

Town of Maggie Valley
Regularly Scheduled Board of Aldermen Meeting
April 15, 2008
5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Members Present: Mayor Roger McElroy, Aldermen: Saralyn Price, Colin Edwards, Phil Aldridge, and Mark DeMeola
Staff Present: Manager Tim Barth, Attorney Chuck Dickson, Public Works Director Mike Mehaffey, Planning Director Nathan Clark, Captain Jason Moody, Administrative Assistant Karen Batick, Finance Director Shayne Wheeler, and Town Clerk Vickie Best
Others Present: Chamber Director Lynn Collins and Reporter Beth Pleming

1. Meeting Called to Order.

Mayor McElroy called the meeting to order at 5:41 pm in the Flossy White Room of Town Hall.

2. Consent Agenda

- a. Tax Releases and Refund.
- b. Correction and Approval of Minutes for the March 25 and April 1, 2008 meetings.

**ALDERMAN DEMEOLA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Prior to moving to the next agenda item, Mayor McElroy read the following proclamation honoring Finance Director Leta Shayne Wheeler.

TOWN OF MAGGIE VALLEY
PROCLAMATION
PROCLAIMING APRIL 15, 2008 "LETA SHAYNE WHEELER" DAY

WHEREAS, MS. WHEELER HAS BEEN WITH THE TOWN OF MAGGIE VALLEY SINCE DECEMBER 2001;
AND

WHEREAS, MS. WHEELER RECEIVED THE FIRST CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING IN FISCAL YEAR 2002/2003 AND HAS MAINTAINED THAT STATUS EACH YEAR SINCE AND;

WHEREAS, THIS CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT IS THE HIGHEST FORM OF RECOGNITION IN GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING AND;

WHEREAS, THIS ATTAINMENT REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENT BY A GOVERNMENT AND ITS MANAGEMENT AND;

WHEREAS, THIS AWARD WAS JUDGED BY AN IMPARTIAL PANEL TO MEET THE HIGH STANDARDS OF THE PROGRAM INCLUDING DEMONSTRATING A CONSTRUCTIVE "SPIRIT OF FULL DISCLOSURE" TO CLEARLY COMMUNICATE ITS FINANCIAL STORY;

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NOW, THEREFORE, ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF MAGGIE VALLEY WE DO HEREBY PROCLAIM APRIL 15, 2008 AS THE DAY TO HONOR LETA SHAYNE WHEELER:

1. MAGGIE VALLEY IS FORTUNATE TO HAVE A FINANCE DIRECTOR WITH SUCH INTEGRITY, AND CONTINUED PRIDE IN REACHING THE HIGHEST OF GOALS IN SERVING THE TOWN OF MAGGIE VALLEY.
2. MS. WHEELER PLEASE ACCEPT THIS PROCLAMATION AS THE MAYOR, BOARD OF ALDERMEN, AND THE CITIZENRY'S WAY OF SAYING THANK YOU FOR BEING SUCH A LOYAL DEDICATED EMPLOYEE AND MAKING MAGGIE VALLEY STAND OUT AS ONE OF THE FEW MUNICIPALITIES IN THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA TO BE ABLE TO CLAIM THIS GREAT HONOR.

Ms. Wheeler received a standing ovation for her dedication and accomplishments. The Town Council and supporting staff are very proud of Ms. Wheeler.

3. Public Hearing on the financing for the Town Hall Renovation and Possible Expansion.

There were no comments from the floor.

The cost for the restroom located in the expansion area has not come in yet. When the price for the restroom comes in, a signed change-order will be required. A special called meeting may be needed if the change-order is needed in a timely fashion to prevent delays.

Mayor McElroy signed the change-order for the expansion.

4. Consideration of the development of a legislative agenda.

Council directed Manager Barth to contact each of Maggie Valley's representatives individually to schedule a meeting/luncheon for Council to discuss their legislative goals for 2008/09.

5. Update on activities from Lynn Collins, Director of the Maggie Valley Chamber and Area Visitors Bureau.

Due to a lot of confusion that has arisen since the new occupancy tax laws have come into effect, Chamber Director Lynn Collins reported the following:

- The official name for the organization as stated in the bylaws is The Maggie Valley Chamber & Area Visitors Bureau.
- There are 15 board members: 8-member Executive Board, President, Immediate Past President, VP Membership, VP Festivals, VP Finance & Capital, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- Board members serve 3-year terms with five seats being up for election each year.
- The Board has annual monthly meetings. Membership dues and festival income fund the Chamber. Last year the Chamber recruited over 70 new members bringing the current membership to 260. For the Chamber to be completely self-

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sustaining, there would need to about 400 members. The 2008/09 goal is to hopefully meet and/or exceed last year's number of 70 new members.

