

June 13, 2023

The Town of Blowing Rock Town Council met for their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, June 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting took place at Town Hall located at 1036 Main Street Blowing Rock, NC. Present were Mayor Charlie Sellers, Mayor Pro-Tem Doug Matheson and Council Members Albert Yount, David Harwood, Melissa Pickett, and Pete Gherini. Others in attendance were Interim Town Manager Kevin Rothrock, Town Attorney Allen Moseley, Town Engineers Doug Chapman and Jared Wright, Police Chief Aaron Miller, Interim Planning Director Brian Johnson, Emergency Services Director Kent Graham, Finance Officer Nicole Norman, Public Works Director Matt Blackburn, and Town Clerk Hilari Hubner. IT Director Thomas Steele was unable to attend.

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

town, budget, council, spaces, tda, property, year, work, building, approve, parking, questions, blowing, motion, issues, fiscal year, planning board, rock, increase, pay

SPEAKERS

Kevin Rothrock, Melissa Pickett, Dale Howard, David Harwood, Charlie Sellers, All, Doug Matheson, Pete Gherini, John Winkler, Jennifer Brown, Jared Wright, Allen Moseley, Jane Sellers, Jean Kitchen, Aaron Miller, Nicole Norman, Brian Johnson, Albert Yount

Charlie Sellers

Approval of the open and closed session minutes from May 9, 2023, do I have a motion?

Doug Matheson

So, moved.

Charlie Sellers

Do I have a second?

David Harwood

Second.

All

All in favor of the motion.

Charlie Sellers

Approval of the May 16, 2023, closed session meeting, do I have a motion to approve?

Melissa Pickett

Motion to approve.

Pete Gherini

Second.

All

All in favor.

Charlie Sellers

Approval of the May 18, 2023, budget workshop minutes. Do I have a motion?

Pete Gherini

So, moved.

Albert Yount

Second.

All

All in favor.

Charlie Sellers

All right, do we have a motion to approve the regular agenda?

Doug Matheson

So, moved.

Charlie Sellers

Do I have a second?

David Harwood

Second.

Charlie Sellers

Any discussion on the agenda?

All

With no discussion - all were in favor of the motion

Charlie Sellers

Okay, consent agenda. That's a budget amendment 2023-10 and the Blowing Rock ABC store travel policy. Do I have a motion to approve the Consent Agenda?

Doug Matheson

Motion to approve.

Charlie Sellers

Do I have a second?

David Harwood

Second.

All

All in favor.

Charlie Sellers

Okay, ladies and gentlemen, we have quickly made it to our public comments section. If you would like to step up to the microphone and state your name and address Yes, yes, ma'am. Now, Janie, you cannot discuss anything on the agenda that's under public hearing.

Jane Sellers

Right. My name is Jane Sellers 412 Wonderland Drive. And I am also the Vice-Chair of the Blowing Rock Civic Association. And I'm making these comments for that organization. As I believe, you know, the Civic Association's mission is to provide and promote an improved quality of life in Blowing Rock by evaluating civic issues, educating, and engaging residents on key issues, working with local government and business community, encouraging citizens to be involved in their community and to vote. We also believe it's important that leaders of our Town are transparent about issues before them for decision. And we participate in Town government meetings like the one tonight to gather pertinent information to pass along to our members and others through our communication channels, primarily our website emails in the BRCA 28605 broadcast. From time to time, we also pass along to you views of our organization, and its leadership. That's my purpose tonight. We very much appreciate the Council and Town Manager's efforts to disseminate Town Council agendas and supporting documents before its meetings. This is important in order that you can receive informed comments and suggestions at your meetings. We also find the YouTube recordings of the Council's meetings to be very valuable, particularly as we try to disseminate information about Council's decisions to those who want to know about them but aren't available to attend an entire meeting or listen to a lengthy video. With this history, we were very disappointed that the listen only budget workshop on May 18 was not made available on the Town YouTube channel. Don't know why wasn't and when I contacted the Mayor, he was surprised also. It did leave certain questions open that would be natural to have answered during the work session. And we had a board member there who did pass along some information that came out, so we had that. I'll just conclude by saying that I hope we won't have comments that you all have already talked about that we don't have the ability to avoid repeating and we really do appreciate those YouTube broadcast and encourage you to do them in the future. I'm not sure that the 12 - 7 walk in thing about the comprehensive plan is going to lend itself to YouTubing. But the retreat did, and I'd encourage you to be sure that the man behind the curtain is continuing to operate. Thank you.

Charlie Sellers

Thank you, Ms. Sellers. I'm sorry for the confusion there. A lot of this began, a little history, back pre-COVID. The videos, the recordings and so on and there was some issues during the budget meeting with the recording, but I think the Council as a whole all feels like that it's probably always good to have that available to the citizens. And it should be in the future if I'm not mistaken. So, thank you, Ms. Sellers. All right, moving right along. Okay. Next section is public hearing this is a SUP. It is on the Moody Building. If you would like to speak this is quasi-judicial. So, you will need to go up to Hilari and be sworn in. That is also if the applicant wishes to speak and or any of his or hers associates. And let's see Brian, I guess Brian needs to be sworn in and let's see.

Kevin Rothrock

Yes, Brian does. and anyone who would like to speak on this.

Charlie Sellers

Brian Johnson I'm gonna let you lead this off. We are now in public hearing.

Brian Johnson

Good evening, Mayor and Council. I'm here to present a special use permit number 2023-04 the Moody Building Hotel, which is a new proposed hotel located on Sunset Drive. John Winkler is the applicant; he has requested a special use permit to demolish the Moody Building that is currently there. The address now is 125 Sunset Drive. And the property is approximately .58 acres and is located in the water supply watershed. The applicant's proposing to demo the existing Moody Building furniture warehouse that was previously approved, I believe in 2019 under a previous conditional permit. Basically, the parking lot will remain as it is, the big change will be the removal, demo of the existing building and construction of the hotel. Basically, in the same footprint that's there now. A few other minor things, you can refer to the site plan up here for the proposed building. The applicant is proposing also to remove the dumpster screen, which is in the rear here now. He is proposing just rollouts with a smaller concrete pad for those. Those will be screened. One note on the plan, John is proposing to add some variation to the front of the building here. Typically, in central business, we have a 15-foot setback. We do have a provision ordinance that allows you to encroach into that 15-foot setback. However, you can't go past the 10-foot setback here, but to compensate for that and to allow that, he does have to move this part here and increase the required space there. Their thoughts, in conversations with John, was if you are coming down Sunset was to have more of an open space, a little green space plaza as you go down Sunset. Required parking, the hotel requires 18 parking spaces, that is one parking space per hotel room. Right now, there are 27 existing spaces. There is part of that right now there is a parking space back here that will be removed. John's parking is contained here now, this area will be reconfigured to accommodate handicapped spaces, down there now, a handicap comes up there to the side of the building was obviously elevated at some point, but everything will be accessed from the accessibility standpoint through the back of the building there now. Stormwater, there was a stormwater system put in at the time and the Moody Building renovation that's remaining as is. Jason, the engineer, has basically left the impervious area the same as previous so there was no additional requirement for that, but the existing detention will remain. Actually, there's a little bit more extra landscaping now with it. There's a render up here. The proposed hotel is going to

