

**MINUTES – EMERGENCY MEETING
BOONE TOWN COUNCIL
October 9, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

An emergency meeting of the Boone Town Council was called to order at 2:00 p.m. remotely via WebEx video conferencing software. Mayor Futrelle presided. Council members present were Mayor Pro-Tem Dalton George, Todd Carter, Eric Plaag, and Edie Tugman. Staff present included Town Manager Amy Davis, Town Clerk Nicole Harmon-Church, Grants Coordinator Laney Wise, and Parking Administrator Reta Jackson. Town Attorney Allison Meade was also in attendance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**DISCUSSION AND POTENTIAL ACTION REGARDING THE USE OF TOWN OF
BOONE PROPERTY KNOWN AS DANIEL BOONE PARK FOR USE BY FEMA FOR
GROUND OPERATIONS.**

Mayor Futrelle provided an update on FEMA's operations in the area, emphasizing the critical need for their presence and cooperative efforts with the Town. He noted that FEMA was establishing a central recovery location outside Boone to serve surrounding counties over the long term. The proposed location being discussed will accommodate 350 personnel, with ten trailers, a recreation tent, a communication center, and food facilities set up at the Town-owned property known as the Horn in the West. Mayor Futrelle highlighted the efficiency of the location, noting its central accessibility. He also expressed appreciation for FEMA's cooperation in communicating updates and combating misinformation.

Council member Plaag supported FEMA's presence and urged a detailed outline of the operations. Mayor Futrelle elaborated that 50 active FEMA personnel were conducting site assessments and assisting with applications from the Enterprise Center at DSS. He added that the Horn site would allow FEMA teams to mobilize more effectively in the field. Council member Plaag asked about trailer setup timelines, while Parking Administrator Jackson recommended exploring other locations for displaced student parking. Manager Davis clarified that debris operations would also occur at this site, as it is the only state-permitted site for debris management, and cannot be relocated without incurring fines. Attorney Meade raised concerns about terminating the Farmers Market's license for the property, emphasizing potential legal ramifications. Manager Davis reassured the Council that prorating the license fees would mitigate conflicts.

Council deliberated on the use of the Farmers Market property during this emergency. After briefly reviewing the lease, Attorney Meade highlighted that the Farmers Market license allowed the Town to utilize the property in emergencies. Mayor Pro-Tem George emphasized the need to support farmers and vendors while balancing Town priorities. Mayor Futrelle noted that safety concerns with trucks and pedestrian traffic made the location unsuitable for market operations while FEMA was utilizing the property. Attorney Meade suggested making sure the lease agreement with FEMA was clear as to duration and ensuring any documents are reviewed for restrictive terms or indefinite commitments.

Mayor Futrelle confirmed that the current FEMA agreement was temporary, lasting 21-30 days, but Attorney Meade expressed concern about terms allowing indefinite extensions. Council member Carter proposed amending the lease to ensure the Town maintained control, while Council member Plaag suggested potential three-month extensions with Council approval. Mayor Pro-Tem George motioned to approve and ratify the 21-30 day FEMA agreement with conditions for staff direction and reasonable extensions. The motion was seconded by Council member Plaag and passed unanimously.

The discussion then shifted to temporary housing solutions. Council member Plaag raised questions about FEMA's intentions for temporary housing, particularly given the displacement in the Town and County and with App State reopening without dorm availability for emergency housing. Manager Davis reported that the new Public Works site, which FEMA had inspected, faced concerns about its susceptibility to flooding based on past events. Attorney Meade noted that current Town code did not provide exemptions for emergency or temporary housing, such as FEMA trailers, and would require amendments. Council discussed options for accommodating emergency workers in hotel rooms under long-term contracts or using facilities for emergency shelters. However, it was noted that quick setups like tiny homes may face regulatory challenges.

Council members Tugman and Plaag suggested that Council proactively work on code updates to prevent delays and reduce burdens on the planning department. Mayor Pro-Tem George proposed forming working groups to gather information on problematic items, while Mayor Futrelle suggested including this topic in the regular meeting scheduled for October 23rd. It was the consensus of Council to proceed with discussions and planning on temporary housing and FEMA-related operations.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Mayor Pro-Tem George, seconded by Council member Carter, Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 2:54 p.m.

Nicole Harmon, Town Clerk

Tim Futrelle, Mayor