

**TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN
HOUSING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
June 15, 2010**

The **Black Mountain Housing Commission** held its regular monthly meeting on **Tuesday, June 15, 2010 at 10:00 am** in the Town Hall at 160 Midland Avenue, Black Mountain, N.C.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order with the follow members present:

Joanne Brannon, Chair
Connie Pruitt, Vice Chair
Ellen Farrior, Secretary
Dawn Wilson (arrived late)
Peter Vazquez

Absent:

Jeff Hunter
Dot Jones
Jessie Sherrill

Speakers:

Renae Brame, Director, Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry
Bill Hamby, First Baptist Church of Black Mountain, N.C.

Staff:

Elizabeth Teague, AICP, Planning Director
Rebecca Eberhardt, Zoning Administrator
Marcia D. Onieal, Town Manager
Spencer Elliott, Fire Inspector
Rosa B. Hilbert, Senior Administrative Assistant

Others:

Joan Brown, Vice Mayor
Ruth Brandon, Alderman

Chair Brannon called the meeting to order with four regular members, there was not a quorum at the opening of the meeting. Dawn Wilson arrived late and a quorum was recognized later in the meeting.

Chair Brannon opened the meeting with discussion on **IV. Business, Item 2 – Update from Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry and First Baptist church on possible shelter Assistance for this winter.** She introduced Renae Brame, Director of the Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry (SVCN) and Bill Hamby, representative from First Baptist Church, Black Mountain to give an update about the progress of the Shelter Assistance project.

Ms. Brame addressed the Commission and said that Barry Cordell, a homeless man, died in late October due to exposure. His death and the deaths of several other homeless people in the area affected many people and prompted the SVCN to consider the possibility of opening a shelter.

A volunteer team of local residents began a series of meetings with SVCM leaders to discuss ways of protecting the homeless. The First Baptist Church of Black Mountain graciously offered its assistance to provide the space needed for the shelter. A contract was drawn between First Baptist and SVCM in May to provide shelter from the cold weather beginning in November and continuing through March. (120 days). The shelter will be open when the temperature is 38 degrees or colder because exposure to the elements during those temperatures result in the loss of toes and fingers. She anticipated 8 to 10 homeless people in the shelter. Ms. Brame said that the shelter will be supervised with trained volunteers on duty at all times to observe behaviors and report to 911 if there are any problems. Guests may enter the shelter beginning at 6:00 p.m. and must leave at 7:00 a.m. She said that if a guest leaves the shelter, he or she will not be allowed to return that night and the Black Mountain Police will be notified. The shelter will house men, women and children. Ms. Brame addressed the issue of mental illness among the homeless and said that the standard operating procedures for volunteers would be to call 911 if they encounter threatening or uncomfortable situations. Drugs and alcohol will not be allowed in the church. Local churches will be asked to provide the breakfast and dinner meals. An article will be in the Black Mountain News requesting public donations to assist with specific needs.

Bill Hamby, representing First Baptist Church of Black Mountain, said that this is a new endeavor for both organizations and the community. He gave a brief history of his experience, education and ties with this community. He shared a personal experience and said it became clear to him that First Baptist Church could work with SVCM to assist with providing a temporary shelter. After several discussions with the church pastor, and Board of Directors, a search committee was formed to investigate what permits and inspections would be required to meet the fire code. Mr. Hamby explained the church approval process in detail and said that after the first 30 days of operation, the project will be evaluated again to identify any problems.

Spencer Elliott, Town Fire Inspector, said that the first priority of the shelter is to save lives. He said that the Department of Insurance and the Office of the State Fire Marshal has requirements in place for temporary shelters. It is not uncommon for churches to be used as temporary homeless shelters. Mr. Elliott said his inspection of the building would cover the first 120 days as set forth by the Department of Insurance, after that time, the building would need to be re-inspected for the next 120 days. He said there are other regulations in place for longer periods of time.

Chair Brannon thanked the speakers for accepting the invitation to attend the Commission meeting. She asked Mr. Hamby to extend the Commission's gratitude to the members of First Baptist Church for its vision and mission. At this time, Chair Brannon recognized that a quorum was present and asked the Commission to return to the regular agenda items.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Vice Chair Pruitt made a motion to adopt the agenda, Dawn Wilson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Vice Chair Pruitt made a motion to adopt the minutes of May 18, 2010, Dawn Wilson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

IV. BUSINESS

Update of Homeowner Assistance for the summer

Elizabeth Teague reported that she and Dot Jones met with Renae Brame to review the list of names and addresses of elderly and disabled homeowners in need of minor home repairs. Over the summer, there will be various groups of volunteers available to assist with home repairs. Ms. Teague thanked the Commission for its diligent work with the homeowners and coordinating with the SVCMM.

Discussion of a second workshop on the Voucher Program

Elizabeth Teague said that Anthony Goodson from the City of Asheville Housing Authority presented a workshop on the Voucher Program in February. She asked the Commission to consider scheduling another workshop later in the year. The Commission discussed perspective attendees targeting landlords and tenants, dates and time for the workshop. Some of the recommendations were:

- An early evening meeting (5:30 or 6:30 p.m.) in October or November because of work schedules and convenience.
- That the workshop be announced at the September Board of Aldermen meeting.
- Utilize email to send notice of the workshop to the Association of Landlords, Realtors, and the local builders/contractors because they may be landlords

Meeting schedule for July-August

Ms. Teague said that Chair Brannon has graciously offered to host the Commission for a luncheon meeting at her residence. She noted that in July there will be new incoming members and suggested that this would be a good time for the luncheon to socialize and consider goals for the coming year. The consensus was to schedule the luncheon on July 20, 2010 at 11:00 a.m. Town staff will process the appropriate meeting notifications. The Commission came to a consensus to cancel the August 17th meeting because it is typically the vacation month.

V. STAFF AND MEMBER REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Vice Chair Pruitt reported that she attended the June meeting of the Town Square Steering Committee while Chair Brannon was away. Some of the discussions included putting an informational sign on the property showing the permitted uses, develop a questionnaire for the community to help decide what to do with the property, post updated information on the Town website.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT – none

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The Commission adjourned by consensus at 11:06 a.m.

Joanne Brannon, Chair

Ellen Farrior, Secretary

Rosa B. Hilbert, Senior Admin. Assistant