feature obviously, cultured stone down at the bottom here. Vertical board and batten, wood bracing, Douglas Fir columns and there will be some black metal railings here. We've had some discussion with John and his architect about maybe adding a little bit more color to that. So that's something we can work out through the process. Top of the roof is proposed at 30 foot which is within the ordinance limits. One thing we do need to bring up, that wasn't on the proposed special use permit that's in there. On the previous approved Moody Building, there was a commitment from that applicant at the time to reserve three spaces for the public there. I believe the one was one that was back here. And there was a couple here that was signed. Obviously, with no one there, it's been used as public parking since it's been built, but John, I think is requesting to forego those three spaces. That is your decision to approve or disapprove that, but you can have discussion with John on why he is wanting to forgo those. The other thing I'd like to point out, we may add a condition to the special use permit, for when you approve that, is this variation of this, staff feels like we should probably make a motion to approve that variation out front, the front setback where it's been setback and adding a green space there and I can read you that section. When you get to that point, on that requirement there. Maybe a little bit more history, the three parking spaces that was committed by the applicant previously was because when the project was proposed, this was the access in, and they lost those three spaces right there in the front. There are still two, these two exist in there now. That's why those were removed from the access and that's why the commitment was there for the previous permit. That's all I've got any questions.

Charlie Sellers
Council?

Pete Gherini

Brian, you and I had talked about the alleyway that leads to the back and to Steve Hetherington's project. Do you want to just go over that and explain for the record what we discussed.

Brian Johnson

So, the vacant lot up in this area here on John's property here, there's an existing easement that was dedicated on the property for access to that, it's a ten-foot easement. There's also a five-foot easement on this side here with the other two properties, it's a total of 15 feet. That is the access for that property. We don't know what's happening with that property yet, so we can't speculate, but that's their main ingress and egress for that property.

Pete Gherini

So, we're not talking about coming in on Main Street.

Brian Johnson

I think we would deter coming off Main Street.

Charlie Sellers

So, in other words the owner has access to that easement is that correct?

Brian Johnson

Yeah, 15-foot easement right. This right now as existing with the patio that is there is on the property line, encroaching the property. That will actually be removed, and this will be a landscape buffer there now. So, it will open that up the actual access is 15 feet.

Charlie Sellers

A 15-foot easement is only gonna allow one automobile Correct?

Brian Johnson

Yes.

Charlie Sellers

One way.

Brian Johnson

We will have to cross that bridge when that project comes through.

David Harwood

Can you tell me about mechanical equipment, where that's going to be located?

Brian Johnson

My understanding it's on the roof. This is not a true sloped roof.

David Harwood

Similar to what you did at the Getaway?

John Winkler

There will be a place just like we did at the Manor.

David Harwood

So am I correct in that our minimum roof slope per code is 6 and 12. This would require a variance.

Brian Johnson

Yeah, I think we would need to again, part of the original condition is five and a half.

David Harwood

Okay. And I just have one more question. We've got two elevations one shows grills in the windows like this and the other one doesn't. And I don't know if that's a resolution issue with the print we got.

John Winkler

That was one of the first ones we turned in before we had this one done.

David Harwood

So, we do have segmented mullions like this or we don't?

Kevin Rothrock

Yes, that shows this, same thing.

David Harwood

Okay.

Kevin Rothrock

Not just plain glass, more residential stuff.

David Harwood

Okay, that's all I had.

Doug Matheson

My question is probably for John. I know that the Planning Board had talked about dressing up or changing that back just a little bit, because it looked so plain jane.

Brian Johnson

That was discussed at Planning Board and I think they recommended adding some features there as well.

John Winkler

We were just starting our room design at the time, and we weren't sure where to put them, but we do know now.

Brian Johnson

Planning Board's consideration was that's fairly visible back there, so they had concerns with that.

Pete Gherini

Brian, no problems with fire access, getting trucks in and stuff like that and two where's the fire hydrant?

Brian Johnson

I think they'll all be access right here, but no access issues there.

Charlie Sellers

But it's required to be sprinkled right? So it's up to the Fire Department?

John Winkler

It is a sprinkler system.

Doug Matheson

I make a motion to move it to public hearing.

Charlie Sellers

Do we have a second?

Pete Gherini

Second.

All

All in favor.

Charlie Sellers

Okay. John, would you like to speak on this or?

John Winkler

I do have one comment and the reason we're keeping the same footprint, is because we will have very little grading work to do that way. The lot won't be torn all to pieces with mud out in the road. We'll just tear down the whole building and start at the foundation right in there. So, it probably wouldn't take over a week of grading. And so, it wouldn't be detrimental for the town during construction. Of course, there will be trucks in and out hauling materials. But other than that, it should be a pretty low-key project.

Doug Matheson

When do you plan to start it?

John Winkler

Oh, it will probably be early fall. I have got to get my plans turned in, it will be a while.

Doug Matheson

Are you gonna leave the parking open the way it is now?

John Winkler

After I own it, I will not because there's too much liability. I mean if somebody gets hurt or it's another car in there. I'm gonna have to block it off. Or we thought about maybe having someone patrolling and rent it out for a while, but I'm not sure how viable that'll be. And I don't want to forecast that yet. We just kind of have to wait and see. I hadn't really thought about that much until if I do get approved, I will cross that bridge then. I will work with the town and see if there's something we can do for a couple of months, you know to help the parking in the summer. But I don't know, it's probably a legal question, but we might be able to lease it the Town during that period of time and let him use it for parking or something like that. I just don't want to be liable for anybody to get hurt in there or anything like that.

Charlie Sellers

You know, one thing I would say, a valet service would lease that from you on a short-term basis. And they would have to carry the liability insurance would they not Allen? Just a thought?

John Winkler

As long as you know, I wouldn't be liable. I do have to keep those six spaces of Mr. Lovern's open. I'll have to leave that open the whole time. And if I do close it off, I'll close it off after that. That's just one of the requirements he had in settling the property.

Doug Matheson

They will remain open all the time for him even after the motels built.

John Winkler

Yeah. And on you all's parking, I had nothing to do with that. And I don't think it's my responsibility to furnish Town parking and if I understand the bargain, I don't know how we would monitor it anyway. I don't know how we would enforce it and not get it all mixed up with my business, you know, that would be an impossible task.

