. Crider to the Committee.

Mayor Pro-Tem George expressed concern regarding one of the applicants for an open student position on the Sustainability Committee, noting that the applicant's responses did not meet the criteria set forth by Council. He then asked Mr. Santucci about Mr. RyLee Wadman's application. Mr. Santucci stated that Mr. Wadman would be a strong addition to the Committee.

Based on this, Mayor Pro-Tem George nominated Mr. RyLee Wadman and Ms. Caroline Smith to the two open student positions on the Sustainability Committee. Council provided consensus to appoint both individuals.

MAYOR REPORT

Mayor Futrelle encouraged Councilmembers to attend the High Country Council of Governments Banquet, which was set to be held in October.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Ms. Davis began by explaining that Mr. Justin Summers from Senator Ted Budd's office had met with her and Mr. Presnell and mentioned that additional FEMA funding is expected within the next few weeks.

She also noted that she had met with a representative from Senator Thom Tillis's office to request \$5 million in state appropriations for a new Public Works building. While she expressed uncertainty that the request would be approved, she felt it was important to submit it.

Ms. Davis further reported that the Boone Police Department had begun targeted traffic stops focused on mufflers and speeding, per Council's request. She also stated that a firm had been selected for the construction of Fire Station #4 and that, once Attorney Meade reviews the contract, it would be presented to Council for approval.

TOWN ATTORNEY REPORT

Attorney Meade had no report.

BOARD LIASION REPORT

Councilmember Tugman apologized and stated that she had no report. Councilmember Carter reported that the new double-decker bus with AppalCART had completed 138 trips during the most recent football game, which he described as very exciting. Mayor Pro-Tem George also reported that he had no board report.

Councilmember Roseman noted that SAHA had a successful season, despite the impacts caused by construction at Horn in the West. She added that the Parks and Recreation Committee had appointed new Chair and Vice Chair members and inquired whether a member of Public Works could participate in the Watauga County Rec Center's Trunk or Treat event, as many children had expressed interest in seeing Public Works staff at the event. Mr. Moody confirmed that a Public Works representative would participate.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem George made a motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Carter, to adjourn the September 10th, 2025, Boone Town Council meeting.

VOTE: Aye: Dalton George, Todd Carter, Edie Tugman, Virginia Roseman
 Nay: None
 Absent: Eric Plaag