

**Minutes  
Spruce Pine Town Council  
September 26, 2016 5:30 PM**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on September 26, 2016. Present were Mayor Pro Tem Larry McKinney and Council Members Jackie Rensink, James Acuff and Rocky Buchanan. Staff in attendance included Richard Canipe, Darlene Butler, Dave Lindsey, and Bill Summerlin. Others attended, including Gregg Henline, Lisa Henline, John Pendley, Herman Buchanan, Don Waldroup, Josh Boone, Ron Cohen, Jimmy Phillips, John Hall, Luther Stroup, Libby Phillips, Sandy Blankenbaker, Tommy Westall, Peter Franklin, Amy Waller, Brandon Roberts, and David Purtell (Mitchell News-Journal).

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Larry McKinney called the regular meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Rocky Buchanan gave the invocation. Jackie Rensink led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

James Acuff moved to approve the agenda, adding an appointment for Josh Boone. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2016 regular meeting. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

APPOINTMENTS

Josh Boone, on behalf of Spruce Pine Fire and Rescue, requested a solicitation permit for a roadblock for Shop with a Cop and Angel Tree. The date is October 22, 2016 from 10AM to 2PM. Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the request. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

CONSENT AGENDA – NONE

ACTION AGENDA - NONE

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

- Town manager Richard Canipe reported that Altapass Baptist Church has offered a caboose to the Town of Spruce Pine. Some restoration is needed. The offer has three stipulations. 1) If it is no longer wanted, first right of refusal is to the NC Transportation Museum. 2) A plaque is requested to commemorate the donation of the Lee Medford/Bud Phillips/Altapass Baptist Church caboose. 3) The caboose needs some restoration. Mike Queen is looking into moving it for us. Altapass Baptist Church voted to give it to the Town. James Acuff moved to go forward. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT / BUSINESS OWNER COMMUNICATION

John Pendley addressed the Council with several talking points. He noted that West Jefferson, a town with a population of around 1,314, has 6 motels. He thinks having a caboose is a great idea. He wants to start thinking about buildings downtown. He noted that 15 properties look like WWII hit them. He thinks the Phillips family would work with us on their properties. He asked what happened to the sidewalk plans. Town manager Richard Canipe responded that Main Street is working on a starting point for the budgeted sidewalks. He stated that he feels the Town needs its own EDC director and imaging plan. Richard noted that the plan developed several years ago with the aid of Gary Cooper is continuing to be implemented. He commended Starli McDowell on her work on her building, noted that the Dorman building is overpriced, and appreciated that trees inside the Harding building were cut. He proposed that the Town needs a presence in magazines such as Our State. He feels that the Carolina Theater is the sleeping giant downtown and that something positive should be done with it. Council Members James Acuff and Jackie Rensink noted that they are on board with him.

Peter Franklin of Foxfire Real Estate stated that he would like to back up John Pendley's thoughts on an EDC position for the Town of Spruce Pine. He feels Spruce Pine would be a great site for an industry such as Ruger. He expressed a need for a Spruce Pine brochure. The Town desperately needs a national chain hotel, even a small one. An incentive package from the Town could help with that.

Per Luther Stroup, Holiday Inn founder Robert Wilson comes to Spruce Pine all the time. He noted that a hotel won't come here because we are not a destination.

Robert Cohen updated the Council briefly on the feasibility study on the Carolina Theater. He stated that the feasibility is a given, that viability is the question. Would completion of the theater attract a hotel? A more elaborate study is coming.

Luther Stroup noted that the use of the old Peoples building as a church is not a good use of a downtown building. In response to Luther's question about the next steps for the Pinebridge Coliseum, Richard Canipe noted that the bond referendum money has been released. The roof of coliseum is the next step.

Peter Franklin noted that on Oct 17,18 and 19, the Bank of America building is to be auctioned on-line. He said the ground floor could easily be a bank again, though the second two stories haven't been touched in 50 years.

#### MAYOR/COUNCIL

#### ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by motion of Rocky Buchanan and second by James Acuff at 6:11 PM.

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Darlene Butler, Town Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_ absent \_\_\_\_\_  
Darla Harding, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
James Acuff, Council Member

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Rocky Buchanan, Council Member

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Larry McKinney, Mayor Pro Tem

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Jackie Rensink, Council Member