

**TOWN OF SEVEL DEVILS
TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES – REGULAR SESSION
May 9, 2011**

The Seven Devils Town Council met in regular session on Monday, May 9, 2011, at Town Hall. Present were Mayor Bob Dodson, Mayor Pro Tem Kathy Copley, Council Members Richard DeMott, Kay Ehlinger and David Ehmig. Also present were Town Manager Ed Evans and Town Attorney Rob Angle. The minutes were recorded by Beth Taylor, Town Clerk.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Dodson called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council members and citizens recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPT AGENDA

Member DeMott made a motion to adopt the agenda. Mayor Pro Tem Copley seconded the motion. The members agreed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Regular Meeting April 11, 2011; Continuation meetings April 13, 2011, April 28, 2011, and May 5, 2011

Regular Meeting April 11, 2011

The following corrections were made to the April 11 minutes:

Under Old Business, Water Use Ordinance revised, the sentence beginning with “Attorney Rob Angle stated...” should say ‘...usually **has to go** through’ and not ‘...usually through’ Also, under the same heading, the sentence beginning with “On page 9-1 of Article 9- Enforcement...” the sentence should say ‘...court cost will be **assessed...**’ and not ‘court cost will be assed...’

Mayor Pro Tem Copley made a motion to accept the April 11, 2011 minutes as amended. Member DeMott seconded the motion. The Members agreed unanimously.

Continuation meeting April 13, 2011, April 28, 2011, May 5, 2011

On the first page, third paragraph, seventh line down on the April 13 continuation minutes, strike the sentence beginning ‘Several...’ as it is repetitious.

Mayor Pro Tem Copley made a motion to accept the April 13, 2011 minutes as amended. Member DeMott seconded the motion. The Members agreed unanimously.

Mayor Pro Tem Copley made a motion to accept the April 28, 2011. Mayor Dodson seconded the motion. The Members agreed unanimously.

Mayor Pro Tem Copley made a motion to accept the May 5, 2011. Member DeMott seconded the motion. The Members agreed unanimously.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mayor Pro Tem Copley stated she had a citizen’s comment from Barbara Williams. Mrs. Williams wanted to thank the Council & Town Manager for so carefully shepherding the Town’s resources. She was pleased to see our Town reserve was listed at 50% in the April *High Country Press*.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE & CALENDAR

Member DeMott wanted to know where the Town was going to be posting the past due taxes list if we were not putting it in the paper. Manager Evans stated that it is posted here in Town Hall on the bulletin board and that every delinquent taxpayer will receive a certified letter. Evans stated that every delinquent tax parcel must be listed individually and we cannot simply add the totals for a single taxpayer with more than one account.

Member Ehmig wanted to know the status of the generator that is for sale. Manager Evans replied that someone has been by to look at repairing it. We are just waiting to have it transported to the repair shop.

Mayor Pro Tem Copley asked if Manager Evans could give an update on the Grandview Project. Evans replied that all the main water lines have been installed and the pressure checks have been completed. The service connections are being worked on now. We are looking to finish ahead of schedule. We have the pavement company coming in to give estimates on re-paving. We are hoping to be completed by the end of the fiscal year.

Member DeMott noted that he had spoken to the NCDOT and that they are willing to send people here to speak to the Town explaining the upcoming projects (what these projects will cost, what they will entail, etc).

Member Ehmig stated that the reason for the white line on the roads on the Avery County portion of Skyland Drive is that from the Avery County line up, the state will resurface the road (the state road, not Town Roads).

OLD BUSINESS

-None-

NEW BUSINESS

Manager presents Balanced Budget

Manager Evans presented a Balanced Budget to the Council and stated the Budget process is going well and will be completed soon. The Council has been working hard on getting it completed.

~**OPEN**~

Travel request – NCCCMA conference June - Ed

Member DeMott made a motion to approve the travel request for Manager Evans to attend the NCCCMA conference in June. Mayor Pro Tem Copley seconded the motion. The Members agreed unanimously. ~**CLOSED**~

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning Board

Public Works – Mayor Pro Tem Copley stated that in this fiscal year we have put in a hydrant for Snowcloud and we have moved forward with obtaining cost estimates for the Snowcloud water project, divided into two phases. Town Engineer David Poore is going ahead with the engineering plans so that we can get permitting from the state. That way, when we get the funding, we will be ready to move forward. The estimated cost is \$165,000 for the uphill portion (from the hydrant up) and \$74,000 from the hydrant down.

Public Safety Committee

Recreation Commission

ABC Board

TDA- Mayor Pro Tem Copley wanted clarification on what ‘policing’ meant. She further stated that she felt that since the TDA is the only one that can spend TDA money; they should be the one identifying who the Occupancy Taxes are due from. Mayor Pro Tem Copley also thanked the TDA for paying for the paving of the Town parking lots.

Public Safety Department

-Police Report- Manager Evans stated that the man who was arrested for allegedly killing his wife here in Seven Devils has had his first public arraignment and was charged with first degree murder. It will probably be two years before we hear from them again.

-Fire Report

Financial Report

Mayor Dodson made a motion to accept the financial report. Member DeMott seconded the motion. The Members agreed unanimously.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Pro Tem Copley stated that she felt Kevin McCarthy deserved an answer to show what the Council has done in attempt to resolve the problem he addressed in the previous Council meeting. Manager Evans stated that after having a meeting with Mr. McCarthy and Police Chief Davis, Mr. McCarthy has a better understanding of the situation.

RECESS

Mayor Dodson made a motion to recess the meeting until next Thursday, May 12, 2011 at 9:00. Member DeMott seconded the motion. The members agreed unanimously. The meeting was recessed at 6:01 pm.