Charlie Sellers

And that's why I suggest you could do a short-term rental of it.

John Winkler

And another this is off the subject, well it's not off the subject, but off the property. I talked to Kevin, the old piece of property ya'll have behind this piece behind the bank. I was down there with my surveyor one day, and I figured you a way to fit 13 more parking spaces down there and re-stripe it. And that would be a big deal if you ever want to go down there.

Charlie Sellers

Let's take a look at that Kevin.

Kevin Rothrock

Ok I will make a side note.

Charlie Sellers

Any more questions for Mr. Winkler? Thank you, Mr. Winkler.

John Winkler

Yes, sir.

Charlie Sellers

Yes sir. Would you please step up here to the microphone and state your name and your address please.

Dale Howard

I'm Dale Howard, I am a lawyer, my office is over in Boone. I happen to live in Blowing Rock. But I'm here I represent the owner of the property currently, RWL 1, LLC. And I wanted to make sure number one; this is a presentation and representation by John Winkler, the buyer of our property, not my client, RWL 1, LLC. Number two, John already mentioned, the fact that there are six spaces specifically reserved for RWL 1, LLC. They are the first six spaces starting at sunset. We have details to work out

on future use of those other than the fact that it is reserved for us. So, I wanted to make sure that the presentation included those spaces that is why I came. All right. Thank you.

Charlie Sellers

Thank you, sir.

Allen Moseley

So, question related to that.

Charlie Sellers

Okay, what does that Allen?

Allen Moseley

So if there's going to be six spaces reserved for the current owner when he sells the property, I'm assuming there's going to be some reference in our permanent as to that. And those six spaces are going to be shown on a map that gets recorded in the Register of Deeds office.

David Harwood

I wouldn't think so.

Allen Moseley

Well, so we're acknowledging that we're approving a site plan. In the site plan that's presumably going to show which spaces there are from the Town's perspective, improving the site plan.

David Harwood

But they only have to have 18.

Allen Moseley

Understood.

David Harwood

And that seems to me, that's a private deal between Mr. Lovern and Mr. Winkler.

Charlie Sellers

We're approving it contingent on that as well though.

David Harwood

But we don't have to approve it contingent on that. I mean, you're the attorney.

Allen Moseley

I think just a paragraph in the permanent that just addresses that fact. So I understand what you're saying that it only requires 18 spaces, but at the same time, a short paragraph that just references that. My assumption is that when the closing takes place, your client is going to delineate the location of those spaces in some form or fashion.

Charlie Sellers

Would it be a part of the deed?

Allen Moseley

Sure. I would think there would be a map that would be recorded that would locate those parking spaces.

Dale Howard

I have one question. You made a response to the inquiry about the alleyway. Am I correct that this property currently shows that this is the boundary line for the property?

John Winkler

No, Jeff looked at that and they left you a message. That lot with that alleyway is one deed, we have that deed. So, we're buying all that. That corner goes just like it shows you right there. We used this survey.

Dale Howard

All I am saying is that representation is by Mr. Winkler and not by the current owner of the property, period, thank you.

Charlie Sellers

Council questions for Brian.

David Harwood

Kevin, you might have to chime in on this. But if I remember when we issued, I don't know if it's was a CUP or a SUP at that time to Mr. Lovern.

Kevin Rothrock

A CUP.

David Harwood

The CUP. The three spaces that were for Town public use, were a result of us losing spaces for the driveway, correct.

Kevin Rothrock

That's right.

David Harwood

I never felt like that was enforceable or we should have done that. But I know that was the wish of the Council at that time. And so part of this would be the release, is that the right word.

Kevin Rothrock

I think that is fair.

Albert Yount

That is a variance, is it not?

Brian Johnson

No, I think you just approve it in your condition for approval.

Doug Matheson

Now the alleyway will always have to be kept open because the right of way for that back property back there.

Brian Johnson

I did read through those deeds today and say it has to remain open for that property.

Doug Matheson

That's been there for so long, I've been through that.

Pete Gherini

To Allen's point and to Dale's point, I think there needs to be language in there about these six parking places. So, there's no confusion moving forward or in the future about what's intended. So, Brian how that gets put in there. I think it's important to have it in there.

Charlie Sellers

I got a question. The three the Town required, are those part of the six?

Brian Johnson

No.

Charlie Sellers

They are not, so it's a total of nine spaces right now.

Brian Johnson

18 for the hotel which is adequate for his use.

Charlie Sellers

Yeah.

Brian Johnson

I think that will leave John, a couple extra over 18.

Charlie Sellers

Did we have some of the public that would like to speak further? Do I have a motion to close the public hearing.

Pete Gherini

So, moved.

Charlie Sellers

Do I have a second?

Doug Matheson

Second.

Charlie Sellers

Additional discussion Council? Thoughts, motion?

Pete Gherini

I'll make a motion to approve with the two variances that I stated. And the parking.

Charlie Sellers

So, you're making a motion to approve the two variances one and two what were which?

Brian Johnson

Number one for the increased encroachment into the setback, for the increased setback of the building for more green space, open space, second was for the roof pitch, five and a half instead of six.

Charlie Sellers

Last is a condition of which is relinquishing the three parking spaces the Town originally requested on the first CUP. Okay, we have a first, do we have second?

Albert Yount

Second.

Charlie Sellers

Okay, any further discussion? How do you vote Council?

Albert Yount

Well, based on my knowledge of the strength of the Winkler organization, and their knowledge and adherence to the building theory of scale I vote yes.

David Harwood

I vote yes. It's nice to see an underutilized building being utilized. Thank you.

Melissa Pickett

Yes.

Doug Matheson

Yes.

Pete Gherini

Yes. And because of what Albert said, John has proven in the past that he has done really good projects, and he likes to see Blowing Rock prosper. And so, he's the perfect person to do it. So, I vote yes.

Charlie Sellers

I will say something Council. I think the Winkler's have done an excellent job, along with the other builders in Town. But gosh, I wish we could find some more restaurants to move into Town. Moving right along. Now this next section is the public hearing for the 23-24 budget. I'm going to defer to Mr. Kevin Rothrock. Now you do not have to be sworn in for this particular public hearing. And you will be able to speak once we are open for the public hearing after Mr. Rothrock presents the budget.

Kevin Rothrock

Okay, thank you, Mayor, and Council. I'm gonna give a brief update. As you know, we had a budget workshop back in May. And the feeling of the Council at that time was to move forward with the proposed budget, Fiscal Year 2023-2024 recommended budget, total of \$16.8 million for all Town operations, capital improvements and debt service requirements. This increase of \$1.1 million dollars over the last year's budget is a 7.14% increase. The increase is mainly due to salary increases with both a cola and a subsequent merit system to be effective in January. Final issuance of our GO bond debt. Additional fire positions, three positions for fire, two positions for the Blowing Rock Academy daycare. And also, other property purchased debt service. The recommended increase to the tax rate is two cents, from .37 cents to .39 cents. Nicole Norman is going to give us some more details briefly from a power point presentation she's put together to give some more highlights, and then turn it over for the public hearing.

