TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN
APPLICATION TO FILL VACANT TOWN COUNCIL SEAT

Appointment Period: Through December 2028

Application Deadline: Friday, July 10, 2026 at 12:00 PM

Scheduled Appointment Date: July 13, 2026 Regular Monthly Council Meeting* Applicant

Information

Legal First Name: **Lisa** Legal Last Name: **Raleigh**

Residential Address: **21 Dyer Drive**

City: **Black Mountain** State: **NC** Zip Code: **28711**

Mailing Address (if different): **N/A**

Primary Phone: **970.274.2012**

Other Phone: **N/A**

Email Address: **lisaraleigh@gmail.com**

Eligibility (Check Yes or No)

1. Are you a registered voter in Buncombe County? **X Yes** □ No
2. Do you live within the municipal limits of Black Mountain? **X Yes** □ No
3. Are you 21 years of age or older? **X Yes** □ No

Application Questions

1. What motivates you to serve as a member of the Black Mountain Town Council?

I feel incredibly grateful to live in Black Mountain. The geography and setting are simply spectacular. The breadth, depth and variety of the entrepreneurial businesses are amazing for a town of our size. And the resilience our community has shown in our post-Helene world gives me hope for a bright future.

I am motivated to serve on the Town Council to champion and celebrate all that is good and to help create a culture of positive intentions and collaborative solutions through tone and actions. I understand this is a pivotal moment for our Town. Council has been working to close real budget

gaps, address deferred maintenance on our aging Public Safety Building, and support our local businesses as we rebuild trust after a difficult year. I believe my background, style and passion would be an asset in this moment.

I would also like to support the incoming Town Manager to ensure they flourish in their role, including bringing some much-needed stability to this position and senior leadership and helping create a positive environment where colleagues want to stay and are excited and proud to represent the Town.

While it is easy to stand on the side and be critical, I would like to challenge myself to be part of the solution and give my time, talents and service to our community. I am willing to step into this recent vacancy/appointed role and get to work.

2. Describe any relevant experience you may have and why you should be selected to fill this vacancy?

For the past five years, I have been the Executive Director of RiverLink, a 40-year-old conservation organization serving the French Broad River watershed. We have a unique mission to promote both the environmental and economic vitality of the region, and I have been successfully leading our organization in both those sectors. I understand the critical importance of a thriving economy in conjunction with advocating for our natural resources and flood resilience, and I am personally familiar with the Helene recovery landscape and many of the state, federal, and private funding opportunities that still remain.

I am a quick study, with a PhD in Environmental Science, decades of public relations and marketing experience, and a track record as a skilled fundraiser and grant writer. I oversee a balanced $2M+ annual budget at RiverLink.

I am also fortunate to hold meaningful relationships with many Buncombe County leaders, both elected and senior staff, and often partner with the Land of Sky Regional Council, Explore Asheville/TDA and the Chamber of Commerce on grants and initiatives. I also just served a three-year term on the Black Mountain Active Mobility Commission, where I greatly enjoyed working with both the Commission members and staff liaisons.

I am comfortable speaking in all settings (including a recent TEDx Talk on the importance of resilient rivers in our region post-Helene) and my passion and commitment are often contagious. I believe in creating a dynamic work environment where people feel supported and empowered to carry their work forward with integrity, passion, and excellence.

I believe I could be an asset to the Town Council.

3. Describe your understanding of the Council-Manager form of government.

Based on my research, it can be simply stated: "The Council decides what to do; the Manager decides how to do it."

I understand that Council is an elected body that sets policy, passes ordinances, adopts the budget, and establishes the overall vision and priorities for the Town. The Town Manager is employed by the Council and handles day-to-day operations including managing staff, implementing Council policy, preparing budget recommendations, and overseeing departments.

As an Executive Director working with a large, engaged, and dynamic Board of Trustees, I have firsthand experience navigating this dynamic. I understand that the relationship works best when the board sets clear direction and then trusts staff to execute and that it could break down if that line is blurred, whether a board member reaches too far into daily operations or staff drift from board-set priorities.

With a new incoming Town Manager, I believe there is significant value in a Council that helps establish this relationship from day one, with clear expectations, mutual trust, good intentions, and respect for each other's role, so the Town can move forward with stability and hit its economic stride.

4. What are the most important elements in developing a municipal budget?

I again see clear parallels between running a financially audited nonprofit and managing a municipal budget, including that both start by reflecting the organization's or Town's priorities in a fiscally responsible, legally compliant way. I understand what it takes to achieve a balanced budget, including the hard decisions that often come with a shortfall, but making those decisions in a way that still honors community priorities, safety and wellbeing, with a longer-term view rather than just a stop-gap measure. I am strategic by nature, and I thrive on identifying diverse, offsetting revenue streams that provide additional financial stability, and I have a successful track record doing exactly this post-Helene. I also recognize the importance of transparency and integrity throughout the process, from community input and work sessions to final approval.

In summary, I believe the most important elements are:

- **Fiscal responsibility rooted in priorities;**
- **Hard decisions with a long-term, values-driven lens;**
- **Diverse, offsetting revenue streams; and**
- **Transparency and integrity throughout the process.**

5. How would you ensure all voices in the community are represented?

Ensuring representation is a key part of my role as RiverLink's Executive Director. For example, across our programming from youth education to addressing unmitigated stormwater issues, we understand the importance of ensuring all community members are served, not just those with the time, privilege, or confidence to attend a public meeting. I understand the effort it takes to keep the loudest voices from drowning out those with less agency, especially during an ongoing recovery where renters, the elderly, and lower-income families often have the fewest resources to advocate for themselves.

