

**MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING
BOONE TOWN COUNCIL
MARCH 4, 2013**

An Intergovernmental Retreat was held at 5:00 p.m., Monday, March 4, 2013, in the ASU Athletics Center, ASU Campus. Council Members present were Lynne Mason and Rennie Brantz. Town Clerk Kimberly Brown was also in attendance. Elected officials and staff from the following entities were also present: Appalachian State University, Watauga County, Town of Blowing Rock, Town of Seven Devils, Town of Beech Mountain, High Country Council of Governments, High Country United Way Vision Council, Mayland Community College, and members of various media outlets of the area.

The purpose of the meeting was to hold an intergovernmental retreat.

High Country United Way Vision Council Overview – Nancy Riegel

Nancy Riegel provided an overview of the Vision Council process. Highlights included:

- High Country United Way (HCUW) wanted to change way of allocating funds to service agencies – shift from funding direct services to focusing on funding projects based on outcomes
- Used Buncombe County’s recent process as guidance
- In September 2011, HCUW organized stakeholders to determine community focus
- Process covered Watauga and Avery Counties
- Three focus areas were determined – health, income, education
- Councils were formed to address each focus area
- Each council followed same process – create vision, identify barriers, identify needed improvements, develop strategies to obtain improvements
- In 2013, 30% of HCUW funding will go to projects with community impact
- In 2014, 60% of HCUW funding will go to projects with community impact
- In 2013, 90% of HCUW funding will go to projects with community impact
- Each year, 10% of funding is reserved for emergency relief

Health Council - Bryan Belcher, Alice Salthouse

Bryan Belcher and Alice Salthouse described the work of the Health Council. Highlights included:

- Health Council established three priorities:
 - Create an environment that supports health
 - Provide needed healthcare and resources
 - Reduce substance abuse
- 23% of Watauga County residents have no health insurance
- Working to establish a full-time Farmers Market
- Working on Project Lazarus (a prescription drugs abuse prevention program)

Income Council – Susan Jones, Joe Furman

Susan Jones and Joe Furman described the work of the Income Council. Highlights included:

- Income Council wants to address both income of citizens, and cost of living
- Income Council established three priorities:
 - Create affordable housing
 - Attract, obtain, and maintain diverse industries
 - Create sufficient affordable healthcare
- Watauga Community Housing Trust has been established as a non-profit to provide “workforce” housing
- A Housing Summit is being planned for early Summer 2013

- The Watauga County Economic Development Commission annual Economic Development Summit is scheduled for April 17, 2013 in Blowing Rock

Education Council – Gary Childers, Dick Jones, Melissa Phillips

Gary Childers, Dick Jones, and Melissa Phillips described the work of the Education Council. Highlights included:

- Education Council established three priorities:
 - Expand non-traditional education opportunities
 - Increase/change perception of value of education
 - Increase collaboration to align resources
 - Watauga County has a 15% dropout rate
 - Education Council is not using (lack of) funding as an excuse for educational barriers
- Availability/cost of childcare is barrier to adult education

ADJOURNMENT

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Kimberly S. Brown, Town Clerk