

TOWN OF WEBSTER

MINUTES FOR APRIL 10, 2015 BOARD MEETING

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Webster met for a scheduled planning meeting at 1411 Webster Road. Mayor Breedlove called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Breedlove, Commissioner Janice Blanton, Commissioner Billie Bryson, Commissioner Allan Grant, Commissioner Danell Moses, and Vice Mayor Tracy Rodes

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Tanner Hall of *The Sylva Herald*

GENERAL MEETING

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Grant motioned to approve agenda as amended; Vice-Mayor Rodes seconded. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ABOUT JAIL PROPERTY PURCHASE

Mayor Breedlove presented a list of questions regarding the purchase of the property in town that was the former jail, now owned by the Penland heirs; the topic has come up a few times after the property was put on the market. Two area architects would be able to survey the property and give the town a ballpark estimate of what it would take to rehabilitate the property. The Local Government Commission would require an architect's report before approving any financing, should the town purchase the property.

Likely renovations, Breedlove said would be HVAC, Roof, Windows, Flooring, Asbestos, Mold, Structural Integrity, ADA Compliance, Parking, Signage.

Mayor Breedlove presented a cost analysis of potentially purchasing the property. He estimated a loan inclusive of the building purchase and about \$200,000 in repairs (which he termed a conservative estimate) would run around \$3,000 a month; the museum space at the Courthouse, in comparison, only runs \$385/month.

Commissioner Blanton stated that it would offer community centered options as well as an historical museum. She said she thought we could get money from various sources to cover the costs of the purchase, renovations, and running the museum.

Commissioner Moses stated that she thinks the building is uninhabitable and should probably be razed. She didn't think the costs to renovate would be feasible.

Vice-Mayor Rodes said she worried about the costs. She had reservations about getting an historical architect. She said it would be nice to have more of a town center than the current town hall and said while we don't need more space, we do need more of a yard and outside area.

Commissioner Grant said he thinks it would be space the town doesn't need, and the town does not need to be a landlord.

Commissioner Bryson she thought it would be worth it because of the preservation of history. The final decision was to not take any action at present.

STREETLIGHTS

Commissioner Blanton said she doesn't care whether or not homeowners want street lights that it was a safety issue and the town should move forward with adding them. Breedlove told the board a few homeowners were adamant about not having streetlights, and Blanton said the town should install them anyway. Breedlove said he would check with Duke Energy on whether the town could utilize its franchise agreement to install them without right-of-way permission from the landowner.

Board members agreed to add lights at the following locations:

ADDED

at the base of Briarwood Road

at the ballpark with a leader pole to the street

at the kudzu patch with a leader pole which might be used as a light pole in future in front of Shallocks

around back of Buchanan Loop, beginning in the curve before Joey Hoell's house with leader poles every 150 feet, lights every 300 feet (ideally the lights would be placed on the other side of the street from Hoell's property as he had objections to them being beside his house) near Kathleen Buchanan's house (Summer Garden Place Rd) in blind curve before cemetery

REMOVED

Kirk Stephens yard

PLANNING EFFORT IMPLEMENTATION

Discussion ensued surrounding the 10 Action Steps for Implementation in the "Webster Heart and Soul" plan. The steps included:

1. Adopt this plan
 - A. This is complete.
2. Updating the Zoning Ordinances
 - A. This is in process through the Planning Board.
3. Upgrade the ball field site and install water fountain
 - A. The Parks and Rec Department has added a pavilion to their future capital funding plan. Blanton said the town board hasn't fully decided on a water fountain yet and some board members might not want it. Mayor Breedlove said the water fountain was included in the plan because grant funding might be available for it in the future and it would be an asset for the town. Blanton said they can be difficult to upkeep and said some are disgusting.
 - B. Moses and Blanton suggested that the idea of a water fountain be discussed further in future.
4. Pursue funding for Buchanan Loop pedestrian facilities
 - A. This will be addressed after getting the WCU Town Survey results.
 - B. NC DOT indicated resurfacing Buchanan Loop for roughly \$800,000 would accomplish this and the resurfacing project would include a wide, paved shoulder.
5. Develop a Land Use Plan
 - Mayor Breedlove asked if the board wanted to apply for a grant for technical assistance to develop a land use plan. He has gotten plans from other small towns.
 - Vice-Mayor Rodes indicated that she that didn't think we needed to go through a big planning project like what happened with the last three-year ordinance process.
 - Moses asked why the town would decide it needs a plan. Mayor Breedlove said that technically towns should have one, as Kostelec had indicated, to guide their zoning. The land use plan would give a justification and foundation on which the ordinances would be based.
 - Commissioner Rodes asked how much it would cost to get one put together like the example from the town of Clyde. Mayor Breedlove indicated that Kristy Carter of J.M. Teague had estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000.
 - Grant said that since we have a vision for the town that should control the land use.
 - Mayor Breedlove will meet with the county planner, Gerald Green, to find out the next steps to find out the next steps for creating a plan. He said the board would discuss the plan at their next meeting and whether the town board wanted to pursue one. He indicated he would also contact the state to see if assistance is available.
 - Moses will contact Dillsboro for a copy of their ordinances and land use plan.
 - Commissioner Blanton said that while she thinks we need a plan so we are prepared to represent who we are and where we want to go, she still has reservations spending a lot of money to get one prepared. She mentioned that during the most recent board meeting, a plan would have allowed the board to have a document to reference for what we do and do not allow. She mentioned the two outside parties who attended the meeting were both interested in money, but that we (the board) must be interested in Webster.