- TDA funding and festival income funds the Visitor Bureau.
- The Chamber produces a Membership Directory & Visitors Guide annually (25,000). Chamber produces a newsletter in conjunction with the Town of Maggie. Chamber hosts monthly networking meetings alternating between luncheons and business after hours events.
- The Chamber does ribbon cutting for new businesses.
- The Chamber plans and implements 5 festivals and events each year. In addition to those festivals, the Chamber provides assistance with 6 other festivals.
- Chamber is working with Ghost Town, the Lodging Assoc., the Hotel/Motel Assoc. and Cataloochee to put together a comprehensive marketing campaign to apply for 1% funding to market Maggie Valley as a destination. They are looking to promote Maggie Valley attractions, festivals, proximity to the Blue Ridge Parkway and the GSMNP, and to attract visitors from niche markets such as group travel, motorcyclists, military, soft adventure, outdoor enthusiasts, and multigenerational. Maggie Valley is being promoted as a year round destination – not just seasonally.

Visitor Bureau Statistics

In the past year over 50,000 visitors were assisted with information and directions.

12,399 visitor phone calls were answered.

6,736 emails were answered.

Over 30,000 pieces of mail were mailed in response to inquiries.

Over 1,000 relocation packets were distributed.

25,000 of the Chamber membership directories were distributed.

20,000 of the Beth Brown Visitor Guides were distributed.

Over 20,000 of the TDA Visitors Guides were distributed.

In addition to the above, brochures from all of the members and other local area attractions and destinations were provided to visitors.

All of the inquiries and requests received are then turned over to the TDA, which makes up a large portion of their count that they provide to their board.

The website gets 300 – 400 unique visitors a day on average and during season that number climbs to an average of 600 per day. The Chamber constantly monitors search engine optimization in order to keep the website at the top of the list in searches for Maggie Valley.

- The Chamber sends out on a monthly basis, a calendar of events to all of the member businesses.
- The Visitors Center is getting ready to go to print with a comprehensive calendar of events for May 08 through March 09. 25,000 calendars will be printed.

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- The Visitors Center is going to print with a tear off map for Maggie Valley – it will have the Valley on the top side and a bicentennial driving tour with 28 historic points of interest in Maggie Valley on the backside.
- The Visitors Center/Chamber is working with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation on printing a brochure with directions to Cataloochee Valley and information about the Elk program. The quantity for this brochure will be 100,000. In addition to the brochure, the Visitors Center/Chamber is working with the Foundation on a project to determine the economic impact of the Elk to the area and to determine the future of the program.
- Another function of the Visitors Bureau is to submit up to date information regarding Maggie Valley, to other websites such as the North Carolina tourism website. The Visitors Bureau provides information on accommodations, attractions, shopping, dining and activities to over 20 other websites.

Director Collins stated that without volunteers, the Town of Maggie Valley, Maggie Valley Public Works, and the Maggie Valley Police Department the festivals would not be possible. The festivals are needed not only to bring business to Maggie Valley but to subsidize the Chamber.

The 2008 Trout Festival planning is coming along nicely. Vendors, crafters and educational booths are continually being reserved. Senator Joe Sam Queen will be present in support of Maggie Valley. Due to demand, it is hopeful that with enough volunteers, two Kids in the Creek Clinics can be offered. The clinics sell out weeks before the festival.

Maggie Valley is one of the five test cities for the Mountain Heritage Trout Waters Program. The program is designed to introduce visitors and local residents alike the opportunity to fish in Jonathan Creek. The Chamber/ Visitors Bureau will issue the three-day fishing licenses as well as participate in the Fishing Tackle Loaner program. This allows people to borrow the necessary equipment to fish. Promotional and educational materials will also be available for public distribution.

Maggie Valley will be responsible:

- Secure unrestricted public access through lease agreement, easement, or other means to Jonathan Creek.
- To permit ingress, egress and regress to Commission personnel engaged in executing the recommended fishery management activities
- To provide personnel assistance necessary to implement a Fishing Tackle Loaner Program, maintain adequate registration and tracking records on program participants, and forward the registration information to the commission upon request

