

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND THE TOWN COMMISSIONERS OF
BILTMORE FOREST HELD APRIL 13, 2021.

Be it remembered by those that follow these proceedings that the Governing Board of the Town of Biltmore Forest met and conducted the following business:

Roll call taken by the Clerk:

Mayor George F. Goosmann, III, present

Commissioner Doris P. Loomis, present

Commissioner E. Glenn Kelly, present

Commissioner Fran Cogburn, present

Mr. Jonathan Kanipe, the Town Manager was present and Mr. William Clarke, the Town Attorney was also present via Zoom. Roll call was taken by the Clerk.

Mayor Goosmann called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm. Commissioner Loomis made a motion to approve the minutes from March 12, 2021. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cogburn and unanimously approved. Roll call was taken by the Clerk.

Interim Chief Trevor Lance gave the report for the Skyland Fire Department. Chief Lance also introduced the Interim Deputy Chief Zach Cicillian. The month of March was slower than it normally is. Chief Lance discussed swimming pool safety and keeping campfires monitored. Chief Lance also said to clean your grills because there have been many catch on fire from not being cleaned. Mayor Goosmann thanked Chief Lance for all the hard work the Fire Department provides.

Chief Chris Beddingfield gave the report for the Police Department. Chief Beddingfield said there were 646 calls for service. There were not as many major incidents this month when compared to last month. The incident number was the same but the list of major incidents decreased. Chief Beddingfield said the interesting news of the month was the person trying to break into the police department. The subject was arrested and the charges are pending. Chief

Beddingfield said there have been several questions relating to body camera footage. The camera footage is all electronic and cloud based. Anytime there is something like a pursuit incident or a “use of force incident,” it is administratively reviewed. This information is shared electronically and shown to the District Attorney. Mayor Goosmann thanked Chief Beddingfield for all of their hard work.

Mr. Harry Buckner gave the report for the Public Works department. Mr. Buckner said there was an accident with the recycling truck. They recently got the truck back from the repair shop. Thankfully there were no significant injuries involved in this accident. Mr. Buckner said the public works employee was not hurt and the accident was not his fault.

Mr. Buckner said public works has been getting a lot of utility locate requests due to construction, landscaping, and removal of trees.

Mr. Buckner thanked Mr. Charles Tesner and Ms. Laura Jacobs for working diligently on the Beacon water meter reading system. Mr. Buckner said there were no errors in the meter reading system out of 800 connections which has been a long time goal.

Mr. Buckner said as far as certifications go, two employees are working on obtaining their water certifications through the State of North Carolina. That class ended today. They will be taking the exam in May.

Mr. Buckner went out below the sinkhole repair and noticed some additional erosion downstream has occurred. It is on Cedar Hill between Hemlock and Cedar Chine. It is more than likely a project they will attack in the future.

A small section of water line will be replaced on Hendersonville Road. A storm drain on Fairway Place will also be repaired. Mayor Goosmann thanked Mr. Buckner for all of their hard work.

New Business was discussed pertaining to Consideration of Changes to the Carolina Day School Entrance Sign. Ms. Sarah Goldstein and Ms. Stephanie Whitney were present from Carolina Day School. Ms. Goldstein said they were present to show the Board the enhancement of the school sign which faces Hendersonville Road. They are requesting to alter the existing entry sign. Everything is in compliance with the Town's sign ordinance. In 2015, the previous sign was a temporary structure due to a vehicular accident that occurred and the sign was hit. One of the students in 2020 designed the sign and they would love to implement a version of his sign. There were no further questions. A motion was made by Commissioner Fran Cogburn, seconded by Commissioner Doris Loomis. Roll call taken by the Clerk and unanimously approved. Ms. Whitney said they are delighted to work with the Town and thanked the Board for the approval.

Mr. Kanipe reviewed the proposed budget amendment which was brought back and modified from last month. The biggest change is the increase in revenue line items to reflect sales tax receipts for the first nine months of FY 2021 with estimates for the next three months based on what we have seen so far. Thankfully, sales tax has been performing better than anticipated. The expenditures relate to the Police Department with Capital Outlay and engineering within the Streets Department. Those are covered through amendments within maintenance and repair cost for vehicles. A motion was made by Commissioner Kelly and seconded by Commissioner Cogburn. Roll call was taken by the Clerk and unanimously approved.

Mr. Kanipe discussed the Consideration of Appointment to the Design Review Board. Mr. Fred Groce has decided to step down as a member of the Design Review Board. His term is up and Commissioner Cogburn has nominated Mr. Tony Saponaro. Commissioner Cogburn said Mr. Saponaro has lived here about fifteen years, he is enthusiastic, loves Biltmore Forest and is a young retiree. Commissioner Cogburn said he would do a wonderful job serving on the Design Review Board. Commissioner Cogburn made the motion, Commissioner Loomis seconded the motion. Roll call taken by Clerk and unanimously approved.

