

MINUTES
VILLAGE OF FLAT ROCK COUNCIL MEETING
ASSEMBLY ROOM – VIA ZOOM
APRIL 8, 2021
9:30 A.M.

Mayor Weedman presided over the April 8, 2021, council meeting at 9:30 a.m. Those present in addition to Mayor Weedman were Vice Mayor Coletta, Council Members Carpenter, Dethero, Gooch, Gregory, Tiles, Village Clerk Parker and Village Administrator Christie.

MOMENT OF SILENT MEDITATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Weedman led the group in a moment of silent meditation. He then led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments – Village Clerk Parker received a public comment via email from Victoria Flanagan, and Mayor Weedman read the email.

Flat Rock Playhouse – Lisa Bryant & Kim Hinkelman

Council Member Tiles welcomed Lisa Bryant, Producing Artistic Director of the Flat Rock Playhouse, to the meeting. Ms. Bryant mentioned Kim Hinkelman was not available to attend the meeting via Zoom. She then spoke about the financial position of the Playhouse during the COVID pandemic of 2020. Some actions the Playhouse took to increase their financial stability included launching a Rock Solid Campaign with a fundraising goal of \$1.5 million as well as applying for grants. So far, they have already reached 40 percent of their goal. The Playhouse is in hopes of reopening the theater in the Fall. Ms. Bryant asked for Village Council to consider financially supporting the theater in the upcoming FY 2021/2022 budget.

Agenda Approval/Changes – Under *New Business, Item #10 – National Law Enforcement Week* was added to the agenda. Council Member Carpenter made a motion to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Council Member Gregory. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Consent Agenda

1. The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:
 - March 1, 2021 – Agenda Workshop Minutes
 - March 11, 2021 – Council Meeting Minutes

The above minutes were approved.

Special Reports

2. Administration – Village Administrator Christie

Administrator Christie reviewed the March 2021 zoning report dated April 5, 2021, and the Village Administrator report dated April 5, 2021 (see attached reports).

3. Park Update – Council Member Carpenter

Council Member Carpenter reported the Park Commission met March 25, 2021, and discussed the following:

- Implementation of QR Reader infrastructure: The initial QR Readers have been purchased. The plan is to begin with the Pollinator Garden, then spread to the Wildflower Garden and other sections of the Park in stages. This may be a multi-year project.

Update: As reported at the March council meeting, the couple who were going to set up the implementation of this system on the Internet have decided to close their business, so a new company will need to be selected to finish this work.

- Pollinator Garden Update
 1. The Park Commission had previously approved the placement of new steppingstones in the garden. This work has now been completed.
 2. The Commission has contracted for the new perimeter path around the Pollinator Garden consisting of granite fines. The money for this project is not in the current budget, so a budget adjustment was approved at the March council meeting. The path has been contracted out and should be completed around the end of May or early June.
- The downed pine tree in the Park was removed on April 6, 2021.
- Tree City USA/Arbor Day Observance: As previously stated, it was decided that the Village would invite the Boy & Girl Scouts to the park to participate in a tree planting ceremony to take place between 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 1, 2021, in observance of National Arbor Day (officially designated for April 30 of each year). In addition, Mayor Weedman will be tossing in the first shovel full of dirt, and then giving a short tree-related speech. Nine hardwood trees have been donated and will be planted: six hardwood trees donated by Ace Hardware and three trees donated by Raymond's Garden Center, consisting of a Sugar Maple, Native Red Maple, and River Birch. The Park Commission and Park Foundation are publicizing this event, keeping in mind the Governor's COVID-19 restrictions that may be in place on May 1st.

The Henderson County branch of Forestry Service has agreed to staff a table at the event to hand out tree and forest related literature and answer questions on tree propagation and care. The Park Foundation will also be on hand at this event.

- A motion was made at the March 25, 2021, Park Commission meeting to replace the golf course wire fencing near the Highland Golf Villas with locust wood split rail fencing. The cost would be between \$3,000 - \$4,000 with the funds to be taken from the park budget. The motion was seconded and approved. John Wilkerson will place an order for the fencing.

4. Foundation Update – Council Member Gooch

Mr. Dennis Flanagan reported Yoga will take place twice a week. On the fourth Saturday of each month, Pardee will hold wellness and health programs from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. The Foundation is continuing to work on other activities. Kids in Parks dedication/ribbon cutting will take place on April 24, 2021. Also, in April is the first anniversary of Friends of the Park, now with 145+ members and continuing to increase donations to sustain the park.

5. Transportation Update – Vice Mayor Coletta

- Culvert replaced and road section paved on Mary Place in Flat Rock Forest.
- West Blue Ridge Road section in front of Mill House Lodge that was repaired several months ago because of flooding is now paved.
- West Blue Ridge Road scheduled to be resurfaced, waiting to hear back on the work schedule.

Update on N. Highland Lake Road project:

- NCDOT opened bids on the project in February, but all submitted bids were too high for a division needs project, which this is, so the contract process has been sent to Raleigh with an expected let date sometime in May.
- Construction still scheduled to start in August/September.
- PARTF paperwork is being finalized, and we hope to send it out in the next week or two.
- NCDOT reimbursement funds to the Village are now in escrow with the Henderson County Clerk and can be accessed by the Village once all required paperwork is completed by the Village attorney.
- Village Council unanimously passed a motion authorizing the payment of \$27,000 to the Highland Golf Villas HOA as reimbursement for their stone wall, which will be removed due to the road project, as soon as funds become available from escrow; HGV HOA negotiated with NCDOT on this reimbursement, but due to how NCDOT had to handle the project, their reimbursement was included in the Village's funds as a separate line item.

