



TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN

Town Hall, 160 Midland Avenue, Black Mountain, NC 28711

Date: **March 5, 2022** Time: **9:00 a.m.** **Special Call Meeting Minutes**

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Larry Harris called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. with the following members present:

Mayor Larry B. Harris
Vice Mayor Ryan Stone - absent
Council Member Archie Pertiller
Council Member Bill Christy
Council Member Doug Hay
Council Member Pam King

The following staff members were present:

Josh Harrold, Town Manager
Savannah Parrish, Town Clerk
Steve Parker, Police Chief

Manager Harrold introduced Amy and David Smitherman of Bear Strategies. Amy and David were contracted by the Town to lead the Council Members through a discussion of their long-term goals and priorities. This special call meeting was held Montreat College's Black Mountain campus, 213 Vance Avenue.

Each Council Member identified several issues that they feel will need attention in the immediate years to come. Those included staff salaries, increasing the number of positions, infrastructure investment, the greenway project, public safety funding, and the expansion of Parks and Recreation offerings.

The Council Members were also asked to identify accomplishments of the Town they are most proud of. Answers included the improved water system and increased water capacity, the stormwater utility, expanding services such as solid waste, and the rewrite of the town charter.

The Town Council took a five-minute recess at 9:53 a.m.

The meeting facilitators then led the Council Members through more in-depth discussions of their priorities by moving through the implementation matrix of Elevate Black Mountain. There was much discussion among the facilitators, the Mayor, and Council Members on the accomplishments of the town, and what can be improved. Much of the discussion was centered on the need for market wages for town staff in order to retain labor. A pay and classification study was identified and a need, and will be proposed in the upcoming FY 22-23 budget.

The Town Council took a five-minute recess at 11:05 a.m.

Other priorities were identified from each section of the implementation matrix.

Walkable and Livable

- Prioritize and conduct small area, corridor, and neighborhood plans
- Conduct a housing plan

Green and Resilient

- Reduce waste and expand recycling
- Evaluate and update municipal regulations for sustainability

Vibrant Economy

- Develop an economic development strategic plan

Civic Engagement

- Enhance and maintain town's infrastructure and services
- Implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Connected and Accessible

- Implement the Black Mountain Bike Plan
- Implement Greenway Master Plan
- Improve Local Roads

Manager Harrold gave a brief overview of town funds, which referenced the presentation given by Davenport Public Finance on January 28, 2022. That presentation concluded that the town could take on additional debt and still compare favorably to highly rated communities.

The Town Council took a brief recess for lunch at 11:55 a.m.

The discussion of the most pressing needs of the town continued. The facilitators used an informal ballot method to identify the five most important priorities for this Town Council. They were identified as:

- A pay and classification study for town staff.
- Grey Eagle renovations.
- Reducing waste and increasing recycling.
- Pickleball Courts.
- Updating and implementing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Other priorities that fell outside of the top five included accelerating the town's paving program, a facility needs assessment, new full-time employees, and prioritizing electric vehicles.

The Mayor and Council members thanked Amy and David for the productive discussion.

No action was taken during this meeting.

There being no further discussion Mayor Larry B. Harris adjourned the meeting at 1:53 p.m.

ATTEST:


Savannah M. Parrish Town Clerk


Larry B. Harris, Mayor


Josh Harrold, Town Manager