Charlie Sellers

Thank you, Ms. Norman.

Nicole Norman

Good evening. As Kevin said, we had our budget work session where we went over the budget in great detail. I'm going to give a little bit more of an overview here as to the FY 23-24 recommended budget. So, we are familiar with our general fund revenues. These are our major sources as of revenue for the general fund, we look at property tax, sales tax, occupancy tax, as well as the category of other revenues, which includes debt proceeds, and as well as sales and services, from programs such as recycling, parks and rec programs, and permits and fees. So, we are looking at our pie chart that kind of gives a visual of those different revenue sources. So, you can see your property tax makes up 46% of our total budget. Number two is going to be sales tax at 22%. And the third highest is occupancy tax at 15%. With the fourth highest other revenues of 9%. As I said, that is comprised of debt proceeds and sales and service revenues. So, looking at our property taxes, the Town of Blowing Rock experienced minimal average tax base growth this year, only realizing .4% of average tax base growth. The recommended tax rate does recommend a two-cent increase from our current .37 cent rate to .39. And the value of a penny this year is calculated at \$164,742. That's up about \$1,900 from the value of a penny during this current fiscal year of \$162,766. So, this is a look at our 15 year tax base trend. So,

you can see the current year, FY 23-24 is projected at about .4% growth. Whereas last year during the revaluation, we experienced 35.4% growth. And you can see prior to that revaluation over the past 14 years, that was historically high growth within that time period. This year, we kind of inquired as to the minimal growth, because we know that there are some properties that have come on the tax scrolls. And what we discovered was that there were a large number of appeals to this revaluation. So basically, our regular growth that we would experience was offset by those appeals that were granted. So, Watauga County for Blowing Rock granted about \$15.3 million in appeals. So that's how we ended up with .4% growth. This is a look at our tax rate comparison. So, Beach Mountain, Seven Devils Boone and then Blowing Rock, that is through fiscal year 22-23. That's our current tax year. And just kind of a look at where Blowing Rock compares to the surrounding area tax rate wise. This is also a look at the value of a penny and how that has trended again over a 15-year period. You can see the small amount of growth here. And again, the revaluation that happened during fiscal year 22-23. grew the value of a penny for us. Moving onto sales taxes is our second highest revenue source for the general fund. This makes up about 22% of our general fund revenue. So, sales tax currently is estimated to come in at the end of this fiscal year at about 15% up compared to last fiscal year. And looking at collections through March, we're about 20% up which is great. However, economists are forecasting some decline towards the end of this calendar year and early calendar year 2024. So, we do expect this to slow down some, so therefore we are budgeting 6% growth in our sales tax for next year over this year. This is a look at our sales tax and then the differential there. Our sales tax is distributed utilizing the ad valorem method. And so, we always kind of like to keep track of the difference, because we were previously under the per capita method, so we continue to track that and kind of see where we are under the new method of distribution. So, during the current fiscal year, we expect to collect a net of about \$600,000. Over the per capita method. And that is net of the feedback to Watauga County. So, looking at the budget, I mentioned a 6% increase for our budget. And so, we're looking at a net budget wise of approximately \$632,000. And again, that is net of the 70% return to Watauga County on that distribution method. Looking at occupancy taxes is our third highest revenue source for the general fund. This is 15% of total general fund revenue for the town. So, we are budgeting 15%. Down, this was a discussion with the TDA board. And from kind of looking at where things are coming in, right now, we are currently down four and a half percent for the fiscal year with a march coming in 10%. Down. We do have April numbers now, and April came in 15%. down so the TDA is taking measures to prepare for that with their decrease and budget for occupancy tax. Okay, this is a look at the allocations of occupancy tax funds to the town. These are initiatives that the TDA contributes to. We have things such as a park restroom attendant, town landscape, beautification, Christmas decorations, sidewalk maintenance, street maintenance, they pay half the cost of the landscaping, out on 321. And you can see the full list here, I will mention that there is a change, there was a change. So, the TDA has since adopted their budget, and they did make an adjustment that will flow over to the Town side. And that's going to be this overhead cost right there that the TDA did vote to decrease that. So, the difference is \$34,932, which is a change from our budget work session that is now to be covered, we proposed, through fund balance, a one-time allocation for fund balance. The other change will be to the BRAHM parking facility loan payment. That payment has since been paid off. So, we will need to redirect those funds towards another initiative. And that is that can be amended, you know once a redirect is determined. Moving on now to our general fund expenditures. So general fund expenditures totaled \$14 million. And this is just a breakdown of the departments within this 14 million and how the budget is allocated. So, you can see central government makes up 30% You can

just kind of look around at the percent of the pie that the departments represent the street department as well. Police Department 16 The only things that I will point out as new initiatives or changes here that they kind of standout is that we did have some departmental breakouts and one new department. So, we have our board rock Academy, new department here, landscape was just a breakout from Parks and Recreation. And then it was working out from central government. So otherwise, our departmental makeup remains the same. Okay, this is an overview of subsections of the budget we have personnel up here and that had a decrease at 14%. This column represents the change in these different categories of personnel, operating and maintenance capital and other is transfers as well as debt service in our total so total budget increased 7% for the general fund. And you can see our percentage changes in the area breakdown. Okay, the proposed personnel and salary changes in the budget are a compressive of 5% cost of living or a COLA increase for full time town employees as well as up to a 4% merit pay available for each employee. So, the town is pursuing In America, we're interested in pursuing a merit system for our town employees, where they would have the ability after having a evaluation with their supervisor of up to 4% merit pay. There are five new positions within the recommended budget, three of which are fire or EMT positions, two of which are for Blowing Rock Academy staff, the director, and the teacher. This is a listing of the general fund capital equipment and vehicles that are proposed for fiscal year 20 to 23. So, the total is \$530,477,075. We are replacing several vehicles with used options. Just where we know that a vehicle has less use, we've decided to propose a used vehicle in those areas. And there are there will be a rehab of the current communication building of a Green Hill. There's a portion of the general fund and a portion being paid for the water sewer fund because those radios that operate on that equipment serve both funds for us several portable radio replacements as well as an electric motor. Okay, looking at BRAC brackets a separate fund for us. Their budget did not change much this year, it only increased about \$500 or 2%. And that was actually all in printing costs. So, Brad contributes towards landscape and beautification of public property, the downtown hanging baskets, as well as the town cleanup day and playing today. And landscaping beautification needs of the town. The water sewer fund, we are going to look at our water charges, sewer charges, as well as other revenues that are comprised of debt proceeds, as well as collection. Okay, this is our water sewer fund revenue and breakdown. So, we have 48% Water targets and 42% sewer targets. The primary funding source in our water sewer fund our impact water and sewer targets, and that is how the state of North Carolina local government commission actually requires us to operate. So, we are in year three of our rate and revenue recovery plan. Three years ago, actually probably four or five years ago, we sat down and met with the state of North Carolina Water Association. And they assisted us with kind of analyzing our rates that were in place and determining what kind of rates we would need in order to fund our system and find anything that we could see in the foreseeable future. So, from that we have developed a five-year plan. We are on year three of this plan. And while year three expected a two and a half percent increase, we actually were in need of a three and a half percent rate increase to fund the FY 2324 budget. So, if you're curious what that means for anybody paying a water sewer bill, we calculated some averages the difference between a two and a half percent rate increase in a three and a half percent rate increase for a 5000-gallon customer is about \$4.56 in a year. Whereas if you're a 10,000-gallon customer it's \$7.56. So, we were cognizant of the impact of that okay, looking on the expenditure side of the water Superfund we have three There we go. We have three major departments within the water sewer fund we have field operations, plant operations in administration or billing. And you can see the breakout here 36% Is plant alterations 25% of Field Operations 39% is admin and billing. There are not a lot of changes happening