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- To ensure that fishing tackle is loaned free of charge to the general public without discrimination and consistent with the regulations stated on the registration form, and that no supplies associated with the Fishing Tackle Loaner Program will be sold
- To reimburse the Commission annually 25% of the Commission's cost of rod-and-reel combos and other fishing supplies associated with the Fishing Tackle Loaner program
- To maintain, and repair as necessary, the rod-and-reel combos that the Commission provides to the Town for the Fishing Tackle Loaner program
- To use Fishing Tackle Loaner Program cards as the means by which to loan rods and reels to anglers after they initially register in the program, and to limit distribution of the mini-tackle boxes to first-time registrants
- To honor all valid Fishing Tackle Loaner Program cards distributed from any participating Mountain Heritage Trout City that has a valid MOA for said program with the commission

Ms. Collins next addressed the issue pertaining to the Town purchasing the property located at the entrance to the Maggie Valley Festival Grounds. The Chamber/Visitors Bureau has worked hard over the past several years developing a strong relationship with the Town, as well as other organizations within Maggie Valley. The Executive Board members felt that in the best interest of everyone involved the Chamber/Visitors Bureau should "walk away" from the controversy that has developed within Town. The Chamber/Visitors Bureau will continue to seek other options. The members are confident that the Chamber/Visitors Bureau will find a permanent home.

Alderman Edwards explained that Council is not against working with the Chamber but the majority of Council members feel the property is too expensive, among other reasons.

Director Collins went on to say that the Executive Board also voted to give a portion of the net-profits from the Trout Festival and Red, White, and Boom Celebration back to the town. The Chamber will also begin paying the \$750 non-profit rental fee for the BBQ Festival and the two Craft Festivals.

6. Setting a date to interview candidates for the Zoning Board of Adjustments.

There are three positions where terms have expired.

The first regularly scheduled May meeting was rescheduled until May 7 due to the elections being held on May 6.

ALDERMAN EDWARDS MADE A MOTION TO CHANGE THE MEETING DATE TO MAY 7, 2008 AT 3:30 P.M. AND TO SCHEDULE ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT INTERVIEWS FOR 2:30 PM PRIOR TO THE MAY 7 ALDERMEN MEETING.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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7. Consideration of declaring the old antenna from Town Hall as surplus property.

The antenna that was attached to the roof behind town hall was removed in three sections. The antenna will need to be declared surplus before the antenna can be sold or given away. An individual has inquired about the antenna; but a determination has not been made. Alderman DeMeola suggested donating the antenna to a Ham Radio Club, if other options do not come to fruition.

**ALDERMAN EDWARDS MADE A MOTION TO DECLARE THE ANTENNA
SURPLUS.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8. Manager's Report.

- ▶ Manager Barth read a thank you letter from Jonathan Valley Elementary for the Town's donation for playground equipment.
- ▶ Representatives from the Pigeon River Fund will be at Parham Park on April 18, 2008 to evaluate the area since Maggie Valley applied for grant funding. All Council members are encouraged to attend the meeting.
- ▶ The Jones' Brothers Construction will complete the sewer project along Country Club Drive by April 18. Two bids were received for the sewer project. The Jones' Brothers Construction had the lowest bid by several thousand dollars.
- ▶ Manager Barth will be out of the office April 23 through April 26. The Town Clerk will be acting manager during Manager Barth's absence. Mr. Barth will always have his cell phone, so that he can be reached at all times.
- ▶ The owners of the four illegal portable signs located within town have been notified and given 48 hours to remove the signs or penalties will be imposed.
- ▶ The annexation notification has been mailed to all affected residents.

9. Other Business.

☐ The Asheville Chapter of Make a Wish Foundation previously addressed the Parks, Recreation, and Festivals Advisory Committee requesting relief on the rental fee for the festival grounds for a Make a Wish Foundation Fund Raiser. The presentation was so compelling, and in addition to that, a terminally ill child from Maggie Valley will be making a wish. The PRFAC is requesting Council to waive the rental fees.

**ALDERMAN DEMEOLA MADE A MOTION TO ALLOW THE MAKE A WISH
FOUNDATION USE THE GROUNDS FREE OF CHARGE.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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- The final sale for bricks ended with 250 bricks being sold.

Alderman Aldridge stated that this could be a project that is done in phases. “Once people see the brick displayed, more people will want to purchase bricks.”

**ALDERMAN ALDRIDGE MADE A MOTION TO CONTINUE THE BRICK SALES TO BE ORDERED EVERY SIX-MONTHS.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- A fundraiser pancake breakfast will be held May 10 from 7 to 10 am at Legends Restaurant for Alderman Aldridge’s lung transplant. The cost will be \$5 per adult. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

10. Public Comment.

There were no public comments.

11. Meeting Adjourned.

**ON MOTION OF ALDERMAN PRICE, WITH ALL IN FAVOR THE MEETING
ADJOURNED AT 6:43 PM.**

Mayor Roger McElroy

Seal

Vickie Best, CMC, Town Clerk