MINUTES – BOONE TOWN COUNCIL
MARCH 26, 2025
1500 BLOWING ROCK ROAD

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Boone Town Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. on March 26, 2025, in the Town Council Chambers located at 1500 Blowing Rock Road in Boone. Mayor Tim Futrelle presided. Council members present included Mayor Pro-Tem Dalton George, Todd Carter, Virginia Roseman (entered at 6:03 p.m.), Edie Tugman, and Eric Plaag. Town staff included Town Manager Amy Davis, Town Clerk Nicole Harmon-Church, Interim Police Chief Daniel Duckworth, Deputy Planning Director Brandon Wise, Planning Director Jane Shook, Advanced Planning Specialist Jessica Mitchell, Public Works Director Todd Moody, and Finance Director Guy Miller.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

A brief moment of silence was observed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements were given.

TENTATIVE AGENDA ADOPTION

Upon a motion by Council member Tugman, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem George, Council voted to adopt the agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye: Tugman, George, Carter, Plaag
Nay: None
Absent: Roseman

APPROVAL OF PROCLAMATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

Mayor Futrelle read the following proclamation into the record:

PROCLAMATION

***WHEREAS**, in 1872, J. Sterling Morton proposed to the Nebraska Board of Agriculture that a special day be set aside for the planting of trees; and*
***WHEREAS**, this holiday, called Arbor Day, was first observed with the planting of more than a million trees in Nebraska; and*

***WHEREAS**, the Town of Boone was named a 2024 Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation in honor of its commitment to effective urban forest management; and*
***WHEREAS**, the Town of Boone has honored its commitment to effective urban forest management as a recognized Tree City for 33 years; and*
***NOW THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED,** I, Mr. Tim Futrelle, Mayor of the Town of Boone, do hereby proclaim April 4, 2025 **ARBOR DAY** in the Town of Boone, and I urge all citizens to support efforts to care for our trees and woodlands and to support our Town's Community Forestry Program, and further, I urge all citizens to plant trees to gladden the hearts and promote the wellbeing of present and future generations. Recognition as a 2024 Tree City USA is a reflection of The Town of Boone's commitment to the environment and an effective urban forest management. We realize that trees provide numerous environmental, social and economic benefits and that trees are one piece of community infrastructure that actually increases in value over time.*

This the 26th day of March, 2025.

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ATTEST: Tim Futrelle, Mayor

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Nicole Harmon-Church, Town Clerk

Mayor Pro-Tem George thanked Deputy Planning Director Brandon Wise for his work on this program and proclamation, and noted that staff had acquired 33 Tree City awards over the years.

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Council member Tugman read the following resolution into the record:

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

***WHEREAS**, March is designated nationally as Women's History Month, an annual commemoration acknowledging that women of every race, class, and ethnic background have made historic contributions to the growth and strength of our Nation in countless recorded and unrecorded ways; and*
***WHEREAS,** women have been leaders not only in securing their rights of suffrage and equal opportunity but also in the abolitionist movement, the emancipation movement, the industrial labor movement, and the civil rights movement; and*
***WHEREAS,** women have played vital roles in the Town of Boone, in particular as educators, business owners, healthcare professionals, public servants, religious leaders, artists, and engaged citizens, enriching the town's culture and economy; and*
***WHEREAS**, women in Boone have been at the forefront of local initiatives and movements advocating for education, environmental sustainability, economic development, and social justice, ensuring a thriving and inclusive community; and*

WHEREAS, *despite these significant contributions, the role of women in history has often been overlooked and undervalued in literature, teaching, and the study of American history; and*

NOW, THEREFORE, *be it resolved that the Town of Boone formally recognizes March 2025 as Women's History Month and encourages all residents to celebrate and reflect upon the invaluable contributions of women throughout history and in our community today.*

This the 26th day of March, 2025

_____ *Tim Futrelle, Mayor*

ATTEST:

_____*(SEAL)*

Nicole Harmon-Church, Clerk

Mayor Futrelle applauded the recognition of women's vital role and acknowledged the ongoing assault on women's rights.