in the water sewer fund. We continue to fund our we call it internally our AMI meter change out program throughout the town. So that is already funded in starting actually. So, this is a listing of any capital and vehicles within the water sewer fund. So, you can see our portion of the communication, building rehab in the water sewer fund as well as a grandfather lift station rehab, a vehicle trailer, as well as portable radios and chargers. And that is it. I have nothing else. I don't know if you have any questions.

Charlie Sellers

Council do you have any questions?

David Harwood

Can you enlighten me a little bit about the \$83,200. So that was we paid off the BRAHM parking deck.

Nicole Norman

Yes.

David Harwood

Okay. So, we have budgeted to do that, but it's paid off in this fiscal year.

Nicole Norman

Yes, it was just paid off this month.

David Harwood

Okay, so what are we what are we backfilling with that? Are we going to escrow it? I'm sorry, so the payments that would have gone to that.

Nicole Norman

So, these allocations from the TDA, like the \$83,000 annual debt service payment. There has not been a decision made. So that is, is sitting there still under that purpose until a reallocation is made. So, it's just really all finished up.

Charlie Sellers

And that has to be done by TDA. Correct?

Nicole Norman

Yes. You know, the Town can identify a project that they would like to request the funds to be allocated towards, and they can by all means make that request to the TDA. Because I know the TDA always wants to help on things that you know the Town and TDA are a partnership with.

David Harwood

Thank you.

Nicole Norman

Sure.

Charlie Sellers

Thank you, Nicole. Good Job. Do I have a motion to open the public hearing?

Doug Matheson

So, moved.

David Harwood

Second.

All

All in favor.

Charlie Sellers

All right, we're now open for public comments. Yes, ma'am if you want to step up and state your name and address.

Jean Kitchen

Mayor Sellers, Council Members, Interim Town Manager Rothrock. My name is Jean Kitchen, and our address is 783 Wonderland Trail. I'm the chair of the Blowing Rock Civic Association. And these comments are from our organization. They're not about what's in the recommended budget that we just heard, but rather what is not in the budget in 2022 and again in 2023. The Blowing Rock Civic Association has conducted surveys regarding issues of concern to the residents who live here, many of whom are registered voters, both last year and this year. A top issue for those who registered their views is the need for improved ambulance service for Blowing Rock. The failure of service levels to reach national standards, which was nine minutes, get there in nine minutes and 90% of the time was highlighted by Chief Graham, at the Town Council's annual retreat earlier this year. The EMS 24/7 transport was one of four long term goals and objectives set by the Council at the conclusion of the 2023 retreat. Efforts have been made for years to come to a negotiated solution to this problem with Watauga County. But still nothing is happening. If Congress can negotiate a compromise on the debt ceiling it seems like Blowing Rock and Watauga County could do it especially on a clear health and safety issue like this. The proposed budget appears to include approximately \$221,000 for new fire EMS personnel at the fire station offset by reduced part time and overtime pay and benefits of \$71,000. This on page 103 of the Council meeting materials. No explanation of the change in personnel approach was provided in the staff report but we think it's related to EMS 24/7 transport; we have to wonder the net increase of \$150,000 and Fire and EMS personnel expenses couldn't be a good start to solving the ambulance issue. Time is short to complete negotiations within the County in the context of currently proposed budget but given the importance of this life and death issue, we urge you to consider setting up a reserve for this purpose or planning for a budget amendment earlier in the new fiscal year. While BRCA isn't in a position to commit private dollars to help achieve the desired outcome, we have strong reason to believe there are individuals in the community who may be willing to do that and could work with Town staff to make connections that would be appropriate. Another comment on the proposed budget personnel expenses, salary and benefits represents 43% of the recommended operating budget. Substantial pay increases are included in the budget both 5% Cola and potentially 4% merit increases in mid-year. When one looks at the COLA for Raleigh and Charlotte.

I checked it, Googled it, and it's 1.9% Cola. The staff's budget message states as follows on page 6 of 18, which is page 69 of your materials, a contributing factor to the Town's organization's financial picture relates to its organizational structure, and personnel costs supporting such an organization. There needs to be a balance on the town's ability to retain and recruit quality employees in comparison to being competitive with the surrounding labor market. It is understood that the last time the town fully assessed its organization and conducted and implemented a related classification and pay study was in 2014, which is approximately nine years ago. This is something that may be considered during the FY 24-25 budget process. Being then it would be 10 years since the last study at that time. During the time between pay studies, organizations typically change, and new positions are added as we saw like with the academy and changed over time. So cyclical pay studies can assist in keeping pay rates in line with the overall structure and ward off compression issues. BRCA doesn't have position on the specific compensation proposed in the budget. But we do believe in fiscal responsibility. We urge you as our Council to use third party reviews as recommended by Town staff to determine whether our staffing levels and compensation programs are in line with other jurisdictions and to the extent comparable with the private sector in the area. The final topic I'd like to call your attention it's in the budget report is appendix five the capital improvements plan for the 10-year period 2021 through 2031. It's appendix five in your materials. The total amount for parks and recreation, water and wastewater streets, stormwater, sidewalk was originally \$49,167,500 through the upcoming year 2023 through 2024, \$12,122,413 is taken care of leaving \$37,045,087 of the 10-year CIP. However, these plans date back nearly 10 years updated annually since then. The staff has stated the following budget message in your meeting materials. A pressing expenditure for the Town of Blowing Rock in the coming years relates to the development of a capital improvement plan. The Town's engineering firm McGill Associates assisted the Town staff and the development of a 10-year capital improvements plan during fiscal year 2013-2014. The CIP identified a variety of improvements throughout the Town, including public facilities, parks and recreation, roads, sidewalks, roadside ditches and water and sewer lines and plants. It is adopted that on an annual basis the Town should reassess its capital improvement plan and incorporate necessary revisions for the future budget planning. Conducting a complete water and wastewater utility Asset Management inventory program could be very helpful when developing realistic Capital Improvement Plans. Consistent with our desire for fiscal responsibility and our belief that repairing replacing and maintaining the Town's aging infrastructure should be a priority given its essential nature. We see the staff's recommendation for a current water and sewer assessment as both reasonable and necessary. With a realistic CIP covering and the Town can then also consider how best to plan for its wants. Thank you for the opportunity to make these comments. I'd like to add one thing on a personal note. I want to really thank ya'll for the physical respect and responsibility you showed to the citizens of this Town, by not approving the underground utility project. I hope as you look at the dollars, the public offers, you view them like you view your family budget. Because those dollars come straight out of people's family budgets. And I talked to somebody after the last meeting, she said with her revaluation, her property taxes are going up 60%. And she's having to go back to work and leave young children and get daycare for them because of that. Now every time you go up, it's based on the new evaluations. So, it impacts people more. So, thank you very much for your respect and responsibility for that.