Bob Dodson, Mayor

Beth Taylor, Town Clerk

TOWN COUNCIL CONTINUATION MEETING
Thursday, May 12, 2011

The Seven Devils Town Council reconvened at 9:00a.m., on Thursday, May 12, 2011 at Seven Devils Town Hall. Members of the Town Council Present were Mayor Bob Dodson, Mayor Pro Tem Kathy Copley, and Council Members Richard DeMott and David Ehmig. Member Kay Ehlinger was unable to attend. Town Manager Ed Evans and Intern Chad Simons were also present.

At 9:01a.m, Mayor Dodson called the meeting to order and made a motion to come out of recess. Member DeMott seconded the motion. The members agreed unanimously. The Council and Manager Evans continued discussions on the FY11-12 Capital Improvement Plan and Annual Spending Plan. Town Manager Ed Evans discussed business license fees and asked if there was any desire to make any changes to these fees. Members discussed the issue at great length. Evans discussed the possibility of imposing a business license fee for vacation rentals. Council Members and the Manager also discussed a potential ticket tax in Hawksnest. Mayor Dodson asked Town Manager to pursue more information regarding business license fees and a potential ticket tax.

Manager Evans discussed potential fee changes with Council Members related to building permits, as well as increasing some of the “Violation Notice” fees imposed by our Public Safety Department, such as Handicap Parking penalty fees to comply with state statutes. The Council agreed with increasing building permit fees to those recommended by Evans so that we are not charging less than Watauga County is charging Seven Devils for making inspections in Seven Devils. The recommended changes make Seven Devils building permit fees similar to the Watauga County building permit fees. Evans stated that he would bring a list of recommended changes to “Violation Notice” fees to the next meeting.

The Council asked Evans about our Capital Projects at Devils Lake Drive and Grandview Drive. Mayor Dodson and Council Members expressed concern regarding completion of the projects in a timely manner. Manager Evans stated that the projects should be completed before the fiscal year ends telling the Council that we hope to finish by the end of June.

Manager Evans updated Council Members about potential health-care changes, and several questions were asked from Council Members about the benefits of achieving “grandfather status” with our health insurance plan. The Council discussed the health insurance status of town employees for an extended period of time. Mayor Dodson requested updated and accurate budget figures for the next meeting.

Motion to Recess

Mayor Dodson made a motion to recess at 10:48a.m. Mayor Pro Tem seconded the motion. The Council agreed unanimously. The Town Council will reconvene on Wednesday, June 2, 2011 at 9:00 am.

Bob Dodson, Mayor

Town Manager, Ed Evans

TOWN COUNCIL CONTINUATION MEETING
Wednesday, June 2, 2011

The Seven Devils Town Council reconvened at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, June 2, 2011 at Seven Devils Town Hall. Members of the Town Council present were Mayor Bob Dodson, Mayor Pro Tem Kathy Copley, and Council Members Richard DeMott and Kay Ehlinger. Member David Ehmig was unable to attend. Town Manager Ed Evans and intern Chad Simons were also present.

At 9:06 a.m., Mayor Bob Dodson called the meeting to order and made a motion to reconvene the meeting. Member DeMott seconded the motion. The members agreed unanimously.

The Council and Manager Evans continued discussions on the FY11-12 Capital Improvement Plan and Annual Spending Plan. Evans notified the Council that the Town has been awarded grant monies for Fire Department use for FY11-12, which can be used toward the garage doors and painting of the fire bays. Evans explained that this allows us to lower the expense in the proposed CIP for these items from \$10,000 to \$8,000. Evans also informed Council Members that he had made a decision to increase the employee health insurance policy deductible from \$1,000 to \$2,500 and supplement this with an HRA. Employees would be responsible for a personal deductible of \$500, an increase from \$250, in order to help meet rising health-insurance costs. Mayor Dodson and Council Members commended Manager Evans for taking the necessary action.

Manager Evans asked Council Members about a potential fire tax, after informing Council Members about the inability of a town fire truck to pass a pump test. Mayor Dodson advised Council Members about the consequences of losing their fire rating status. Council Members discussed this at great length. Mayor Dodson and Council Members agreed to look into a potential fire-tax to help the town meet sufficient safety standards. Manager Evans also informed Council Members about the proposed health-insurance changes and potential strategies to reduce costs in the future. The Council continued to discuss this matter in greater length.

Manager Evans recommended making several changes to the town's "Violation Notice" book by increasing violation fees (fees for citations issued by our Public Safety Department). Council Member Ehlinger expressed concerns about the town's size and how this could cause enforcement problems for the town's Public Safety Department. Evans noted that this is not an effort to generate revenue, but rather an attempt to bring the town's fees into line with general statutes and to cover our expenses in writing and collecting violation fees. He also noted that the fee change recommendations were proposed in concert with Chief Davis. After discussing the issue, Member DeMott made a motion to increase violation fees as presented by Evans. Mayor Pro Tem Kathy Copley seconded the motion. The Members agreed unanimously.

Evans next discussed the town's fund balance, informing Council Members that the town would be able to keep the fund balance above fifty percent going into the next fiscal year. Council Members commended the Town's administrative employees for the accomplishment.

Manager Evans informed the Council about a strategy to capture back taxes from residents. Mayor Dodson asked Manager Evans to gather more information about the process and put it on the agenda for June 13, 2011.

ADJOURN

At 11:20 a.m., Mayor Pro Tem Copley made a motion to adjourn. Member DeMott seconded the motion. The Members agreed unanimously.

Bob Dodson, Mayor

Ed Evans, Town Manager