6. Financial & Tax Report – Mayor Weedman & Paul de Chalain

Mayor Weedman reported that, as of April 7, 2021, the current fiscal year tax collections are at 99.5 percent with \$1,252,867.99 total collected (see attached report).

Mr. de Chalain prepared a Statement of Revenues and Expenditures Budget and Actual for the nine months ended March 31, 2021 (see attached report).

Old Business

7. 2021/2022 Budget

Mayor Weedman and Paul de Chalain will meet individually with council members to review their proposed budget worksheets in preparation of a tentative budget.

New Business

8. American Rescue Plan – Mayor Weedman

Mayor Weedman reported the Village will receive \$990,000, and have until December 31, 2024, to allocate the funds. The Village will receive \$495,000 mid-May, and remaining \$495,000 a year later. He stated that there is not yet any federal guidance or rules that specify how the funds may be spent or how they may be dispensed. The National League of Cities is working with the Treasury Department to establish the guidelines/rules, which may not be available until mid-May. Mayor Weedman stated that the Village will take time in dispensing the funds, so that it is done correctly. He also mentioned that the Village cannot use the funds to reduce the village tax rate or to supplement pensions.

9. Flat Rock Transportation Advisory Committee – Vice Mayor Coletta

Vice Mayor Coletta had presented a draft of the Flat Rock Transportation Advisory Committee Charter (see attached copy). Vice Mayor Coletta made the motion that the Village Council approve the creation of a Flat Rock Transportation Advisory Committee to advise the Village Council on transportation issues. Council Member Gregory seconded the motion, and there was discussion. Discussion included information on the committee make-up of five members: council member responsible for transportation, one representative from Historic Flat Rock, Inc., and three at-large members. Council members were requested to send names for possible committee members to Vice Mayor Coletta. After discussions, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

10. National Law Enforcement Week – Council Member Carpenter

Council Member Carpenter stated National Law Enforcement Week begins May 9, 2021, through May 15, 2021. He suggested adopting a resolution for Village Council to consider showing support of the Henderson County Sheriff's Office, and he would prepare a draft resolution to be approved at the May agenda meeting. Council Member Gregory is coordinating providing lunch to the Henderson County Sheriff's Office.

Other Business

11. Mayor – Council Reports

Council Member Dethero reported he has had no communications with John Connect on the sewer system of Halfway Tree Mobile Home Park. The completion date for the sewer system was set for the end of March but has not been completed to date. He received a call from Luke Hunter who is having problems with water run-off from Trenholm Road to the mobile home park. One of the causes is a leaking water pipe along Trenholm Road. Council Member Dethero and Luke Hunter have a meeting with a City of Hendersonville Water Department representative who oversees water run-off on April 14, 2021. He will report back to Council on what was discussed.

Council Member Dethero asked Victoria Flanagan to give an update of the Historic Landmarks progress on Saluda Cottages (1895 Little River Road). Mrs. Flanagan reported that the required document is 75 percent completed, and she is waiting on drone shots of the property. The change of title is completed, and the project itself should be completed late spring or early summer of this year.

Council Member Dethero mentioned Kudzu spraying will start in June 2021. The annual Ice Cream Social has been cancelled for June, but it may be held in the Fall. He asked for council members to consider another type of event instead of the ice cream social.

Council Member Tiles gave an update on the following:

Census – Redistricting data may be available by late August, prior to the September 30th data release, but would be in an older format that could be difficult for states to work with. There is still no final determination regarding municipal elections based on redistricting.

Health – As of April 7th, all of those sixteen-years-old and older are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds will receive the Pfizer vaccine, as it is the only one approved for them. The Health Department has closed their waiting list and appointments are now made online at www.hendersoncountync.gov/health. The vaccination site is currently at the old J.C. Penny's in the Blue Ridge Mall. Vaccines are also provided by Advent Health, Blue Ridge Health, and the Pardee clinic at Blue Ridge Community College as well as some local drug stores. 26.5 percent of Henderson County residents have had the first

vaccine and 20.1 percent are fully vaccinated. The Governor's Executive Order #204 COVID-19 restrictions are in effect until April 30, 2021.

Playhouse – As we learn more regarding the uses of the American Rescue Plan monies that Flat Rock will receive, the Council will be determining if some can be given to the Flat Rock Playhouse.

Vice Mayor Coletta reported on the following:

Litter Sweep - The Village Council will participate in the NCDOT Spring Litter Sweep, which runs from April 10 – 24. Vice Mayor Coletta contacted the NCDOT Henderson County Maintenance Office to see about getting equipment for Litter Sweep. The office has signs and gloves, but no vests or pinchers, although some are on order and expected in a few weeks. The office needs at least a day's notice to gather the equipment for pick up.

Broadband Access: Mayor Weedman asked Vice Mayor Coletta to look into the state of broadband access in the Flat Rock area, since this is specifically mentioned in the American Rescue Plan Act as an approved use for any ARP funds. In 2019, Henderson County, Fletcher, Laurel Park, and Hendersonville, working with the Land of Sky Regional Council, produced the document, *Henderson County Broadband Community Profile*, which looked at the county overall and identified areas that were underserved or had no access. Vice Mayor Coletta will continue to research this issue.

Council Member Carpenter mentioned the Park Commission approved the park budget at the March 25, 2021, meeting. He asked council to consider holding the May agenda meeting as an in-person meeting.

Council Member Gregory reported Shred Day and Pill Drop-off is scheduled for Saturday, May 8, 2021, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. There will be a banner displayed above the Village Hall sign at the intersection of Highway 225 and Little River Road, and the event will be advertised in the Hendersonville Lightning and on the Village's website and social media pages.

Public Comments – None

Adjournment

With no further discussions, at 10:57 a.m., Council Member Tiles made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Vice Mayor Coletta.

Michelle Parker, CMC
Village Clerk

Nick Weedman
Mayor