Charlie Sellers

Thank you, Ms. Kitchen. Do we have any other citizens that would like to speak on the proposed budget? Do I have a motion to close the public hearing?

Albert Yount

So moved.

Charlie Sellers

Do I have a second?

Melissa Pickett

Second.

All

All in favor

Charlie Sellers

Any additional discussion Council? Any questions for our Interim Town Manager or Nicole?

Albert Yount

I don't have a question, but I do want to say one thing. No one anywhere take this as a criticism of the County Commissioners. They have their job; we have our job. They have said no basically to full-time ambulance service. But they wanted to give it to us for \$250,000, half a million dollars. We elected not to do that. And in the meantime, things are growing here and bubbling here. And the Fire Department and the Rescue are having a lot more redundancy in their calls. That means two and three at a time, that didn't use to ever happen. So, the Commissioners, as I say, have their job and we have ours. What is left to us but hire some additional people to come to your house if you have a heart attack. And we don't have an ambulance. The first four to seven minutes are the most critical. That's why I support hiring those people. Now Doug and I started off with the Commissioners when Doug? A long time ago we had one Commissioner that was in favor of this, and he elected not to run anymore. And it's become apparent to me that the only thing we can do is take care of ourselves and our people. And that involves having these new EMTs and Firefighters. So that's how I explain why we are hiring three new additional people. I am totally in favor of that.

Charlie Sellers

Doug, you were on the Fire Department for many years. Just one paragraph. Would you explain once again, to our citizens, the importance of the first responders in addition to transport. Reason being, we're hiring three new EMTs. And that is like Albert was saying for the safety of our citizens.

Doug Matheson

Kent is having to deal right now with a lot of calls that are very close to each other, which is tying up more and more of our people. As Albert said the quickest response especially when you're having a heart attack is to get there, get you stabilized. Our guys are very proud, our chief is very proud he has one of the best departments in the state. Our size we probably have more paramedics than anybody. And with the addition of these Firefighters/EMTs that's coming on. It will give us a greater chance when

we do have calls or when the chief has calls back-to-back when they're out on one and then all of a sudden here the alarm goes again and you have more people to move up, fill in, move up, fill. So, this is at least a step in the direction that we're trying to achieve that doesn't mean that we've given up on the County 24/7 service. We haven't given up on that.

Charlie Sellers

As Doug did say, the 24/7 transport is yes, something we definitely need. And I think all the Council agrees with that as many of the citizens, it's definitely needed. But first and foremost, we got to make sure that our first responders get there, stabilize and then transport from that point. So, thank you, Doug. Thank you, Albert. Any other thoughts Council? Anyone want to make a motion?

David Harwood

I'll make a motion to approve the budget as presented.

Albert Yount

Second.

Charlie Sellers

Okay, we have a first and a second, any additional discussion? How do you vote?

All

All in favor of the motion.

Charlie Sellers

Moving right along, Planning Board recommendation. Kevin.

Kevin Rothrock

Planning Board Member Sam Hess recently submitted his resignation from the board. He had family and work obligations that didn't provide him with enough time to serve like he wanted to. To that end, there's a seat available on the Planning Board. Just a few months after we got started with a new group. Brooks Mason had applied to serve on the Planning Board but was appointed in February to serve as an alternate on the Board of Adjustment. Larry Armor and Charles Gilliam also applied to serve on the Planning Board, Larry received a vote during the February meeting to serve but was not appointed. Mr. Mason can be appointed to fill the vacant seat on Planning Board and Larry Armor, the next highest vote getter, can be appointed to Board of Adjustment, both have agreed to this scenario, if it would please the Council. If you want to move forward, that will take a vote of the Council tonight.

Doug Matheson

You've talked all these and everybody's in agreement.

Kevin Rothrock

Yes sir.

Charlie Sellers

So, we have Mr. Mason in attendance, is Larry Armor here or Charles Gilliam?

Kevin Rothrock

I don't think so. I have spoken with Mr. Armor, but I don't think he's here.

Charlie Sellers

Okay. What do you thank Council? Would you like to make a motion?

David Harwood

I would be very pleased to go with the recommendation that you've made. I think that we had all stated that we liked the idea of the highest vote getter moving into that role. I make a motion to accept your recommendation to put Brooks Mason in the vacant Planning Board seat and Larry Armor in the Board of Adjustment seat.

Doug Matheson

Second.

Charlie Sellers

I have a first and a second. How do you all vote?

All

All in favor of the motion.

Charlie Sellers

Thank you for volunteering your time. I'm so pleased that so many citizens do jump up to the plate that says a lot about our community. So thank you.

Charlie Sellers

All right, audit contract 2023 Ms. Norman.

Nicole Norman

So, this is the audit contract for the fiscal year 2023 audit. The fee proposed is \$26,500 and this is no increase over last year. This is year two with Thompson Price Scott Adams and Company PA. And you know, we were pleased with our audit services last year. So this is up for your approval.

Doug Matheson

You were satisfied with them?

Nicole Norman

Yes.

Charlie Sellers

That's the main thing.

Nicole Norman

Yes.

David Harwood

Are we year to year?

Nicole Norman

We aren't technically year to year. However, we do intend we kind of set our commitment last year to do a three-year cycle. And I do recommend going into a good cycle with your auditors because it just takes so much when you change. So, I'm in full support of sticking with this company.

Charlie Sellers

Council?

Pete Gherini

Nicole, how have you been working with these people? Good report, things getting done when they are supposed to get done and so on?

