

## Town of Lake Santeetlah

### Council Meeting Minutes

**June 21, 2016**

Mayor Crabtree called the meeting to order at 10:01AM. Vice Mayor Jim Hager and Council Members Bob Wehr, John Garland and Connie Gross were present for the meeting. Town Administrator Kim Matheson, Clerk Emily Hooper and Public Works Technician Eric Hayes were also present.

The first order of business was the approval of the agenda. With no additions or changes necessary Councilman Jim Hager made motion of approval. Councilman Bob Wehr seconded. All others approved, the motion carried.

After review of the May 17, 2016 Council Meeting minutes no changes or corrections were indicated. Councilman Jim Hager made a motion of approval. Connie Gross seconded. All others approved. The motion carried.

The minutes from the Special Called meeting on May 28, 2016 have been distributed for review and with no corrections or changes Councilman Jim Hager made a motion to approve. Councilwoman Connie Gross seconded. All others approved. The motion carried.

After review of the June 16, 2016 Special Meeting Minutes a correction was needed in the millage rate from .0225 to .0025. Councilwoman Connie Gross made a motion to approve the minutes with the correction. Councilman John Garland seconded. All others approved. The motion carried.

**Financial Report:** Finance Officer Jim Hager briefly reviewed the reports explaining the reserves are lower than recommended in both the Water and General accounts. The budget for 2016-17 does have allotted funds to increase these accounts.

#### **Request for Public Comment:**

Jack Gross spoke about the idea in progress of a boat rescue plan. Jack and Connie Gross are in the planning stages and have a list of volunteers willing to help. Jack presented a map of the lake that had been zoned so stranded boaters could identify their location on the lake. Further updates will be provided as available.

#### **Old Business**

**#1 Approval of Stop Work Order/Town Administrator authorization of enforcement:** The Stop Work Order proposed was composed by attorney, M. Ellen Davis and will be used as a notification tool in the case of noncompliant construction. Councilman John Garland made a motion to approve the Stop Work Order. Councilman Jim Hager amended the motion to include that the Town Administrator had the authority to enforce the Order. Councilman Bob Wehr seconded. Connie Gross opposed. With three members in favor the motion carried.

**#2 Code of Ordinances/Letter of Response:** Attorney M. Ellen Davis composed a letter to the American Publishing League explaining the dissatisfaction of the updated code of ordinances received. Many of the codes were insignificant to the Town and were obviously unnecessary. A remaining balance was due of \$3,240.00 for the updated codes and Davis requested in the letter that some action be taken in order to suffice the poor efforts. A response was received from the League acknowledging that for no additional payment the Town could terminate the contract. Attorney Davis has agreed to come to Town Hall and work with staff to update the ordinances and supply an electronic copy for approximately \$1,500.00. The Council is open to this idea and will discuss further at a later date. Councilman Jim Hager made a motion to sign and mail the contract termination agreement. Bob Wehr seconded. All others approved. The motion carried.

## **New Business**

**#1 Approval of the 2016/17 TOLS Budget:** The proposed budget for the Town of Lake Santeetlah has been updated to include the tax increase approved June 16, 2016 at a Special Called Meeting. The budget has been distributed for review, discussed at several meetings, and posted on the Town website. With no further suggestions or comments Councilwoman Connie Gross made a motion to adopt the budget as proposed. Councilman Bob Wehr seconded. All others approved. The motion carried.

**#2 Removal of Steps on Town Property:** The steps located near 123 Santeetlah Trail on Town Property have deteriorated and must be removed or replaced. The dock below the steps belongs to resident John Cochran. Town Administrator Kim Matheson attempted to contact Mr. Cochran but was unable to do so. The Town would like to ask Mr. Cochran if he uses these steps for access to the dock. If he would like to replace the steps a liability form could be devised by the Town attorney to allow him to replace the steps and access his dock while removing the Town from any liability in this matter. This project may be of no interest to Mr. Cochran if he does not use the area. Town Clerk Emily Hooper contacted Laurel Wright from the North Carolina Division of Handicap Department to question if the Town replaced the steps would there need to be handicap access even though only a ten foot strip is owned by the Town. Mrs. Wright explained that as a Town if the area is considered public access we could replace the steps in that area, however at some location within the Town we would be required to offer access that would be handicap accessible. This would be a costly project and these access points are rarely used. There is also an option to disable public access and remove the steps. However this would require Brookfield to remove the dock. Town Administrator Kim Matheson will continue to attempt contact with Mr. Cochran. This item will be further discussed after contact with Mr. Cochran has been made.

**#3 Lakeside Road Turnover/Advice from Attorney M. Ellen Davis:** Attorney Davis was emailed after the Planning Meeting June 16, 2016 with a list of questions concerning Lakeside roads and her advice to proceed. A response was received by Mrs. Davis this morning acknowledging receipt of the email and that she would review and respond within the week. Mayor Crabtree suggested that due to the long list of questions that we have for Davis we ask that she attend the July Planning or Council Meeting rather than respond by email. Town Administrator Kim Matheson will contact Attorney Davis to see if she can attend.

**#4 Danger Tree Removal at 195 Nantahala Trail:** The danger trees in the area are affecting both power and phone lines and could damage two homes if they fall. Town Clerk Emily Hooper contacted Duke Energy and reported the trees. Duke will trim the trees below the lines but will not fully remove them. Clean Cut tree service came and looked at the trees and will provide an estimate to remove once Duke Energy has completed their work.

