

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN BOARD OF ALDERMEN
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING – GOLF WORKSHOP
MARCH 28, 2011**

THE BLACK MOUNTAIN BOARD OF ALDERMAN held a special called meeting on Monday, March 28, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room of Town Hall, 160 Midland Avenue, Black Mountain, NC, for the purpose of discussing issues related to golf course facilities and operations.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bartlett called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. with the following members present:

Mayor Carl R. Bartlett
Vice Mayor Joan Brown
Alderman Ruth D. Brandon
Alderman Tim Rayburn
Alderman Carlos Showers
Alderman C. Michael Sobol

The following staff members were present:

Marcia D. Onieal, Town Manager
Ronald E. Sneed, Town Attorney
Darlene Whisenant, Town Clerk
David Ballard, Golf Pro/Pro Shop Manager
Jennifer Tipton, Permit Clerk
Dan Cordell, Building Inspector
Kevin Pressley, Police Chief
Steve Jones, Fire Chief

Representing the media:

Mark Vanderhoff, Black Mountain News
Gary & Sally Biggers, Black Mountain Video Productions

Mayor Bartlett reviewed the rules of procedure for the Workshop Session, noting that the Board had voted not to accept citizen comment during the work session. Mayor Bartlett announced to the citizens that he, Alderman Sobol and Alderman Rayburn would remain after the meeting adjourned for anyone who would like to have their comments heard.

II. MANAGER'S UPDATE

Town Manager Marcy Onieal gave a recap of the timeline of Board decisions regarding the Black Mountain Golf Clubhouse to date. Discussions started with the November 22, 2010 Board of Aldermen Golf Workshop, at which the Board directed staff to prepare a request for proposal (RFP) for replacing the previous food service vendor who ceased operating on December 1, 2010. Subsequent building inspections necessitated by the recruitment of a new

food vendor revealed that the building was structurally deficient and failed to meet ADA requirements and building and health codes, all of which would have to be addressed before a food vendor could move back in to the clubhouse. At the Board's December meeting, the manager reported these findings, and recommended the board consider a loan in the amount of \$250,000 from the General Fund to the Golf Fund in order to provide for course and facility improvements and unbudgeted operational priorities, which the Board approved. Due to bad weather, the Board did not meet in January, 2011 and at the February 14, 2011 Board meeting, the manager reported that golf staff and golf advisory group members had recommended all available funding be allocated to course improvements as a first priority, and to either close or demolish the clubhouse since it had never been in good condition, since it would require an excessive level of funding to bring back to desired condition, and since it did not adequately meet golfing needs. A motion to demolish the clubhouse failed on a vote of 2-3. Following, at the same meeting, the board approved closing the building to all use indefinitely and delaying any decision on future expenditure or disposition of the building until it could be considered during the budget process in May and June. In subsequent action, the Men's Golf Association lease was terminated with a 60-day notice to vacate, and the deck, porch, and snackbar were ordered to be immediately closed due to safety concerns, while the lower lounge was granted a temporary CO through June 2, 2011, to accommodate the Women's spring tournament schedule. At the March 14, 2011 meeting, the Board directed the manager to return within two weeks a list of minimum requirements and cost estimates for renovations necessary to reopen the clubhouse with no change in use or layout of space. Tonight's golf workshop is for the purpose of hearing reports on code compliance requirements and cost estimates for minimum required renovations.

III. RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

John DeWitt, Recreation Commission Chair, gave a brief summary regarding the discussions at the recent Recreation Commission meeting on Thursday, March 24, 2011. Their goal was to discuss factual information and provide a recommendation to the Board of Aldermen. Three of the seven commission members supported the idea that the Town should start to repair the golf course and bring the building up to standards for use by all golfers, while four of the members supported the fact that bringing the course up to standard should be the first priority and to consider building upgrades or replacement only when the Golf Fund returned to a positive flow of revenue, and was out of a deficit situation. The latter recommendation (to focus on course improvements and delay building improvements) was also supported by the Manager's Golf Advisory Committee and by David Ballard, Golf Pro and John Shaw, Golf Maintenance Supervisor.

IV. CLUBHOUSE-CODE COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS & COST ESTIMATES

Ms. Onieal introduced Jane Mathews with Mathews Architecture to review their assessment of the Town of Black Mountain Golf Clubhouse. Ms. Mathews visited the site on March 16, 2011 and met with Elizabeth Teague, Planning & Development Director; Dan Cordell, Building Inspector; Spencer Elliott, Fire Inspector; Craig Bannerman, Assistant Fire Chief; John Shaw, Golf Course Maintenance and Jimmy Lamm, Smith Engineering and Design.

The clubhouse has two unconnected levels of occupied space. The lower level which is used as the Women's Golf Association with adjacent unfinished areas currently utilized for storage and the upper level is divided into the Men's Golf Association section and the 19th Hole Snack Bar which has a storage dish room as well as a screened porch.

Ms. Mathews provided a detailed report, accompanied by a power point presentation, prepared by town staff, showing each interior and exterior section of the clubhouse. Full assessment details from the firm of Mathews Architecture is attached and hereby, made part of these minutes.

Ed Medlock and Frank Ungert with Medlock Engineering Associates addressed the Board of Aldermen and citizens with their structural engineering report and floor loading evaluation after conducting a site observation on Thursday, December 9, 2010. Details from their report were provided in hard copy to the Board of Aldermen and are attached, and hereby, made part of these minutes.