Nicole Norman

Yes, we are already starting dialog for the upcoming audit. Last year was our first year with them, so year one is always you are trying to learn their ways and you are trying to learn their ways. It can be a rocky process, but we found them good to work with and I think they found us good to work with as well. So it was a good fit.

Doug Matheson

I make a motion to approve.

Melissa Pickett

Second.

Charlie Sellers

Any further discussion? How do you vote?

All

All in favor.

Charlie Sellers

Moving along to Gardener's Gallery, the addition to their SUP. Mr. Brian Johnson

Brian Johnson

We have a request for a modification to special use permit 2023-03 which is a minor modification to the Gardener's Gallery and BR Farmer's Market, which you heard last month. The applicant is back in front of us tonight for a minor modification. The Farmers Market I think has been popular with a lot of interest. So, they're back tonight to request additional vendors to be able to be on site. The previous

special use permit that was approved last month allowed up to 80 vendors. What was approved last month was having the vendors on this side here. They're requesting four additional vendors to be able to access as well and they're looking at this site here I think with all the activity, what they are requesting is an additional four vendors which will bring it to a total of 12 and completely close the parking lot to allow for that and probably allow for safety reasons as well. Previously there was 23 spaces needed with the increased area for the farmers market it required one additional space. They have secured a parking agreement with First Baptist Church that has been secured and they're fine with it. So the gravel area beside it will adequately accommodate all those spaces. Staff has requested and recommended that there be one handicap space here that remain open or be accessible during this for accessibility. I think the agreement is they will have someone on hand and if someone needs to park there for ADA accessibility then they will park there. I think they've had two or three farmers markets now, no issues. Any questions you have?

Doug Matheson

I think it's great to see it growing, very good.

Pete Gherini

I think John and Jill have done a great job. And the response from people down there is, is really very good. Parking on a full day is a little challenging, but it's well done. And I think adding these extra slots will even enhance it even more. So, I'll make a motion to approve.

David Harwood

Second.

Charlie Sellers

Further discussion? How do you vote?

All

All in favor.

Charlie Sellers

I have a few comments. Once again, thank you for those that attended this evening. Thank you for those who are viewing outside of the building. And Jerry burns day is Sunday. Jerry Burns was the driving force for the Blowing Rocket and did a lot for our community, volunteered for a lot of different things. His birthday will be celebrated at the Legion Hall on the 18th. In addition, they're celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Horse Show and the 100th anniversary of the library. And then, the 4th of July will be celebrated in our Town on Saturday July 1st. The parade starts at 10 am and we will have festivities all around town. That's all I have.

Albert Yount

I've actually noticed a reduction in speeding on the bypass. So, it must have something to do with the enforcement that we'd have beefed up. Everybody should be aware that.

David Harwood

I want to first say thank you to Ms. Norman and all the Department Heads for all their hard work on the budget. Really good job, thank you so much. And welcome Mr. Rothrock into the Interim Manager position. It's nice to see you moved from there to here. So thank you very much for stepping up and agreeing to do that and I look forward to working with you in that capacity.

Doug Matheson

Just for FYI, the new County Parks and Rec director has stepped down, so we have an Interim Parks and Rec Director at the County, Karen Poteat. The short-term rental, ETJ passed the Senate with just a few modifications, which did not pertain to us. There's 50,000 and under is still left under control of the state or we'll lose our control of the ETJ and short term. So if anybody knows anybody that they can talk to, Ray said that it was in the house now and he said he would do all he could do. Last be on the lookout this Friday, probably between 9 and 10, Rod Power is coming through Blowing Rock on its way to Bristol and they are estimating up to 6,000 vehicles.

Pete Gherini

A couple of quick things, Charlie, before I get into the main thing that I'm going to talk about, which is temporary food trucks. I want to thank Matt for getting those speed bumps down on Cornish and Clark, have had it from a couple of people that live over in that area that speeding on Cornish has stopped with that speed bump there. Second thing is, as chairman of the Economic Development Commission, I'm in the process of getting with the new school superintendent to welcome her to Watauga County and also asked for her to pursue what the former superintendent said about finding a way to finally pay Blowing Rock for the resource officer. And he made that commitment, I'm just going to ask her to pursue that. Finally, I had called Charlie and said I'd gotten a number of calls, from people talking about the lack of food available with a few places closed and a few in transition. There's definitely a shortage of places to eat. So, Charlie suggested that I get together with Kevin, and Kevin and I talked about it. I also talk with Lee Anne Haley, who has the Egg Rolling truck. She's had that for six years. I've been told that a lot of people are starting to go to West Jefferson, West Jefferson has 21 restaurants on its Main Street. And if we start losing people, you know, could be hard to get them back. But in talking to Lee Anne, she said that she thought the best place for a truck would be next to the Chamber and the Police Department as a way to test the theory and see if it would work. She also said we should just start on a temporary basis, and we should do only one to try it so that we can see if it's going to work not only for the Town, but for the person that's bringing the truck up here. The two big weekends that we should really look at are Fourth of July and Labor Day. Those two big holidays are when there are going to be a lot of people here. And if we don't have restaurant's open, it's going to be a problem. She suggested operating Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 11 to 5. And the main point she made was, you have to make sure that the truck operator has the appropriate insurance. She also gave me a list of people that have those kinds of trucks. I wanted to point it out and you know whether we want to do something about it now or if we want to take it to the summer retreat. Kevin, you'd mentioned if it did move forward, it would probably have to go to the Planning Board and back to the Council to do something, you might want to comment on that.

Kevin Rothrock

That's right, if we're gonna do something that amends the ordinance it would need to go to the Planning Board and then to Council to do it, right. We want to do that. I think there is a need that's been

recognized. How we handle it, we want to be sensitive to those that have restaurants. There's less of those now but be sensitive to how that may affect them and take a lot of information into trying to solve this issue.

Charlie Sellers

This is going to be on the summer retreat. Right. Okay. I have a question. can something be done temporarily without amending the ordinance such as like we allow the Baptist Church to do it on a special occasion.

Kevin Rothrock

Special Events is something where they would be allowed. Not sure what kind of special event would be pinpointed here.

Doug Matheson

4th of July.

Charlie Sellers

4th of July weekend.

Kevin Rothrock

4th of July weekend, sure.

Charlie Sellers

Allen, thoughts?

Allen Moseley

I think if they were just isolated to a special event, it is ok. But you know, in the long run, you need to look at amending the ordinance. We don't address that in the ordinance.

Charlie Sellers

But it would be something that if say the Council wanted to do it this 4ht of July they could.

David Harwood

Can we put this on a different agenda. I feel like we're exceeding our Council comments and we're debating.

Charlie Sellers

That's fine, this is my call. So, it's gonna be on the summer retreat and it'll be there for discussion. And then if Council wishes to go forward with it then so be it. I just had that question for Allen since he was here.

