

TOWN OF SEVEN DEVILS
PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
March 10, 2020

The Seven Devils Town Council met for a Public Hearing for PARTF Grant on Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at 5:00pm and in a Regular Meeting at 5:30pm at Town Hall. Present at the Public Hearing were Mayor Larry Fontaine and Council Members: Wayne Bonomo, Kay Ehlinger and Jeffrey Williams. Mayor Pro Tem Brad Lambert was absent; a quorum was met. Also present were Eric Hiegl-Blue Ridge Conservancy, Charlie Brady-Blue Ridge Conservancy. Town Staff present were Town Manager Debbie Powers, Parks & Rec Tech Jewel McKinney; Town Attorney Rob Angle joined at the Regular Meeting; the minutes were recorded by Town Clerk Hillary Gropp.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Fontaine gave the Invocation for tonight's meeting. Council members and citizens recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fontaine called the Public Hearing to Order at 5:00pm.

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Fontaine explained the Public Hearing is a presentation of the Parks & Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grant opportunity. Citizens attending who want to speak during the Public Comment session will need to sign up to speak. Comment time is limited to three (3) minutes for each citizen speaker. The Town Clerk will control the timer.

Member Ehlinger made a motion to open the Public Hearing; Member Williams seconded the motion. All agreed unanimously.

PRESENTATION

Manager Powers provided a summary on the PARTF; the grant provides dollar for dollar matching grants to local governments for projects to serve the public. There is a nine (9) member authority that allocates money from the Trust Fund; three (3) members appointed by the Governor, three (3) members appointed by President Pro Tem of the Senate, and three (3) members appointed by the Speaker of the House and are appointed for three (3) year terms. The Town of Seven Devils has been a recipient of PARTF funds twice before in the creation of Otter Falls, phases I & II. This project will cost approximately \$190,000. If awarded, the grant would provide \$95,000 with the remaining \$95,000 paid from Town funds and in-kind labor and donations. The Town funds have been set aside in the CIP (Capital Improvement Program) for the last four (4) years at \$20,000 each year. An additional \$20,000 will be funded in 2020-2021. The grant application deadline is May 1, 2020. The Authority will meet in August to review all applications and determine awards. If awarded this PARTF grant, the funds can be used as the portion required by the Town for the recently awarded RTP grant of \$100,000, which is a 75% - 25% matching grant.

Manager Powers introduced Eric Hiegl, Director of Land Protection & Stewardship at the Blue Ridge Conservancy, who is the owner of the property, to discuss this opportunity.

Eric Hiegl stated the Blue Ridge Conservancy is a private, non-profit land trust that partners with local communities and landowners to protect land with agricultural, cultural, ecological, recreational and scenic significance. Recently, Blue Ridge Conservancy acquired an additional 91 acres which includes Peak Mountain, above the Shoppes of Tynecastle. This new acquisition of land is adjacent to the Town of Seven Devils border.

In 2016, Blue Ridge Conservancy purchased a 265 acre tract on Peak Mountain, with an additional 40 acres was acquired in Avery County giving the trail over a 1 mile of ridgeline. In 2017, these parcels were annexed into the Town of Seven Devils, with a zoning

designation of Parks. The Conservancy and the Town have a mutual interest in extending the Otter Falls Park trails into the Peak Mountain property. The trail would extend from Otter Falls Park across the ridge of the mountain and terminate at the end of Skiview Road. Blue Ridge Conservancy and the Town will partner to maintain the trails, and give a 25 year easement to the Town. Once the 2+ miles trail is complete along Peak Mountain Ridge, volunteer groups could be used to help keep the trail clean and litter free.

Charlie Brady, CEO of the Blue Ridge Conservancy stated he is appreciative of the good relationship with the Town, and the partnership in achieving the goal of building Peak Mountain Trail for citizens to enjoy.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Anne Fontaine, 127 W. Rocky Top, speaking as a resident, stated she is in favor this this trail. The trail will offer many recreational opportunities to our residents & visitors. It encourages people to get out in the fresh air, gives a sense of community, creates greater community connections, and promotes a healthy relationship. Speaking as Chair on behalf of the Parks & Recreation Committee, additional hiking trails are a goal, as featured in the recently adopted Town of Seven Devils Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Plan 2020-2030. Anne also spoke on behalf of TDA, as Chair and TDA is fully committed to allocating the funds to help support this trail.

Leigh Sasse, 245 Chestnut Ridge Trail, spoke in favor of the trail and asked that adequate parking be built, and to consider the citizens who live near the trailhead.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

Member Ehlinger made a motion to close the Public Hearing; Member Williams seconded the motion. All agreed unanimously.

RECESS

Mayor Fontaine asked for a motion to recess. Member Ehlinger made a motion to recess; Member Williams seconded the motion. All agreed unanimously. The Town Council went into recess at 5:20pm.

CALL TO ORDER FROM RECESS

Member Ehlinger made a motion to come out of recess; Member Bonomo seconded the motion. All agreed unanimously.

ADOPT AGENDA

Member Williams made a motion to adopt the agenda; Member Ehlinger seconded the motion. All agreed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

ADOPT MINUTES OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETING on February 11, 2020.

