

**MINUTES**  
**Town of Blowing Rock**  
**Town Council Meeting**  
**January 14, 2025**

The Town of Blowing Rock Town Council met for their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, January 14, 2025, 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, Council Members Cat Perry, David Harwood, Melissa Pickett and Pete Gherini. Others in attendance were Town Manager Shane Fox, Town Attorney Joey Petrack, Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Brown, Finance Director Tasha Brown, Planning Director Kevin Rothrock, Town Engineer Doug Chapman, Public Works Director Matt Blackburn, Police Chief Nathan Kirk, Landscape Director Cory Cathcart, IT Director Thomas Steele and Town Clerk Hilari Hubner, who recorded the minutes.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Sellers called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Mayor Sellers verified attendance via roll call.

**THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**MINUTE APPROVAL**

Mayor Pro-Tem Matheson made the motion to approve the minutes from the December 10, 2024, regular and closed session meetings, seconded by Council Member Gherini. Unanimously approved.

Mayor Sellers asked for a moment of silence for all the tragedy and loss that have occurred over the past several months.

**REGULAR AGENDA ADOPTION**

Council Member Gherini made a motion to adopt the regular agenda as presented, seconded by Council Member Perry.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Tax Releases – 2024-03, 2024-04, 2024-05
2. Tax Releases – Uncollectable – 10 years and older – 2009-2013
3. Tax Refunds – 2024-02 and 2024-03
4. Budget Amendment - #2025-01
5. Amendment Ordinance – 2024 Tropical Storm Helene Grant Project Ordinance

Council Member Pickett made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Council Member Harwood. Unanimously approved.

## **SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR**

None

## **SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

### **1. Introduction of New Police Officers and Recognition of Daren Church**

Police Chief Nathan Kirk introduced the two newest police officers hired, Nathan Mitchell and Dillon Walton. Chief Kirk recognized Darin Church for his recent retirement from the Blowing Rock Police Department after eleven (11) years of service to the Town.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **1. Tyler Sime Annexation**

Planning Director Kevin Rothrock stated Mr. Sime submitted a petition of voluntary annexation for Council consideration in December and Council approved both resolutions to move forward with the annexation. The Public hearing is the second and final step of the voluntary annexation process. The property is currently in the ETJ just outside of the Hillwinds subdivision off Wildwood Place and is zoned R-15. If approved as presented, the annexation will become effective June 30, 2025 but Mr. Sime would be allowed to make utility connections as soon as zoning and building permit applications are submitted and water and sewer availability fees are paid. Mr. Sime would not need to wait on the effective date of the annexation of June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Pro-Tem Matheson made a motion to open the public hearing.

With no questions or comments Mayor Pro-Tem Matheson made a motion to close the Public Hearing, seconded by Council Member Pickett. Unanimously approved.

Mayor Pro-Tem Matheson made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Council Member Perry. Unanimously approved.

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

### **1. 2024 Audit Presentation**

Hannah Leskovec with Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams Audit Firm presented the FY 23-24 Audit.

Manager Fox thanked Finance Director Tasha Brown for all her hard work. He added this year was a transitional year for the Finance Department with the previous Finance Director who had been with the Town for a number of years leaving. He stated Ms. Brown had worked tirelessly to make sure the budget and audit were completed on time and that it was materially correct.

Manager Fox wanted to clarify for understanding the prior period adjustments made were to make sure that the receivables and the balance sheets were correct and essentially a lot of new eyes looking at everything this year. He summarized FY 23-24 with the Town added money to general fund fund balance, the general fund cash and the available fund balance went from 28.9% to 48% which is closer to the 50% mark it has been in the past. He further clarified that the water/sewer fund restriction was because of the timing of the

reimbursement for the water/sewer project funds from the state. The request was submitted to the state in March of 2024 and the funds were not received until July of 2024 which was after the close of FY 23-24, which was out of staff's control.

Council Member Gherini made a motion to approve the audit, seconded by Council Member Pickett. Unanimously approved. – **Audit PowerPoint - Attachment G**

## **2. Meridian Barriers**

Chief Nathan Kirk explained in light of recent national events with the “car attack” that happened in New Orleans over the New Year’s holiday, focus has been put on safety for parades and events. Chief explained the Town would like to purchase some Meridian Barries to use during these events. The initial kit would be eight (8) Archer 1200 Barriers, two (2) Tow Bars, one (1) Archer Hauler, one (1) Archer Hydraulic Deck Trailer and one (1) Archer Rapid Gate Kit.

Council Member Pickett made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Council Member Perry. Unanimously approved.

## **3. Budget Amendment – For Meridian Barriers**

The Budget Amendment allocates funds received from an extra ABC distribution (\$100,000) and allocates fund balance (\$12,000) to cover the cost of the meridian barriers for public safety.

Council Member Harwood made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Council Member Pickett. Unanimously approved.

## **OFFICIAL REPORTS & COMMENTS**

- Mayor Sellers – Thanked all the public works and staff for their part in snow removal. Thanked Ms. Brown for her hard work on the audit.
- Council Member Perry – Thanked public works and staff and thanked Ms. Brown for her hard work on the audit.
- Council Member Harwood – None.
- Council Member Pickett – None.
- Mayor Pro-Tem Matheson – State employees insurance update. Offered his condolences to the city of Salisbury for the recent death of their Mayor.
- Council Member Gherini – Thanked public works staff and thanked fire and rescue for their efforts to rescue the vehicle and occupant that went over the embankment by the former Wheelies Refresher restaurant.
- Town Attorney Joey Petrack – None.
- Town Manager Shane Fox – Gave updates on Main Street, Maple Street, 221, Memorial Park Bids, FEMA update – Wonderland Trail and Valley View, childcare day, Planning Board and Retreat – January 29-31 at the Blowing Rock Conference Center.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 7:00 PM Council Member Perry made a motion to go into closed session, **NCGS 143-**

**318.11.(a)(6)** *Attorney/Client privilege*, seconded by Council Member Harwood. Unanimously approved.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:15 p.m. the Council returned to open session and with no further business, Council Member Harwood made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Council Member Perry. Unanimously approved.

**MAYOR** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Charlie Sellers, Mayor**

**ATTEST** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Hilari Hubner, Town Clerk**

**Attachments**

**Tax Releases – 2024-03, 2024-04, 2024-05 – Attachment A**

**Tax Releases – Uncollectable 10 years – Attachment B**

**Tax Refunds – 2024-02 and 2024-03 – Attachment C**

**Budget Amendment – Attachment D**

**Amendment Ordinance – 2024 TSH Grant Project Ordinance. -Attachment E**

**Tyler Sime Annexation – Attachment F**

**2024 Audit Presentation – Attachment G**

**Budget Amendment – Meridian Barriers – Attachment H**