

**MINUTES – WORKSHOP/RETREAT
BOONE TOWN COUNCIL
March 7, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER

A special meeting of the Boone Town Council was called to order electronically at 9:11 a.m. on Monday, March 7, 2022. Mayor Tim Futrelle presided. Town Council members present included Becca Nenow, Dalton George, Todd Carter, Virginia Roseman, and Mayor Pro Tem Edie Tugman. Staff present included Town Manager John Ward, Town Clerk Nicole Harmon, Police Chief Andy Le Beau, Finance Director Amy Davis, GIS Coordinator Chris Miller, Human Resources Director Dale Presnell, Fire Chief Jimmy Isaacs, Communications Specialist Laney Pilkington, Cultural Resources Director Mark Freed, Wastewater Treatment Plant Director Superintendent Rudy Broschinski, and Sustainability and Special Projects Manager George Santucci.

The purpose of the meeting was to hold the annual budget workshop.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

FY 21/22 BUDGET REVIEW AND Q&A

Ms. Davis and Mr. Ward provided an in-depth overview of the FY 21/22 budget and answered questions from Council members. A complete copy of the FY 21/22 budget can be viewed online at <http://www.townofboone.net/>.

Mayor Futrelle declared a break at 10:32 a.m. Council reconvened at 10:42 a.m.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Freed presented the following for discussion:

Properties

Rivers Property

- Current discussions with TDA about possible renovation of rock house. This property is also part of the MSD, so possible collaboration with DBDA. Complete project estimated at \$3 million. House and sitework \$1.5 million.

North Street Park

- Needs rezoning. Would like to erect a fence for the community garden and to build a pavilion for outdoor gathering space. There will be some sitework needed for better access to Queen Street lot. There are community partners signed on for this project for financial and in-kind needs. Work is estimated to cost in the \$50,000 range.

Daniel Boone Park

- Funding in the amount of \$15,000-\$20,000 is needed to construct an accessibility path for Daniel Boone Native Gardens. Community support is available for in-kind help with grading.

Programming

Boone 150

- Additional funding for the celebration, including July 4, Boone Summit, Guided Walking Tours, and permanent downtown historic marker/information is needed in the amount of \$20,000.

Boonerang Music & Arts Festival

- An on-going line item (\$25,000) is requested to allow the festival to continue.

FIRE/GIS/WIDE AREA COMPUTER NETWORK

Chief Isaacs indicated that the biggest challenge his department had dealt with over the last year was losing good employees and potential employees to other, more competitive agencies. He explained that the Rural Fire Board was

looking at initiating staffing for the proposed Fire Station 4 at the new municipal complex so that training could begin. Mr. Carter asked what it would take to make staff's pay competitive with other agencies in the area. Chief Isaacs answered that it would take approximately a 15% pay increase to bring pay up to a competitive level, but cautioned that doing so would create compression issues between new hires and existing employees. He finished by explaining the rural fire district to Council members and what the ISO rating meant for property owners that lived in the area.

LUNCH

Mayor Futrelle called for a break at 12:10 p.m. Council reconvened at 1:00 p.m. Mayor Pro-Tem Tugman presided over the meeting from 1:00 p.m. until 1:41 p.m. when Mayor Futrelle returned.

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Director Rick Miller began discussion by reiterating Chief Isaacs's points regarding recruitment and retention. He pointed out that he had difficulties obtaining and retaining qualified employees. Mr. Miller indicated a need for an additional diesel mechanic in the fleet department, and additional maintenance positions within water and sewer operations. He added that his next priority was the municipal complex at the Bolick property, and reminded members that the Town was still paying rent on the building Public Works was currently housed in. Other needs included a vac truck, sidewalk tractor and a zero-turn mower in the facilities maintenance department, as well as a snow plow in the street department and a one-ton service truck in water and sewer.

PLANNING & INSPECTIONS

Planning Director Jane Shook presented the following needs for the Planning Department for the upcoming fiscal year: Digital Watauga (\$5,000), Digital Plan Table (\$15,300), Software to mark-up plans (\$2,000), New Permitting Software (\$31,010 initial, \$23,100 recurring), Hybrid/Electric Sedan (\$25,000-\$27,000), Comprehensive Planning (\$50,000-\$75,000) and Salaries.

CLOSED SESSION

Upon a motion by Mr. George, seconded by Ms. Roseman, Council voted unanimously to enter into closed session at 4:05 p.m. pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-318.11(a)(6), to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee.

Upon a motion by seconded by Council voted unanimously to exit closed session at p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by seconded by Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at p.m.

Nicole Harmon, Town Clerk

Tim Futrelle, Mayor