Mr. Kanipe discussed the Preliminary Budget Discussion. Mr. Kanipe said they are in the middle of a property revaluation year. Every four years, Buncombe County does a property revaluation. Mr. Kanipe said the Town is forecasting a 7.5% increase in the property tax base. As

part of state law, we have to provide a tax neutral rate as part of the review for this year. If the property tax rate had gone down, we would be showing a revenue neutral tax rate that is going up. One penny brings the Town \$82,177. While a formal proposal will be made in May, at this time Mr. Kanipe does not intend to recommend a property tax reduction in order to provide a revenue neutral rate. The additional \$164,353 that the current tax rate, at minimum, brings will enable the Town to move forward with multiple projects. Since tax values have increased, the revenue neutral rate is lower than our current tax rate. Mr. Kanipe's analysis shows a revenue neutral tax rate of \$.325 per \$100 valuation, which is two cents below the current tax rate. Mr. Kanipe does not foresee his budget proposal recommending the two cents reduction and suggests staying at the \$.345 rate.

Powell Bill funds went down by \$3,000. Investment earnings are negligible, and there is no likelihood of this changing in the coming year.

On March 15, 2021, the American Recovery Plan was signed. We are anticipating receiving \$410,000 for the Town of Biltmore Forest. We still do not have rules on how this money can be spent but it has to be related to COVID. The first payment of \$205,000 should be coming in by May 15th. The second half of money should be coming in by May 2022. The money can be used by FY 2024 to spend that money but should be dedicated to one or two large projects.

The Fiscal Year 2022 expenditures were discussed. Chief Beddingfield and Mr. Kanipe would like to add two new vehicles again next year to keep the transition going while allowing a spare vehicle.

Mr. Kanipe said the Governor's Highway Safety Patrol grant was applied for again which would be \$6,000.

Mr. Kanipe discussed the administrative needs of the police department. They would like to invest in the Quartermaster inventory system which would cost approximately \$4,000.

Chief Beddingfield also discussed the CAD system which is computer aided dispatch to expand on the current software. This software will automatically put a timestamp as to when a call is initiated and also when an officer arrives on scene. CAD would allow them to have a mapping component as well which would help the officer and the telecommunicator. This software is much more in depth and efficient and would greatly expand what we have now. Mr. Kanipe said it would definitely benefit the Town to have the CAD system.

Chief Beddingfield also discussed the Quartermaster software which electronically maintains inventory. It is an excellent resource to have and is very in depth as to how it keeps track of inventory.

Commissioner Loomis asked what the cost of the CAD software is. Mr. Kanipe said the cost of the software is \$42,000 which is inclusive of the Police Pak software which is \$20,000/year. Some of the items with CAD would be a one-time purchase.

Mr. Kanipe discussed the needs of the Public Works department. Mr. Kanipe suggested the Town is considering specific issued garbage containers in order to offset repetitive motion injuries among employees. One thought is that residents could be offered different size garbage containers such as a 32 gallon container, a 60 gallon container, and 95 gallon container. The resident would get the first container for free but there would be a fee if more containers are requested. Mayor Goosmann said there have been several employee shoulder injuries in the past, and the garbage cans issued by the Town would significantly reduce injury due to the trucks lifting the containers, and not by the public works employees.

Mr. Kanipe said with Mr. Mike Dale and Mr. Harry Buckner on board, a lot more can be done with the stormwater master plan due to their knowledge. The Greenwood Park renovation funding will be in the proposal coming up. A cleaner version of the park master plan will be developed that encapsulates the stream restoration plan as well. The project should be completed within the next fiscal year.

Mr. Kanipe said they will be working on the Town's version of the Comprehensive Plan that is required by the State. Mr. Billy Clarke will be assisting with this.

Commissioner Loomis said an electric vehicle would be great for public works which is much quieter and more fuel efficient.

Mr. Kanipe showed the Board the map of the Duke Energy underground project which shows construction year 2022-2023. There are three specific phases broken down. Right-of-way acquisition will begin this fall. July to remove poles where they can. If AT&T and Charter are still on these poles, Duke will physically cut them so it won't be visible anymore. Mr. Kanipe is still working with Charter and AT&T. Commissioner Cogburn asked for the final plans. Mr. Kanipe said he will post this information on the website.

The Planning Commission will meet next Thursday to go over existing ordinances and statutory changes. Additionally, next Thursday evening, The Friends of Biltmore Forest meeting will occur at 7pm with a Zoom lecture regarding boxwood blight and other invasive species. There will also be a presentation on hemlock preservation.

The North Carolina League of Municipalities annual summit will also occur next month. Commissioner Loomis and Mr. Kanipe will be attending virtually. Chief Beddingfield has been nominated to serve as a member of the Board of Directors. Chief Beddingfield will serve as a Board member representing the affiliate organizations within the State. Mr. Kanipe thanked Commissioner Loomis for serving on the nominating committee as well.

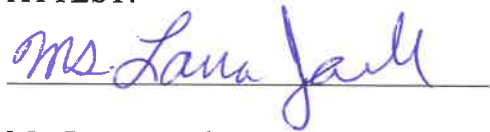
Ms. Helen Stephens resigned at the end of March and we are in the process of finding a replacement. Mr. Kanipe said he is hoping to have something finalized this week so the Board can meet him/her at next month's Board meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment

Mayor Goosmann adjourned the meeting at 5:21 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 4:30 pm.

ATTEST:



Ms. Laura Jacobs
Town Clerk



George F. Goosmann, III
Mayor