

MINUTES
Town of Blowing Rock
Town Council Meeting
July 8, 2025

The Town of Blowing Rock Town Council met for their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, July 8, 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, Police Chief Nathan Kirk, Finance Director Tasha Brown, IT Director Thomas Steele, Emergency Services Director Kent Graham 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 June 10, 2025, regular session and June 24, 2025 Mid-Year Retreat open and closed sessions, seconded by Council Member Pickett. Unanimously approved.

REGULAR AGENDA ADOPTION

Council Member Perry made a motion to adopt the regular agenda, seconded by Council Member Pickett. Unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. Annual Tax Report and Order of Collection**
- 2. Fireworks Permit – Blowing Rock Chamber**
- 3. Blue Ridge Relay**
- 4. 321 Resolution – Safety**

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

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Eric Brinker – 232 Flannery Fork Farms Road – spoke in favor of the Town considering allowing food trucks in town. Mr. Brinker is the owner of the Speckled Trout Restaurant and Bottle Shop, and he understands the difficulty restaurants in town have with being able to accommodate the heavy influx of tourists during busy times and felt allowing food trucks would take some of the pressure off the restaurants.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Kristi Brantley and Sarah Wood from the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources office in Raleigh presented via zoom information on historic preservation.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Proposed Debt Financing

Town Manager Shane Fox stated Town Staff, along with First Tryon Financial Advisors, propose the Town move forward with soliciting bids from financial institutions for an installment loan in the amount of approximately \$2.25M. The loan covers the cost of the Memorial Park Project, along with the purchase of two parcels of property, and much needed upgrades at Fire Station One. If the resolution is approved, staff along with First Tryon will begin the bid solicitation process. Once bids are received, staff will bring to the Town Council the results for consideration. If Council finds the bid process to be satisfactory and recommends a bidder for the installment loan, then staff will proceed with formal approval from the Local Government Commission.

This resolution does not approve the financing, but it authorizes making applications to the Local Government Commission and beginning the bid process as required and making certain findings that the Local Government Commission requires as part of the application process.

Mayor Sellers opened the public hearing.

Mayor Pro-tem Matheson asked for clarification if this was a ten (10)-year loan.

Manager Fox stated it would be and noted the first payment would not be due until 2026, which would be in the FY 26-27 budget. He further stated the town will have two major debts rolling off, the Fire Station and the Buxton Property which will free \$500,000 in funds for this loan which the estimated loan payment is \$225,000.

With no questions or comments from the public, Council Member Gherini made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Matheson. Unanimously approved.

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

2. Loading Zones

Town Manager Shane Fox explained during the Mid-year Retreat, Town Staff and the Town Council discussed the possibility of installing permanently marked loading zones within the Town, including Sunset Drive and Main Street. Town staff have identified two areas, one on Sunset Drive near the intersection of Maple Street and a second location on Main Street, in front of Memorial Park and the 1888 Museum. Staff would like to have a discussion and possible approval of permanent marked loading zone on Sunset and Main Street. Three

(3) parking spots will be eliminated on Main Street for the loading zone.

Council Member Harwood asked what steps would be taken towards future enforcement and taking steps to make business owners and their suppliers aware of this.

Manager Fox explained he and Chief Kirk have discussed starting with notifying the business owners, then the delivery truck drivers making sure they are aware of the designated areas. Manager Fox further explained if loading zones are not utilized a conversation of enforcement/fines can be had.

Mayor Pro-Tem Matheson felt the penalty piece really needed to be discussed at some point because without a penalty there is no real incentive to make drivers utilize the loading zones.

Manager Fox mentioned the hope was they would be encouraged to utilize the loading zone from a safety standpoint and felt communication would be the first step in the process.

Council Member Pickett asked if the handicap spot that will be lost due to the loading zone will be replaced in another location.

Manager Fox stated another spot close to the area can be designated a handicap space to replace the one eliminated.

Council Member Perry stated she remembered discussing at the retreat there were only a few businesses that had delivery trucks. She is on board with the loading zone on Sunset but has concerns about losing three (3) parking spots on Main Street as well as two (2) other spaces already being removed due to the Main Street paving making a total of five (5) spaces eliminated on Main Street.

Council Member Harwood made a motion to approve the loading zones as presented, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Matheson. Unanimously approved.

3. Code of Conduct

Town Manager Shane Fox reviewed during the Mid-Year Retreat a draft of a Code of Conduct for elected officials and appointed board members of the Town of Blowing Rock. The topic of the Code of Conduct began at the Winter Retreat and staff have worked diligently to draft a copy for review and possible adoption by the Council.

Council Member Pickett asked if any decision had been made as to how often signatures will be required for Council and board members.

Manager Fox thought a yearly refresher and signature would be sufficient and could be done when the board members are appointed in March.

Council Member Harwood had several changes and reviewed those with Manager Fox and Council.

Council Member Gherini made a motion to approve as amended and noted he appreciated all of Manager Fox's hard work he had put into this and thanked Council Member Harwood for his attention to detail on his corrections, seconded by Council Member Pickett. Unanimously approved.

Manager Fox asked when the Council would like to implement the Code of Ethics and Conduct.

Council consensus was to have all boards have their Code of Ethics and Conduct signed and back to staff by August 31st.

OFFICIAL REPORTS & COMMENTS

- Mayor Sellers – Apologized the paving wasn't completed by the July 4th weekend in time for the parade but noted the asphalt plant had to close and Maymead wasn't able to finish before the holiday. He thanked Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Police Department, Administration, Volunteers, Town Council and Town Manager Fox for their hard work to make the 4th of July parade a success. Reminded sign up to run for an elected official began on July 8th and will end at noon on July 18th. Sent out his prayers to all the folks in Texas that have lost lives, land, homes etc. in the devastating floods as well as the Piedmont/Eastern North Carolina region that have lost so much as well due to flooding.
- Council Member Perry – None
- Council Member Harwood – None
- Council Member Pickett – None
- Mayor Pro-Tem Matheson – Attended Retreat for Risk Management two weeks ago and was informed more than likely House Bill 205 will heading back to be heard again in session. He noted House Bill 765 is not completely dead, what is being done is taking some of the things out of the big Bill and moving to the smaller bills as they are trying to "piece mill" to get moved through. Thanked Representative Pickett for working hard to try to get everything stopped. Was made aware it's beginning for any police departments that have drones to make sure their operators are certified.
- Council Member Gherini – Speeding down by Chetola has increased since the paving has been completed in that area. Manager Fox stated staff can have some visual radars placed.
- Town Attorney Joey Petrack – None.
- Town Manager Shane Fox – Thanked Parks and Recreation, Police, Fire, Public Works, Landscaping, IT for their hard work with the parade. Gave updates on Main Street paving and Memorial Park.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:05 p.m. Council Member Perry made a motion to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11.(a)(5) – discussion of potential property acquisition, seconded by Council Member Gherini. Unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:40 p.m. Council returned to open session. With no further action, Council Member Perry made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Council Member Gherini. Unanimously approved.

MAYOR _____
Charlie Sellers, Mayor

ATTEST _____
Hilari Hubner, Town Clerk

Attachments – July 8, 2025

Annual Tax Report and Order of Collection – Attachment A

321 Safety Resolution – Attachment B

Historic Preservation PowerPoint – Attachment C

Proposed Debt Financing – Attachment D

Code of Conduct – Attachment E