Albert Yount

The Retreat is pretty soon, isn't it? I thought we were going to talk about it then.

Jared Wright

Good evening, Mayor and Council Members. I'll be brief just wanted to give an update on our Main Street infrastructure improvement project. And this is specifically divisions one through three that were previously awarded, the water and sewer and sidewalk improvements. I thought it would be fitting to update Council on the schedule and project sequence since we have moved a little further along in process now. So, we had a good planning session with our contractor, Iron Mountain Construction last week, just to talk about those very things. How to schedule the project, when to start, how to sequence it. So, coming out of that meeting, it looks like in mid-July, we're going to hold a formal pre-construction conference with the contractor and DOT and Town staff will be invited to that. We'll go over the project particulars, and then establish a notice to proceed date of mid-August. And we haven't nailed down on that specifically. But we're going to get past the Fourth of July holiday scheduled to bring on and then first week to second week of August sometime in that timeframe for a notice to proceed. Now when the work starts, it's going to start on the south end of the project near the intersection of Main Street and Hwy 321. The new water line installation, it will move north, we can't really gauge how progress will be a lot of unknowns underground. So, the contractor will commence in that direction working on the North waterline installation until near the Chestnut Drive intersection. That's as far north as as they will come. At that time, we'll find and identify a suitable stopping point and move to the north end of the project either near Chetola or US 221. Start in working either South or North staying out of the downtown core. And we will complete water and sewer on the north end the project. So, at that time, hopefully we've moved into the winter months, we're trying to minimize the impacts the downtown merchants and visitors to downtown. So, during winter, we will focus in the downtown corridor. And that's what's water the remainder of the sewer installation here in downtown, then moving forward into spring of 2024. We'll work on the final section, which will be the sidewalk over in the Hill Street area. And we're putting that off until we get suitable temperature for concrete placement, which hopefully we achieve in early spring.

Pete Gherini

Yes, we are, it's in 2 weeks.

Charlie Sellers

Thank you very much.

Albert Yount

Any night work?

Jared Wright

No, sir. We covered that very topic with the contractor and at this time he's not planning on any night work.

Aaron Miller

Council I was asked at the last meeting to bring back some numbers on some on street parking only enforcement. I apologize I don't have anything on the screen, but.

Charlie Sellers

You will be making the presentation at the summer retreat?

Aaron Miller

Yes.

Charlie Sellers

Okay.

Aaron Miller

I just wanted to pass this out and give you some numbers that you can look over and be digesting between now and retreat. The summary of the numbers is that probably according to our estimations pay to park on street only would probably be able to pay for itself and then have some revenues left over. So, some decisions would have to be made. Whether we wanted to have pay to park on Sundays or leave it as it is Monday through Saturday, Monday through Saturday as it is now we projected that the revenues would be \$335,616 cost \$180,000 and an estimated net leftover of about \$155,000. So, there's some other numbers there that you can look. We can certainly discuss some questions,

Charlie Sellers

Questions? Okay. Thank you, Chief.

David Harwood

Thank you.

Jennifer Brown

Mr. Rothrock asked me to let you guys know that we are in the process of planning our 4th of July Festival and Parade. It's going to be on Saturday July 1. We are taking applicants to be in the parade. If you have a problem with it, just call our office we will be more than happy to help you. But we will start off the morning, we'll have a band in the morning at nine o'clock. The parade will begin at 10 o'clock. There will be no parking on Main Street from 2am until the parade is over which we pretty much have the street cleared off by 11:30. And then we'll have the Cochran Family playing afterwards in the park. We will have park games and then we have our park dance. I will say we have contacted all the food trucks locally to see if they would be able to participate and be in the police station parking lot. A lot of the ones that we've reached out to they already have other events or things that they're going to. So we're figuring out that we've got to start earlier if we want to get some people here but we do have some locals. Blue Deer might be one if they have enough staff, a lot of it is staffing issues too if they have a brick and mortar and a food truck, especially during that weekend. So we are we have reached out and we're contacting and see who we could potentially get

Albert Yount

What time is the parade?

Jennifer Brown

10 o'clock in the morning.

Pete Gherini

Can you give us an update on the childcare center.

Jennifer Brown

So currently, we have an electrician that is supposed to come on Thursday. And once the electrician gets all of the building wired and the lights and stuff fix because we've added a wall to make two rooms. Once he gets that done, then we will come in and sheetrock will be hung. We are in the process of ordering cabinets and sinks. I don't know if you know this but in childcare you have to have an astronomical amount of sinks. One for hand washing, one for diaper changing, one for food prep. So there's a lot of sinks in this building. But we have all of that plumbed so once we get our walls up, our cabinets in, the plumber, will come back and hook everything up. And our goal was July 1st it might be pushed back a little bit because it's been hard getting everyone lined up to come in. Because everybody's so busy.

Kevin Rothrock

Just a few things. First, I want to thank Council and Mayor, for trusting me to do this interim position. Thank you for allowing me to serve. And I thank the staff, all the Department Heads and all the support staff throughout the Town. They've been terrific in the last couple of weeks. And you know, I'm trying to pull myself out of my old office a little bit, it's just kind of tough being there 20 years. But Brian's done a great job serving as acting Planning Director. So, I want to thank you for that first, hoping I can continue to serve in any way that you need. Will mention, you've mentioned it already, the Comp Plan workshop Monday afternoon at the American Legion, this coming Monday. Park bathroom bid opening. I think this is the third opportunity. And those bids will be opened on Thursday, June 22. I did speak with two contractors that seemed to be interested. I don't think they were involved. And so, we're hoping to get at least two possibly three bids. We may be surprised and have a few more. Everything else has been covered. The Mid-Year Retreat is on June 26. And we've got several items that we're working through to get them on the agenda. We talked about some of those tonight. And the other would be the TDA Master Plan Presentation, the TDA wanted to present that to you during the retreat.

Charlie Sellers

that's all I have. And welcome on board again. Thank you. You got to tell you got a great staff. And

Kevin Rothrock

And I failed to mention Shane. Shane has been very helpful. We have spoken several times a day over the past few weeks, and he's been a big help to and we

Charlie Sellers

We were very blessed to have been associated with Shane and moving forward, we're blessed to have our citizens and our Department Heads and Kevin Rothrock. Ok we're going to take a 10-minute recess and then we're going to go into closed session.

Albert Yount

Going into closed session under NCGS 143-318.11. (a)(3) – To consult with attorney retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege.

MAYOR _____

Charlie Sellers

ATTEST _____

Hilari Hubner, Town Clerk

ATTACHMENTS

Budget Amendment #2023-10 – Attachment A

Moody Building SUP #2023-04 – Attachment B

Audit Contract 2023 – Attachment C

Gardener's Galley SUP #2023-03 – Attachment D