Planning Dept and inspections staff provided a summary of code compliance requirements and estimated costs for minimum required renovations as follows: General Safety/Structural reinforcement requirement for the entire structure (upstairs) - \$15,300; Men's and Women's lounge, deck, and site - \$21,400 - \$23,200, with two site options presented; the Snack Shop, kitchen and porch - \$5,200. Staff report showed that for an estimated \$41,900-\$43,700 the Town could address the structural loading issues per the engineering study, meet the requirements of the building, fire, and health department inspectors, and achieve the Town's obligations for providing required program accessibility under ADA. In addition, the report recommended building in a contingency of 15-20% to cover minor aesthetic needs or unknowns which may arise in the course of, or due to, renovation activities.

Ms. Onieal reported on other related key budget estimates, which need to be considered given limited funding available for golf-related needs, including: preliminary recommendations from USGA for course improvements - \$128,400; anticipated deficit in Golf Fund at 6/30/11 - \$103,000; minimum code compliance renovations at clubhouse - \$43,700 plus contingency of \$8,740, bringing the total of immediate needs to more than \$283,840. She also noted other pressing major maintenance needs at the facility, including replacement of two HVAC units, leaking roof, severe damage to fascia, soffits, siding, doors, windows, foundation and drainage problems. The Board had previously approved a transfer of \$250,000 from the General Fund to the Golf Fund to address all these needs, but clearly the need outstrips the available funding.

V. QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Alderman Carlos Showers passed out a memo addressing the Board of Aldermen with several motions for discussion in regards to the ultimate goal of bringing the golf course back to good shape and to bring the clubhouse up to code and ADA compliant.

Alderman Showers made a single multi-part motion, which the Mayor elected to have the Board vote on separately as follows:

1) that the Board authorize the immediate release and expenditure of funds from proceeds of the \$250,000 General Fund loan previously approved by this board, for the following purposes: a) to initiate new capital improvements and major maintenance projects designed to improve the course, as recommended by the USGA consultant, in an amount not to exceed \$128,400. The motion was unanimously approved.

2) that the Board authorize staff to begin physical improvements to the lower level of the golf clubhouse in an amount not to exceed \$25,000 for maintenance and code compliance needs and for conversion of the women's lounge to a unisex gathering space with outdoor patio, (with use of the space designated into three categories; i) as being generally available and open for public use during regular business hours; ii) for exclusive use at no charge by tournament sponsors and participants for the duration of any tournament scheduled at the course; and iii) as available for lease by individuals or groups on a first-come/first serve basis, with a 4 hour minimum, and at a rental rate in keeping with fee charged for other recreation facilities. Mayor Bartlett asked the question as to who would now be in charge of keeping the facility clean. Ms. Onieal stated that town staff or contractor would probably need to absorb that duty under the proposed scenario.

The motion passed by a 3-2 vote with Aldermen Rayburn and Sobol opposing.

3) that the remaining \$96,600 of approved loan funds be reserved until the board can consider future golf expenditures, specifically renovation of the upper floor, including Snack Shop, kitchen and area now known as the Men's Club, with a deadline for consideration of July 1, 2011. Ms. Onieal commented that if the board is seriously considering renovating the entire facility it would be more efficient and less expensive to have all renovation work done at one time, rather than part now and part after July 1.

The motion passed by a 3-2 vote with Aldermen Rayburn and Sobol opposing.

4) that the Board authorize the town manager to negotiate an offer with both the Men's and Women's Golf Associations to purchase or accept donation of, select furnishings and equipment which are owned by them, and currently in use at the clubhouse, for continued use in the refurbished downstairs lounge; and to begin immediate development of a transition plan for the clubhouse facility.

The motion passed by a 3-2 vote with Aldermen Rayburn and Sobol opposing.

5) that the Board of Alderman acknowledge and affirm its February decision to terminate the Town's 20-year exclusive lease with the Black Mountain Men's Golf Association, and to authorize the Town Clerk to collect, store and protect and archive any important golf memorabilia that may be left, and to dispose of any personal property remaining, after the Association has vacated the premises on April 16, 2011.

The motion passed by a 3-2 vote with Aldermen Rayburn and Sobol opposing.

6) that the Board commend the Recreation Commission, the town manager, the golf advisory group, the members of the Men's and Women's golf associations, and all the town staff for maintaining professionalism and grace under intense pressure, and for their unwavering commitment to improving golf in Black Mountain.

The motion passed by a 3-2 vote with Aldermen Rayburn and Sobol opposing.

Mayor Bartlett asked for Debra Wooton to speak to the Board and citizens regarding her personal interest in the importance to have all Town facilities meet ADA compliance. Ms. Wooton shared that she was once a healthy, productive participant in society and one day she walked into the University of South Carolina and three weeks later she walked out a disabled American. When she visited a community library in a wheel chair with the help of a nurse, she was able to get through the door, but when she needed to use the restroom facilities the wheelchair was not able to go through the door. These are basic rights that everyone should have access to. The ADA is no different than any other law. Some parts of it are good; some parts of it are not so good. Ms. Wooton stated that what we are talking about here in Black Mountain is accessibility. We now know about the ADA and we know we are not compliant, so now we are doing everything we can to become compliant. The Town is working toward making the golf course clubhouse ADA compliant just as they have the Lakeview Center. Ms. Wooton's desire is for the Town to get the golf course into pristine condition once again, so that it will once again regain its reputation as a stellar golf course.

Alderman Showers made the announcement that he would be available to meet with any citizen who would like to schedule an appointment on Wednesdays from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. If interested, please contact the Town Clerk, Darlene Whisenant at 419-9300 x 310. The meetings would be held in the Mayor/Board of Aldermen office located next to the Training Room in the Police/Fire Department at 106 Montreat Road.

With no further business, Alderman Joan Brown made a motion to adjourn at 7:55 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Carl R. Bartlett, Mayor

Marcia D. Onieal, Town Manager

Prepared by:

Darlene R. Whisenant, Town Clerk