Member Ehlinger made a motion to approve and adopt the minutes; Member Bonomo seconded the motion. All agreed unanimously.

CITIZENS COMMENTS - NONE

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

Town Manager Powers provided the following update:

- RTP Grant (75/25) has been awarded for Peak Mountain Trail - \$100,000
- Mayor Fontaine & Town Manger Powers attended Banner Elk Kiwanis on 2/4 to present Peak Mountain Trail for PARTF Grant.
- Town Manager Powers met with Prudential NC 401 (K) on 2/12
- The Planning Board met on 2/18 for their Organizational meeting and reviewed additions/amendments to the Nuisance Ordinance.
- Town of Boone vs. Watauga County Summons to Appear in court regarding Sales Tax Allocation

- HCCOG is organizing an Interlocal Government meeting on April 2nd; two council members will need to attend.
- Town Manager Powers attended the NCLM Risk Management administrative online training webinar on 2/25 for future webinar trainings for employees.
- Police Chief Harris has earned the Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate (1000 hours of LE Training) from State of NC on 2/21.
- Town Hall is closed on Friday, April 10th for Good Friday/Easter holiday.
- Echo Newsletter – Spring Edition is now available and posted to 7D website.
- Town Council Retreat to be held on Wednesday, March 25th at FGCC- 10am -2pm.
- The Planning Board meeting scheduled for March 17th is now cancelled.

Updates for: Tree Permits, Projects, Fence Permits, Complaints, Violation Letters, Stop Work Orders, & Real Estate Closings

OLD BUSINESS – NONE

NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution #2020-02



**RESOLUTION
#2020-02**

PART F

IN SUPPORT OF TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AND PARKS AND RECREATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS WITHIN THE TOWN LIMITS OF THE TOWN OF SEVEN DEVILS

WHEREAS, The Town of Seven Devils recognizes the desire of residents and visitors alike to enjoy parks and recreational services and green spaces; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Seven Devils endeavors to create and preserve natural resources for the enjoyment of citizens for future generations; and

WHEREAS, in order to address recreational needs in the future, the Town of Seven Devils has allocated financial resources to expand trails, parks, and recreational green spaces; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Seven Devils has adopted the Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan 2020-2030, dated February 11, 2020 to serve as a guide for the Town to make informed decisions relating to the development of recreation facilities & assets, seeking out new opportunities and meeting the needs of citizens throughout the next decade;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: The Town of Seven Devils Town Council firmly resolves to accept and support the administration of the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Grant for \$95,000 for Peak Mountain Trail, with a \$95,000 match in funding, and completion within three (3) years.

ADOPTED, this 10th day of March 2020.

ATTEST:


Larry Fontaine, Mayor

 
Hillary Gropp, Town Clerk

Member Bonomo made the motion to approve Resolution #2020-02; Member Ehlinger seconded the motion. All agreed unanimously. ~CLOSED~

B. Audit Contract FY20

Member Williams made a motion to approve the Audit Contract FY20 with S. Gillespie, P.A.- Certified Public Accountant. Member Bonomo seconded the motion. The members agreed unanimously. ~CLOSED~

C. ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE NUISANCE ORDINANCE

(i) Added Article 12 - Damage to Town Roads and Right of Ways

Member Williams made a motion to adopt Nuisance Ordinance, Article 12; Member Ehlinger seconded the motion. All agreed unanimously. ~CLOSED~

(ii) Firearms - Amended Language

Member Bonomo made the motion to amend the existing Firearms Nuisance Ordinance; Member Williams seconded the motion. All agreed unanimously. ~CLOSED~

(iii) Holiday Construction - Added Language

Member Williams made a motion to adopt the language to the Nuisance Ordinance- Prohibited Noises; Member Bonomo seconded the motion. The members agreed unanimously. ~CLOSED~

D. PLANNING BOARD APPLICATION

Joan Streightiff submitted an application for the Planning Board, to serve in the future if a seat is vacated by a member. Term expiration TBD if circumstances occur.

Member Ehlinger made a motion to accept the appointment for the future appointment to the Planning Board; Member Williams seconded the motion. The members agreed unanimously. ~CLOSED~

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Board of Adjustment - No meeting

Planning Board - February minutes

Public Works - No meeting

Public Safety Committee - Letter from Chairman

Parks & Recreation Committee - February meeting

TDA - No meeting

ABC Board - January meeting

Tree Committee - February meeting

Public Safety Department

Police Report

Fire Report

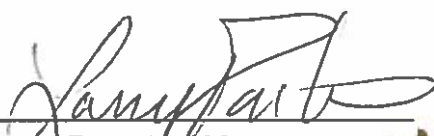
Financial Report

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Member Ehlinger provided an update on Mayor Pro Tem Lambert's wellbeing and recovery, and possible return date to his duties.

ADIURN

Member Ehlinger made a motion to adjourn; Member Williams seconded the motion. All agreed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:15pm.



Larry Fontaine, Mayor



Hillary Gropp, Town Clerk

