

**TOWN OF VALDESE
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING – PUBLIC HEARINGS & BUDGET WORKSHOP
APRIL 24, 2017**

The Town of Valdese Town Council met on Monday, April 24, 2017, at 5:30 p.m., in the Community Room at Town Hall, 102 Massel Avenue, SW, Valdese, North Carolina. The following were present: Mayor John F. “Chip” Black, Jr., Councilman Keith Ogle, Councilwoman Frances Hildebran, Councilwoman Susan Stevenson, Councilman Gary L. Delp, and Councilman Roy F. Sweezy. Also present were Town Manager Seth Eckard and Finance Director Jerry LaMaster.

Absent: None.

A quorum was present.

Others present: Sherry Long, WPCOG Assistant Executive Director, Dwayne Wilson and Chip Harvey with Dwayne Wilson Insurance & Financial Services, and HR Officer/Utility Customer Services Manager Debbie Jones.

Parks & Recreation Director Doug Knight; Beth Heile, President of Friends of the Valdese Rec; and Richard Garrison were also in attendance.

Mayor Black called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m., and invited Members of Council to enjoy dinner catered by Myra’s Catering.

CDBG FIRST PUBLIC HEARING Mayor Black opened the public hearing and asked if anyone wished to speak either for or against.

Ms. Sherry Long said each year North Carolina receives approximately \$45 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. Local governments can apply for these funds for various activities that benefit low-to-moderate income persons with severe needs. Public hearings are required to receive public comment before the City can submit a CDBG application. This first public hearing is to assist the City in the development of CDBG projects for the coming year. The two programs funded yearly with CDBG funds to North Carolina are Infrastructure and Economic Development. She offered the following brief summaries of both programs:

INFRASTRUCTURE (CDBG-IF) There would be approximately \$25 million available this year from the NC Department of Environmental Quality for this program. The funds can be used for water and wastewater transmission lines or improvements to water and sewer treatment facilities to serve low to moderate-income areas to correct severe health or environmental needs. Maximum grant amount based on 2016 will be \$2 million with no required match. Applications anticipated due in September 2017.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CDBG-ED) The North Carolina Department of Commerce will have approximately \$15 million available in 2017 to assist local governments. The funds may be used for the construction of public utilities – road, water, sewer, gas, electric city, etc. (up to \$1 million); demolition of industrial buildings (up to \$500,000); building reuse projects (\$750,000); loans to local governments for shell buildings or industrial park development; and low interest loan funds in tandem with a bank for private industrial investment. For all categories besides the demolition grants and loans for shell building and industrial park development, the industry or business must commit to create or retain permanent full-time jobs. Of the committed job creation, persons with low to moderate income must hold 60% of the jobs and this is based on their prior 12-month household income (below 80% of median). A local match of 25% (which can be paid by the developer) is required for public facilities and demolition grants. Applications accepted on a continuous basis.

There being no one else wishing to speak, Mayor Black closed the public hearing.

SET PUBLIC HEARING DATE FOR CDBG SECOND PUBLIC HEARING

Councilman Ogle made a motion to set the date for the Second CDBG Public Hearing for Monday, June 5, 2017, 6:00 p.m., Valdese Town Hall, seconded by Councilman Sweezy. The vote was unanimous.

At 5:45 p.m., Ms. Long left the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING - PARKS AND RECREATION TRUST FUND GRANT APPLICATION Mayor Black opened the public hearing and asked if anyone wished to speak either for or against.

Parks and Recreation Director Doug Knight said the Town of Valdese had begun to seek funding for the purchase of a 302-acre parcel to become Lake Rhodhiss Park. The total cost of the project was estimated at \$1.35 million. Approximately 50 percent of this had been requested from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund, and \$400,000 had been committed by private donors. Staff would like to apply for a Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grant in the amount of \$ 300,000, which—if secured—would cover the remainder of the project costs. The purpose of the public hearing was to discuss the project, including any sources of matching funds, and to assess Town Council support and if Council was comfortable with the proposed application. Staff requested a formal approval of the application. He briefly reviewed a sheet with “Basic Facts and Assurances.”

There being no one else wishing to speak, Mayor Black closed the Public Hearing.

Councilman Sweezy made a motion to approve the PARTF Application submission, seconded by Councilwoman Stevenson. The vote was unanimous.

At 5:50 p.m., Mr. Knight, Ms. Heile as well as Mr. Garrison left the meeting.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE UPDATE Mr. Wilson and Mr. Harvey offered an overview of employee insurance and said there were seven high claims. Mr. Wilson said he would advise staff as soon as the quote for the renewal rate was received.

Town Manager Seth Eckard said there would be a significant increase in insurance costs and briefly discussed ways to budget for the increase.

At 6:30 p.m., Mr. Wilson, Mr. Harvey and Ms. Jones left the meeting.

DOWNTOWN STREET LIGHTS Council discussed the street light project and recommended delaying this project.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION GRANT PROPOSAL Mr. Eckard said since the grant funds would not go toward the downtown street light project that perhaps a committee could be formed for downtown revitalization recommendations. He said after payment for the brick stamped pavers and removal of bump-out on Main Street that approximately \$50,000 remained of the grant.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Black appointed Councilwoman Stevenson and Councilman Delp to serve on a committee with the Town Manager, Community Affairs Director, Planning Director, and Public Works Director.

SANITATION OPTIONS Mr. Eckard offered an update on sanitation options and said there would be an agreement on the May 1 agenda for approval.

SPECIAL PROJECTS BUDGET Mr. Eckard offered an update on Town projects.

PROPOSED BUDGET AND HIGHLIGHTS - FY 17-18 Mr. Eckard and Finance Director Jerry LaMaster presented the proposed budget for FY 17-18. They reviewed the General and Utility Funds Revenues and Expenditures.

PROPOSED RATE STRUCTURE FY 17-18 Mr. Eckard briefly reviewed the proposed rate structure which was also presented at the budget retreat.

ADJOURNMENT At 8:32 p.m., there being no further business to come before Council, Councilman Ogle made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Delp. The vote was unanimous.

The next meeting is a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, May 1, 2017, 6:00 p.m., Valdese Town Hall.

Town Clerk

Mayor

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