I believe it takes commitment and thoughtful processes that strive for equity and the greatest representation of all community members, including going where people are, partnering with trusted community partners, recognizing language or communication barriers, and creating opportunities that work for people who might not be able to attend a 6pm meeting on a Monday evening. My time on the Black Mountain Active Mobility Commission reinforced this, highlighting some of the access issues that affect people differently depending on age, mobility, and vehicle ownership — and that those most impacted are often least likely to show up and say so. If appointed, I'd bring that same intentionality to the Town Council, helping lower barriers for input and arriving at decisions that reflect the full spectrum of folks who call Black Mountain home.

Thank you for considering my application. I would be honored to serve Black Mountain and to bring my experience, energy, and commitment to this next chapter for our Town.

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Certification

I certify that the information provided is true and complete. I further understand that if appointed, I will abide by the local governing board's code of ethics and rules of procedure, https://tinyurl.com/tobmethics, which is pursuant to N.C.G.S. §160A-86.

Signature: Lisa Raleigh **Date: July 3, 2026**

Submission Information

To be considered for appointment at the July 13, 2026 Council meeting, applications must be received by Town Clerk Wesley Barker **by 12:00 pm on Friday, July 10, 2026** in the following ways:

1) In person at Town Hall, 160 Midland Ave., Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. 2) Via email:

wesley.barker@tobm.org and/or town.clerk@tobm.org

3) Via USPS: Town of Black Mountain, Attn: Town Clerk, 160 Midland Ave., Black Mountain, NC 28711

Contact Information for Questions:
Wesley M. Barker, Town Clerk
160 Midland Ave., Black Mountain, NC 28711
(828) 419-9310
wesley.barker@tobm.org, or town.clerk@tobm.org

**Town Council will review the applications and will vote via ballot method at the beginning of the July 13, 2026 regular monthly Town Council meeting, which will be held at 6:00 p.m. at Black Mountain Town Hall. At that time, following the ballot voting, the Council will formally vote to appoint the member to the Council, and they will subsequently be sworn in and participate in that meeting, if in attendance.*

LISA RALEIGH, PHD

970-274-2012 lisaraleigh@gmail.com linkedin.com/in/lisaraleighphd

Profile

I am a lifelong learner with a passion for the environment, education and social justice. My work is strategic, creative and goal-oriented. I enjoy strong written and oral communication skills with significant experience in nonprofit leadership, fundraising, public relations, communications and public speaking.

Experience

Executive Director, RiverLink, Asheville, NC (2021 – present)
Overseeing all aspects of this 40-year-old conservation organization and land trust committed to the environmental and economic vitality of the French Broad River watershed and the communities that live alongside her. Organizational partnerships include municipalities and counties (staff and elected officials), donors and grantors, and broad community support.

Independent Development Consultant, Lisa Raleigh Unlimited, Redstone, CO (2019 - 2021)
Igniting ideas, generating results and exceeding expectations by partnering with like-minded organizations, elevating and delivering fundraising, strategic planning initiatives and results.

Director of Advancement, Colorado Rocky Mountain School, Carbondale, CO (2010 - 2019) and Director of Communication (2008 - 2010)
Directed the school's robust development and marketing operation, overseeing all aspects of annual, capital, endowment and planned giving, including a successful $11M capital campaign and annually raising $1M+ with a dynamic and collaborative team.

Associate Publisher, Big Stone Publications, Carbondale, CO (2003 – 2007)
Led the advertising and marketing effort for this agile and authentic group of outdoor titles including *Rock & Ice* and *Trail Runner,* in addition to partnering and delivering creative revenue streams beyond traditional print advertising.

Founding Partner, Backbone Media, Carbondale, CO (1997 - 2003)
Backbone Media was born out of a passion and love for the outdoors with the goal to provide dedicated, authentic and impactful public relations and media buying expertise for outdoor specialty brands. What began as a humble entrepreneurship partnership has grown and expanded into a dominating force of influence in the outdoor industry today.

Education

PhD, Environmental Science, University of Oklahoma
MS, Environmental Science, University of Oklahoma
BS, Geology, University of Oklahoma

Volunteer Service

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Swannanoa Valley Endowment Committee Member (2026 to present)
Assisting with the establishment and governance of a newly endowed fund.

Black Mountain Active Mobility Commission (2023 - 2026)
Served a full term to advise the Town Council on items that may impact the safety and mobility of those who travel by foot, bicycle, or other active mobility device, to ensure consistency with established town goals, and to improve and promote active transportation opportunities.

For the Good: Board Member (2019 to 2025)
Educating girls is one of the most effective ways to combat poverty and climate change, yet 52 million girls who live in Sub-Saharan Africa are not enrolled in school. For the Good works to change that through focusing on three key pillars proven to increase girls' access to education: enrolling out-of-school children; opening secondary schools and activating local leadership.

CASA of the Ninth

I am trained as a Court Appointed Special Advocate and supported and represented children in the foster care system in Garfield County, CO.

Traits

I am a quick study, self-starter, high achiever with a tremendous amount of energy and ideas. I enjoy utilizing my skills in new applications, fast-paced environments and am incredibly success-oriented. I am a passionate outdoor person and international traveler, with a strong commitment to the environment and equity, who enjoys trail running, road biking, hiking, and climbing.

References Upon Request