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Mayor Futrelle stated that this year's Lineworker resolution carried more weight than in previous years. He believed the workers never receive the praise and recognition they deserved, but considering all the time and energy they put into restoring service after Hurricane Helene came through the area, everyone is even more grateful for their service this year. He then read the following statement and proclamation:

PROCLAMATION HONORING PUBLIC POWER LINEWORKERS DURING LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAYS
APRIL 8 AND APRIL 18, 2025

WHEREAS, *on January 3, 2017, the 115th Congress of the United States adopted House Resolution 10 recognizing the profession of lineworkers, the contributions these brave men and women make to protect public safety, and expressing support for the designation of April 18 as National Lineman Appreciation Day; and*

WHEREAS, *on April 15, 2015, the North Carolina General Assembly ratified House Bill 140, which designates the second Monday in April of each year as Lineworker Appreciation Day in North Carolina; and*

WHEREAS, *the Town Council of Boone celebrates the profession of electric lineworkers and wishes to honor them for their exemplary service to the Town and its citizens; and*

WHEREAS, *lineworkers are often first responders during storms, working to repair broken and damaged electric lines under hazardous conditions to make the area safe for other public safety heroes; and*

WHEREAS, *lineworkers play a vital role in the lives of our citizens by maintaining and growing our electrical infrastructure, putting their lives on the line every day by working with the dangers of high voltage and ensuring they provide safe, reliable energy; and*

WHEREAS, *the lineworkers of Appalachian State University's New River Light and Power's electric utility and their example of service above self are deserving of the respect, admiration, and appreciation of all the citizens of the Town of Boone; now, therefore*

BE IT RESOLVED *that the Town of Boone, North Carolina, joins all N.C. public power communities and all public power systems in the United States in these celebrations of Lineworker Appreciation Days.*

This the 26th day of March, 2025

_____ Tim Futrelle, Mayor

ATTEST:

_____(SEAL)

Nicole Harmon-Church, Clerk

Upon a motion by Council member Plaag, seconded by Council member Tugman, Council voted unanimously to approve the following:

1. Proclamation – Arbor Day
2. Proclamation – Women's History Month
3. Proclamation – Power Lineworker Appreciation Days

PUBLIC COMMENT

Riley Oates, representative from the Small Business Administration (SBA) provided information regarding the availability of small business loans for relief and repairs related to Hurricane Helene. Council Member Plaag expressed concern about the public perception that funding for this program had been depleted. In response, the SBA representative clarified that ample funds remained available for distribution to storm victims. Council Member Plaag recommended that the SBA representative connect with the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce to help increase awareness and improve outreach regarding the availability of these resources.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

Upon a motion by Council member Plaag, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem George, Council voted unanimously to approve the following items on the consent agenda:

1. Ordinance – July 4th Parade

INTERPRETATIVE PANELS

Advanced Planning Specialist Jessica Mitchell provided a brief update on the Boone Cemetery Interpretative Panels, which were approved by Council in May 2024. She

reported that the panels were ready for installation and requested Council's guidance on whether an official unveiling ceremony should be held.

Council Member Plaag asked whether any additional changes had been made to the panels following their final approval. Ms. Mitchell confirmed that no further changes had been made. Council Member Plaag expressed his support for holding a ceremony, emphasizing the importance of commemorating one of the most critically significant events in Boone's early history. Council Member Tugman concurred and proposed that a guided tour of the cemetery be held in conjunction with the unveiling ceremony, noting that such an event would be both engaging and informative.

Council member Plaag offered to convey the request for a cemetery tour to the Watauga Historical Society, contingent upon consensus from the Council. Mayor Pro-Tem George expressed his support and agreed that collaboration with the Society would be both appropriate and enriching. There was consensus among the Council members to proceed with the request for a cemetery tour. Council Member Plaag recused himself from the consensus, as he is a member of the Watauga Historical Society. He confirmed that he would relay the request to the organization.

Regarding the timing of the unveiling ceremony, Council member Plaag recommended scheduling the event for early May, when the weather is typically warmer and drier, and Appalachian State University students are still present in town. He also suggested that staff contact the History Department at Appalachian State University to extend an invitation to attend the ceremony.

Ms. Mitchell stated that she would share this information with the Historic Preservation Commission and would coordinate with both the Commission and the Watauga Historical Society to plan the event. She concluded her update with a brief status report on the Stoneman's Raid interpretative panels.