**#5 Update Sign Ordinance/Signage Complaints:** The current sign ordinance limits each sign within Town to one square foot and at least five feet from the road right of way. Each home can have one sign for every road bordering the property and one that can be viewed from the lake. Councilwoman Connie Gross discussed the ordinance further sharing her concern for the need for more signs directing to the homes as many are difficult to locate. Councilman John Garland and Bob Wehr agreed that this would compile to be a large amount of signs and not be appealing within the Town. Bob Wehr suggested that we devise a list of homes for sale and rentals that could be attached to the Town website for further identification. The two signs that are currently noncompliant will be removed and the owners will be notified and provided a copy of the sign ordinance. The sign ordinance allows a request for exception for a noncompliant sign if the owner wishes to do so.

**#6 Water Tap for Emily Hohenschutz:** Public Works Technician Eric Hayes has been unable to find where an old tap may be located at the Hohenschutz residence. Lamar Williams, the contract water operator, will be here Wednesday to locate the best option to tap into the main if an old tap cannot be located.

**#7 Approval of Budget Amendment:** The amendment presented will be the last for the 2014-15 budget. The danger tree removal listed at \$3500.00 is a high estimate to be assured that there are sufficient funds budgeted for the removal.

**#8 Road Bond Refund for James Case:** All construction is complete at James Case residence and there are no areas of damage. The property is clean other than a small amount of dirt is in the roadway that will be removed later this afternoon. Councilman Jim Hager made a motion to approve the bond refund. Councilwoman Connie Gross seconded. Others approved. The motion carried. Councilman John Garland did not vote as he was the constructor for this project.

**#9 Road Bond Refund/Authorization for Town Administrator to issue refund:** Councilwoman Connie Gross made a motion to authorize Town Administrator Kim Matheson to refund road bonds after Public Works Technician Eric Hayes has visited the property to assure there has been no damage and the area is clean of all construction. Councilman Jim Hager seconded. All others approved. The motion carried.

**#10 Approval of Resolution of Sympathy and support for Orlando Victims:** Resident Roger Carlton composed a resolution of sympathy for Orlando victims and singer Christina Grimmie. The resolution was reviewed by the Council. John Garland made a motion of approval to send the resolution as proposed. Bob Wehr seconded. Councilwoman Connie Gross was opposed. With three members in favor the motion carried. The resolution will be sent to the clerk of Orange County Florida.

**#11 Raymond Williams/Mowing:** During last year's mowing season the Council discussed and received bids for mowing the strip along 129 that leads to the entrance of the Town. The state typically mows the area two or three times per year and the area is overgrown by the next mowing cycle. Raymond Williams was the low bidder and was asked to mow at the Town's request. After being asked to mow the area last week he came to complete the job and the contractors had already passed by and mowed the area. Williams acknowledged that after being requested to come it was an inconvenience to bring his employees and equipment and not be able to complete the job. Williams did not feel that the Town of Lake Santeetlah would have any effect in pressuring the state to increase the amount of times that area was mowed. To keep the area looking desirable it should be mowed every two weeks according to Williams. There are also certain streets within the Town (ex. Indian Trail) that are not included in Williams' service that need both the grass cut and bushes trimmed. After the discussion of this matter it was suggested that Public Works Technician Eric Hayes and Williams work together to devise a plan including all areas and streets within the Town that need regular service in hopes of keeping the Town and entrance way looking better. Williams stated that typically each additional road will add \$25.00 more to the current contract cost.

Raymond Williams also pointed out that in the past he was ordered to clean up downed trees and remove debris from the area, trim trees and bushes, and clean out culverts. Williams questioned why this process had changed. After discussion the first order of direction in the case of a downed tree will be to contact Public Works Technician Eric Hayes, if he is not available Town Administrator will contact Raymond Williams to clear the road for traffic. Finance Officer Jim Hager will then decide depending on the size of the tree if the job needs two estimates.

Also as a member of the Graham County Library Board Williams asked that the Town reconsider its decision to only contribute \$1000.00 for the 2016-17 fiscal year. The employee issues that were of concern have been dealt with and with the changes Williams hopes that the Library can regain the dedication and support lost by citizens over the past few years. The Council agreed that if the budget allows more funds may be donated. The new director will begin work in July and will be asked to attend an upcoming Planning or Council meeting.

### **Discussion Items**

**#1 Report of Past Due Water/Tax Collection:** Past due water collections currently total \$14,495.07. All past due accounts are currently on a payment plan except for Lake Point Investments. Stephanie Danforth has paid several payments on her account and has a remaining balance of \$442.88. Mrs. Danforth's bills were being sent to the wrong address and she was not receiving them therefore explaining why the account was past due. The address has been updated and Danforth requested that the Town take some responsibility for faulty bookkeeping and wave the remaining balance. Finance Officer Jim Hager will review Mrs. Danforth's account and will return to the

Council for further discussion. No water meter will be locked without proper notification according to the water policy.

**#2 Grass Mowing on 129/Compose Resolution to DOT:** This item was discussed earlier no further discussion was needed.

Councilman Jim Hager made the motion pursuant to the provisions of North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11 (c), I move that the Town of Lake Santeetlah Town Council go into closed session for the purpose of considering personnel matters as defined in and allowed by North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11 (a) (6) and North Carolina General Statute 160A-168. Bob Wehr seconded all others approved. The motion carried.

**Announcements:**

Mayor Crabtree announced that there would be a Planning meeting July 14, 2016 and a Council meeting July 19, 2016 both at 10:00AM.

With no further business at this time Councilman Jim Hager made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bob Wehr seconded, all others agreed. The motion carried. Mayor Crabtree adjourned the meeting at 12:02PM.

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Robert P. Crabtree, Mayor

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Emily Hooper, Town Clerk