

**TOWN OF MAGGIE VALLEY  
REGULARLY SCHEDULED PARKS, RECREATION, FESTIVAL ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Joint meeting with the Board of Aldermen  
September 8, 2008**

Members Present: Chairman Tammy Brown, Tammy Wight, Carol Burrell, Rick Mahoney, Sonja Michels, and Dan Massey  
Aldermen Present: Mayor Roger McElroy, Aldermen: Colin Edwards and Phil Aldridge  
Staff Present: Manager Tim Barth, Public Works Director Mike Mehaffey, Chief Scott Sutton, and Town Clerk Vickie Best  
Others Present: Eight people

**Meeting Called to Order**

Chairman Brown called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m. in the Town Hall Boardroom.

**Long-Term Vision for the Festival Grounds**

Mayor McElroy stated that he would like to see the festival grounds become more self-sufficient. Council would like to see any event come to the festival grounds that was decent and put "heads in beds". The motorcycle rallies could be held during the spring and fall when the tourist season is slow.

Alderman Edwards stated that he would like to get more three-day events on the grounds; so that some of the existing events that do not draw people to spend a night or two in the hotel/motels could be dissolved. It was under consideration to limit and to bid out two motorcycle rallies per year. After further consideration, Council determined that this would not be the best method. An undesirable promoter may be able to place the highest bid to be the "only rally in town". The reason Council was even considering limiting the rallies was due to complaints from residents when motorcycle rallies come back to back every weekend. Council would like to hire someone to help bring new and different events into Maggie Valley and use some of the 1% TDA funding for the process.

Alderman Aldridge felt that Maggie Valley needs activities for kids and of course when people are visiting the mountains, they want to hear bluegrass music and see the clogging and square dancing. "Have an event with a mountain theme."

Council must consider the amount of wear and tear on the grass, especially if an event is held during a rainy weekend.

Chairman Brown stated that currently there are ten vacant weekends per year. (August-4 weekends, October- 2-weekends, May- 3 weekends, and 1 weekend in June)

Mr. Edwards felt that craft shows do not provide a lot of overnight stays.

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Mr. Massey felt that Council was limiting itself by not allowing animals, carnivals, and circuses on the grounds. He felt that motorcycle rallies were all that was left that would bring people into the valley to spend a couple of days.

Alderman Edwards felt it would help if other bike rallies were brought in for events such as Honda or Gold Wing rallies. "They are much quieter bikes."

Ms. Wight opposed only having two motorcycle rallies per year. The rallies fill most of the motels for three-plus days. If the Town were going to bring in another event she felt people would enjoy a heritage festival with craftsmen actually doing their trade. The businesses throughout town could participate. A Heritage Day promoted by the Town could become an annual event and grow to be like Bele Chere in Asheville where everyone participates.

Alderman Aldridge felt that it was also important to have events for the local people to enjoy. "Resident tax dollars go toward the festival grounds too."

Alderman Edwards agreed adding that the lighting project will be complete in December 2008 and that next year Council will have to look at adding monies to the TDA funding from the General Fund to help bring in different types of events.

There is still some funding left in the 1% TDA account for Maggie Valley.

Ms. Burrell reiterated that an Appalachian/ Heritage/ local culture type of event would be something that would grow in attendance from year to year. There are a lot of days that are not being utilized. Allowing afternoon soccer games would also be beneficial to the area.

The problem with allowing ball teams to use the grounds is that the land is not flat. It is also full of bedrock and once the top portion is removed to level an area, the land still remains rocky.

Chairman Brown reminded Council that the Chamber of Commerce is membership driven, not event driven. The festival grounds will never be self-sufficient. The Town leaders should hire an events booker. The additional income is needed, but it becomes difficult when the same group of people are doing all of the work, at all of the events.

Mayor McElroy wanted to look at expanding the events that are already on the festival grounds.

Chamber Director Lynn Collins reminded Council that there are more expenses to hiring an events booker than salary. There are membership dues and travel expenses, to name a few.

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Chairman Brown will contact Bill Clark whom schedules all of the events that take place at the Ramsey Center. He would be able to help the boards to create a criteria as well as what should be expected from an events booker.

Ms. Michels reminded everyone that new events can not be added to the Chamber because those people are volunteers. As for the Clear Point Marketing Firm, Ms. Michels felt they were looking at advertising the events that are already taking place at the festival grounds.

Both Mayor McElroy and Alderman Edwards asked that the PRFAC have input on hiring an individual to bring in new events. Hopefully Mr. Clark with the Ramsey Center will be able to attend the October meeting and provide both Council and the PRFAC with some insight.

The most recent job description for a festival director will be emailed to each PRFAC and Aldermen to review and/or revise.

Chairman Brown stated that there are a lot of organizations inside Haywood County that do not know about the festival grounds that would possibly use the grounds.

Mr. Andy Taylor stated from the audience that he has several members of a Veterans Motorcycle Club coming to stay at the Valley Inn to consider having a rally in Maggie Valley in 2010 or 2011.

Mr. Phil Wight asked if the PRFAC would accept public comment at the meeting to follow the joint meeting.

The PRFAC will accept public comment.

Chairman Brown ended the meeting by reminding everyone of the enormous progress that has been made on the festival grounds such as the stage, bathrooms, concession stand and now the entire property will have overhead lighting and electric. Everyone should be proud of the progress that has been made in the last two years.

The meeting ended at 3:30 p.m.

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Chairman Tammy Brown

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Vickie Best, CMC Town Clerk

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