APPOINTMENT TO HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Mayor Pro-Tem George initiated the appointment discussion by nominating applicant Trevor Moody to serve a three-year term on the Human Relations Commission. Before a vote was taken, Council member Roseman shared that she had encouraged applicant Evelyn Sharpe to apply for the position. She noted that, despite having differing political perspectives, her conversations with Ms. Sharpe had consistently demonstrated an ability to find common ground. Council member Roseman emphasized that this quality would be particularly valuable in a representative serving on the Human Relations Commission. She further emphasized the importance of ensuring diverse representation on the Commission to incorporate a broad range of viewpoints. In light of these considerations, Council Member Roseman nominated Ms. Sharpe for the seat set to expire in June.

Following the discussion, Mayor Futrelle called for a vote.

T. Moody
Term expiring March 26, 2028

VOTE: Aye: All
Nay: None

Trevor's Term will expire on March 26, 2028.

Council member Carter expressed that he did not support the suggested term for applicant Evelyn Sharpe. He emphasized that the Human Relations Commission had a defined mission, and he believed that its members must be fully engaged with that mission to ensure both success and productivity. Council member Carter suggested that Ms. Sharpe be considered instead for the seat currently held by Buck or for a term expiring in September.

Council member Roseman responded by deferring to the Commission's liaisons, Council members Carter and George, regarding the appropriate term. However, Council member Carter also raised concerns about Ms. Sharpe's application, specifically noting issues related to name-dropping and questions about her residency. In response, Council member Roseman acknowledged these concerns but maintained that Ms. Sharpe's contributions could not be fully understood until she was given an opportunity to serve.

Council member Plaag expressed appreciation for Council member Roseman's collaborative spirit and her desire to find consensus. However, he stated that he could not support Ms. Sharpe's appointment to the Commission for any term.

Council member Tugman shared her concern based on the application, noting that it appeared Ms. Sharpe was significantly invested in her residency in Florida. She questioned the applicant's motivation to serve on a board in Boone and expressed doubts about her level of commitment to the Boone community. Council member Roseman agreed that she, too, had concerns about the emphasis the applicant placed on personal associations, including individuals she had previously worked with or dated, while making minimal reference to the mission and goals of the Human Relations Commission.

Mayor Pro-Tem George added that the Council had previously denied applicants based on residency and voter registration in other jurisdictions. He emphasized that all applicants, including Ms. Sharpe, would be welcome to reapply in the future.

Council member Roseman then provided background information on Ms. Sharpe, noting her familial connection to the owners of Mystery Hill in Blowing Rock as an explanation for her listed address. She also shared that Ms. Sharpe had experienced severe brain

trauma, which she believed might contribute to the applicant's current understanding of the world. Council member Roseman expressed confidence in the applicant's potential and encouraged Council members to give her a chance to serve.

Council member Carter acknowledged the applicant's background and recommended that she consider reapplying with a more complete and appropriate application. Despite the concerns raised, Council Member Roseman stood by her nomination of Ms. Sharpe for the seat, but with a September expiration. A vote was subsequently taken.

E. Sharpe
Term expiring September 14, 2025

VOTE: Aye: Roseman
Nay: Carter, George, Tugman, Plaag

Mayor Pro-Tem George inquired whether applicant Puliatti, who was attending the meeting virtually, wished to speak about her application. Ms. Puliatti respectfully declined the opportunity and expressed her gratitude to Council members for their consideration.

Mayor Pro-Tem George proceeded to nominate Ms. Puliatti to serve a two-year term on the Human Relations Commission. Council member Carter expressed his support for the nomination, thanking Ms. Puliatti for submitting an excellent application that demonstrated both passion and a strong sense of commitment. He also acknowledged and expressed appreciation for her public service within the school system.

With no further nominations brought forward, Mayor Futrelle called for a vote.

VOTE: Aye: All
Nay: None

Ms. Puliatti's term will expire March 26, 2027.

Upon a motion by Mayor Pro-Tem George, seconded by Council member Carter, Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:48 p.m.

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Tim Futrelle, Mayor Nicole Harmon-Church, Clerk