6. Work with Jackson County and Southwestern Commission on plan updates
 - A. Mayor Breedlove is engaged with CTP boards in this effort.
7. Fund an initiative to develop a brand and town seal for Webster
 - A. Mayor Breedlove will solicit information from professional design firms with the intent of approving a firm at the May 6.
8. Develop a wayfinding system
 - A. Mayor Breedlove has applied for a Tourism Development Authority grant that would cover most of the cost of erecting signs and printing brochures for the Historic Walking Tour. We will add this to a future agenda.
9. Adopt a Complete Streets Policy
 - A. Mayor Breedlove will draft a policy the board can adopt as a resolution to be presented at the next regular board meeting in May 2015.
10. Erect a Little Free Library
 - A. Commissioner Moses will ask Brad Moses how much he would charge to build a book kiosk.
 - B. Commissioner Grant indicated that if are going to be a walking community, it would be another place for residents to stop.
 - C. Commissioner Bryson is strongly opposed to the idea.
 - D. Vice-Mayor Rodes indicated she is in favor of the idea, but only if the kiosk is well maintained.
 - E. Commissioner Blanton joked that she had concerns about people placing pornographic materials in the kiosk.

Copies of Walking Plan for the Town Hall and Board

Each board member will receive a copy, five copies will be printed for the public, and one will be left in Town Hall.

FY 2015-16 budget discussion

1. Attorney/landscaper contract renewal

The board decided to keep Michele Smith as town attorney and Justin Woodard as landscaper. Vice-Mayor Rodes asked that Mayor Breedlove to inform Woodard that Lowe's was discontinuing a weed killer that has been known to damage bee populations. Breedlove said he would let Woodard know.

Sheriff patrols

Moses said that the current budgeted amount is \$10,000. That covers 400 hours per year. Board members came to the consensus to decrease to 26 hours per month or \$7,800 for the year.

Moses will contact the deputies and ask them to schedule their rotations around the school rush (7-8 AM) and after work hours (5:30-8:30 PM).

Their presence and extra lighting are important for the town's Halloween activities.

Moses will prepare a compilation of the patrol reports to better assess the data.

2. Future repairs budget

Commissioner Rodes suggested that the town hall apartment needed repairs to cabinets and a few other items; she said the current tenant may be moving out and the town board would need to make repairs to those items to make it habitable.

Mayor Breedlove questioned whether the town wanted to continue to rent the apartment and whether we needed to be in the rental business because in prior years between expenses and repairs to the apartment and rental income received the town has come close to breaking even. Commissioner Bryson said if the town does not make the repairs, the apartment will fall into disrepair. Mayor Breedlove suggested that monies be set aside for future repairs. The board decided to put extra money into the repairs line item to cover the cost of deductibles.

3. Sidewalks

Mayor Breedlove suggested that monies be set aside for future sidewalk as the county no longer receives Powell Bill funds and the town at some point in the future may be faced with costly repairs. The board decided to put \$1,000 per year in that new line item.

4. Donations to organizations

The board decided to make donations to Jackson County Historical Society, Webster Historical Society through membership in both. Mayor Breedlove will bring back information regarding the town joining the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce.

Commissioner Moses asked the group to consider providing a dinner for Circles of Hope as a way to show concern for all of our Jackson County neighbors. She will bring a list of available dates to the May meeting.

Other budget discussion

Budget items were discussed by line item. Moses will create a draft budget based on suggestions:

<i>Administration</i> will increase to	\$ 6,000.
<i>Attorney Fees</i> will increase to	\$ 6,000.
<i>Election</i> will increase to	\$ 2,000.
<i>Law Enforcement Patrol</i> will decrease to	\$ 7,800.
<i>Sidewalk Fund</i> will be added to include	\$ 1,000.
<i>Street Lights</i> will increase to	\$ 9,000.
<i>Electric for apartment</i> will decrease to	\$ 700.

RPUD Discussion

Board members early in the meeting had said they'd like to discuss RPUD housing developments in Webster if there was time at the end of the meeting. Some board members had prior obligations with Southwestern Community College's 50th Anniversary so the meeting was adjourned without discussing RPUD housing. Mayor Breedlove asked the board whether they would like him to invite the former visitors who attended the prior board meeting about RPUD (Jim Grant, Sarah Grant, David Dellinger, Todd Baucom, and Wanda Herren) and Commissioner Blanton said 'no'.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Nick Breedlove, Mayor

Danell Moses, Town Clerk